

June 21, 2013

RE: GORT-5 Comprehension Subtest

Dear GORT-5 User,

Recently, several GORT-5 users have reported that the application of the basal rule for the Comprehension subtest printed in the manual inflates the scores of some students. After extensive review of the data and scoring procedures, we have verified that this is, in fact, the case. During the process of reviewing the scoring procedures, we discovered that the instructions provided in the manual differed from those that were used to prepare the normative tables and establish the test's reliability and validity.

We then rescored the standardization data using the instructions in the manual and compared those scores with those actually used during the development of the GORT-5. Surprisingly, we found that in 94% of the sample the difference between the scorings was equal to or less than 1 standard error of measurement (i.e., 1 scaled score point). For the remaining 6%, however, the Comprehension score was indeed inflated. Based on this, we concluded that the basal and ceiling rules in the manual should be replaced with the correct instructions (i.e., those used to prepare the normative tables and establish the test's reliability and validity).

Enclosed you will find replacements for pages 8-10 of your GORT-5 manual. Simply place them over the pages they are replacing. If you need additional information, simply email PRO-ED at [testquestion@proedinc.com](mailto:testquestion@proedinc.com).

Kind regards,

Elizabeth A. Allen, Ph.D.  
Director of Research and Development

7. The Deviations from Print total is converted to an Accuracy Score.
8. The Rate and Accuracy Scores are summed to yield the Fluency Score, which is used to determine basals and ceilings.

## Basals and Ceilings

Although the GORT-5 yields scores for Rate, Accuracy, Fluency, and Comprehension, **basals and ceilings are computed only for Fluency**. The Fluency basal is established when the student scores 9 or 10 points on **two** consecutive stories. The ceiling occurs when the student's Fluency score is 2 or less on **two** consecutive stories. If no Fluency basal is obtained on the first two stories administered, testing continues until a ceiling is reached or until Story 16 has been administered. The examiner then returns to the entry point and administers the stories in reverse order until a basal is reached or until Story 1 has been administered.

All stories below the basal are given full credit for Rate, Accuracy, and Fluency, and all stories above the ceiling get zero points. Some students will not obtain a basal for Fluency even when Story 1 has been administered. Other students will not obtain a ceiling for Fluency even when Story 16 has been administered. These situations do not invalidate the test.

No basal or ceiling rules are applied to Comprehension. Instead, every story that is administered in the process of obtaining a Fluency basal and ceiling is also scored for Comprehension. When calculating the total raw score for Comprehension, sum the item scores for the *administered* Comprehension items and add 5 points for each *unadministered* story below the Fluency entry point or basal. All Comprehension items above the Fluency ceiling get zero points. **Note:** Never administer stories below the Fluency basal or above the Fluency ceiling for any reason. Doing so will result in invalid scores.

Four examples of how to apply basal and ceiling rules and to calculate total raw scores are provided in Figure 2.2. The first example depicts a fairly straightforward administration; the remaining examples demonstrate less common occurrences.

*Example A—One Basal, One Ceiling:* Testing began with Story 4. The student's basal occurred at Story 4 (i.e., Fluency scores of 9 for both Story 4 and Story 5). Testing continued until a ceiling was reached at Stories 7 and 8. Fifteen points were added to both Rate and Accuracy for the stories below the basal. Fifteen points were also added to Comprehension for the unadministered stories below the basal. Because Fluency is a combination of Rate and Accuracy, 30 Fluency points were awarded for the stories below the basal. Zero points (0) were awarded for the stories above the ceiling. The scores for all stories are summed to yield Total scores for Rate (31), Accuracy (27), Fluency (58), and Comprehension (23).

*Example B—No Basal:* The examiner began testing with Story 4 (the entry point). Testing continued until the ceiling was obtained at Stories 10 and 11. Because the student still had not obtained a basal, the examiner administered Story 3, Story 2, and Story 1. The scores for all stories are summed to yield Total scores for Rate (32), Accuracy (33), Fluency (65), and Comprehension (30).

