

What is DRA?

DRA stands for Developmental Reading Assessment. At our school it is administered at least twice a year: (1) before Christmas break and (2) before the end of the year. The purpose of the DRA is two-fold. It not only gives teachers a reading level for each student, but it also lets the teacher know where the student's strengths and weaknesses are.

DRA assesses student performance in the following areas of reading proficiency: reading engagement, oral reading fluency, and comprehension. The selection of these target skill areas and the methods used to assess them are based on current research in reading from sources such as the *National Reading Panel Report* (2000) and *Reading for Understanding* (Rand Education, 2002).

Teachers use the information from the DRA to form flexible groups for guided reading based on independent reading level and skill need. The DRA determines a student's independent reading level. The teacher then generally instructs that student at a level slightly above that...one that is more challenging and requires teacher help to be successful.

In grades K-3, there are several levels within each grade level. However, beginning grade 4 and continuing through grade 8 there is only one level per grade. For example, if a student is in 4<sup>th</sup> grade it is probable that he/she will work on a level 40 all year long because the skills and strategies for each grade are ever increasing.

If you have any questions about DRA or any other part of Balanced Literacy, please contact your child's teacher or call Marcia Baxter, Literacy Coach, at 532-1155 ext. 3102.