Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT)

Description: The Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT) is a quick estimate of target word recognition levels for children and adults. Test administration time is approximately 3-5 minutes. The assessment is available in Spanish, Braille, and/or large print.

Publisher: Slosson Educational Publications, Inc.

Grade Levels: 1-12

Skills/Standards Assessed: The SORT assesses students’ word recognition level and decoding (phonics).

Report Format/Results Type: The SORT is a norm-referenced assessment that provides estimates of grade and age equivalents, standard scores, and national percentiles.

Research Based:
There is partially convincing evidence for the research base and development of the SORT assessment tool. One MMY review indicates:

Words were chosen from a variety of reading lists and textbooks at selected grade levels so that they represent a steady progression of difficulty from the preprimer to high school level. Words were not chosen according to their phonic characteristics, and hence, the SORT-R cannot be used to determine a person's knowledge of grapheme/phoneme relationships. (Westby, 1995)

However, there is no evidence available to suggest that the developers piloted the items in the assessment tool or revised the items based on feedback from an expert panel. Further, “the SORT-R has retained the same (reading) lists as the original SORT” (Westby, 1995) which was initially created in 1963.

Reliable and Valid:
There is partially convincing evidence for the reliability and validity for the SORT assessment tool. A MMY review of the assessment states “Although the SORT-R has adequate reliability, the test has limited relevance to school-based instruction. The content and construct validity of the SORT-R is questionable” (Shaw, 1995).

Multiple Data Points:
The SORT assessment tool is intended to be used for screening purposes; therefore it is not useful as a continual progress monitoring tool to collect multiple data points of students’ performance (Slosson Publications, Inc.).

Aligned with Reading Standards:
There is convincing evidence that the SORT assessment tool is aligned with state and national reading standards (Slosson Publications, Inc.). Specifically, the assessment is aligned with the Common Core Standards in that it (1) addresses major areas of reading including vocabulary and comprehension and (2) is sensitive to text complexity (i.e., leveled items of differing difficulty level).

Sensitive and appropriate for differing cultures and needs:
There is no evidence that the SORT assessment tool is sensitive and appropriate for differing cultures and needs. Unfortunately, there is currently no research or information in support of this standard. The developers and outside researchers have yet to address this standard in the development of their items and determining if the items used are appropriate for individuals of differing cultures or needs. Additionally, the assessment tool does not provide norms that are disaggregated by individuals of differing cultures or needs.

References

