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The Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS): A new tool for measuring how children feel about themselves as readers

This article introduces an instrument for assessing an important dimension of reading.

Recently, reading educators and researchers have shown renewed interest in how affective factors influence children's academic achievement and behavior (Alvermann & Guthrie, 1993). As a result, our longheld intuitions about the powerful impact that attitudes, values, beliefs, desires, and motivations exert on literacy learning have begun to receive the focused attention they deserve.

Because of research in the affective domain, we now know with greater certainty that children who have made positive associations with reading tend to read more often, for longer periods of time, and with greater intensity. This deeper engagement translates into superior reading achievement (Anderson, Fielding, & Wilson, 1988; Foertsch, 1992). At the same time, we know that when children feel negatively about reading, their achieve-

ment tends to suffer. These children will either avoid reading altogether or read with little real involvement. Perhaps this is why, in a recent national poll, teachers ranked motivating students and creating an interest in reading as their first priority (O'Flavahan et al., 1992).

The movement toward greater consideration of affective influences on reading achievement is long overdue but somewhat understandable (Athey, 1985; Mathewson, 1985). Educators and researchers have recognized for some time the importance of knowing as much as possible about the many affective elements that shape readers' engagement (Morrow & Weinstein, 1986). Unfortunately, because affect tends to be difficult to measure, the tools necessary to make truly valid appraisals have not been available (Henk, 1993). Consequently, teachers have been hindered in adjusting classroom learning climates to foster maximum literacy growth.

To help teachers better address the role of affect in reading, we describe an important psychological construct, *reader self-efficacy*, and introduce a new scale to measure this aspect of literacy. The new scale can be administered to groups of students for the purposes

of instruction, assessment, and research, and it provides data on affect that make individual reading evaluations more complete.

Reader attitudes and self-perceptions

Fortunately, educators have made some important strides in measuring affective elements in recent years. For instance, McKenna and Kear (1990) have developed the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS), a public domain instrument that measures elementary students' attitudes toward both school-based and recreational forms of reading. The ERAS has been used extensively by primary and intermediate level teachers to determine the overall attitude levels of classes, and it has also provided insights into the reading habits and achievement levels of individual children. Besides its inviting response format that makes use of the comic strip character Garfield the cat, a major advantage of the ERAS has been its extensive norming. Unlike many affective scales, the ERAS exhibits solid validity and reliability characteristics, two critical attributes given the potential importance of attitudinal indicators.

Following in this tradition of instrument development, we created the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) to measure how intermediate-level children feel about themselves as readers (Henk & Melnick, 1992). The RSPS was developed in response to calls in the professional literature for instruments that measure the way readers appraise themselves (Winograd & Paris, 1988; Wixson, Peters, Weber, & Roeber, 1987). Valencia (1990) refers to this notion of reader self-evaluation as "perception of self as reader," a concept important in both statewide and individual portfolio assessment contexts.

Like the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, the RSPS has been validated systematically and measures a dimension of affect that almost certainly influences attitudes toward reading. At the same time, the construct tapped by the Reader Self-Perception Scale is different enough from reading attitude to warrant special consideration. The two instruments also differ in terms of grade level appropriateness. While the ERAS can be used in the primary grades through grade 6, the RSPS purposely focuses on intermediate-level read-

ers. This targeting stems from developmental research that has consistently indicated that prior to fourth grade, children do not estimate their academic performance accurately, nor attribute its causes properly (Blumenfeld, Pintrich, Meece, & Wessels, 1982; Nicholls, 1978; Stipek, 1981). By contrast, children in the intermediate grades are less likely to attribute their achievement to luck or effort and more likely to attribute performance to ability (Nicholls, 1979; Ruble, Boggiano, Feldman, & Loebel, 1980).

Self-efficacy and reading

The Reader Self-Perception Scale is based on Bandura's (1977, 1982) theory of perceived self-efficacy. Bandura defines self-efficacy as a person's judgments of her or his ability to perform an activity, and the effect this perception has on the on-going and future conduct of the activity. In short, self-perceptions are likely to either motivate or inhibit learning (Schunk, 1982, 1983a, 1983b; Zimmerman & Ringle, 1981). Self-efficacy judgments are thought to affect achievement by influencing an individual's choice of activities, task avoidance, effort expenditure, and goal persistence (Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Schunk, 1984).

