

TEAM TOOL 6.16

What Counts as Student Work?

When teams want to know how students are growing in areas of comprehending complex text and engaging in other reading challenges and opportunities, they can broaden the ways they think about the work students have been doing. In addition to the traditional products and culminating performances required of students, teachers can consider some of the less-traditional ways they have guided students to productive work.

Teams might be interested in collecting data about these other kinds of student work listed as follows. Some general guidelines can help:

- Choose a representative group of students to focus attention on.
- Collect data samples from similar tasks at different points in the year. Look for changes over time.
- Compare data regularly and note trends. Use this information to design supports that help increase wanted behaviors such as time on task.
- Create regular opportunities for students to look at this data with partners and in small groups and to discuss and write about what changes they see over time in themselves and each other.

Student Think Aloud Comments

- Record students' comments during Think Aloud in notebooks or on audio or video tape. When comparing samples, ask, is the text of the Think Aloud getting longer, more complex? Is there evidence that students are more engaged, reading with better stamina, using more strategies . . . ?
- Record students' talk about and reflection on what they notice about their own and others' Think Aloud experiences.

Personal Reading Histories and Student Reading Surveys

- Give pre- and post-Personal Reading History assignment. How does the pre- compare to the post-?
- Give pre- and post-student reading surveys. What evidence is there that students are, for example, reading more, spending more time reading, or reading more broadly, with better engagement, comprehension, less frustration, and using more strategies?
- Have students look at their pre- and post-records, discuss with a partner, and write reflectively. What changes do they notice?

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Talking to the Text

- Collect samples over time, and compare.
- Focus the task on a particular literacy strategy that is challenging (e.g., questioning) and have students Talk to the Text using that literacy strategy (e.g., writing all the questions that come to mind). Do this before and after instruction in that particular literacy strategy.
- Give the Content-Embedded Reading Assessment (CERA) before and after and compare.
- Have students respond to their peers' Talking to the Text.
- Save samples of work from early in the year and later in the year, pass them back, and ask students to talk and write about what they notice about their reading and Talking to the Text.

Metacognitive Logs, Double or Triple Entry Journals, Evidence/Interpretation Records

- Compare samples from different times in the year. Note changes in, for example, number of pages read (fluency), time spent reading (stamina), length of responses (engagement in task), depth and complexity of responses (comprehension or engagement), range, and complexity or choice of reading (any increase in sophistication or difficulty).
- Ask students to look at early samples and current samples, discuss in small groups, and then reflect individually in writing about what they notice.

Reading Task Behavior, Engagement, and Motivation

- During silent reading tasks or responses, keep a roll sheet in front of you, glance around the room at regular intervals (e.g., every three minutes), and quickly mark each student (or focal student) for on-task or off-task behavior. Time how long it takes for students to begin a task. Time how long students engage in reading or writing responses to reading.
- Count the number of students using reading supports (e.g., sticky notes, highlighters, logs). Note who is and who is not.
- Note who finishes first, last, rereads. Compare students' individual patterns.
- Note who responds or participates during group discussions.
- Note who is reading what. Are students' individual selections and preferences changing—more complex, broader range, more difficult, longer?
- Ask students to regularly reflect orally or in writing on their level of attention and engagement. Discuss focusing engagement strategies and risk factors for inattention and how to deal with them. Have students write about learning to deal with inattention and lack of engagement, and design action plans for dealing with difficult, boring, or confusing texts and with challenging reading environments.
- Time how long students remain in discussion about readings in pairs or small groups. Notice whether or not the length of discussion and time on task increase over the year.
- Keep a tally of absences, referrals, tardy slips, and other similar data. Note trends.