



assessing reading

from theories to
classrooms

Edited by

Marian Sainsbury

Colin Harrison

Andrew Watts

assessing reading

from theories to classrooms

*An international multi-disciplinary
investigation of the theory of reading
assessment and its practical implications
at the beginning of the 21st century*

Edited by

Marian Sainsbury

Colin Harrison

Andrew Watts



First published in July 2006
National Foundation for
Educational Research
The Mere, Upton Park
Slough, Berkshire SL1 2DQ
www.nfer.ac.uk

The views contained in this document are
the authors' own and do not necessarily
reflect those of the NFER.

Every attempt has been made to contact
copyright holders. Please contact the NFER
if you have any concerns.

© NFER 2006
Registered Charity No. 313392
ISBN 1 905314 21 3

Design by Stuart Gordon at NFER
Layout by Helen Crawley at NFER
Index by Indexing Specialists (UK) Ltd
www.indexing.co.uk

Contents

1 Introduction and overview	1
<i>Marian Sainsbury</i>	
 [Part 1] Competing paradigms: theories of reading and theories of assessment	
<hr/>	
2 Validity and the construct of reading	8
<i>Marian Sainsbury</i>	
3 A psychological perspective on the diagnostic assessment of reading: establishing priorities	22
<i>John R. Beech</i>	
4 Cognitive psychology and reading assessment	38
<i>Alastair Pollitt and Lynda Taylor</i>	
5 Postmodernism and the assessment of literature	50
<i>Colin Harrison</i>	
6 Learning to read or learning to do tests?	64
<i>Ros Fisher</i>	
 [Part 2] Historical insights as drivers of theory	
<hr/>	
7 The assessment of reading comprehension: key historical influences in the USA	76
<i>P. David Pearson and Diane Nicole Hamm</i>	
8 Significant moments in the history of reading assessment in the UK	102
<i>Chris Whetton</i>	
9 Lessons of the GCSE English ‘100 per cent coursework’ option, 1986–1993	122
<i>Paul Thompson</i>	

[Part 3]

Theory into practice: current issues

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 10 Postmodern principles for responsive reading assessment:
a case study of a complex online reading task | 140 |
| <i>Colin Harrison, Nasiroh Omar and Colin Higgins</i> | |
| 11 Automated marking of content-based constructed responses | 158 |
| <i>Claudia Leacock</i> | |
| 12 The role of formative assessment | 168 |
| <i>Gordon Stobart</i> | |
| 13 Using assessment focuses to give feedback from reading
assessments | 179 |
| <i>Lorna Pepper, Rifat Siddiqui and Andrew Watts</i> | |

[Part 4]

Theory into practice: national initiatives

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 14 Validity challenges in a high-stakes context: National Curriculum
tests in England | 196 |
| <i>Marian Sainsbury and Andrew Watts</i> | |
| 15 New perspectives on accountability: statutory assessment of
reading of English in Wales | 210 |
| <i>Roger Palmer and David Watcyn Jones</i> | |
| 16 There is no alternative ... to trusting teachers: reading and
assessment in Scotland | 222 |
| <i>Louise Hayward and Ernie Spencer</i> | |
| 17 Low-stakes national assessment: national evaluations in France | 241 |
| <i>Martine Rémond</i> | |
| 18 The National Assessment of Educational Progress in the USA | 250 |
| <i>Patricia Donahue</i> | |
| 19 Concluding reflections: from theories to classrooms | 258 |
| <i>Marian Sainsbury</i> | |
| Index | 260 |

Contributors

John R. Beech

John Beech is a senior lecturer in the School of Psychology, University of Leicester. He was Editor of *Journal of Research in Reading* for vols 24–7 and is currently a coeditor of this journal. He is author/editor of a dozen books including *Learning to Read, Cognitive Approaches to Reading and Psychological Assessment of Reading* (coedited with Chris Singleton). His research interests are in cognitive, biological and educational approaches to reading and reading development.

Patricia Donahue

Patricia Donahue is a Senior Program Administrator in the Assessment Division at Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey. She is the coordinator of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading assessment and serves on the reading task force for the PIRLS study.

Ros Fisher

Ros Fisher has taught in primary schools in the north-west of England and the USA. She is now Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Exeter. She writes widely about the teaching of literacy and has researched the role of the teacher and teacher change in current large-scale initiatives to change the teaching of literacy in England. She is currently researching the relationship between talk and writing. She has recently written *Inside the Literacy Hour* (Routledge, 2002) and edited the collection of papers from an ESRC-funded research seminar series *Raising Standards in Literacy* (Falmer, 2002).

Diane Nicole Hamm

Diane Nicole Hamm is a graduate student in Educational Psychology at Michigan State University. Her research interests include reading comprehension processes as well as the cognitive outcomes of assessment. She has co-published a number of pieces with her adviser, P. David Pearson.

Colin Harrison

Colin Harrison is Professor of Literacy Studies in Education at the University of Nottingham. He has been at various times a secondary school teacher of English, a GCSE examiner, a full-time researcher into the place of reading in school, a teacher educator and a director of national projects evaluating the place of ICT in learning. His three current research projects are in the use of digital video for teacher development, using

artificial intelligence approaches in evaluating the quality of internet research, and exploring the processes of innovation and invention in the junior school.

Louise Hayward

Louise Hayward is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Education, University of Glasgow. Over the past 15 years she has worked to bring research, policy and practice in assessment into closer alignment in Scotland. Currently, she chairs the Research and Development group for the National Assessment for Learning programme. Her research interests are in inclusion, assessment and transformational change.

Colin Higgins

Colin Higgins is Head of the Learning Technology Research Group in the Computer Science department at the University of Nottingham. He is interested in automatic assessment of essays, and particularly the development of the CourseMarker (formerly CEILIDH) system. His other current projects are in handwriting recognition, constructing metrics for object-oriented designs and programs, and writing programs to measure the quality of logic programs written in the Prolog language.

Claudia Leacock

Claudia Leacock is a senior member of technical staff at Pearson Knowledge Technologies. Since receiving her PhD in Linguistics at the CUNY Graduate Center, she has specialised in the automated understanding of human languages. Her primary focus during the past 10 years has been the automated assessment of constructed responses – for both content and grammar – and she has published many articles in this area. Most recently, she was a guest co-editor of the *Journal of Natural Language Engineering's* special issue on building educational applications using natural language processing.