In reading, self-perceptions can impact upon an individual's overall orientation toward the process itself. Children who believe they

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are good readers probably enjoy a rich history of reader engagement and exhibit a strong likelihood of continued positive interactions with text. By contrast, children who perceive themselves as poor readers probably have not experienced much in the way of reading success. They almost surely will not look toward read-

ing as a source of gratification. In this sense, it is not hard to imagine direct links between readers' self-perceptions and their subsequent reading behavior, habits, and attitudes. That is, how an individual feels about herself or himself as a reader could clearly influence whether reading would be sought or avoided, the amount of effort that would occur during reading, and how persistently comprehension would be pursued (Henk & Melnick, 1992).

The basic self-efficacy model (Bandura, 1977, 1982; Schunk, 1984) predicts that individuals take four basic factors into account when estimating their capabilities as a reader: Performance (a very broad category that in-

How an individual feels about herself/himself as a reader could clearly influence whether reading would be sought or avoided—and how persistently comprehension would be pursued.

cludes past success, amount of effort necessary, the need for assistance, patterns of progress, task difficulty, task persistence, and belief in the effectiveness of instruction), Observational Comparison, Social Feedback, and Physiological States.

Overall, our previous research into the sources of information that children in the intermediate grades use to make reader self-perception judgments (Henk & Melnick, 1992, 1993) supports this four-factor model. However, as we indicate in the later section on Validation, we found it necessary to redefine the Performance category more narrowly. Consequently, our first source is Progress (PR). We define this scale as how one's perception of present reading performance compares with past performance. The second source, Observational Comparison (OC), deals with how a child perceives her or his reading performance to compare with the performance of classmates. The third source, Social Feedback (SF), includes direct or indirect input

about reading from teachers, classmates, and people in the child's family. Finally, the Physiological States (PS) source refers to internal feelings that the child experiences during reading. The entire Reader Self-Perception Scale is reproduced in Appendix A with items coded by scale to illustrate various item types.

It is important to understand that the four sources of information used in making reader self-perception judgments do not operate in isolation from one another (Marshall & Weinstein, 1984). A very natural overlap exists between the categories. For instance, personal perceptions of progress (PR) will be based, in part, not only upon children's observations of how their performance compares with classmates' performance (OC), but also upon the kinds of positive social feedback (SF) they receive, and their internal comfort while reading (PS). In fact, the scales relate so much to one another that interactions among them are inescapable.

These interactions confirm the idea that literacy learning is both complex and socially situated (Alvermann & Guthrie, 1993). In making reader self-perceptions, individual children may value one or more sources over the others. Much of this valuing process will be related to the social context in which the literacy learning occurs. Of course, observational comparison and social feedback are, by their very nature, socially situated. Even aspects of the physiological states category possess social dimensions, especially in the case of internal feelings experienced during oral reading (Filby & Barnett, 1982). Viewed in this social perspective, the classroom, the home, and anywhere else that reading occurs represent contexts for learning about oneself as a reader.

Why the RSPS?

Somewhat surprisingly, there have been very few attempts to develop instruments for measuring reader self-perceptions. The few scales that do exist definitely have their merits, but all possess some notable limitations (Boersma, Chapman, & MacGuire, 1979; Cohen, McDonell, & Osborn, 1989; Mitman & Lash, 1988). For instance, some scales measure self-perceptions of general achievement or language arts proficiency, but do not focus on reading achievement specifically. Others have very few items, and these items tend to mea-

sure reader self-efficacy indirectly at best. Often, major elements of reading such as word recognition, word analysis, fluency, and comprehension are not represented in the item pool as they are in the Reader Self-Perception Scale.

