



Book Club Running Records

A Letter to Mrs. Roosevelt Sylvia & Aki Out of the Dust

For pairing with C. I. A. Unit of Study—Historical Nonfiction, Children of the Dust Bowl 6.2

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Running Records

A running record is an informal assessment that helps teachers determine the students' reading level and gain some insight into their oral reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension (Clay, 2013). Running records are valuable because they offer an opportunity to hear students read, establish rapport, and determine their strengths and weaknesses.

To conduct an assessment, ask a student to read a short passage from the selected trade book. As the student reads, you will

- record errors,
- time the student's reading rate,
- make notes on prosody, and
- assess the student's comprehension.

This will yield immediate data. If the student reads the book excerpt with reasonable accuracy, fluency, and comprehension, you can match the student to the same text during instruction.

The directions that follow will guide you through the process of administering these running record assessments and analyzing the results.

Administering the Running Record Test

To prepare to give a running record test:

- Copy the running record form and cover sheet for the novel the student will be reading. You also will need a copy of the novel for the student to read from, a timing device, and a pencil. (*Optional:* Use a recording device to capture the running record conference on an audio file.)
- 2. Make sure the student is comfortable and relaxed.
- 3. Provide the student with information about the selected title (use the script provided).
- 4. Tell the student to read from the paperback novel, then turn on the timing device. You will stop timing at a designated point, but the student will continue to read the rest of the passage silently.
- 5. Note on the running record form miscues or errors the student makes.
- 6. Record the total time needed to read the designated portion of the passage.
- 7. Instruct the student to continue reading the selected excerpt silently.
- 8. When the student has finished reading, continue testing the student's comprehension.
- 9. Finish scoring the assessment and determine which book the student will be matched to in book club.

Accuracy

Noting a student's miscues or errors as she reads aloud at least 200 words from the selected book will give you a reading accuracy score that can be used to determine whether the student is independent, instructional, or frustrational. A text that a student reads with 98% accuracy is one that she easily could read independently. A text that a student reads with 90–97% accuracy presents more challenge; she can read the text when instructional supports are provided or when the text is of high interest. A text that a student reads with less than 90% accuracy often causes frustration and typically is avoided.

A miscue is any omission, substitution, insertion, or teacher-assisted word. Miscues are subtracted from the total number of words read to get the total number of words read correctly.

You will use the provided Quick-Sheet Guide for Scoring Running Records.

Fluency

To evaluate a student's fluency score, you will use the provided fluency benchmarks based on national fluency norms (Hasbrouk & Tindal, 2017). If a fifth grader reads at a rate of 97 words per minute correct (WCPM) in the fall, that student then scores at the 25th percentile. Such a score suggests that the student is having difficulty with fluency, which may stem from several causes. Fluency is disrupted when students struggle with word recognition, vocabulary, comprehension, or they are just processing the text slowly. As the norms indicate, a student's fluency should increase throughout the school year.

Comprehension

It is not enough to know whether a student is a fluent reader: you also must determine whether the student understands what he reads. The second part of the running record test will assess the student's comprehension of the passage, both the part read orally and the part read silently.

The student will have the opportunity to score a total of fifteen points on the comprehension assessment. The first five questions examine the student's literal understanding of the text—what the text says. The next three questions explore the student's inferential thinking about character feelings and motives, predictions, and the ability to infer a word's meaning from the context. Each question has a point value, and inferential questions are assigned a higher value than literal ones.

The running record provides the questions, suggested answers, and a place to record checkmarks. We have provided more than one correct answer. It is not necessary for a student to note all of the details about a main character to receive full credit for an answer. Note four special rules for scoring comprehension:

- 1. The student does not score a point for each item checked.
- 2. If the student shares an inaccurate detail, note the inaccuracy, but it will not hinder the student's total score.
- 3. The student will have an opportunity to score a total of three points for telling about the plot: one point for an event from the beginning of the excerpt, one point for an event from the middle, and one point for an event from the end of the excerpt.
- 4. If a student struggles to give an answer, provide wait time, repeat the question, and provide wait time again. If the student still is unable to give an answer, score the student a zero and move on to the next question.

The student has a good understanding of the text if she earns 75% of the possible comprehension points (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011). The student's comprehension is weak if she earns 49% or less of the possible points. Between 74% and 50% is considered borderline. The book will be an appropriate fit so long as a peer or the teacher provides extra support.