Nasiroh Omar

Nasiroh Omar came from a post in a technological university in Malaysia to the University of Nottingham's Learning Sciences Research Institute to work on a doctorate in the field of artificial intelligence and human learning. She has been the lead programmer and researcher on the Online Reading Internet Research Support System.

Roger Palmer

Roger Palmer was educated at Canton High School, Cardiff and University College, Cardiff where he read English and also completed a PGCE course. He taught for 20 years in schools in the Cardiff area before joining the Curriculum Council for Wales in 1989. When the Council was superseded by the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales, Roger worked for the new body as an English Subject Officer. In September 2004, he became the Authority's Assistant Chief Executive (Curriculum and Assessment: 3–14).

P. David Pearson

P. David Pearson, a frequent writer on issues of assessment and policy, serves as Professor and Dean in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Berkeley. Additionally, Pearson has an active programme of research on issues of instruction and reform in high-poverty schools.

Lorna Pepper

Lorna Pepper is a Project Officer at Oxford Cambridge and RSA (OCR), developing key stage 3 English test papers for National Assessment Agency (NAA) and managing key stage 3 English test development for the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). Previously, she worked in secondary education, first as an English teacher and then in various middle management roles, before taking up positions in international schools abroad and in the UK, as International Baccalaureate Coordinator and school Vice Principal.

Alastair Pollitt

Alastair Pollitt is currently a visiting fellow at the Research Centre for English and Applied Linguistics in the University of Cambridge, where he was a Senior Research Officer from 1990 to 1994. In the intervening years he was Director of the Research and Evaluation Division at the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (now Cambridge Assessment). In 1989, while a lecturer in the University of Edinburgh, he co-directed the national survey of standards of English in Scotland's primary and secondary schools.

Martine Rémond

Martine Rémond is *Maître de conférence* in Cognitive Psychology at the IUFM de Créteil, France. Her research interests[†] are devoted to reading comprehension and its assessment, to the role of metacognition, to the improvement of reading comprehension and the effects of strategy instruction training. Nationally and internationally recognised for her ability in assessment, she is reading expert for PISA (2000, 2003, 2006) and PIRLS (2001), for the French High Committee for Education Assessment (2000–05), and for the French High Committee for Reading (since 1996). She has been involved in a large number of educational and psychological researches on assessment and in large-scale studies (in France and in Europe) for her expertise in reading processes. [†](Institut National de la Recherche Pédagogique and University of Paris 8)

Marian Sainsbury

Marian Sainsbury is Head of Literacy Assessment Research in the Department of Assessment and Measurement at the NFER. She is director of the projects developing the national tests in English at key stages 1 and 2 in England and key stage 2 in Wales and international reading coordinator for the PIRLS study. Her research interests are in a variety of aspects of literacy and its assessment.

Rifat Siddiqui

Rifat Siddiqui is a freelance education consultant with a range of experience in literacy assessment. Formerly a primary teacher, she has worked for a number of education organisations including the NFER, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the University of Cambridge.

Ernie Spencer

Ernie Spencer is Honorary Research Fellow in the Faculty of Education, University of Glasgow. In previous roles as Senior Research Officer at the Scottish Council for Research in Education and HMIE National Specialist in Assessment and in English he made significant contributions to the development of formative and summative assessment in Scotland.

Gordon Stobart

Gordon Stobart is Reader in Education at the University of London Institute of Education. After teaching English in secondary schools he worked as an educational psychologist in London. He then studied in the USA as a Fulbright Scholar. After working as Head of Research at London Examinations he became Principal Research Officer for the National Council for Vocational Qualifications and then for the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. He is a member of the Assessment Reform Group, which campaigns for better use of formative assessment in teaching and learning, and has produced a series of influential pamphlets – *Assessment for Learning (1998)*; *Testing, Motivation and Learning (2002)*; *The Role of Teachers in the Assessment of Learning (2006)*. He is also editor of the international journal *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice*.

Lynda Taylor

Lynda Taylor is currently Assistant Director of the Research and Validation Group at the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (part of Cambridge Assessment – a non-teaching department of the university). She is responsible for coordinating the research and validation programme to support Cambridge ESOL's wide range of language tests and teaching awards. She has extensive experience of the theoretical and practical issues involved in second language testing and assessment, and a special interest in the theory and practice of assessing reading comprehension ability.

Paul Thompson

Paul Thompson has been working as a lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Nottingham since 2001. For many years previously, he was a Head of English in City of Nottingham comprehensive schools. His main research interests centre around the relationship between oracy and literacy. He is particularly interested in theories of collaborative learning and classroom talk.

David Watcyn Jones

David Watcyn Jones became English Subject Officer (key stages 1 and 2) at ACCAC in 1998 and the following year was appointed Assistant Chief Executive (Curriculum and Assessment 5–14). This post required him to advise the Chief Executive and the Authority on curriculum and assessment policy, 3–14, and lead the development, monitoring and review of the National Curriculum and its associated statutory assessment arrangements. He also led the development of related curriculum and assessment guidance. Since his retirement from this post in 2003, he has worked as an educational consultant, primarily for ACCAC, involving himself in national initiatives and speaking at numerous conferences. He is a Welsh speaker.

Andrew Watts

Andrew Watts began his career as a teacher of English in secondary schools in Surrey, Coventry and Northampton, UK. After 11 years he moved to Singapore where he taught in a Junior College for over four years. He then worked for five years as a ‘Specialist Inspector’ for English in the Ministry of Education in Singapore, focusing on curriculum development in English teaching and in-service teacher development. In 1990 he returned to England and has been working with Cambridge Assessment since the summer of 1992. For most of that time he looked after teams that were developing national tests in English, Maths and Science for 14-year-olds in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. He is now working on the setting up of the Cambridge Assessment Network, whose purpose is to promote online and face-to-face professional development opportunities for assessment professionals internationally.

Chris Whetton

Chris Whetton is an Assistant Director of NFER and also Head of its Department of Assessment and Measurement. He is the author of over a dozen published tests spanning both educational and psychological uses. He has directed several large-scale national projects including the development of National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds as these were introduced, and other National Curriculum projects including key stage 2 English development.

1 Introduction and overview

Marian Sainsbury

The nature of ‘reading’ is something usually taken for granted. In contemporary societies, the use of literacy for a vast range of social and personal purposes is so widespread that it is rarely questioned. Within the education system, reading becomes an explicit focus of attention, with substantial resources devoted to the teaching and learning of literacy. Even here, however, the definition of ‘reading’ is usually not discussed, although one can be inferred from the kinds of teaching and learning activities adopted. It is in the research community that the nature of reading becomes a defined area of study, and here, as will become apparent, there are major disagreements between different academic traditions over what is included and implied by the term ‘reading’.