Another major problem with many of the scales is that they have not undergone adequate norming. Some are based on small samples, and others have not considered possible scales. A further major concern is that none of the existing reader self-perception instruments appear to be grounded in learning theory. By contrast, the RSPS takes its lead from a well regarded learning-theory framework and is steeped in a solid tradition of supportive research in the affective domain (Athey, 1985; Mathewson, 1985).

Although previous quantitative scales have fallen short of the mark, several useful structured interview formats are available for qualitative assessment of individual readers' self-perceptions (See Blumenfeld, Pintrich, Meece, & Wessels, 1982; Borko & Eisenhart, 1986; Canney & Winograd, 1979; Filby & Barnett, 1982; Gordon, 1990; Nicholls, 1979; Stipek & Weisz, 1981). Individual data collections can be extremely informative, but they tend to be time consuming and therefore of somewhat less practical value. To date, only the group-administered Reader Self-Perception Scale accounts adequately for concerns related to focus, norming, theoretical grounding, and practicality. Beyond these advantages, the RSPS offers a wide range of assessment, instructional, and research applications that are outlined in later sections.

Description of the instrument

The Reader Self-Perception Scale consists of 1 general item and 32 subsequent items that represent the four scales (Progress, Observational Comparison, Social Feedback, and Physiological States). The general item was used simply to prompt the children to think about their reading ability. The remaining items deal with overall reading ability as well as aspects of word recognition, word analysis, fluency, and comprehension. Wording of the items was kept simple so that reading ability itself would not confound the assessment. In addition, all items were stated positively to foster straightforward decision-making.

Brief written directions to the children ap-

pear directly on the instrument. The possible responses and their respective abbreviations are also included. The introductory material also contains a sample item and an accompanying explanation. Before duplicating the instrument for student use, the codes to the left of the items should be covered or removed.

In taking the RSPS, children are asked to read each item and to rate how much they agree or disagree with the statement. They make their ratings using a 5-point Likert system (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree). Because the number of items varies according to the scale (PR = 9; OC = 6; SF = 9; PS = 8), the maximum possible scores will differ for each scale (PR = 45; OC = 30; SF = 45; PS = 40).

Table 1
Number of items and internal consistency reliabilities for each scale

Scale	Number of items	Alpha reliabilities
Progress	9	.84
Observational Comparison	6	.82
Social Feedback	9	.81
Physiological States	8	.84

Note: The RSPS consists of 33 items with 32 items representing the four scales shown here plus 1 general item ("I think I am a good reader").
n = 1,525.

Administration and scoring

The RSPS takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The teacher is asked to explain the purpose of the assessment to the children and to work through the example so that all children understand what they are to do. Children are encouraged to ask questions about any aspect of the instrument they don't understand. The teacher should emphasize that the children should be as honest as possible and that there are no right answers. Specific directions to the teacher are provided in Appendix B.

Scoring of the RSPS is accomplished by summing the raw scores for each of the four scales. The scoring sheet in Appendix C has been provided to help compute scores for the

Progress, Observational Comparison, Social Feedback, and Physiological States scales. To calculate the scores, the child's completed RSPS is placed alongside a scoring sheet. With the exception of item 1, the scorer transfers the child's responses to each item on the RSPS to the answer sheet using the numerical scoring key (e.g., SA = 5; SD = 1). After all responses are recorded, the scorer simply adds the number in each column to get a raw score for each scale.

The child's scores can then be compared with the norming data in Table 2. Any score for a scale that is slightly below, equal to, or slightly greater than the mean indicates that the child's self-perceptions are in the normal range. On the other hand, scores that are a good deal lower than the scale's mean would be a cause for concern. When the difference exceeds the size of the standard deviation, the child's scores are in the low range. Rough low range cut-off points for the scales would be: Progress (34), Observational Comparison (16), Social Feedback (27), and Physiological States (25). By the same token, scores that exceed the mean by an amount equal to or greater than the standard deviation would indicate high reader self-perceptions (i.e., PR = 44+; OC = 26+; SF = 38+; PS = 37+).

