

Teacher Copy: Assessment for Independent Reading Levels
Levels L-Z (Fiction/Narrative)

Reader's Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____
 Excerpt from *Miracle's Boys*, by Jacqueline Woodson, pp. 21-24
 Level Z 759 words

Independent Level: Yes No
 Accuracy Rate: _____

Book Introduction: (*Say this to the reader before he or she begins the student copy of the text*)
 "The character in this story, Lafayette, lives with his two brothers Charlie and Ty'ree. Please read aloud the first section. When you get to the line, you may read the rest silently. When you're finished reading, I'll ask you to retell what you read."

- During & after the running record, you may make these observations & notes to inform instruction**
- Responds to punctuation by changing his/her voice
 - Self corrects before asking for help
 - Pauses while reading to think
 - Flexible word-solver
 - Reads in phrases rather than word by word
 - Miscues make sense
 - Miscues fit the syntax or structure of the sentence
 - Miscues look similar to words in the text

Running Record: *For the first 100 words, record the reader's miscues (or errors) above the word as he or she reads. Later, you may or may not code them, using miscue analysis (MSV). Stop when the child has made five miscues and go back to the previous level.*

After Newcharlie and Aaron left, I went into the living room and turned on the television. On Friday nights Ty'ree let me watch it as much as I wanted as long as I took one weekend day for homework. I usually chose Sunday – usually starting in the late late afternoon or the minute Ty'ree started getting after me – whichever came first.

I flipped through the channels for a while, then sat back against the couch and watched music videos. I couldn't really tell one from the other. Most of them had some guy standing there rapping and a lot of (**100 words**) pretty girls dancing around him. Or the guy was driving a fancy car with pretty girls in it. Once in a while the guy would be in a swimming pool with pretty girls. That was the one on now—a guy with a lot of rings on his fingers rapping to some pretty girls in bikinis.

**** (*Reader may continue silently from this point on*) ****

Newcharlie liked listening to music and said he was gonna be a rapper. Aaron said he was gonna be one too. Either that or a car salesman. I guess he figured he'd sell cars to rappers who would fill them with pretty girls. Thing (**200 words**) about rapping though, Newcharlie said, is you gotta do it now. Most rappers weren't much older than him. Sometimes he and Aaron sat in our room all day long, making up rhymes and slapping each other five when something came off sounding right. But I hadn't seem them taking any real steps—like making some tapes and calling up a radio station to ask for a few minutes on the air.

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More observations & notes to inform instruction:

I turned the volume down low. The apartment felt big and quiet with nobody in it. It's not that big—just four rooms: me and Newcharlie's room, then Ty'ree's (**300 words**) room right next to us. His room used to be Mama's. Then there's a long hallway leading to one big room that's both the living room and the dining room. If you go right, there's a dining-room table and chairs. If you go left, there's the couch and stuff. The door to come in and out is between the couch and dining-room table. You walk through the living-room side to get to the kitchen. You have to walk through the kitchen to get to the bathroom.

Newcharlie had put plants in all the windows – spider plants and ferns and some (**400 words**) other ones I don't know the name of. He'd learned a lot about plants at Rahway. It was strange to see him messing around with them on Saturday mornings, taking off the dead leaves and giving them water. Sometimes he put these little sticks of plant food in the dirt. Once I even caught him *talking* to them, telling this sickly-looking fern that it better toughen up if it wanted to make it in the world.

The sun had come out again, and I watched it bounce off the plants and sprinkle itself over the dining-room table. When I closed (**500 words**) my eyes to just a sliver, I could see Mama sitting at the table, playing with her eyebrow the way she did when she was worrying, her hair coming loose from its braid. I watched my ghost mama for a while. She looked peaceful sitting there even if she was worrying.

"Hey, Mama," I whispered. "Can you make some chicken for dinner tonight?"

Mama looked over at me and smiled, a quiet, faraway smile. I blinked and she wasn't there anymore.

I got a thousand dollars in my pocket, the guy in the rap video was saying. I leaned back (**600 words**) against the sofa and watched him do a sort of swim-dance around the girls.

After a while, I heard Ty'ree coming up the stairs. He always whistled the same song—a song our mama used to sing to us called "Me and Bobby McGee" about a woman hitchhiking with her boyfriend in Louisiana and how free she felt whenever she played her harmonica. When Ty'ree sang the words sometimes, it made me want to get a harmonica and get out onto the road. Maybe see a sunset. Once Ty'ree took me to Central Park and we watched the sun go (**700 words**) down over the lake my daddy got hypothermia in. It was real pretty. Pretty and sad. Most times, thought, it just sets and then it's night and what you notice is the day and the night—not the sunset in between. On the highway you probably get all four parts—the sunrise, the day, the sunset, and the night. (**759 words**)

Total miscues including self corrected: _____

Self-Corrections _____

Miscues reader did not self-correct: _____

Accuracy Rate: Circle the number of miscues the reader did not self correct.

100%	99%	98%	97%	96%
0 miscues	1 miscue	2 miscues	3 miscues	4 miscues

96%-100% accuracy is necessary to determine the reader's independent reading level. Try another text if the reader made 5 or more miscues.

* If the child makes the same miscue repeatedly, count it as one miscue.

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Literal and Inferential Retelling

Say, "In writing, retell the important parts of what you just read and answer the four questions. You may look back at the text if you need to." The reader will write the retelling and answers to Part 1 on the student copy. You may assess the reader's comprehension when finished. If the reader has difficulty writing the retelling or the answers to Part 1, you may complete any or all of this section orally.

Optional: Say, "Retell the important parts of what you just read." Write notes regarding the student's retelling in this box and on the back of this page. If the reader has trouble getting started, prompt him/her to look at the text. Say, "What happened first?" Make a note that you prompted their retelling.

Comprehension Questions Section:

The reader will answer these four questions on the student copy, along with the written retelling.

Optional: Listen to the reader's retelling for the following information and take note of the reader's answers, based on the retelling. If the retelling did not already contain the following information, ask the reader the remaining questions and take note of the answers.

1. *Literal Question:* Who makes the rules in Lafayette's apartment?

2. *Literal Question:* What does Lafayette think is surprising about Newcharlie since he came back from Rahway?

3. *Inferential Question:* What does this passage teach you about the complicated feelings, other than sadness, that Lafayette has about his mother?

4. *Inferential Question:* In this excerpt, Lafayette describes the dreams and aspirations of his brother and his friend, Aaron. Lafayette also has different dreams of his own. Based on this passage, what do you think Lafayette dreams of ?

The reader must answer at least three of these questions to determine if this is the child's independent reading level. Try another text if the child could not answer at least three of these questions.

Final Score

- Yes No Was the reader's accuracy rate at least 96%?
 Yes No Did the reader read with fluency?
 Yes No Did the reader answer at least three comprehension questions in the Comprehension Questions Section correctly?
 Yes No Did the retelling express the important things that happened in the text?

If the answer is "Yes" to all four questions, this is the child's independent reading level.

* Continue trying more difficult texts until you have found the child's highest independent level. *