Essentially, this book sets out to explore some of the theories, practices and conflicts that surround the idea of reading at the beginning of the 21st century. In order to do this, it adopts a particular perspective: that of assessment. Researchers, educationalists and the population at large have questions about how well people read. Often, though not exclusively, these people are children who are still in the process of mastering reading. This need to assess leads inevitably to the question ‘What exactly are the skills and understandings that we want to know about, in order to gauge reading ability?’ Thus it is that a particular definition of reading becomes made concrete in an assessment. By scrutinising tests and other instruments, it is possible to study the definition of reading – the construct – specified or assumed in each one. It is the existence of this concrete evidence in the form of tests and other instruments that makes assessment a promising springboard for investigating the nature of reading.

In 2003–4, a series of seminars was held in England, supported by the research funding body the Economic and Social Research Council, with the purpose of exploring the construct of reading. The participants were selected with the deliberate intention of allowing interaction between different disciplines, and consisted of a group of specialists in assessment and reading from the United Kingdom, France and the United States. There were cognitive psychologists with research interests in reading; educationalists with a range of research backgrounds in the teaching and learning of literacy and literature; and assessment specialists. Unusually in such gatherings, there was a strong representation of test developers, whose day-to-day research activities included the practical processes of devising, trialling and refining actual reading tests.

This group set out to bring together their varying experiences of and perspectives on the construct of reading. The seminars were open-ended and built in generous time for discussion, in recognition of the complexity of the subject matter. Each individual chapter in this volume explicates its reasoning and rationale, with references that situate it within its own research background. However, some ‘fault lines’ in the arguments can

be set out in general terms, and these apply both to ideas about reading and to ideas about assessment.

When we read, we consciously or unconsciously recognise written symbols as words with meaning. The act of reading includes deciphering, or decoding, written words and letters, transforming them into recognisable language, and understanding their meaning. Meaning is intricately tied up with communication, and communication of many kinds of meanings occupies a central role in human social intercourse. There is a fundamental divide between researchers who focus primarily on the decoding of words and those who focus primarily upon reading as an act of meaning-communication. For the former group, 'reading' proper is recognising the words; the uses of those words to communicate meaning and support social interaction are interesting, but not essential to the construct of reading. For the latter group, by contrast, it is not possible to make sense of the notion of 'reading' without communicating meanings; the communicative act is primary, and the specific skills involved in decoding written words cannot logically be separated from this.

These two perspectives can be thought of as competing paradigms: theory-systems that shape experience. The paradigm determines what counts as evidence, what observations are relevant, and even what is observed. Because the difference between them is logical, definitional rather than empirical, no observation can prove that one is right rather than the other. But this rather bleak view of paradigm competition does not rule out an understanding of both, nor a rapprochement between them in practice. In the real world of a literate society and an education system preparing children to participate in it, the stark differences outlined above are masked. All agree that children need to acquire the ability to recognise words fluently and to use this ability to facilitate and enrich their everyday lives.

At the same time, there are equally fundamental disagreements about what – and whom – assessment is for, and once again these can be seen as competing paradigms. One kind of assessment purpose is to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in reading development and to diagnose barriers to that development. Such assessments give rise to indications that guide teaching or prescribe remedial action. These formative and diagnostic assessments can be seen as broadly for the benefit of the learner, but also of teachers and other professionals, whose effectiveness is enhanced by this information.

Formative assessment stresses the value of informative feedback in the course of ongoing teaching. The information obtained from informal, day-to-day assessment is used by the teacher to provide better-focused teaching. It can also be used by the learner as a powerful tool for improvement. If pupils are able to monitor their own learning in this way, rather than relying on the teacher and other outsiders, they can play an active part in planning their own learning experiences. In this classroom use, the assessment is very informal. The evidence can be entirely ephemeral, such as a pupil's answer to a teacher's question, or take the form of feedback comments on a pupil's written work. It is also possible to use more formal assessments in this formative way. Rather than focus on the numerical score obtained in a test, it is possible to make an analysis of

the strengths and weaknesses demonstrated at individual, group or class level, and to use this information to plan the curriculum.

Diagnostic assessment is used when a child is experiencing difficulties in learning to read, in order to pinpoint the perceptual or cognitive problems that underlie the lack of progress. For this purpose, carefully designed batteries of subtests are devised, and are administered on an individual basis by an educational psychologist.

An entirely different purpose for assessment is certification. Final examinations and tests assess the reading curriculum covered in the course of schooling. The certificates awarded on the basis of these assessments serve to attest to the competence and understanding of the student. They thus benefit the student, in providing a recognised measure of attainment, but also society, where they fulfil the purpose of selecting candidates for further study or for employment. They are high-stakes assessments, because the individual student's life chances are affected by them.

In some countries in recent years, however, notably the UK and the USA, the predominant purpose for assessment is political accountability. Governments have a legitimate interest in improving educational standards. Better national attainment in literacy benefits individuals as well as enhancing the economic performance of a country. In this context, tests have the role of providing the performance outcomes that are used by government and the public to evaluate progress towards defined targets. As a result, the tests acquire high stakes for the local authorities, schools and teachers who are being held to account for their pupils' performance.

The participants in the seminars represented a range of interests in and allegiances to these differing views on the nature of reading and on the purpose of assessment. They were brought together with the aim of understanding more about one another's perspectives, and perhaps finding an overarching position that brought them closer. In the latter aspiration, it is fair to say that the seminars had only limited success, as the incompatibility of the underpinning theories became if anything more evident. This will be discussed in more detail in the concluding comments of the book. But in the aim of fostering mutual understanding and respect, the seminar series can be counted a success.

This book is the outcome of those seminars, and the themes outlined above are worked out in a variety of cross-cutting ways in the following chapters. Part 1 is devoted to explicating in more depth some of the theoretical underpinnings of reading and of assessment. Each of the authors in this section sets out a single perspective; it is only later in the book that the links between them become apparent.

Marian Sainsbury starts this process by outlining the evolving theory of construct validity in assessment and suggesting an overall shape for the construct of reading that attempts to integrate competing points of view.