Assessment and instructional uses

Information obtained from the Reader Self-Perception Scale can be used for both whole group and individual assessments and interventions. Teachers can gain a sense of how the general classroom climate affects children's self-efficacy judgments in reading. These conclusions can be drawn by examin-

ing group performance on the total scale and on the four individual scales. For example, after results of the RSPS are available for interpretation, teachers might feel the need to: (a) devise more meaningful and considerate ways to communicate reading progress to their students, (b) modify their current classroom oral reading practices, (c) revise their grouping techniques, (d) pay closer attention to the reading materials they assign, (e) become more sensitive to indirect signals they send to children regarding their reading performance, (f) counsel the class and the parents about constructive feedback, or (g) strive to make the children more physically and mentally comfortable during the act of reading.

Data from the RSPS can also be useful for monitoring individual children. For instance, scores for the total scale and for the four subscales might be maintained in portfolios to demonstrate changes in self-perceptions over time. A child's results from the beginning of the school year could be compared with those obtained at the midpoint or at the end of the year. Likewise, RSPS results for a child could be compared from year to year. Regardless of timeline, individual instructional adjustments could flow naturally from the findings.

Besides a portfolio application, the scale could help teachers to detect and assist children whose self-perceptions are somewhat below the norm. Depending upon their individual profiles, these children might require one or more of the following instructional adjustments: (a) more frequent and concrete illustrations of their progress; (b) opportunities to read in situations where their performance compares favorably with the performance of

Table 2
Descriptive statistics by scale and grade level

Grade level	n	Progress			Observational Comparison			Social Feedback			Physiological States		
		Mean	SD	SE	Mean	SD	SE	Mean	SD	SE	Mean	SD	SE
4	506	39.6	4.8	.21	20.7	4.7	.21	33.2	5.3	.24	31.8	5.9	.26
5	571	39.5	5.2	.22	21.0	4.8	.20	32.7	5.4	.22	31.0	6.4	.27
6	402	39.0	5.1	.25	21.3	4.6	.23	32.0	5.5	.27	30.5	6.2	.31
Total	1,479	39.4	5.0	.13	20.9	4.7	.12	32.7	5.4	.14	31.2	6.2	.16

Note: Total possible raw scores are Progress (45), Observational Comparison (30), Social Feedback (45), and Physiological States (40).

peers; (c) increased positive reinforcement from the teacher, parents, and classmates; and (d) modeling of the enjoyment, appreciation, relaxation, and gratification that can be gained from reading. For example, low scores on the physiological states scale could signal that the teacher needs to be especially enthusiastic with a particular child, to strive to make her or his reading engagements consistently pleasurable, and to provide the child with a rich array of engaging literature.

Many of these adjustments can be accomplished by carefully estimating and orchestrating the interest, familiarity, and readability of texts. Self-perceptions can also be enhanced when teachers prepare children well for all reading assignments and group them wisely and flexibly. Children with low reader self-perceptions will function best in classrooms where patience is the rule and individual differences are not only tolerated but respected and valued. Additional encouragement and assistance can go a long way in building positive reader self-perceptions.

The Reader Self-Perception Scale can also be used to help identify children who are at risk due to a severe lack of confidence in their reading ability. These children need to be assessed more thoroughly and treated more intensively. When a child's RSPS profile departs markedly from the norm, the teacher can follow up with a personalized, structured interview like those cited previously. Insights gained from the scale itself and from the interview can be applied in counseling the child. In extreme cases, however, the results may be indicative of a deep-rooted or broader self-esteem problem that demands the expertise of a counselor or school psychologist.

One teacher's use

Near the beginning of the school year, Ms. Hogan decided to administer the RSPS to her entire class of fourth graders. Since the children came to her from a building that houses only primary students, she knew very little about them. Ms. Hogan recognized that the children would do a great deal more "reading to learn" in fourth grade, and so she wanted to learn how they felt about themselves as readers because this would influence their response to literacy instruction. Ms. Hogan planned to make adjustments that would benefit the

whole class as well as individual children. She also planned to administer the RSPS again at the end of the year to determine if her instruction produced affective growth.

