

## Literacy Case Study 1 - Secondary

Jessica Scott, Age 15, Year 10

Jessica was assessed with the *New Group Reading Test* along with the whole cohort as part of annual screening. This was the first year the school had used *NGRT*.

Jessica's *CAT4* scores from Year 9

Battery	No, of attempted questions	SAS	NPR	ST	SAS (with 90% confidence bands)												
					60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140				
Verbal	48/48	95	37	4						●							
Quantitative	36/36	97	42	5						●							
Non-verbal	48/48	93	32	4					●								
Spatial	36/36	101	53	5					●								
Mean	-	96	-	-					●								

These results are from *CAT4* Level F, administered in Year 9. From these it can be seen that Jessica has an average, even profile and at this stage further investigation of her levels of literacy may not have been a priority. Jessica's Verbal Reasoning score is in the low average range; it would not signal a discrepancy in performance based on her *NGRT* overall score: so reading performance is as expected given her level of verbal reasoning.

Jessica's *NGRT* scores

For *NGRT*, Jessica's overall standard age score was 92. However, a discrepancy of two stanines between the two parts of the test generated the following commentary:

*"Jessica's score for sentence completion is below average and that for passage comprehension is average. With a gap in scores of two or more stanines, it is recommended that a follow-up assessment is administered. It would be most beneficial if this could be an individual, diagnostic assessment. GL Assessments York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension, which includes test material across a range of difficulty and scores for reading rate, accuracy and comprehension, could be helpful. If a SpLD is suspected a specialist assessment and/or assessor may be required. Intervention will likely need to focus on decoding and building up accuracy and automaticity in word recognition before introducing support for comprehension."*

The *Analysis of responses for Sentence Completion* shows that Jessica was not able to answer questions at an age appropriate level. Because of the adaptive format of the digital test, questions are generated randomly so it is not possible to report on individual questions and whether these were achieved or not.

Performance on Sentence Completion informs the first passage choice and this was 'What is Youth Challenge?' a non-fiction passage from NGRT Level 3 which is for students aged 10 to 13.

As can be seen from the *Analysis of responses for Passage Comprehension* Jessica did well on this passage but most of the questions are well below the average reading ability of a student of her age. At the end of the first passage, Jessica's reading ability is re-calculated and the next passage presented was 'Wind in the Willows' again from Level 3 but at a slightly higher level of difficulty.

Again Jessica did well and when her reading ability was re-calculated she was presented with a final passage, 'Birth of Frankenstein's Monster' from Level 4 which is the appropriate level for her age. However this was too difficult for Jessica, and she achieved only four correct responses from the 10 questions presented.

At the end of the test all scores are calculated including an age equivalent score (or reading age) which showed that Jessica is nearly two years below her chronological age.

Looking in more detail at the *Analysis of Passage Comprehension responses by question type* it is clear that retrieval and some higher order skills are secure (raw score 8/9) but that context comprehension and inference and deduction are much weaker.

In the 'Birth of Frankenstein's Monster', Jessica could not answer the three sentence completion questions which are at the start. Again, this may point to a weakness in vocabulary but also in inferential skills.

### Jessica's YARC scores

As public examinations are just over a year away for Jessica it is important that further assessment is carried out. This was done with *YARC* with the following outcomes:

Summary of scores					
	Ability score	Standard score	Confidence intervals	Percentile rank	Age equivalent
Single Word Reading (SWRT)	57*	100	92 to 108	50	15:03

Reading Rate	74	85	79 to 94	16	10:05
Comprehension	60	97	89 to 105	42	14:04

*\* Please note that this is a raw score value*

Jessica scored 57 out of 70 on the *Single Word Reading Test* producing a standard age score of 100 – precisely average for her age. She read two passages at Level 2 which is the age appropriate level. In ‘On the way to the New World’ Jessica scored 5 out of 13 on the comprehension questions. She appeared to struggle as she did not attempt a further five questions and, in particular, found questions that tested her understanding of certain words difficult. For example, she could not explain the meaning of ‘intractable’, ‘tersely’ and ‘remonstration’. In the summarisation task Jessica showed that she had understood the gist of the passage by giving 3 correct points (out of 9). This puts her in the average band in a task that students generally find difficult.

In the second passage, ‘Louise Nevelson’ Jessica answered 7 out of the 13 comprehension questions correctly. Again, she found it difficult to explain the meaning of particular words or phrases, for example, ‘bric-a-brac’ and ‘commission’. Jessica did well on the retrieval questions, although her summary of the passage contained some inaccuracies, suggesting that she had not understood the passage fully.

Jessica’s reading profile reveals that she has a general understanding of what she is reading, although she does not always understand the details. Her comprehension score on both assessments was very similar demonstrating that some skills are secure but by looking back at responses to some of the *YARC* questions it is clear that her vocabulary is weak and that this may be having an effect on inferential tasks.

Jessica should be given opportunities to talk about what she has read and encouraged to respond in an in-depth way in discussion. Specific work on extending her vocabulary should help elucidate her reading and deepen understanding. This will support Jessica across all subjects as she works towards GCSEs. She is, almost certainly, an example of where screening and diagnostic assessment at an earlier stage would have been highly beneficial.