In John Beech's chapter, a psychological perspective is advanced that can broadly be situated in the tradition focusing primarily on the decoding of the written word. In highlighting the contribution of psychology to the study of reading, he stresses the value of soundly researched psychological theories, arguing that these are rarely if ever embodied in reading tests. His stance on assessment is to highlight its diagnostic

and theory-building potential, with tests contributing to research and to remediation of difficulties.

Alastair Pollitt and Lynda Taylor also adopt the perspective of cognitive psychology, and agree with Beech's argument that reading test design fails to reflect psychological research and theory. Their particular focus is upon the processes that characterise reading comprehension and they use research findings and practical illustration to build a picture of the process of constructing meaning from text. In this way, their chapter directly contributes to the delineation of the construct of reading that runs through the book.

In the fourth chapter of theoretical exploration, Colin Harrison takes a radically different perspective, situated firmly within socio-cultural and literary traditions. His starting point is the challenge posed to the definition of reading by postmodernism. On this view, meaning itself is shifting and ephemeral and texts are susceptible to a variety of readings, none of which is privileged over others. He draws from this position a demanding set of requirements for any valid assessment of reading. Harrison's chapter adds a new dimension to the emerging outline of the construct of reading and raises fundamental questions about assessment itself.

Ros Fisher adopts yet another stance, this time looking at reading and its assessment from the perspective of teachers and children. Her chapter argues strongly for the centrality of these stakeholders in the assessment of reading. For Fisher, purposes for assessment must be evaluated according to how well they support the enterprise of teaching and learning, and the construct of reading in tests is contrasted unfavourably with school literacy, which itself is narrower than the broader, richer and more subtle nature of literacy as social practice.

These introductory chapters highlight the assumptions and demands of several of the most influential paradigms that compete in the definition of reading and its assessment. By their very nature, these chapters present incommensurable theories; the arguments of one cannot be translated into the terms of another. However, any serious attempt to investigate the construct of reading must take account of this bewildering complexity, reflecting as it does the variety of viewpoints attracted by this important human activity. There is no attempt here to build bridges. Instead, these opening chapters raise and illuminate the issues that arise in different forms in the remainder of the book.

Any test or assessment can be seen as a concrete embodiment of a construct of reading and of an assessment purpose. In designing a test, in espousing an assessment system at any level from individual to class to nation, decisions are made about reading and about purpose which define a specific form in the context of a specific use. This book is about actual assessments just as much as the theories that underlie them. By examining reading tests and other less formal assessment approaches, the abstract notions set out in the first part of the book can be investigated in practice. The later chapters take on this task, sometimes focusing closely on a single test, sometimes more than one, sometimes following up practical implications of particular ideas.

In the second section, three chapters cast a historical light upon the assessment of reading, revealing patterns of change over time and discovering reasons and causes in

the historical context. P David Pearson surveys some key moments in the history of reading tests in the USA, pointing up the evolution in underlying theory that gave rise to each new development. Similarly, Chris Whetton highlights significant points in reading testing in the UK, but argues that political and social influences are at least as important as theoretical developments in determining key outcomes. Paul Thompson's chapter chronicles the course of one influential innovation in the UK, demonstrating in its own way the jostling of literary and educational theories with political imperatives in determining the shape of reading assessment at one moment in time.

Leading on from these historical insights, the third section of the book looks at the cutting edge of current work and finds two apparently contradictory ideas occupying equally prominent positions. On the one hand, developments in information and communication technology have led to a burgeoning interest in computer-based assessment. Colin Harrison introduces some fundamental issues and principles for consideration. Once again juxtaposing theory with practice, Claudia Leacock's chapter describes an innovative computer program, already operational, that makes possible the assessment of open written responses, releasing computer-based reading tests from the limitations of the multiple-choice question.

On the other hand, a contrasting area of interest and innovation that can be discerned in current thought is the use of informal assessment by both teacher and pupils to support learning – known broadly as the 'assessment for learning' movement. Gordon Stobart sets out the principles of formative classroom assessment and applies them to reading. To complement this, Lorna Pepper, Rifat Siddiqui and Andrew Watts describe a research project investigating the value of giving feedback in a specific form to students who have taken a reading test.

In implementing national assessment systems, governments make decisions about the nature of reading and the purpose of assessment that set the agenda for national discourse. The seminar group included participants who were directly involved in devising the national assessments in England, Wales, Scotland, France and the USA. The insights from these very different systems make up the fourth and final part of the book.

Marian Sainsbury and Andrew Watts describe a system of national testing in England that attempts to combine a complex, meaning-centred, literary construct of reading with the constraints of a high-stakes testing regime. Roger Palmer and David Watcyn Jones describe a similar construct of reading operating in Wales, but their chapter traces the evolution of a similar high-stakes accountability assessment system into one that supports teachers in assessing for formative and diagnostic purposes. This perspective is further amplified by Louise Hayward and Ernie Spencer, writing about Scotland. Here, there is an established commitment to formative assessment that is worked out in all aspects of the national assessment system.

The national evaluations in France take a distinctive view of both the construct of reading and of the nature and purpose of national assessment. Martine Rémond describes a set of formal national tests that are entirely formative in purpose, and that embody a definition of reading which accords more importance to grammatical knowledge than is usual in the Anglo-Saxon world. Finally, Patricia Donahue sets out yet

another different national response to the set of questions posed by the definition and purpose of reading assessment. The National Assessment of Educational Progress in the USA is a national survey of reading attainment that yields indications of performance that are crucial to political decision-making but low stakes for individual students. The construct of reading can broadly be situated within a 'responsive reading' paradigm. These five national assessment systems therefore represent a variety of ways in which contemporary societies obtain their evidence about reading, and demonstrate how these governmental decisions are both reflections and determinants of national values.

Each of these chapters is capable of standing alone, giving a summary and overview of a particular perspective. The book can be used for reference, bringing together a collection of theoretical and practical information about the assessment of reading in its political, educational, geographical, historical and contemporary contexts. Reading the entire book brings out the interaction between these factors, as principles are juxtaposed with concrete examples, political demands with academic, social influences with individual, theories with classrooms.

Index

Entries in *italics* denote publications and specific initiatives.