After the children's papers had been scored, she looked closely at the scores and was pleased to note that most of the students felt very good about their reading ability. As a group, the children's mean scores on the Progress, Observational Comparison, and Physiological States scales were quite high (42, 23, and 34, respectively), but the mean score for Social Feedback was only 24. Because this score was well below the average range, Ms. Hogan became concerned. In response, she planned to provide the children with reading materials that would allow her to make frequent use of praise. In addition, she decided to monitor her body language closely to make sure that she sent her students positive messages about their reading performance. She would also work hard to create a more supportive climate for literacy by encour-

Teachers can gain a sense of how the general classroom climate affects children's self-efficacy judgments in reading.

aging the children to praise one another and by advising parents how to offer constructive feedback at home.

One of the children, Patti, scored extremely well on all four scales. It was clear that she had a solid appreciation of her own reading ability. On the other hand, the RSPS profile of another student, Bob, showed average scores for Progress, slightly below average for Physiological States, and well below average for Observational Comparison and Social Feedback. Ms. Hogan wondered if Bob felt fine about his silent reading but lacked confidence when reading aloud. She thought that he might have noticed his oral reading didn't compare well with the other children's, and she wondered if the signals he had received in the past from teachers, classmates, and parents had

confirmed his doubts. Ms. Hogan believed that his nearly average score on the Physiological States scale might be the result of Bob's feelings about his silent and oral reading offsetting one another. She decided to monitor the situation carefully during the year, to speak with Bob's previous teachers, and to check his permanent record to see if his oral reading had lagged consistently behind his silent reading.

Ms. Hogan was most concerned about Norm. All of his RSPS scores were very low, and his previous achievement test scores indicated a serious reading problem. Norm was new to the district, and Ms. Hogan suspected that the children in her class might read much better than those at his old school. At first, his progress had been slow because the reading materials were much too difficult for him. Also, from listening to the other children read, he learned very quickly that his reading ability didn't compare well. Other children were impatient when Norm read aloud, and she noticed his discomfort with almost any reading task. Because his reading ability was so limited, Ms. Hogan realized that his low reader self-image had probably been shaped over a long time, but she knew that his recent difficulties had made matters worse. She intended to interview Norm individually to gain insights into his reader self-perceptions; to share her results and concerns with the guidance counselor, school psychologist, and principal; and to make as many appropriate instructional adjustments as possible.

A final word

Due to its uniqueness and timeliness, the Reader Self-Perception Scale might be immediately useful in a wide array of literacy contexts. The norming of the instrument has been quite extensive, and the scale provides meaningful data for teachers, administrators, parents, and perhaps the students themselves. For the time being, the scale should only be used in fourth through sixth grades, although with additional norming it might prove to be functional at higher grade levels. We would also caution against using the RSPS below fourth grade, even if the items are read aloud to the students. The instrument has not been tested at lower levels and, as we noted previously, research suggests that children in earlier grades tend not to appraise their reading ability accurately, nor attribute the causes of their achievement properly.

Users of the RSPS and the various stakeholders will ultimately need to decide how the instrument ought to be applied and interpreted. The scale yields a general indication of a child's self-perceptions of reading ability. This indicator should not be confused with more specific self-evaluations of reading skills and strategies that students might make as part of regular classroom instruction. Neither does the scale address self-appraisals of specific word analysis techniques or comprehension abilities such as prediction, imagery, self-regulated learning, retelling proficiency, or critical reflection. Whether the scale's major function is for assessment and instruction or for research, our hope is that with additional norming, the instrument will become a routine reading-related assessment on a par with well known cognitive and affective measures.

Authors' note

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APPENDIX A

The Reader Self-Perception Scale

Listed below are statements about reading. Please read each statement carefully. Then circle the letters that show how much you agree or disagree with the statement. Use the following:

SA = Strongly Agree
 A = Agree
 U = Undecided
 D = Disagree
 SD = Strongly Disagree

Example: **I think pizza with pepperoni is the best.** SA A U D SD

If you are *really positive* that pepperoni pizza is best, circle SA (Strongly Agree).

If you *think* that is good but maybe not great, circle A (Agree).

If you *can't decide* whether or not it is best, circle U (undecided).