We provide a cover sheet for recording your student's accuracy, fluency and comprehension scores, as well as guidelines for matching students to text.

For more information on assessment, please purchase the book The Assessment and Intervention Guide for the Read Side by Side Reading Program by Peter Dewitz and Sarah Collinge. You will find this book at http://www.shop.readsidebyside.com.

Quick-Sheet Guide for Scoring Running Records—Sample

Running Record Directions—Quick Sheet

Recording miscues:

- Omission: Circle/cross out the words.
- Insertion: Add a caret and write in the student's response above the word.
- Substitution: Draw a line through the word and write the substituted word above.
- Teacher help: Write a T above the word. (Wait 3 seconds before telling the word.)

Also record:

- Repetitions: Draw a line below/above the repeated word(s).
- Self-Correction: Next to the miscue write SC.

The figure below gives you an example of how to record miscues.

LINE OF TEXT WITH NOTES	TYPE	# OF MISCUES
Until I was nearly eleven, until the letter came, life	Omission	1
all was just normal. There were four of us in the	Insertion	1
mom house: my mother, my father, me, and Stella—	Substitution	1
Stella Artois, that is, my one-ear-up and one-ear	Repetition	0
T. down black-and-white sheepdog, who always seemed	Teacher help	1
to know what was about to happen before it did.		0
Fort SC But even she could not have foreseen how that letter	Substitution	1
was going to change our lives forever.		0

Special rules:

- A word that is self-corrected still counts as a miscue.
- If a student omits an entire line of text or section of text, count it as only one miscue. Subtract the total number of words skipped from the total word count.
- If a student makes the same error several times and the error does not change the meaning, count it as just one error (this is particularly true for the misreading of names).
- If a student repeats a word or phrase, this repetition does not count as a miscue.
- Omissions of punctuation do not count as a miscue.

Fluency Benchmarks

GRADE		PERCENTILE	FALL	WINTER	SPRING
2	Independent	50th and above	83 ≤	97 ≤	112 ≤
3	Instructional	25th– 49th	59–82	79–96	91–111
	Frustrational	24th and below	≤ 58	≤ 78	≤ 90
	Independent	50th and above	94 ≤	120 ≤	133 ≤
4	Instructional	25th	75–93	95–119	105–132
	Frustrational	24th and below	≤ 74	≤ 94	≤ 104
F	Independent	50th and above	121 ≤	133 ≤	146 ≤
5	Instructional	25th	87–120	109–132	119–145
	Frustrational	24th and below	≤ 86	≤ 108	≤ 118
	Independent	50th and above	132 ≤	145 ≤	146 ≤
6	Instructional	25th	112–131	116–144	122–145
	Frustrational	24th and below	≤ 111	≤ 115	≤ 121

Note. Table is used by permission from Hasbrouk and Tindal, 2017.

Guidelines for Matching Students to Text

ASSESSMENT	RESULTS	PLACEMENT
The student reads the text above grade level.	The student is independent or instructional in <i>all</i> three categories.	Place the student in the text above grade level.
level.	The student is frustrational in one or more categories.	Retest using the text on grade level.
The student reads the text on grade level.	The student is independent in <i>all</i> three categories.	Place the student in the text above grade level.
	The student is a combination of independent and instructional, or <i>all</i> three categories are instructional.	Place the student in the text on grade level.
	The student is frustrational in one or more categories.	Retest using the text below grade level.
The student reads the text below grade	The student is independent in <i>all</i> three categories.	Place the student in the text on grade level.
level.	The student is a combination of independent and instructional, or <i>all</i> three categories are instructional.	Place the student in the text below grade level.
	The student is frustrational in one or more categories.	Place the student in the text below level and add additional instruction and scaffolding.
The student completes the first book club in the low text and shows little or no progress.	The student continues to score frustrational in one or more categories <i>and</i> is making little or no progress.	Consider an alternate, lower text of the same genre/topic/ theme.

