



Teacher Perspective:

Beyond the Numbers: Analyzing student writing from a qualitative perspective with progress monitoring reports

The progress monitoring report gives teachers quantitative data to consider to track writing performance over time like total number of words written and total number of words spelled correctly, but there is more than just numbers to consider. Qualitative analysis goes beyond writing conventions and the number of correct word sequences. It supports a deeper look at what students are writing, vocabulary, and sentence construction.

REPORTS

5 Kearns (Narrative)

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Words: 30 Letters: 123 Correctly Spelled: 30 Sequences: 32 Date: 01/06/17

Grammar Spelling

The boy finally found the courage to ask the man with a hook for a hand to tell him what happened...

"^Finally^someone^asked^!"^The^pirate^responded, "You^see^it^all^started^while^I^was^a^wee^lad^."^Halloween^was^a^round^the^corner^and^I^needed^to^pick^a^costume^."^

Teachers remark that some writers, for example, may write more dialogue or attempt to use similes or advanced vocabulary worthy of noting. Teachers feel that it is important to see the qualitative piece of the big picture of writing for setting writing goals and needed

teaching interventions. Student writing conferences are perfect times to discuss qualitative measures beyond the numbers. For students scoring in the lower quartile, qualitative analysis can give them an attainable goal before quantitative scores have a chance to build up over time. Higher achievers see qualitative goals such as vocabulary and sentence structure as ways to excel beyond word counts pushing them further to grow as skilled writers.

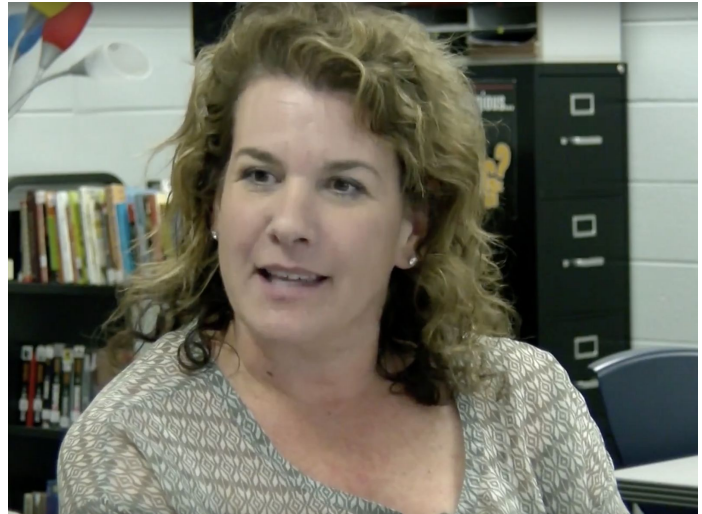
When viewing the short, timed write in the progress monitoring report it is important to consider the writing as a draft and simplify what you are looking for. There are basically three qualitative measures to consider when teachers view progress monitoring and do a data walk: content, vocabulary and sentences.

For content, read and consider the story starter and see if the response stays on topic. Does the response seem random or does the content stay true to persuasive, narrative or expository text? Does the response show purpose of writing with an appropriate text structure?

For vocabulary, the unique versus redundant, simple words are noted. Are these words related to the story prompt?

For sentences, look beyond the punctuation of a well written sentence and search for varied sentence types with details building in a sequence. Does the student include simple, compound and complex sentences? Are transition words and phrases used with embedded clauses?

Remember the progress monitoring text is a short, first-time written text. Observations for quality beyond quantitative measures are valuable and lend themselves well to student writing conferences. Students will appreciate hearing about content, vocabulary and sentences in order to set attainable goals.



She *eventually* went to sleep.
She went to sleep.
Everyone *evacuated*.
Everyone left.