If you *think* that pepperoni pizza is not all that good, circle D (Disagree).

If you are *really positive* that pepperoni pizza is not very good, circle SD (Strongly Disagree).

- | | | | | | | |
|------|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| | 1. I think I am a good reader. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [SF] | 2. I can tell that my teacher likes to listen to me read. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [SF] | 3. My teacher thinks that my reading is fine. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [OC] | 4. I read faster than other kids. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [PS] | 5. I like to read aloud. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [OC] | 6. When I read, I can figure out words better than other kids. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [SF] | 7. My classmates like to listen to me read. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [PS] | 8. I feel good inside when I read. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [SF] | 9. My classmates think that I read pretty well. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [PR] | 10. When I read, I don't have to try as hard as I used to. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [OC] | 11. I seem to know more words than other kids when I read. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [SF] | 12. People in my family think I am a good reader. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [PR] | 13. I am getting better at reading. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [OC] | 14. I understand what I read as well as other kids do. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [PR] | 15. When I read, I need less help than I used to. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [PS] | 16. Reading makes me feel happy inside. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [SF] | 17. My teacher thinks I am a good reader. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [PR] | 18. Reading is easier for me than it used to be. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [PR] | 19. I read faster than I could before. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| [OC] | 20. I read better than other kids in my class. | SA | A | U | D | SD |

(continued)

APPENDIX A (cont'd.)
The Reader Self-Perception Scale

[PS]	21. I feel calm when I read.	SA	A	U	D	SD
[OC]	22. I read more than other kids.	SA	A	U	D	SD
[PR]	23. I understand what I read better than I could before.	SA	A	U	D	SD
[PR]	24. I can figure out words better than I could before.	SA	A	U	D	SD
[PS]	25. I feel comfortable when I read.	SA	A	U	D	SD
[PS]	26. I think reading is relaxing.	SA	A	U	D	SD
[PR]	27. I read better now than I could before.	SA	A	U	D	SD
[PR]	28. When I read, I recognize more words than I used to.	SA	A	U	D	SD
[PS]	29. Reading makes me feel good.	SA	A	U	D	SD
[SF]	30. Other kids think I'm a good reader.	SA	A	U	D	SD
[SF]	31. People in my family think I read pretty well.	SA	A	U	D	SD
[PS]	32. I enjoy reading.	SA	A	U	D	SD
[SF]	33. People in my family like to listen to me read.	SA	A	U	D	SD

APPENDIX B

The Reader Self-Perception Scale Directions for administration, scoring, and interpretation

The Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) is intended to provide an assessment of how children feel about themselves as readers. The scale consists of 33 items that assess self-perceptions along four dimensions of self-efficacy (Progress, Observational Comparison, Social Feedback, and Physiological States). Children are asked to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with each statement on a 5-point scale (5 = Strongly Agree, 1 = Strongly Disagree). The information gained from this scale can be used to devise ways to enhance children's self-esteem in reading and, ideally, to increase their motivation to read. The following directions explain specifically what you are to do.

Administration

For the results to be of any use, the children must: (a) understand exactly what they are to do, (b) have sufficient time to complete all items, and (c) respond honestly and thoughtfully. Briefly explain to the children that they are being asked to complete a questionnaire about reading. Emphasize that this is not a *test* and that there are no *right* answers. Tell them that they should be as honest as possible because their responses will be confidential. Ask the children to fill in their names, grade levels, and classrooms as appropriate. Read the directions aloud and work through the example with the students as a group. Discuss the response options and make sure that all children understand the rating scale before moving on. It is important that children know that they may raise their hands to ask questions about any words or ideas they do not understand.

The children should then read each item and circle their response for the item. They should work at their own pace. Remind the children that they should be sure to respond to all items. When all items are completed, the children should stop, put their pencils down, and wait for further instructions. Care should be taken that children who work more slowly are not disturbed by children who have already finished.

Scoring

To score the RSPS, enter the following point values for each response on the RSPS scoring sheet (Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1) for each item number under the appropriate scale. Sum each column to obtain a raw score for each of the four specific scales.