Running Record Cover Sheet

Student Name:	Date:
Name of Proctor:	
Title of Book:	Level: Below / On / Above

Independent	Instructional	Frustrational	
98% or more	90 - 97%	89% or less	
Accuracy Formula # words - # of miscues = # words read correctly / # of words X 100 = % of Words Read Correctly			

Independent	Instructional	Frustrational
50th percentile or above	49th - 25th percentile	24th percentile or below

Fluency Formula

of words - number of errors X 60 = ____ / # of seconds = WCPM

_____X 60 = _____/ ____ = ____WCPM

Grade Level Fluency Norms (Tindal & Hasbrouck, 2017)

COMPREHENSION - % OF CORRECT ANSWERS

Independent	Instructional	Frustrational	
75% correct or above	50 - 74% correct	49% correct or below	
Comprehension Formula # of points earned / number of points possible X 100 = % of Correct Answers / =% of Correct Answers			

 Reads in meaningful phrase groups:
 Consistently
 Inconsistently
 Rarely
 No

 Reads with expression:
 Consistently
 Inconsistently
 Rarely
 No

 Recommended Placement:
 Below / On / Above

Materials Needed:

The student will need a copy of the book being read (*A Letter To Mrs. Roosevelt*). The teacher will need a timer (stopwatch setting), scoring sheet, and pencil.

Before Administering:

Make sure your student is comfortable and relaxed.

ORAL READING—PROSODY

Tell the student:

You will be reading a section from the chapter book A Letter to Mrs. Roosevelt. Part of the book you will read aloud to me, and part of the book you will read silently. When you have finished reading, you will tell me about what you have read. Do you have any questions?

This is a story that takes place in the 1933 during the time of the Great Depression. The main character, Margo, lives with her parents and her brother in a house on Maple Avenue. The story begins in 1929, then flashes forward to 1933. Please begin reading aloud to me at the flash forward, starting on page 6.

Turn on the timing device. Record oral reading miscues.

Chapter 2 (2)

Maple Avenue, 1933 (5)

Papa owned a shoe repair shop on Bedford Street. (14) I often walked to work with him when there was (24) no school. Every morning at six o'clock he crossed (33) over the First Street Bridge, stopped to greet Mr. (42) Bobb, who operated the train tower on the bridge, (51) then walked the long trek past the steel mill. Papa (61) stopped whistling and tipped his hat in respect as he (71) passed St. John's Church. At the corner, near the (80) Swank Building, he started to whistle again, and (88) continued until he reached the shop. As Papa un- (96) locked the door he would pause to breathe in the (106) balmy scents of leather and shoe polish. Then he'd (115) turn on the lights, walk behind the counter, and put (125) on his apron. (128)

In the late afternoon, Papa closed the shop and (137) walked past he bank on Main Street. There was a (147) time when he would stop in the bank every Friday, (157)

just before closing. That was when he carried a (166) small sack of money, proof of a busy week. He (176) would smile as he proudly handed the sack over to (186) the teller behind the counter. Sometimes Mr. (193) Lockhard, the bank president, would smile back (200) and shake Papa's hand. Not anymore. Now Papa (208) walked by the bank jingling the small change in his (218) pocket, sometimes carrying a basket of fresh fruit (226) and vegetables. (228)

Today I heard him tell Mama that Mr. Lockhard (237) stood in the window of the bank yesterday. Papa (246) tipped his hat, but Mr. Lockhard didn't seem to (255) notice as he stared out at Main Street. He stopped (265) shaking Papa's hand a long time ago, when Papa (274) stopped carrying the money sack. Now Papa used (282) the pocket change to pay our food bill. (290)

Time:

A Letter to Mrs. Roosevelt Lexile 690

SILENT READING—COMPREHENSION

Tell the student: Now you are going to finish reading chapter 2. You will read this part of the story silently to yourself. When you are finished, raise your hand. I will then ask you to tell me about what you read. Do you have any questions? You may begin reading.

After the student has finished reading, tell the student: Now I am going to ask you some questions about what you've read. Pretend that I don't know anything about the story.

