

Making the Grade (Student Progress Reports)

Many of the students we tutor are all too familiar with traditional assessment procedures. Most struggled through school, (some did not finish), and they know the feeling of opening up a report card jacket and seeing the c's, d's and perhaps f's marching along in the columns. A traditional grading system is not appropriate to assess the adult learner's progress. We need a better, a more positive way to check progress.

One way, would be to interview our students several times a year to see how they evaluate themselves, Jane Hansen (*When Writers Read*) was interviewing young students when she posed the following questions:

What's something new you've learned to do in writing?

What would you like to learn so you can become a better writer?

What's something new you've learned to do in reading?

What would you like to learn so you can become a better reader?

We can ask similar questions to our students and add others: *Which book did you enjoy reading most? What would you like to read next? etc.*, Questions like these can lead to a confirmation of student progress. "Look what you've accomplished." They can also provide new directions for instruction.

Patricia Frey writes in *LITSTART*, "Your student needs to see progress in order to maintain motivation. You, as the tutor, need to check progress periodically to maintain your own motivation and to evaluate your tutoring strategies." I suggest a Student Progress Report that can be used twice a year (December and May). The progress report is more a check of student behaviors: those you are seeing as well as those you are not seeing. For example: Self corrects some errors, yes___, no___. Does your student take the initiative to solve a tricky work either by rereading the sentence or taking the word apart or does he/she always appeal to you for help? Under comments, you might list some of the titles of books your student has read as well as if they attend class on a regular basis. You might want to share your summary with your student then forward a copy to the tutor trainer.

Our students are fragile. Many have grown too accustomed to failure. Show them the small steps they have made and tell them what a joy it has been to see them progress. Give them the support they need to take the next step-to jump the next hurdle.

Works Cited:

1. *When Writers Read*, Jane Hansen, copyright 1987, by Heinemann Educational Books, Inc. NH
2. *LITSTART (Strategies for Adult Literacy and ESL Tutors)*, Patricia Frey, copyright 1999 by Michigan Literacy, Inc.

Glenn G. Coats

Tri-County Life Learners, Student Progress Report

Student Name _____

Tutor's Name _____

Date _____ *Assessment Period:* December ____ May ____

Behaviors to Notice (please check yes or no):

* Gets Started quickly yes ___ no ___

* Works continuously yes ___ no ___

* Makes attempt before requesting help yes ___ no ___

* Rereads to search and self-correct yes ___ no ___

* Uses information from pictures yes ___ no ___

* Uses language structure to predict and check yes ___ no ___

* Self-corrects some errors yes ___ no ___

* Recognizes many frequently encountered words quickly yes ___ no ___

* Reads with phrasing and fluency yes ___ no ___

* Participates actively during story introduction yes ___ no ___

* Discovers connections between personal experience & story yes ___ no ___

Comments on student progress:
