Storybook Profile System

Book Title _____

Initials _____

Date _____

1 Screening

Is the book a narrative?

If yes, proceed to Step **2**

A narrative includes an initiating event (explicit or implied) and goal direction.

2 Storybook Difficulty

Difficulty Score [ ]

Rate the book on the following items. Summarize points in the Difficulty Score box.

1. Inference

○ **1 Low**
All of the information needed to understand the story is explicitly stated in the story.

○ **2 Medium**
To understand the story, children need to use background information OR make connections between story events that are not explicitly stated.

○ **3 High**
To understand the story, children need to use background information AND make connections between story events that are not explicitly stated.

2. Emotion Complexity

○ **1 Basic**
Only a basic character emotion is explicitly stated in the text.

○ **2 Complex/Implicit**
A complex character emotion is stated explicitly or emotion is implied through other content.

○ **3 Conflicting**
A character experiences more than one emotion that conflict.

List the emotions

3. Narrative Complexity

○ **1 Simple**
Includes only one initiating event, at least one related action, and at least one resolution.

○ **3 Complex**
Includes more than one initiating event, at least one related action, and at least one resolution.

4. Character Complexity
○ **1** 1-3 characters
○ **2** 4-6 characters
○ **3** > 6 characters

5. Sentences Per Page
○ **1** 0-3 sentences
○ **2** 4-6 sentences
○ **3** > 6 sentences

6. Illustrative Support
○ **1** High
○ **3** Low

7. Challenging Words
○ **1** < 10 words
○ **2** 10-20 words
○ **3** > 20 words

List the challenging words

3 Instructional Purpose

Based on how you rated the book in Step 2, provide an overall judgment about its potential purposes. Refer to the User Guide for instructions.

This book is appropriate for teaching… Check all that apply.

○ Toddlers
○ Preschoolers
○ Kindergardeners
○ First Graders

○ Narrative Structure
○ Vocabulary
○ Comprehension
○ Alphabet Knowledge / Phonological Awareness

○ Feelings / Social Skills
○ Science
○ Math
○ Social Studies

Storybook Profile System (SPS)
Scoring Guide

This Scoring Guide includes definitions of key concepts and examples from five storybooks to help you learn to use the Storybook Profile System (SPS). The five sample storybooks are:

The Day the Crayons Quit by Drew Daywalt and Oliver Jeffers

Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad by Ellen Levine and Kadir Nelson

Muddypaws by Moira Butterfield and Simon Mendez

Star in the Jar by Sam Hay and Sarah Massini

Drum Dream Girl by Margarita Engle

While access to these books is not required to successfully use the SPS, you may find it useful to refer to them as you initially read the instructions and learn the scoring process.

To begin scoring, you will need a storybook, the SPS, and this SPS Scoring Guide.

1 SCREENING

SPS is designed exclusively for storybooks with narrative structure, therefore, the first step is to read your storybook to determine if it contains narrative structure. Narratives contain an Initiating Event and Goal Direction.

Initiating Event
The situation that starts the story; may follow background information

- A problem for the character(s) to solve
- Something the character(s) want to achieve
- A special event the character(s) participate in

Goal Direction
Action(s) toward an outcome or resolution

- Most actions are dedicated to the resolution or conclusion of the Initiating Event
- Examples of texts *without* Goal Direction are collections of facts, a series of rhymes, and a string of actions

If the storybook does not contain BOTH of these elements, it cannot be profiled using the SPS.

The following chart provides examples of Initiating Events and Goal Directions for the five sample storybooks.

Title	Initiating Event	Goal Direction
The Day the Crayons Quit	Duncan wants to color, but when he opens his crayon box he finds letters from his crayons.	Duncan reads each crayon's complaint.
Henry's Freedom Box	Henry is given to his master's son and is separated from his family.*	Henry builds a new family.
Muddypaws	Ben wants to name his new puppy.	Ben observes the puppy exploring his environment.
Star in the Jar	Little brother finds a lost star.*	Brother and sister try to find the star's home.
Drum Dream Girl	The drum dream girl wants to play drums, but everyone believes that only boys can play drums.	The drum dream girl keeps dreaming about playing drums.

* This storybook contains more than one Initiating Event. See Item #3 below for more information.

▶ Read your storybook now and determine if it contains narrative structure. If it does, proceed to Step 2. If it does not, stop here or select another storybook.

2 STORYBOOK DIFFICULTY

To rate each of the 7 difficulty items, refer to the descriptions in the SPS and the elaborations and examples in this Scoring Guide.

| Item #1 | **Inference:** The level of inference needed to fully understand the story. |

- To determine inference, ask yourself the following questions: Is background information necessary to understand the story? Is it necessary for the reader to recall and make connections between story events in order to comprehend the story?
- If the answer to either of these questions is "yes", then a higher degree of inferencing is needed and the story should receive a higher Inference score.
- Examples of content that require background knowledge may include cultural holidays, historical occurences, special topics, or cultural norms.

