

Scoring

In discussing how to score the oral reading sample, we will first take up the issue of *coding* or transcribing the child's oral reading and then move to *analyzing* the coded sample.

Because first-grade-level readers are notoriously slow in moving through text, the tutor will be able to code oral reading—that is, record the child's errors—as the child reads. To do so, the tutor will need a photocopy of the pages being read. (Tape-recording the oral reading is also highly recommended as a later check on coding reliability.) The coding system itself (see Figure 2.2) is traditional and straightforward, with five types of oral reading errors to be marked.

In this coding system, repetitions can be marked by underlining the repeated word or phrase (the boy was). However, repetitions will not be counted as scoreable errors.

Figure 2.3 shows the coding of a third-grade girl's reading of a late-first-grade (1-2) passage.

1. **Substitutions:** Write the substituted or mispronounced word over the word in the text.

(the boy ^{saw} was)

2. **Omissions:** Circle the omitted word.

(the big boy)

3. **Insertions:** Use a caret to indicate the inserted word(s).

(the ^{big}
^ red ball)

4. **Self-corrections:** Place a check (✓) next to the marked error to indicate that the child has self-corrected. (A self-correction is usually a substitution error that the child spontaneously corrects.)

(the boy ^{saw} ✓ was)

5. **Examiner help:** Place an "H" above each word that has to be provided by the examiner (the tutor). The tutor should refrain from providing help unless it is clearly necessary to do so—that is, unless the child refuses to attempt the unknown word or is noticeably unsuccessful in decoding it. (Wait 3 to 5 seconds before providing help.)

H
(the boy was)

FIGURE 2.2. Coding system for oral reading errors.