5–14 programme (Scotland) 226–7, 229, 231–4
'100 per cent coursework' option 122–38

A, E, I, O, U model of purpose 46

AAP *see* Assessment of Achievement Programme

ACCAC reports 212, 218, 219

accountability 3, 135

APU tests 115

comprehension assessment 76, 90

Education Reform Act 122

key stage 2 assessments 212–13

National Curriculum 117, 196

Welsh statutory assessments 210–21

achievement constructs 16

ACT theory of cognition 39–40

activity theory 127–31

adaptive online assessment 140–3

adult readers 18

AEA *see* American Evaluation Association

AFs *see* assessment focuses

age criteria 25

Ahmed, A. 39

algebra questions 164–6

American Evaluation Association (AEA) 224

analytic reading 17, 197–9, 202

Anderson, J.R. 39–40

Anderson, N. 39

answer formats 212

Antarctica booklet (Wales) 213–14

antonyms 161

APU *see* Assessment of Performance Unit

artificial intelligence *see* Intelligent Online Reading Assessment

aspects of reading (NAEP) 252–3

assessment

conservatism 50–1

historical contexts 4–5

paradigm competition 2–3

psychological principles 24–32

see also individual assessment types

Assessment of Achievement Programme (AAP) 228, 236

assessment focuses (AFs) 172, 198

categorisations 181–3

feedback 179–93

key stage 1 200–1

key stage 3 204–8

procedure 180–1

usefulness 184–9

Assessment is for Learning 234–6

'Assessment for Learning' movement 5, 123

Assessment of Performance Unit (APU) 113–15

Assessment Reform Group 189

assessors' focus 190

attainment targets

France 242

National Curriculum 196, 199, 205

Wales 210, 219, 220

'attenuation paradox' 31

authenticity 60, 87, 117

author's authority 60–2

author's techniques *see* writers' techniques

automated marking 158–67

'autonomous' model of literacy 72

Awaida, M. 24

Bakhtin, Mikhail 52–3

basal readers 86, 89

Beech, John R. v, 3–4, 22–37

behaviourism 78–9

behaviours

good readers 141–2

online reading 144–8

Billy's Sunflower (Moon) 199–201

Black, Paul 13–14, 64, 127–8, 235

Bradley, L. 28

brain activity 40–1

Brookhart, S.M. 179, 189

Bryant, P. 28

- Building Bridges* initiative 236
Bullock committee 113, 116
Burt Word Reading Test 104–5
- c*-rater 158–64
California Learning Assessment System (CLAS) 90
Callaghan, James 51, 113
'can do' statements 67
cartoon strips 202–3
case studies
 c-rater 162–3
 online assessment 140–57
Center for the Study of Reading 87
certification 3
children
 central position 64
 performance 66–8
 requirements 68–73
 see also student...
choices 176
Clarke, Kenneth 102–3
CLAS *see* California Learning Assessment System
classical test theory 31
classroom assessment 88, 135, 174, 258–9
 see also informal assessment
classroom relationships 127–31
close reading assessment 225, 233–4
cloze procedure 83–4, 109–11
coded responses 175–6
cognitive assessment 79, 86–9
cognitive psychology 38–49, 85–6
College Board tests 91
communication 2, 13
competency assessment 241–5, 247–8
comprehension 17, 38, 41–2
 APU tests 114
 assessment focuses 181–3
 c-rater 158–9, 162–3, 164–6
 France 244, 247–8
 historical foundations 77–81
 infrastructure 82–3
 key stage 1 201
 meaning concept 59
 online assessment 144–6
 Scottish National Assessment 233
 top-down approaches 29
 UK history 109–11
 US 76–101, 256
 WORD test 25–6
computer-based assessment 5, 140–1, 146–7, 259
 see also online reading assessment
concurrent validity 11
confidence 188–9
consciousness 15
consensus marking 131
consequential validity 10–11, 13, 168, 172
conservatism 50–1
consistency 131–2
consortia 131, 134
construct of reading 8–21
 France 241, 243–8
 National Curriculum 196–8
 Scotland 223–30
 Wales 213–14, 215–17, 219–20
construct validity 8–21, 39, 118, 222–3
constructed responses 158–67, 253–4, 256
constructivist approaches 86–7
content-based responses 158–67
content validity 9, 11
contexts for reading (NAEP) 251–2
contextual information 29, 46
control groups 30
controlled conditions 124, 132
convergent assessment 72
convergent validity 10
correlation statistical analysis 152–3
coursework 55, 122–38
Cox proposals 115
criterion-related validity 11
critical essays 233–4
cross tabulation (*c*-rater) 164–5
cultural capital 65
cultural transmission 125
Cunningham, A. 29
curricula
 funnel effect 70
 see also National Curriculum...
- DARTs *see* Directed Activities Related to Texts
data capture online 148–53
Daugherty Assessment Review Group 170
Daugherty, Richard 210

- Davis, Frederick 82–3
 decoding 2, 16, 29, 199, 201, 216
 deconstruction theory 53
 deduction skills 201–3
 deep learning 170–1
 DeNisi, A. 173–4
 Department for Education and Science (DES) 102–3
 Derrida, Jacques 52, 53
 DES *see* Department for Education and Science
 descriptive assessment 223–4
 ‘desired performance’ standard 173–5
 deviation quotients 112
 diagnostic assessment 3
 Edinburgh Reading Tests 111–12
 France 241, 242–3, 249
 Neale Analysis 109
 psychological perspective 22–37
 Scotland 111–12, 227
 diagnostic feedback 191
 ‘dialogic’ text 52–3
 ‘differentiation by outcome’ 124–5
 Directed Activities Related to Texts (DARTs) 125
 discipline 130
 discrete skills 179
 discriminant validity 10
 divergent assessment 72
 division of labour 129
 document files online 150
 domain restrictions (*c*-rater) 162
 Donahue, Patricia v, 5–6, 250–7
 drama tasks 205–6
 drivers of theory 76–138
 Dual Award GCSE English 124–5
 dual route theory 26–7
 Dunning Committee report 224
 dynamic assessment 89
 dyslexia 25–7, 28
- e-mails 213–14
 Edinburgh Reading Tests 111–12
 education definitions 102–3
 Education Reform Act (1988) 122
 educational constructs 16
 Educational Testing Service (ETS) 158
 effect sizes 22–3, 30
 ego-level feedback 174
- emotions 45
 empathy 133–4
 Engelhard, G. 25, 31–2
 Engestrom, Y. 127–9
 England 196–209
 see also UK
 English as a Second Language (ESL) assessments 83, 84
 English GCSE 122–38
 English language reading 210–21
 EPPI review 237
 error analysis in oral reading 81, 108
 error detection paradigms 80
 error sources
 c-rater 163–4
 test scores 31
 ESL assessments *see* English as a Second Language (ESL) assessments
 ETS *see* Educational Testing Service
 evidence methodologies 56–8
 examination boards 50–1, 54–5, 62
 examination limitations 135
 examination modes 56
 exemplars 175, 218
 experimental online assessment 148–53
 expository texts 85
 external assessment 135, 136
 Eysenck, Hans 25
- factor analysis 82–3
 familiarity of subject-matter 10
 fan fiction sites 61–2
 feedback
 assessment focuses 179–93
 c-rater 164–6
 formative assessments 2–3, 13–14, 168, 172–6
 films 127
 Fisher, Ros v, 4, 64–74
 focusing concept 190
 see also assessment focuses
 Foreman, Michael 201–2
 formal assessment 2–3
 formative assessments
 activity theory 127–8
 AFs 179, 189
 construct validity 39
 definition 168–9
 feedback 2–3, 13–14, 168, 172–6