The following chart shows the Inference scores for the four sample storybooks.

Title	Score	Inference Description
The Day the Crayons Quit	3	Comprehension of how we traditionally use color requires background knowledge. Understanding the feud between the orange and yellow crayons requires connecting story events.
Henry's Freedom Box	3	Understanding the concept of slavery requires background knowledge and following how each event contributes to Henry's desperate act to leave slavery requires making connections between story events.
Muddypaws	1	All of the information needed to understand the story is explicitly stated.
Star in the Jar	2	Recalling how the stars first communicated with the children is required to understand why their final attempt to return the lost star was successful.
Drum Dream Girl	2	Understanding the girl's achievement of playing drums requires a connection between story events: The belief that only boys can play drums and that everyone likes it when she plays drums.

▶ Review your storybook and rate its Inference.

| Item #2 | **Emotion Complexity:** The extent to which emotions are basic/complex, explicit/implicit, or conflicting. |

- There are six basic emotions: anger, fear, happiness, sadness, surprise and disgust. Basic emotions may be scaled (elated is an extreme of happy, frightened is a form of fear), but they are still considered basic.
- Any emotion that does not contain a basic emotion at its root is considered complex.
- Implicit character emotion may be shown through illustrations or context clues such as action verbs (he cried, she wondered).
- If a character experiences more than one emotion at a time, determine whether the emotions are in conflict with one another. If simultaneously experienced emotions are in conflict with one another (The boy wanted to be friends with the new kid at school, but he was afraid she might reject him), a score of 3 should be awarded. If they are not in conflict (The girl was elated by the surprise roadtrip her mom announced they were going to take) and basic, a score of 1 should be awarded. If they are not in conflict but at least one of the emotions is complex, a score of 2 should be awarded.

The following chart shows Emotion Complexity scores for the five sample storybooks.

Title	Score	Emotions	Level of Complexity	Emotions in conflict or not
The Day the Crayons Quit	2	Excited, embarrassed, happy, empty, tired	Some (complex) emotions	Emotions are experienced one at a time
Henry's Freedom Box	3	Lonely, worried, happy, afraid	Some (complex) emotions	Character experiences multiple, conflicting emotions
Muddypaws	2	The puppy's emotions are expressed through illustrations		
Star in the Jar	1	Sad, not happy	Only basic emotions	Emotions are experienced one at a time
Drum Dream Girl	2	Excited, amazed	Some (complex) emotions	Emotions are experienced one at a time

▶ Review your storybook and rate the Complexity of Emotions. List the emotions in the box provided.

| Item #3 | **Narrative Complexity:** The extent to which the narrative structure is simple or complex. |

To determine the complexity of the narrative structure, examine its:

 » Initiating Event - the situation that starts the story (see Step 1: Screening)
 » Related Action - actions or events that occur because of the Initating Event
 » Resolution - any outcome or ending that is the result of actions taken relative to the Initiating Event

- A **simple narrative structure** is one that contains a single Initiating Event, one or more Related Actions, and one or more Resolutions.

- A **complex narrative structure** is one that contains two (or more) Initiating Events, one (or more) Related Actions, and (one or more) Resolutions, OR, if there is a story embedded within the main narrative - such as when a character tells a substantial story about a past event to another character in the story.

The following chart shows the Narrative Complexity scores for the five sample storybooks.

Title	Score	Initiating Event(s)	Related Action(s)	Resolution
The Day the Crayons Quit	1	Duncan wants to color, but when he opens his crayon box he finds letters from his crayons.	Duncan reads each crayon's complaint.	Duncan draws one large picture incorporating each crayon's request.
Henry's Freedom Box	3	Henry is devastated by the loss of his wife and children, and needs to free himself from slavery once and for all.	Henry builds a new family. AND Henry asks James and Dr. Smith to help him, then is mailed in a box to PA.	Henry loses his family to slavery. AND Henry becomes a free man.
Muddypaws	1	Ben wants to name his new puppy.	Ben observes the puppy exploring his environment.	Ben names his puppy Muddypaws.
Star in the Jar	3	Little brother finds a lost star. AND The star is sad because it wants to go home.	Brother and sister try to find the star's home. AND Brother and sister see a message in the sky and figure out how to return the star.	No one claims the star and brother decides to keep it. AND Brother and sister return the star back home to the sky.
Drum Dream Girl	1	The drum dream girl wants to play drums, but everyone believes that only boys can play drums.	her father does not allow her to play drums.	Her father hires a drum teacher. AND The girl becomes very good at playing the drums.

▶ Review your storybook and rate the narrative structure as simple or complex.

Items #4-6   Character Complexity, Sentences Per Page, & Illustrative Support

These three items are direct counts and require minimal instruction.