Characters:

1. The narrator of the story is Margo.

Which character does she describe at the beginning of this chapter? _____ /1 Please tell me a little bit about this character. _____ /1

____ Papa

____ Owns a shop

_____ Repairs shoes

2. Who are the other characters in the story? (2+ characters = 2 pts.) _____ /2

- ____ Margo
- ____ Mama
- _____ Mr. Lockhard (the banker)
- _____ Mr. Frappa (the grocer)
- _____ Rosa (Margo's friend)
- _____ Rosa's father (a steelworker)
- ____ Mrs. DiLuso (a neighbor)
- ____ Miss Dobson (teacher)

Setting:

- 3. Where does the story take place? _____ /1
- ____ Margo's house
- ____ Maple Avenue
- _____1933
- ____ During the Great Depression

Plot:

- 4. What is happening in the story? (events from beginning/middle/end) ____/3
- _____ Margo's Papa owns a shoe repair shop.
- _____ He used to take a sack of money to the bank every Friday.

A Letter to Mrs. Roosevelt Lexile 690

- _____ Now he only makes small change.
- _____ He uses the small change to pay the food bill.
- _____ One family in Margo's neighborhood had to move away.
- _____ They had to leave everything behind except their suitcases, and their cat.
- ____ No one knew where they went.
- _____ Margo's family isn't poor.
- _____ Margo's family isn't wealthy.
- _____ Margo listens to her parents talking.
- ____ Margo goes to bed.
- 5. What is the problem in the book? _____/1

_____ The Great Depression was a time when many people/Margo's family experienced poverty.

Inferential Questions:

6. How does Margo feel when she overhears Mrs. DiLuso tell Mama that the devil had brought the Great Depression to Maple Avenue? Why do you think that? _____12

7. What do you think is going to happen next? What makes you think that? _____12

8. What do you think the word **ledger** means? What makes you think that? _____12 "Mr. Frappa, who owned a grocery store on Maple Avenue, kept a large black ledger of all the money people owed him." P. 7

Total Comprehension: _____ / 15

Materials Needed:

The student will need a copy of the book being read (*Sylvia and Aki*). The teacher will need a timer (stopwatch setting), scoring sheet, and pencil.

Before Administering:

Make sure your student is comfortable and relaxed.

ORAL READING—PROSODY

Tell the student:

You will be reading a section from the chapter book Sylvia and Aki. Part of the book you will read aloud to me, and part of the book you will read silently. When you have finished reading, you will tell me about what you have read. Do you have any questions?

This is a story that takes place in the 1941. The main character, Sylvia, has just moved to Westminster, California and is enrolling in a new school. Please begin reading aloud to me starting on page 3.

Turn on the timing device. Record oral reading miscues.

Chapter 1 (2) *He who doesn't look ahead remains behind.* (9) -MEXICAN PROVERB (11)

Sylvia (12)

Westminster, California (14)

Sylvia Mendez imagined her first day of third grade (23) at Westminster School. She would use her freshly (31) sharpened yellow pencils to write her name in cursive (40) at the top of her worksheets. Her just-out-of-the-shoe- (52) box black Mary Janes would glide across the polished (61) linoleum of the hallway. At the end of the day, she (72) would come home and her father would hug her and (82) ask, "What did you learn today?" Then she would tell (92) him about her teacher and her classmates and every- (101) thing else. (103)

Sylvia never imagined the one thing that actually (111) happened even before her first day of school: she was (121) turned away. (123)

Summer vacation was nearly over. It was the morn- (131) ing Sylvia was to register for school. She rode with her (142) aunt Soledad, her two brothers, and her cousins in the (152) backseat of her family's blue Pontiac sedan, watching (160) orange groves and fields of lima beans, sugar beats, (169) and asparagus rush by. The flat southern California (177) landscape stretched to the mountains, one farm after (185) another, each a distinct pattern of green stripes. (193)

We have a farm, Sylvia thought. For the first time, (203) our very own farm. (207)

Sylvia's father had worked as a field hand on other (217) people's farms most of his life, but now things were (227) different. Now her father was the boss. That day her (237) parents had stayed at home because the irrigation sys- (245) tem on the farm needed fixing. (251)

She knew it wouldn't last forever. Sylvia's family (259) had leased the asparagus farm from a Japanese fam- (267) ily, who would someday return. (272)

Time: _____

SILENT READING—COMPREHENSION

Tell the student: Now you are going to read to the bottom of page 8. You will read this part of the story silently to yourself. When you are finished, raise your hand. I will then ask you to tell me about what you read. Do you have any questions? You may begin reading.

After the student has finished reading, tell the student: Now I am going to ask you some questions about what you've read. Pretend that I don't know anything about the story.

