TEKS Text Difficulty Levels

Independent-Level Texts are those in which no more than approximately 1 in 20 words is difficult for the reader (95-100% accuracy) and that are read with high comprehension.

Independent-level material is appropriate for students who are building fluency or reading independently with little or no instructional support.

Instructional-Level Texts are those in which no more than approximately 1 in 10 words is difficult for the reader (90-94% accuracy) and that are read with average to high comprehension.

Instructional-level texts are appropriate for small group instruction when you provide assistance as students read. They may also be used to build fluency but as we’ll see in a later section, independent level reading materials are best for this purpose.

Frustration-Level Texts are those that are too difficult (more than approximately 1 in 10 words is difficult for the reader -- < 90% accuracy -- and that are read with low comprehension).

Frustration-level texts should be avoided!

Calculating a Text Difficulty Level

- Identify the grade level of a particular text.
- Have the student read aloud a passage of at least 100 words. Tally the number of words misread.
- Subtract the number of words read incorrectly from the total number of words in the passage; this yields the number of words read correctly.
- Divide the number of words read correctly by the total number of words read to calculate a decimal fraction.
- Multiply the decimal fraction by 100 to generate the percentage accuracy level.
- Based on the percent accuracy and using the criterion for difficulty, identify the passage as being at the student's independent level, instructional level, or frustration level.

Number of Words Read Correctly / Total Words Read (x100) = Percentage Accuracy

For example, if a student reads 120 words correctly out of a passage of text that contains 125 words, the accuracy level is 96%. 120 / 125 = .96 (x100) = 96%

A percentage accuracy of 96% means that the text is at the student's independent level.
Activity

Given the information provided, calculate the percentage accuracy to determine the difficulty level.

A 9th grade passage contains 400 words. Martha reads 370 of the words correctly. What is her percent accuracy? What is Martha’s difficulty level for the 9th grade passage?

_____ / _____ = _____ (x 100) = _____% accuracy

Text Difficulty Level: ________________________________