- **Character Complexity:** Count the number of characters in the book. Groups of 2 or more characters that play the same role in relation to the main character, such as parents, family, pets, or neighbors, count as one character.

- **Sentences Per Page:** Estimate the average number of sentences per page by counting the sentences on 5 randomly selected pages. If a book contains more than 6 sentences on some pages and only 1-3 sentences on other pages, choose the score for 4-6 sentences (2 points) to capture the average.

- **Illustrative Support:** This is the extent to which illustrations depict the exact words and concepts contained in the text. Randomly choose 3-4 pages and read the text word-for-word. If the words and concepts in the story are depicted in the illustrations, the storybook support is high. If the illustrations depict something other than the words and concepts in the story, the illustration support is low. The following chart shows the scores for each of these items from the five sample storybooks.

Title	Character Complexity	Sentences Per Page	Illustrative Support
The Day the Crayons Quit	3	2	3
Henry's Freedom Box	3	3	3
Muddypaws	1	1	1
Star in the Jar	1	1	1
Drum Dream Girl	2	1	1

▶ Review your storybook and rate these items.

Item #7   Challenging Words: Less common but useful words

As you read your storybook, note any less common but useful words that may not be commonly used in a child's everyday language. These may include words that require deliberate effort to learn, are more likely to appear in written text than in speech, or represent subtle or precise ways to say otherwise relatively simple things.

The chart on the following page shows the Challenging Words in the five sample storybooks.

Title	Score	Challenging Words
The Day the Crayons Quit	2	Outline, occasional, splash, creativity, gorgeous, completely, handle, empty, congratulate, settle, prove, whine, stubby, fabulous, embarrassed
Henry's Freedom Box	3	Slave, allow, master, torn, wide, quilt, beckon, obey, nod, soar, swirl, factory, mistake, mistress, agree, date, deal, rush, owner, hum, warehouse, excuse, bandage, ache, imagine, disappear, crate, arrive, vitriol, station, burst, rattling, empty, deliver, pour, baggage, scrape, staircase, ill, chest, cart, smoothly, steamboat
Muddypaws	1	Perfect, rather, crept, lean, spanner, pitter, patter, mucky, neighbor, knock, find, indoors, pond
Star in the Jar	1	Belong, shout, gentle, realize, treasure, message, chain, lift, forever, twinkle, special
Drum Dream Girl	2	Pound, timbales, imaginary, towering, dare, bongo, ripple, deserve, round, silvery, comforting, brave, dare, decide, deserve, excited, amazed, practice

▶ Review your storybook and rate the number of Challenging Words. List the words in the box provided.

Difficulty Score

To determine the Difficulty Score for your storybook, total the scores from items # 1-7. The following chart shows the Difficulty Scores for the five sample storybooks.

Title	Difficulty Score
The Day the Crayons Quit	16
Henry's Freedom Box	21
Muddypaws	8
Star in the Jar	10
Drum Dream Girl	11

▶ Calculate the difficulty score for your storybook and record it in the Difficulty Score box.

3 INSTRUCTIONAL PURPOSES

Difficulty Scores should be influenced by the language development and behavior regulation skills of the children for whom the book is intended. The total Difficulty Score reflects how challenging a book might be for children to understand. Suggested grade appropriate scores are:

- First Grade: 19-21
- Kindergarten: 15-18
- Preschool: 11-14
- Toddler: 7-10

▶ Now that you have rated the difficulty of the storybook, provide a recommendation on its potential use for instruction within your context.

Guidelines for Determining Instructional Purposes

For teaching…	Look for	Watch out for
Narrative Structure	Simple narrative complexity.	More than one initiating event may be too difficult for young children; consider reserving for First Graders.
Vocabulary	Several challenging words, high illustrative support, familiar initiating events, and/or low to medium inference required to support the learning of new words.	Too many unfamiliar and challenging words can make learning difficult. Children should know enough words to help them figure out the meaning of the new words.
Comprehension	Storybooks with medium to high inference required and simple narrative complexity. Illustrations and familiar content can help build comprehension too.	Books with an overly complicated storyline, several characters, and many challenging words may be challenging for young children to comprehend.
Alphabet Knowledge / Phonological Awareness	Storybooks designed to teach the letters, sounds, and manipulate the sounds of words (e.g., rhyming words like those in Dr. Seuss books).	Books designed to teach alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness often do not contain narrative structure, but they can.
Feelings / Social Skills	Highlight emotions and proper behaviors associated with those emotions.	Books that do not contain an underlying lesson about how a child should handle feelings or behave.
Academic Content	Math - Numbers, Counting, Shapes Science - Domain specific and challenging words Social Studies - Special places, community helpers, customs and people	Books designed to teach math skills often do not have a clear narrative structure, but they can.

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