Assessments in Literacy

In Rocky View Schools assessments are used to inform instruction and enhance learning. Therefore:

- Teachers are aware of the purpose of their assessments and can describe what the assessments tell them about their students' learning in relation to the Program of Studies.
- Teachers use assessment information to determine where individual students are at, and where they need to go in terms of their learning.
- Teachers use assessment information for programming purposes and not just for reporting purposes.
- Teachers attitudes and actions about assessment reflect the belief that all students are capable of learning.
- Teachers use assessment information in partnership with students.
- Parents are provided with assessment information and encouraged to support their child's growth and learning.

Assessment FOR and AS learning strategies are evident in every classroom

- Students have a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn.
- Students engage in strategies for both self and peer assessment.
- Students are provided with frequent feedback that is specific, timely and designed to help them know what they need to do to improve their learning.
- Students are engaged in purposeful classroom discussions that are designed to elicit evidence of learning.

Assessment OF learning include the following features:

- Aligns to the Program of Studies.
- Includes practices that are fair and flexible
- Emphasize grading practices that reflect students' learning.
- Assessments motivate and challenge students, and are respectful of student diversity.
- Students are provided choice in how they demonstrate their learning.
- Decisions about students are based on a variety of evidence.

Assessment Continuum

There is a continuum of assessments used in literacy, ranging from highly structured formal assessments, to a less structured approach. Each type has a different goal and collects different information. The major purpose of assessment in literacy is to gather information about learners to program and set goals. On-going assessments drive classroom instruction and help teachers determine next steps.

Formal ←——————————→ Informal
(prescriptive and   (less prescriptive and
less teacher control)   more teacher control)

	Norm-Referenced	Criterion-Referenced	Pedagogical Documentation (ongoing assessment that informs teaching and learning)
Purpose	Rank or compare learners	Assess students on specific objectives or tasks	To understand the learner over time, to guide instruction and track growth
Focus	Product/outcomes	Literacy practices related to criteria	Holistic language practices
Data	Quantitative - scores, percentages	Qualitative	Qualitative, Descriptive
Examples	Achievement tests, WIAT Provincial Achievement Tests IQ tests	SLAs Rubrics, Fountas and Pinnell Reading Inventory	Anecdotal records, portfolios, running records, self-assessments, rubrics, inventories, observation, conversations, student work, video, artifacts etc.

(Constructing Meaning, Brainsbridge, Heydon & Malicky, 2014)

In Rocky View, schools provide high quality learning opportunities for every student. Teachers routinely seek, reflect upon, and respond to information they gather on an on-going basis through observations, conversations and students' demonstrations of learning. Teacher also use assessments to demonstrate students' growth and progress. Pedagogical documentation that includes multiple authentic assessments provide teachers with a comprehensive literacy understanding of their students. On-going, holistic assessments help teachers understand their learners over time, guides instruction, and tracks students' growth.

Pedagogical Documentation

Teachers in Rocky View Schools use pedagogical documentation when gathering evidence for assessment and programming. Pedagogical documentation features assessment "for" "of' and "as" learning and intertwines thinking, learning and curriculum. This process of assessment builds on the understanding of how students learn and think. It involves the interaction between planning and learning with pedagogical approaches while honouring the students' role in assessment. It supports students' awareness of learning. In pedagogical documentation the teacher becomes a learner. Listed below are examples of on-going methods to document student learning used in Rocky View Schools.

On-going Literacy Assessment Tools: Observation, Conversation and Products

Observation (samples to be developed)

Read aloud (receptive, expressive language, listening comprehension)	Checklists Anecdotal records
Shared reading (participation, engagement) **Shared writing (collaboration)**	Anecdotal records Checklists
Guided reading (comprehension)	Anecdotal records
Oral reading (book handling, concepts of print, accuracy, word solving, fluency, comprehension)	Running records Miscue analysis Reading level
Independent reading & writing (reading/writing interest, stamina, independent use of knowledge and skills)	Reading/writing logs Anecdotal records
Performances	Video taping

Conversation (samples to be developed)

Reading/writing interests	Questionnaires/Surveys/interest inventories
Conferences with families	Story collection
Book clubs (comprehension, collaboration)	Rubrics, checklists & Anecdotal records
Teacher-student conference (reading & writing)	Goal setting
(e.g. Independent reading conferences - comprehension, interest in reading;	Log books, interest inventories Anecdotal records
Independent writing conferences -ideas,	Portfolios

plot, character development, vocabulary, sentence fluency, conventions)	

Products (samples to be developed)

Reading	Running records, miscue analysis
Writing samples (journals, self-selected,	Rubrics
reader response, narrative, expository,	Portfolios
persuasive)	Anecdotal records
	Reading and Writing continuums exemplars for writing
	Artifacts, rubrics, anecdotal record
	Spelling tests/students' writing
Spelling/vocabulary	

(Davis, Making Assessments Work 3rd edition, 2012, Hibbert, 2005)

[Suggestions for Assess-on-the-Go Possibilities for Adjusting Programming If Needed](#)

[Sample Literacy Assessment Profile](#)

Division-Wide On-Going Assessment Tools

Division-Wide assessment is on-going authentic assessment embedded in day to day literacy practice. Division Wide Assessment Tools Include:
Gr. 1-2   Running Record
Mid Gr. 2- 4   Independent Reading Level and Comprehension Benchmark Assessment

Reading:
Teachers can use the following reading behaviours to help them understanding how students' progress when reading. This information is critical for programming and assessing. It is important to stress that teachers need to keep in mind the features of text and note what students **can** do at each level. Teachers should be cautious about focusing on levels. Levelled information is for the teacher for programming purposes. This information should not be shared with students. What should be shared with students are what they are doing well (i.e. students self-corrects at the point of error, reads fluently, can problem with unknown text). Following are two Reading Behaviour Continuums that outline a set of behaviours students are expected to exhibit at each level.