- France 241, 242–3, 245
key stage 3 123
learning processes 72–3
role 168–78
Scotland 226–7, 231, 234–8
summative relationship 169–70
validity 168, 172–6
- France 5, 241–9
Frith, U. 25
funnel effect 70–1
- Gap/Gapadol Reading Comprehension Test 109–11
- GCSE English 122–38
gender 23–4, 68, 188
generalisability 60, 90, 91
Gernsbacher, M.A. 41
Gipps, Caroline 135–6
global accountability 135
global system solutions 54–5
goals (French evaluations) 241–2, 243
good readers' behaviours 141–2
Goodman, K.S. 81
Gordon, C. 43
Gorey, K. 27
governments 3, 135, 259
grade descriptions 132
Graded Word Reading Test (Schonell) 106
grammatical expectation 110
Grandfather's Pencil (Foreman) 201–2
Grey-Thompson, Tanni 216
group reading tests 107–8
guild knowledge 71
- Haertel, E. 8, 16
Hamm, Diane Nicole v, 60, 76–101
Hanauer, D. 43
Harlen, W. 170, 173
Harrison, Colin v–vi, 4, 5, 50–63, 140–57, 224
Havnes, A. 127
Hayward, Louise vi, 5, 222–40
'Heisenberg' problem 43
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools (HMIS) 102–3, 113
Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) (Scotland) 227–9, 231
hermeneutic tradition 13, 14
The Heron story 245–7
- Higgins, Colin vi, 140–57
Higher assessment (Scotland) 225–6, 233–4
higher order reading skills 38
high-stakes assessment 122–3, 135, 196–209
historical contexts 4–5, 76–138
HMIE *see* Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education
HMIS *see* Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools
- IBM scoring procedures 81
incredulity toward metanarrative 52–62
Indiana 2003 case study 162–3
indices (comprehension) 77–80
individual assessment
 comprehension 91
 differences 45–6
 France 242–3, 247
 National Curriculum 204
inference skills 200–3, 214, 247–8
inferred reading process 144
informal assessment 2–3, 5, 13–14, 18
information use 212–14
input, online reading 144, 146
in-service education and training networks 131
INSET networks *see* in-service education and training networks
Inside the Black Box (Black/Wiliam) 64
integration
 assessment and training 27–30
 language modes 132
 theory and assessment 24–7
intelligence 25–6, 79
Intelligent Online Reading Assessment (IORA) 140–3
interactive model 90
internal validity 10
internet 61–2
 see also online...
interpretative tradition 12–14, 53
intersentential comprehension 84
IORA *see* Intelligent Online Reading Assessment
IQ tests 25–6
Iser, Wolfgang 52, 53
- James, M. 170, 173
Johnson, John 129–30

- Johnson-Laird, P.N. 41
 Joy, R. 67
 juxtaposition 58, 59
- Keppel, Francis 255
 key stage 1 115–17, 197–202, 217–18
 key stage 2 197–8, 202–4, 211–14, 218–19
 key stage 3 123, 179–93, 197–8, 204–9,
 215–17, 219–20
 King's, Medway and Oxfordshire Formative
 Assessment Project 128
 Kintsch, W. 59
 Kluger, A.V. 173–4
 KS... *see* key stage...
 Kuhn, T. 32
- Labour Party 51
 language
 AFs 181–4, 186, 188, 191–2
 key stage 1–3 201, 204, 208
 modes 124, 132
 Scottish construct of reading 223
 language games theory 52
 Language Steering Group (UK) 113
 Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA) 143, 147–8,
 151–3
 'layers' of reading 216–17
 Leacock, Claudia vi, 5, 158–67
 league tables 122, 135
The Learning Country 210–11
 learning difficulties 26
 learning goals 67–8, 70–1
 learning process 64–74, 168–76
 see also teaching and learning
 learning theories/models 130, 135–6
 LEAs *see* local education authorities
 Lewin, Kurt 23
 lexical skills 26–7
 lexical substitution (*c-rater*) 161
 literacy strategies 66–7, 71–2, 113, 197
 literary theory 17, 52, 85, 89–90
 literature 50–63, 124, 126, 130–1
 local education authorities (LEAs) 108
 local system solutions 54–5
 London Institute of Education 235
 low-stakes national assessment 241–9
 LSA *see* Latent Semantic Analysis
 Luke, C. 72
- Lyddie* (Paterson) 202–4
 Lyotard, Jean-François 51, 52
- MacLure, M. 132
 'magic bullet' approaches 28
 mark schemes
 France 245, 247
 National Curriculum 208–9
 Wales 212
 see also scoring procedures
 markers/markings 122, 158–67
 see also assessors...
 matrix item sampling 251
 'Matthew effect' 29
 meaning
 communication 2
 construction 41, 125
 individual interpretations 47–8
 polysemic concept 58–9
 postmodernism 52–3
 measurement theory 30–2, 45
 MEG *see* Midlands Examining Group
Memories test 201–2
 memorising texts 77
 memory 43–4, 85–6, 130
 see also recall
 mental processes 9, 16
 mental representations 38, 41–2, 44
Mental and Scholastic Tests (Burt) 104–5
 Messick, Samuel 8–10, 30–1, 172
 metacognition 68–9, 87, 88
 metanarratives 52–62
 methodology range 56–8
 Midlands Examining Group (MEG) 131
 miscue analysis 66, 69, 81, 116
 mixed ability teaching 124–5, 129
 modelling 175, 223–30
 moderation 131, 134, 237
 Moon, Nicola 199–201
 Moss, G. 68
 Moss, P.A. 13–14
 multiple-choice assessments
 mental representations 43
 NAEP 92, 253–4
 online 141, 143
 Reading Test AD 107–8
 scoring procedures 81
 subjectivity 83

