

Pongal: A Time to Celebrate

There are many ways to celebrate the end of harvest time. For thousands of years, people all over the world have celebrated healthy crops. In southern India, people celebrate Pongal at harvest time.

Pongal features a four-day celebration. It's always held in the middle of January. Pongal means "overflowing" because of how rice is cooked with milk.

On the first day, people do housecleaning and get their houses ready for the celebration. Things that aren't needed are burned.

The second day, the day for thanking the sun god, is the biggest part of the celebration. Families draw pictures outside their homes with colored rice flour. Next, they make a fire in the middle of each drawing. They cook a mixture of rice and milk over the fire.

The third day honors cattle for all they do to help farmers. The animals are washed. Then, their horns are painted and flower necklaces are put around their necks.

The fourth day is the conclusion of Pongal. On that day, people visit family members and have picnics.

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Name/Date _____ Teacher/Grade _____

1. MONITOR ORAL READING FLUENCY

To monitor student progress, use two copies of the passage, one for you and one for the student. On your copy of the passage, record the student’s oral reading behaviors and the minutes and seconds required for the student to read the entire passage.

Note expression, phrasing, and miscues.

INTRODUCE THE PASSAGE

Say: *This passage is called “Pongal: A Time to Celebrate.” Pongal is one way to celebrate harvest. Read aloud to find out what people in southern India do during this special time. You may begin now.*

RATE Use the student’s oral reading time to circle the Words Per Minute (WPM) range. After the assessment, determine and record the student’s exact WPM.

177 (Total Words Read) ÷ _____ total seconds = _____ × 60 = _____ WPM

Rate	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Minutes:Seconds	2:45 or more	2:44–2:14	2:13–1:37	1:36 or less
WPM	64 or fewer	65–79	80–110	111 or more

ACCURACY Circle the number of miscues that are not self-corrected and record the percent of accuracy.

Accuracy	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT			4 ADVANCED	
Number of Miscues	10 or more	8–9	7	5–6	3–4	1–2	0
Percent of Accuracy	94 or less	95	96	97	98	99	100

If the student’s percent of accuracy or rate is below the instructional range, reassess with a lower-level passage to determine an instructional reading level.

Check one: _____ Expression and phrasing are appropriate.
 _____ Expression and phrasing need attention.

Name/Date _____ Teacher/Grade _____

2. MONITOR COMPREHENSION

Circle the descriptors that best reflect the student’s responses. Possible Independent responses for Sections 2 and 3 are provided. Accept other appropriate responses. The student may use the passage when responding.

SUMMARIZE Important/Main Idea Say: *What is the main, or most important, idea of this passage?* (Possible responses: *Pongal is a four-day harvest celebration held in southern India.*)

Comprehension	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Summarize: Main Idea	Identifies vague, inaccurate idea or does not respond	Gives a partially correct response, such as identifies a less important idea; may misinterpret information	Identifies the main idea	Identifies the main idea including details and specific vocabulary from the text

SUMMARIZE Details Say: *Tell me two details you read about what happens during Pongal.* (Possible responses: *A good housecleaning is done on the first day. On the fourth day, people visit family members and go on picnics.*)

Comprehension	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Summarize: Details	Identifies vague, inaccurate details or does not respond	Gives a partially correct response, such as identifies 1 of 2 details; may misinterpret information	Identifies 2 details	Identifies 2 details using specific vocabulary from the text

3. IN-DEPTH PROGRESS MONITORING

The items below provide more in-depth progress monitoring of specific skills. The student may use the passage when responding.

COMPREHENSION Sequence

- Say: *What three events happen on the second day of the celebration?* (Families draw pictures with colored rice flour. They make a fire in the middle of each drawing. They cook a mixture of rice and milk over the fire.)
- Say: *What sequence words help you understand the order of these events?* (next; then)

Comprehension	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Sequence	Is unable to identify the event or the sequence words, or does not respond	Gives a partially correct response, such as identifies 1 event in the sequence	Identifies the events in sequence	Identifies the events in sequence and the sequence words using specific vocabulary from the text

Name/Date _____

Teacher/Grade _____

VOCABULARY Antonyms

- Point to the word *southern* in the first paragraph. Say: ***This word is southern. What is a word that means the opposite of southern? (northern)***
- Point to the word *first* in the third paragraph. Say: ***This word is first. What is a word that means the opposite of first? (last)***

Vocabulary	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Antonyms	Gives inaccurate or vague antonyms, or does not respond	Gives a partially correct response, such as an antonym for one word	Gives an antonym for each word	Gives an antonym with details for each word

- End the conference.

WORD READING Common Syllables Return to the Record of Oral Reading to determine whether the student read these words correctly: *celebration, features, mixture, conclusion*.

Word Reading	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Common Syllables	Does not read any words accurately or omits them	Reads 1–3 of 4 words accurately	Reads all 4 words accurately	Reads all 4 words accurately and automatically