[Development of Reading Behaviors](#)

[A to Z Levelled Reading Continuum (Adapted from Fountas and Pinnell by Moen and Flockhart, Edmonton Public, 2003)](#)

These continuums can be used to assess students during guided reading, CAFE, or reader's workshop.

Kindergarten
Concepts of Print

Running Record: Grades 1-2
Running records are an excellent way to assess how student process print in Grades K-2. It helps teachers understand the strategies and cueing systems student are consistently using, or partially implementing. Teachers should complete running records on a consistent and on-going basis in Grades K-2. On-going records provide teachers with information needed to determine student progress and programming needs. For more information on how to take running records, refer to the link below.

Running Records

Generally, teachers take formal (summative) running records about 3-4 times a year. Students who are making good progress and process print effectively will not need extensive record analyses.

After determining the student's independent reading level from the running record, the following Reading Assessment Level Correlation Chart can be used to determine where the students is at on the reading continuum with respect to grade level.

Reading Assessment Level Correlation Chart

Development of Reading Behaviors

Independent Reading Level and Reading Comprehension Benchmark Assessment: Mid Gr. 2-6

This flexible and quick Independent Reading Level and Reading Comprehension Benchmark Assessment can be used to assess word solving, accuracy fluency, and comprehension with any text. Teacher can use this assessment for grades 2-6 in guided reading, CAFE, and Reader's Workshop (Lucy Culkins). It is very useful for setting student reading goals.

Independent Reading Level and Reading Comprehension Benchmark Assessment

When using this quick reading inventory, have students read about 200-250 words from any section of a text. Note the students' reading behaviour. How do students solve words. Record errors and note the fluency. When finished ask students 10 comprehension questions. Question prompts are provided.

After determining the student's independent reading and comprehension level from the running record, the following Reading Assessment Level Correlation Chart can be used to determine where the students is at on the reading continuum with respect to grade level.

Reading Assessment Level Correlation Chart

Development of Reading Behaviors

Additional Assessments for Students Experiencing Difficulty:

Beyond mid-Grade 2, an in-depth miscue analysis can be used with students who struggle with decoding. Such an analysis can provide teachers with additional information for programming purposes. On-going records provide teachers with patterns of evidence needed to build reader profiles.

If the Running Record and Independent Reading Level Comprehension Benchmark reveal that the student is experiencing difficulty, teachers can explore literacy interventions within a Response to Intervention Model (RTI). For some students, teacher may also want to complete an in-depth analysis of reading records (accuracy, fluency and comprehension) and will need more frequent informal checks. An example of an in-depth reading assessment is Fountas and Pinnell's Benchmark Assessment System (BAS).

Based on the information from the BAS, teachers can utilize additional supports from intervention programs such as the Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI). This more in-depth intervention would be used **only** with students who are experiencing difficulty in reading.

Writing - This section of Assessment is currently under development.

Writing Assessment: K-1

Children come to school with a variety of print experiences, therefore teachers need to be aware of their students' strengths and needs in order to plan an effective writing program. There are many examples of writing continua available in professional resources for teachers to use as a reference and guide. The two developmental continua listed below include developmental stages in writing based on meaning and spelling. Teachers need to consider both when planning, assessing and programming for student success in writing. Students do not develop their writing skills in a synchronous step by step fashion. There is considerable overlap from one stage to the next. It is common for developing writers to exhibit behaviours from more than one stage of development. Writing is a complex task that involves many skills. These assessment tools will help teachers plan and assess writing for diverse classrooms.

Developmental Writing
https://drive.google.com/open?id=1QdZD31dheT-vH9EPG9PI6Y3G49ezfLmfiHFqGtM-ils

Developmental Spelling
https://drive.google.com/open?id=1G-Xjz3YXsQgJAgqDtnQNdf_H-Y1r0SX-ueg-daql2vl

Grades 2-6 (under construction)
There is a growing body of research suggesting that the use of performance assessments embedded within curriculum improves instruction and supports students building higher order complex skills
- goal driven instruction
- purpose to improve the quality of student work
- instruction is assessment based, helps you to evaluate your teaching

A Set of Writing Tools
The following writing tools provide pathways to design, assess and program for student. The following writing assessment tools and resources can be use in all subject areas to grasp where students are in the writing process and determine next steps. These tools can help teachers to assess and assist students to self-assess and collaborate with other learners, help students to learn from feedback and set clear goals.

Exemplars/Benchmarks/Writing Samples
Benchmarks are representative of what a student at the end of each grade should be able to do within a similar context. It is a student sample. Benchmarks are selected because they are memorable and they are worth study. It is to help students, teacher and parents understand the students has met grade level expectations

Checklists
Student friendly checklists allow students to assess their own writing and set goals for themselves.

Descriptive Feedback

Continuums/Learning Progressions
If there is a magic formula in education a secret to success - the process of continuous improvement.

Rubrics
Rubrics are learning progressions based on criteria and give an appropriate weight for each criteria. They can help measure growth over time and notice patterns to inform whole class instruction or mini lessons. They can be used students to self assess.

Performance Tasks

On demand performance assessment prompts
Prompts that direct student to compose the best piece of writing in a fixed period of time. Done in intervals throughout the year to track students progress. Usually start with a baseline piece. Assessed usually by rubrics. These pieces can be put into the portfolio to show growth over time.

Portfolios
Collections of ongoing drafts of writing. Students can use portfolios to select their best pieces to bring to final draft or for student led conferences or celebration.

Speaking, Listening, Viewing and Representing (these sections of Assessment will be developed)

Reference: Policy HK Assessment and Communication of Student Learning
                     Alberta Assessment Consortium