- NAEP *see* National Assessment of Educational Progress
- NAGB *see* National Assessment Governing Board
- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 6, 92, 159, 250–7
- National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) 250
- National Assessment (Scotland) 228–34, 236–7
- national boards 54–5
- National Curriculum (France) 241–9
- National Curriculum (UK) 102–3, 107–8, 115–17, 196–209
see also statutory assessment
- national initiatives in practice 196–259
- National Literacy Strategy (NLS) 66–7, 71, 197
- National Oracy Project (NOP) 129–30
- National Qualifications Higher (Scotland) 233
see also Higher assessment (Scotland)
- national surveys (APU) 113–15
- native speakers qualification 110
- natural language processing (NLP) 158
- navigational goals online 150–2
- Neale Analysis of Reading Ability 108–9
- New Criticism 89
- NLP *see* natural language processing
- NLS *see* National Literacy Strategy
- NOP *see* National Oracy Project
- normalisation (*c-rater*) 159–60
- objectivity 52, 55–6, 207
- observed reading process 144–7
- Omar, Nasiroh vi, 140–57
- online reading assessment 140–57, 162–3
- open-ended questions 158, 163–4, 199, 207
- ‘oracy movement’ 129
- oral reading 77–8, 81, 108–9, 132–3
see also reading-aloud tests
- O’Sullivan, J. 67
- output, online reading 144, 146, 147
- Owen, Wilfred 57–8
- Palmer, Roger vi–vii, 5, 210–21
- paradigm competition 2–3, 7–75
- passage dependency 84, 87
- Paterson, Katherine 202–4
- Pearson, P. David vii, 5, 60, 76–101
- peer assessment 55, 56, 71, 175
- peer support 184, 186–7
- Pepper, Lorna vii, 5, 179–93
- performance
 assessment focuses 184
 children 66–8
 comprehension assessment 91
 formative assessment feedback 173–6
 France 242–3
 Scotland 230–2
 Wales 218
- performance goals 67–8
- Perry Preschool Project (USA) 28
- personal constructs 15
- phonics 16
- phonological dyslexia 27
- phonological skills 26–7, 28–30
- pilot tests, *c-rater* 163, 165
- PIRLS *see* Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
- plagiarism detection 143, 153
- poetry 252
- policy contexts 232, 234, 237, 259
- Pollitt, Alastair vii, 4, 38–49, 225
- polysemic concept of meaning 58–9
- portfolio-based assessment 60
- postmodernism 4, 50–63, 140–57, 258
- PowerPoint presentations 57–8
- practical applications 140–93, 196–259
- predictive validity 11
- preschool training 27–8
- presentation of texts 201, 203
- primary schools 170, 229–30, 241–9
see also key stage 1; key stage 2
- prior knowledge 87
- priorities 22–37
- process, online reading 144, 146
- product of reading 67
- professional development, teachers’ 223–4, 226, 230, 236–7
- programmes of study 196–7, 241–2
- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 232–3
- pronoun resolution (*c-rater*) 160
- prose reading tests 106
- psychology 3–4, 22–49, 78, 85–9, 104–5, 258–9

- psychometric assessment 79, 81–4
 pupils' perceptions 181–7, 190–2
see also children; student...
Pupils in Profile project 223
 purposes
 assessment 18–19, 126–7, 168–9, 242–3
 reading 18–19, 46–7, 126–7
- quality control 255
 question summaries 47
 question wordings 183–4, 188
see also open-ended questions
 questionnaires 180–1
- Radical Middle party 225
 randomised control designs 30
 Rasch measurement model 32
 RDC *see* Real-time Data Collection
 reader response theories 89–90
see also responsive reading
 reader's role 53, 59–60, 61
 reading
 construct validity 8–21
 definitions 102–3, 114, 144
 teaching and learning 65–73
 traditional models 25
 reading age assignment 66
 reading-aloud tests 117
see also oral reading
 Reading Test AD 107–8
 reading theory 30–2
 'real books' 102, 103
 real-life reading 256
 Real-time Data Collection (RDC) 152–3
 reasoning 82–3
 recall 79–80, 88
see also memory
 reception theory (Iser) 53
 redundancy factor 110
 regional consortia 54–5
 reliability 31–2
 '100 per cent coursework' 122, 134–6
 comprehension assessments 90
 formative assessments 172
 NAEP scoring 255
 National Curriculum Assessment 117
 Scotland 236–7
 student-led assessment 60
 Rémond, Martine vii, 5, 241–9
- reproduction 58–9
 research-based assessment 30
 research programs 87
 resource allocation 22–3
 'response to literature' movement 113
 responsive reading
 assessment focuses 183–4
 automated marking 158–67
 GCSE English 126, 133
 National Curriculum 197–9, 202
 postmodern principles 140–57
 validity 9, 17, 18
 Wales 214, 217
see also reader response theories
 responsiveness of assessment system 62
 retellings 88
see also recall
 retrieval of information 200, 201
 revising answers 184–7
 Rosenblatt, Louise 90
- Sadler, D.R. 174–6, 189–92
 Sainsbury, Marian vii–viii, 1–6, 8–21,
 196–209, 216, 258–9
 sampling procedures 250–1
 SATs *see* standard assessment tasks
Save It booklet 207–8
 Scharmer, O. 236
 schemas 41–5, 85–6
 Scholastic Aptitude Test 81
 Schonell Reading Tests 65, 105–6
 schooling in USA 78
 Schools' Examination and Assessment Council (SEAC) 102–3
 scientific approaches 52, 78–9
 scoring procedures 81, 254–5
see also mark schemes
 Scotland 5, 222–40
see also UK
 Scottish Survey of Achievement (SSA) 236
 screen captures online 149
 SEAC *see* Schools' Examination and Assessment Council
 search tasks online 145–6, 150–2
 secondary schools 229–30
see also key stage 3
 self-assessments 55–6, 71, 131, 175
 self-generated text activities 59–60
 self-perception 174

