
October 1968

Test Review: Gilmore Oral Reading Test

Audrey Pyles

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/mrj>

Recommended Citation

Pyles, Audrey (1968) "Test Review: Gilmore Oral Reading Test," *Michigan Reading Journal*: Vol. 2 : Iss. 3 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/mrj/vol2/iss3/4>

This Other is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Michigan Reading Journal by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.

Test Review:

Gilmore Oral Reading Test

by Audrey Pyles

Part I: Summary of Reviews in Buros

Both Duggins¹ and Reynolds² state that the Gilmore Oral Reading Test is of great value to the classroom teachers in grades 1-8. The purpose of the test is accomplished by having the student read 10 paragraphs aloud and then answer 5 recall comprehension questions which are asked by the teacher. The exact purpose of the test, as Duggins says, "... is to measure three aspects of oral reading competency: pronunciation, comprehension, and rate of reading" through the use of paragraph graduation. As the paragraphs range from 1 to 10, the vocabulary, sentence structure and interest levels become more difficult so as to result in finding the highest level of difficulty a student can adequately cope with in both reading and comprehension ability. Duggins is obviously satisfied with, and will accept, Gilmore's system of gradation as proven when she states that "The gradation appears to have been successfully accomplished" in both forms, A and B.

In having a gradation system of recall questions as the only type of comprehension items on the test, the teacher is enabled to score the responses to the questions with greater

objectivity. The author assumes, as Duggins says, that by providing this gradual increase in difficulty of the questions asked and by not using a variation in the type of question asked, he has found the key by which teachers can differentiate between readers of varying degrees of comprehension skill.

The "extensive" manual (as Reynolds calls it) provides the administrator with vital background information as to the formation and initial experiments of the test itself, the actual administration steps, and solid suggestions on how to best utilize the test results. The manual supplies the means by which any individual can administer the Gilmore test successfully. It also provides specific information on the development and standardization of the test, details about vocabulary difficulty and grammatical construction of each paragraph, and a bibliography of materials useful in planning an oral reading program. Thus, the accompanying Manual of Directions is a necessary item for administrators to use when testing with the Gilmore Oral Reading Test.

The overall values in this test, as the reviewers suggest, are in the provisions of the tests for the analysis of an individual's performance and in dis-

covering his specific reading weaknesses so that these weaknesses can be improved. This test is not overly concerned, if at all, with comparing an individual's ability with national norms. It is concerned with the reading ability of one student and how much improvement and success he can possibly achieve with any corrections and help. For those testers who want to use the norms for comparison, Gilmore has provided standardization norms of 1,620 pupils in 5 states. However, the reviewers stress that analyzing individual performances is the first and most important objective of this test and it should be used as such. The second, and not a necessary, objective could be that of comparing individual results with the norms provided.

The economy and convenience of having both A and B test forms in the same spiral notebook is reported by Duggins. She thinks the author took into consideration the teacher's tasks when administering individual oral reading tests and simplified the form and administration time as much as possible, while still providing sufficient data for an adequate diagnosis. Also, with the aid of the well-constructed record blank, both pupils and testers will feel comfortable in using this test.

Therefore, Duggins overwhelmingly agrees with Reynolds' concluding statement when he says that this is the test that "teachers and reading diagnosticians will prefer... over most other tests of similar

type." The beneficial points, as mentioned by the reviewers, heavily outweigh any negative points they may have encountered. In fact, throughout both reviews, only one negative aspect is brought out for the entire test. And even this factor is related to the reader in a positive way. Duggins makes the remark that she is "of the opinion that the face validity of the test is so obvious that the scanty statistical evidence of validity should not be a deterrent to its use." Thus, through Duggins' direct and Reynolds' implied statements, the Gilmore Oral Reading Test appears to be the ideal individual oral reading test to administer to students in grades 1-8.

Part II:

A Teacher's Interpretation

It is satisfying to the classroom teacher to find a well-documented individual oral reading test which is easy to administer, short in gross working time and provides sufficient data by which a teacher can analyse individual reading abilities. Such an adequate test is the Gilmore Oral Reading Test for grades 1-8.

The Gilmore Test provides a teacher with adequate means by which he can individually test his pupils to analyse their oral reading ability and, in so doing, pinpoint any strengths and weaknesses each student may have.

The simplicity aspect of the test only pertains to the out-

ward appearance of the test items. In using a gradation of difficulty in the 10 reading paragraphs the student is confronted with reading levels which range from easy to difficult. Using the testing procedure, a student is assigned to read each paragraph until the teacher says stop. The student's ceiling reading level has been reached at this time. This is the level at which the individual reads a paragraph in which he makes 10 or more errors. By having the student read as many paragraphs as possible, the teacher can determine the student's accuracy in oral reading and his reading rate. To complete the test, the student is asked to answer 5 comprehension questions after the reading of each paragraph using the recall method. The teacher asks the questions immediately after the reading of one paragraph. Here the student displays his comprehension ability. Therefore, the "obvious" simplicity of the test is not really so obvious; only the appearance looks simple.

The most important benefit which can be gained by administering this oral reading test lies in the original purpose Gilmore set out to accomplish when he established this test. He wanted to provide those people concerned with reading instruction with a reading instrument by which to measure oral reading strengths and weaknesses for one individual. After determining the reader's oral

reading ability the teacher can then continue the diagnosis, which Gilmore's test hopes to stimulate, by employing appropriate techniques and material to aid this reader in improving his reading and comprehension ability and lessening, or removing, his weaknesses. Gilmore wants reading instructors to be more concerned about individual reading successes and be less concerned with norms. This point is well taken; possibly the "not - being-satisfied-with-test-results - until-compared - to-norms" need will be lessened.

Thus, by examining the test forms, the record blanks, the manual and the reviews, it appears that the Gilmore Oral Reading Test should be incorporated into a diagnosis program for any students in grades 1 - 8. ¹Duggins, Lydia A., "Gilmore Oral Reading Test." In Oscar Buros (Ed.), *The Fifth Mental Measurement Yearbook* (Highland Park, N.J.: Gryphon Press, 1959) p. 767.

²Reynolds, Maynard C., "Gilmore Oral Reading Test." In Oscar Buros Ed.), *The Fifth Mental Measurement Yearbook* (Highland Park, N.J.: Gryphon Press, 1959) p. 768.

(Audrey Pyles is a teacher at Ferndale High School).