Characters:

1. Who is the main character in the story? _____/1

Please tell me a little bit about the main character. _____ /1

_____ Sylvia

- ____ Third grader
- _____ Is excited about going to school.
- _____ Mexican
- 2. Who are the other characters in the story? (2+ characters = 2 pts.) _____ /2
- ____ Aunt Soledad
- _____ Jerome (Sylvia's brother)
- ____ Gonzalo (Sylvia's brother)
- _____ Alice (Sylvia's cousin)
- _____ Virginia (Sylvia's cousin)
- _____ Sylvia's father
- _____ A Japanese family
- ____ The school secretary

Setting:

- 3. Where does the story take place? _____ /1
- ____ California
- ____ An asparagus farm
- _____ Westminster School
- _____1941

Plot:

- 4. What is happening in the story? (events from beginning/middle/end) _____/3
- _____ Sylvia goes to register at a new school.
- _____ She imagines her first day of school.

- _____ She never imagines she will be turned away.
- _____ For the first time, Sylvia's family has a farm.
- _____ Her father is the boss.
- _____ He is leasing the farm.
- _____ Someday the Japanese family will return.
- _____ Sylvia thinks "wow" when she sees her new school.
- _____ The school has real monkey bars.
- _____ The school has new books.
- _____ She goes into the front office to register.
- _____ The secretary says, "Mexican children go to the Mexican school."
- 5. What is the problem in the book? _____/1

_____ Sylvia and her brothers are not allowed to register at Westminster School because they are Mexican.

Inferential Questions:

6. How does Sylvia feel when the secretary looks closely at her? Why do you think that? _____12

7. What do you think is going to happen next? What makes you think that? _____12

8. What do you think the word **reluctantly** means? What makes you think that? _____12 "Reluctantly she set down the textbook and returned to the office just as Aunt Soledad completed the first set of papers." P. 7

Total Comprehension: _____ / 15

Materials Needed:

The student will need a copy of the book being read (*Out of the Dust*). The teacher will need a timer (stopwatch setting), scoring sheet, and pencil.

Before Administering:

Make sure your student is comfortable and relaxed.

ORAL READING—PROSODY

Tell the student:

You will be reading a section from the chapter book Out of the Dust. Part of the book you will read aloud to me, and part of the book you will read silently. When you have finished reading, you will tell me about what you have read. Do you have any questions?

This is a story that is written in prose or poetry. It is also written as a diary. The first diary entry is written in 1934. The main character, Billie Joe, tells about the day she was born, and about her family. Please begin reading aloud to me starting on page 3.

Turn on the timing device. Record oral reading miscues.

Beginning: August 1920 (3)

As summer wheat came ripe,

so did I,

born at home, on the kitchen floor.

Ma crouched,

barefoot, bare bottomed

over the swept boards,

because that's where Daddy said it was best.

I came too fast for the doctor,

bawling as soon as Daddy wiped his hand around

inside my mouth.

To hear Ma tell it,

I hollered myself red the day I was born.

Out of the Dust Lexile 1040

Red's the color I've stayed ever since. Daddy named me Billie Jo. He wanted a boy. Instead, he got a long-legged girl with a wide mouth and cheeckbones like bicycle handles. He got a redheaded, freckle-faced, narrow-hipped girl with a fondness for apples and a hunger for playing fierce piano.

From the earliest I can remember I've been restless in this little Panhandle shack we call home, always getting in Ma's way with my pointy elbows, my fidgety legs. By the summer I turned nine Daddy had given up on having a boy. He tried making me do. I look just like him, I can handle myself most everywhere he puts me, even on a tractor, though I don't like that much. Ma tried having other babies. It never seemed to go right, except with me. But this morning Ma let on as how she's expecting again. Other than the three of us there's not much family to speak of. Daddy, the only boy Kelby left since Grandpa died from a cancer that ate up the most of his skin, and Aunt Ellis, almost fourteen years older than Daddy and living in Lubbock, a ways south of here, and a whole world apart

to hear Daddy tell it. And Ma, with only Great-uncle Floyd, old as ancient Indian bones, and mean as a rattler, rotting away in that room down in Dallas. I'll be nearly fourteen just like Aunt Ellis was when Daddy was born by the time this baby comes. Wonder if Daddy'll get his boy this time? *January* 1934

Time: _____

SILENT READING—COMPREHENSION

Tell the student: Now you are going to read to the bottom of page 7. You will read this part of the story silently to yourself. When you are finished, raise your hand. I will then ask you to tell me about what you read. Do you have any questions? You may begin reading.

After the student has finished reading, tell the student: Now I am going to ask you some questions about what you've read. Pretend that I don't know anything about the story.

Characters:

- 1. Who is the main character in the story? _____ /1 Please tell me a little bit about the main character. _____ /1 _____ Billie Jo ____ Girl ____13 ____ Long, fidgety legs ____ Redheaded _____ Wide mouth ____ Freckles _____ Narrow-hipped ____ Pointy elbows _____ Likes apples ____ Plays the piano _____ Restless Looks like her dad 2. Who are the other characters in the story? (2+ characters = 2 pts.) ____ /2 ____ Daddy Ma ____ The baby that Ma is carrying _____ Aunt Ellis ___ Great-uncle Floyd ____ Mr. Noble ____ Mr. Romney ____ Miss Freeland Setting: 3. Where does the story take place? _____ /1
- ____ The panhandle
- ____ Shack
- ____ A farm
- ____ During the Great Depression

Plot:

- 4. What is happening in the story? (events from beginning/middle/end) _____/3
- _____ Billy Jo is born.
- _____ Her dad wanted a boy.
- _____ Her Ma tried having other babies, but they were never born.
- _____ Now she is pregnant again.
- _____ They don't have much family.
- _____ The crops are being damaged by rabbits.
- _____ Two men have a bet who can kill the most rabbits.
- _____ The men killed 20 rabbits each.
- _____ One accused the other of cheating.
- _____ The rabbits went to families that need meat the most.
- 5. What is the problem in the book? _____/1
- _____ Billie Jo's Dad wanted a boy, but he got a girl.
- _____ Billie Jo's Ma has trouble having babies.
- _____ Crops are being damaged by rabbits.
- _____ Families are going hungry.

Inferential Questions:

6. How does Billie Jo feel about living in the Panhandle? Why do you think that? _____12

7. Why do you think Billie Jo's dad wants a boy? What makes you think that? _____12

8. What do you think the word **restless** means? What makes you think that? _____/2 "I've been restless in this little Panhandle shack we call home, always getting in Ma's way with my pointy elbows, my fidgety legs." P. 4

Total Comprehension: _____ / 15

The Assessment and Intervention Guide for the Read Side by Side Reading Program

Peter Dewitz & Sarah Collinge, 2020

As a companion to the read-aloud and book club guides, this book inspires teachers as they build assessments into their daily instruction. Formative assessments take the lead, empowering teachers to make instructional decisions, place students accurately in texts appropriate to their level and interest, and provide explicit feedback to move learners forward.

This guide outlines reliable, valid, and useful assessment tools, including:

- surveys of reading motivation and interest;
- observational notes;
- conference forms and scripts;
- standardized assessments;
- running records for each book club title (available online);
- checklists;
- rubrics;
- record-keeping forms; and
- a six-lesson unit preparing students for state testing.

The goal of reading instruction is not only to help students gain comprehension skill, but to ignite their interest and motivation to read. This book complements and is essential to the *Read Side by Side Reading Program*. The intervention strategies give teachers the tools to ensure that all students can succeed with the program, even those who struggle with reading, raising student achievement and increasing students' confidence and competence as readers.

To purchase, please visit www.shop.readsidebyside.com





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Additional Publications

The *Read Side by Side Reading Program* for grades 3-6 provides a highly motivating curriculum design, tailored specifically to the needs of intermediate students. A 2018 evidence study proves the impact of the program on reading interest and comprehension success. The curriculum is written by classroom teachers to bring a high-quality and easy-to-implement curriculum package. The pride of the program is the use of award-winning trade books to better prepare students for middle school reading.

To learn more about the program, or purchase the program for your classroom, school, or district, please visit:

www.readsidebyside.com





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Contact the Author

Sarah Collinge is president and founder of Read Side by Side Publications, LLC., and author of the *Read Side by Side Reading Program*. Prior to this work, Sarah taught for 11 years, focusing her work on middle-grade literacy. Her classroom research and knowledge of best practices brings efficacy to her work.

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