Interpretation

Each scale is interpreted in relation to its total possible score. For example, because the RSPS uses a 5-point scale and the Progress scale consists of 9 items, the highest total score for Progress is 45 ($9 \times 5 = 45$). Therefore, a score that would fall approximately in the middle of the range (22–23) would indicate a child's somewhat indifferent perception of her or himself as a reader with respect to Progress. Note that each scale has a different possible total raw score (Progress = 45, Observational Comparison = 30, Social Feedback = 45, and Physiological States = 40) and should be interpreted accordingly.

As a further aid to interpretation, Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics by grade level for each scale. The raw score of a group or individual can be compared to that of the pilot study group at each grade level.

APPENDIX C

The Reader Self-Perception Scale scoring sheet

Student name _____

Teacher _____

Grade _____ Date _____

Scoring key: 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)
 4 = Agree (A)
 3 = Undecided (U)
 2 = Disagree (D)
 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Scales

General Perception	Progress	Observational Comparison	Social Feedback	Physiological States
1. _____	10. _____	4. _____	2. _____	5. _____
	13. _____	6. _____	3. _____	8. _____
	15. _____	11. _____	7. _____	16. _____
	18. _____	14. _____	9. _____	21. _____
	19. _____	20. _____	12. _____	25. _____
	23. _____	22. _____	17. _____	26. _____
	24. _____		30. _____	29. _____
	27. _____		31. _____	32. _____
	28. _____		33. _____	
Raw score _____ of 45		_____ of 30	_____ of 45	_____ of 40

Score interpretation

High	44+	26+	38+	37+
Average	39	21	33	31
Low	34	16	27	25

APPENDIX D

Validation

A pool of initial items was developed that reflected each of Bandura's (1977) four factors (Performance, Observational Comparison, Social Feedback, and Physiological States). Thirty graduate students in reading were presented the pool of items in random order as well as the conceptual definitions for each of the four factor categories. The graduate students were asked to place each item in the category it seemed to fit best. Based upon feedback received in this judgmental process, modifications were made to the item pool.

The instrument was then administered to 625 students in grades four, five, and six in two different school districts. Preliminary alpha reliabilities for each scale measured in the mid 70's range. Although alpha reliabilities in this range are quite acceptable for an affective measure (Gable, 1986), the analysis identified some items that did not seem to fit well with the rest of the scale. In addition, an exploratory factor analysis indicated clear scales for Observational Comparison, Social Feedback and Physiological States, but not for the Performance scale. Since the items were not clustering as a single construct, the operational definition of the scale was reexamined. A panel of eight experts (consisting of both university faculty and graduate students enrolled in reading and affective instrument development courses) examined the data more closely and made recommendations. The panel concluded that it was more meaningful to use perceptions of personal progress as the one concrete way readers might be able to make ability judgments apart from the other scales. It was also felt that the progress construct subsumed the majority of the dimensions of the original Performance scale. Thus, the original scale was operationally redefined, and only those items that reflected personal progress were retained. For this reason, the scale was renamed Progress.

After the revisions indicated by the first pilot had been made, an additional 1,479 fourth, fifth and sixth grade children in several urban, suburban and rural school districts were asked to respond. Further reliability analyses indicated scale alphas ranging from .81 to .84 with all items contributing to the overall scale reliability. Table 1 (p. 473) displays the internal consistency reliabilities for each scale by grade level. A factor analysis indicated the existence of each of the expected categories and, as hoped, moderate yet significant relationships were indicated between RSPS scores (total and individual scale) and both the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna & Kear, 1990) and a variety of standardized reading achievement measures (Henk & Melnick, 1992, 1993).

Moreover, as Table 2 (p. 474) indicates, the mean scores and standard deviations for each scale were extremely similar across grades, and the corresponding standard errors were desirably low. Children reported the highest relative reader self-perceptions on the Progress scale (39.4 of the maximum possible 45) followed by Physiological States (31.2 of 40), Social Feedback (32.7 of 45), and Observational Comparison (20.9 of 30). Overall, these scores indicate that children tended to think of themselves as capable readers.