- semantics 143, 147–8
 Senge, P. 236
 sentence-completion tests 107–8
 set texts 124–5
 Shakespeare study 205–6
 Siddiqui, Rifat viii, 5, 179–93
 silent reading 78–9, 106
 social nature of assessments 91
 socio-cultural contexts 69, 72
 sociolinguistics 85, 89, 90
 Spear-Swerling, L. 29–30
 Spearman, Charles 31
 speed criterion, comprehension 80
 spelling corrections 161–2, 163–4
 Spencer, Ernie viii, 5, 222–40
 SSA *see* Scottish Survey of Achievement
 stakeholders 258–9
 standard assessment tasks (SATs) 102–3
 Standard Grade (Scotland) 225–6, 233
 standard-sharing 237
 standards, understanding 174–5
 Standards and Quality report (HMIE) 227–9
 Stanovich, K. 29
 statutory assessment (Wales) 210–21
 Sternberg, R.J. 29–30
 Stobart, Gordon viii, 5, 168–78
 story grammars 85
 strategic activities 69
 Structure Building Framework (Gernsbacher)
 41
 student-centred assessment 51, 56–7, 60
 students
 c-rater feedback 164–6
 formative assessments 170
 see also children
 subjectivity 55–6, 83
 summary tasks 44–5, 47
 summative assessments
 assessment focuses 189
 definition 168
 formative relationship 123, 169–70
 learning processes 73
 Scotland 231, 234–7
 validity 173
Sunflowers test 199–201
 superhero genre 202–4
 surface dyslexia 22, 27, 28
 surface learning 170–1
 Survey of English Language 228–9
 synapses 40
 syntactic variations (*c*-rater) 160
 TAAS *see* Texas Assessment of Academic Skills
Taking a Closer Look at Reading 227
 target-setting initiatives 231
 task-level feedback 174
 tasks
 French national evaluations 244
 generalisability 91
 Welsh statutory assessments 210–14
 Taylor, Lynda viii, 4, 38–49, 225
 Taylor, Wilson L. 83–4, 109–10
 teacher-led assessment 50–1, 55–6, 60–1
 teachers
 assessment focuses 187–9
 central position 64
 formative assessments 169, 170
 France 245
 requirements 68–73
 Scotland 222–40
 Wales 210, 215, 217–18, 220
 teaching and learning 2–3, 5, 13–14, 65–73,
 127–31
 teaching objectives (NLS) 71
 test theory 31
 tests
 assessment focuses 179
 France 241–9
 funnel effect 70–1
 high-stakes contexts 196–209
 learning relationship 171
 learning to do 64–74
 Scotland 231–4, 236
 UK history 102–21
 validation 8–12
 Wales 210–17, 220
 Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS)
 171
 text files online 150
 texts
 authority diminution 60–2
 cognitive psychology 85–6
 comprehension process 76
 France 249
 memorisation 77
 NAEP 253–4
 National Curriculum 197–9, 208

- texts *contd*
- removing 44, 47
 - semantic representation 147–8
 - Wales 212, 215
 - see also* literature
- theme park activities 58
- theories
- drivers 76–138
 - in practice 140–93, 196–259
- theory-based assessment 24–7
- think-alouds 88
- Thomas, P. 125, 134
- Thompson, Paul viii, 5, 122–38
- Thorndike, E.L. 32, 80
- timing of assessments 169–70
- To the Rescue* booklet 202–4
- top-down approaches 29
- traditional approaches 25, 125, 129–30
- training 27–30
- transactive model 90
- transformation 58–9
- Trial State Assessment (NAEP) 251
- truth theories 58–9
- Tyler, Ralph 255
- Tymms, Peter 228
- UK
- examinations system 50–1
 - formative/summative assessments 170
 - historical contexts 102–21
 - teacher trust 222–40
 - validation theory 12
 - validity challenges 196–209
- understanding 43–4
- uniform resource locators (URLs) 150
- United Kingdom *see* UK
- United States *see* USA
- unseen texts 124
- URLs *see* uniform resource locators
- USA 76–101, 196, 250–7
- validity 8–21, 31–2
- ‘100 per cent coursework’ 134–6
 - comprehension assessments 90
 - formative assessments 168, 172–6
 - National Curriculum 117, 196–209
 - Scotland 222–3, 237
 - summative assessments 173
 - UK reading tests 118
- vector-based approaches (LSA) 147–8
- verbatim detection 143, 153
- Wales 5, 170, 210–21
- see also* UK
- Warner, L. 134
- Walcyn Jones, David viii–ix, 5, 210–21
- Watts, A.F. 107–8
- Watts, Andrew ix, 5, 179–93, 196–209
- Watts-Vernon test 107–8
- websites 151, 235
- see also* internet
- Weschler Objective Reading Dimensions (WORD) test 25–6
- Whetton, Chris ix, 5, 102–21
- whole-language approaches 29, 124
- William, Dylan 64, 127–8, 235
- WISC-IV 25–26
- Wolves* exercise 248
- Woodstock Reading Mastery Test 32
- WORD *see* Weschler Objective Reading Dimensions
- word knowledge 82–3
- word reading tests 104–5, 106
- word similarity matrices 161
- workload 136–7
- worldwide web *see* internet; online...; websites
- Worthen, J. 125, 130
- Wright, Paul 122–3
- write-along tasks 88
- writers’ techniques 201, 203–4, 207–8, 217
- writing activities 71
- written assessment 133
- Young’s Group Reading Test 65–6, 108
- Yule, W. 26

assessing reading

Edited by Marian Sainsbury, Colin Harrison and Andrew Watts

What is meant by the term 'reading' and what does it include? This book sets out to explore some of the theories, practices and conflicts that surround the idea of reading at the beginning of the 21st century. Based on a series of seminars held in 2003 and 2004, with the purpose of exploring the construct of reading, specialists in assessment and reading from the United Kingdom, France and the United States present their perspectives on current issues, including:

- is 'reading' recognising words, with their role in communication purely secondary, or is it impossible to understand what 'reading' is without communicating meanings?
- what and who is assessment of reading for – the learner, the teacher and other professionals? Or is there an element of political accountability when it comes to the assessment of reading?

The participants in the seminars represented a range of interests in and allegiances to these differing views on the nature of reading and on the purpose of assessment. Contributors included cognitive psychologists with research interests in reading, educationalists with a range of research backgrounds in the teaching and learning of literacy and literature, assessment specialists, and test developers.

Assessing reading will be a key text for undergraduate and postgraduate education students and lecturers, teacher educators, teachers of reading, educational psychologists and all those interested in reading theory and reading assessment.

How do we assess reading? Let me count the ways ... Or let this comprehensive theoretical, historical and practical volume tell you.

Greg Brooks, Professor of Education, University of Sheffield