*Example C—Multiple Basals, No Ceiling:* The examiner began testing with Story 6 and continued until the student had read the last story without reaching a ceiling. Note that several basals were achieved. The basal at Stories 12 and 13

Example A. One basal and ceiling

Section 2. Record of GORT-5 Scores

Story #	Rate Score	Accuracy Score	Fluency Score	Comprehension Score
1		+15	+15	+30
2		+	=	
3		+	=	
entry 4 >	4	+ 5	= 9	2
5	5	+ 4	= 9	3
6	5	+ 2	= 7	2
7	1	+ 1	= 2	1
8	1	+ 0	= 1	0
9		+0	+0	+0
10		+	=	
11		+	=	
12		+	=	
13		+	=	
14		+	=	
15		+	=	
16		+	=	
Total Score	31	27	58	23

Example B. No basal

Section 2. Record of GORT-5 Scores

Story #	Rate Score	Accuracy Score	Fluency Score	Comprehension Score
1	4	+ 5	= 9	5
2	4	+ 4	= 8	4
3	4	+ 3	= 7	2
entry 4 >	5	+ 5	= 10	4
5	3	+ 3	= 6	3
6	2	+ 4	= 6	3
7	3	+ 2	= 5	2
8	4	+ 3	= 7	4
9	2	+ 3	= 5	2
10	1	+ 1	= 2	1
11	0	+ 0	= 0	0
12		+0	+0	+0
13		+	=	
14		+	=	
15		+	=	
16		+	=	
Total Score	32	33	65	30

Example C. Multiple basals, no ceiling

Section 2. Record of GORT-5 Scores

Story #	Rate Score	Accuracy Score	Fluency Score	Comprehension Score
1		+55	+55	+110
2		+	=	
3		+	=	
4		+	=	
5		+	=	
entry 6 >	5	+ 5	= 10	3
7	5	+ 5	= 10	1
8	3	+ 5	= 8	2
9	4	+ 5	= 9	2
10	4	+ 5	= 9	1
11	4	+ 3	= 7	2
12	5	+ 4	= 9	3
13	4	+ 5	= 9	2
14	4	+ 2	= 6	1
15	3	+ 3	= 6	1
16	2	+ 3	= 5	1
Total Score	73	72	145	44

Example D. Double ceiling

Section 2. Record of GORT-5 Scores

Story #	Rate Score	Accuracy Score	Fluency Score	Comprehension Score
1		+5	+5	+10
2	4	+ 5	= 9	4
3	4	+ 5	= 9	3
4	0	+ 2	= 2	1
5	0	+ 2	= 2	1
entry 6 >	2	+0	+0	+0
7	1	+ 1	= 2	2
8	1	+ 2	= 3	3
9	0	+ 2	= 2	3
10	0	+ 1	= 1	2
11		+	=	
12		+	=	
13		+	=	
14		+	=	
15		+	=	
16		+	=	
Total Score	13	19	32	14

Figure 2.2. Examples of Basals and Ceilings.

is the true basal because it is closest to the ceiling (or the last story, if the student never reaches a ceiling). Fifty-five points each were awarded for Rate and Accuracy for the 11 stories below the basal; 110 points were awarded for Fluency for the stories below the basal (i.e., Stories 1 through 11). For Comprehension, 25 points were awarded for the five *unadministered* stories below the basal. The administered Comprehension items were awarded points according to the student's responses (e.g., on Story 5, the student responded correctly to 3 Comprehension

questions, so he received a Comprehension score of 3 for Story 5). The scores for all stories are summed to yield Total scores for Rate (73), Accuracy (72), Fluency (145), and Comprehension (44).

*Example D—Double Ceiling:* Testing began with Story 6. The examiner tested until the student reached a ceiling, at Stories 9 and 10. Because no basal was established, testing continued with Story 5 and proceeded in reverse order until a basal was obtained at Stories 2 and 3. Five points each were awarded for Rate and Accuracy, and 10 points were awarded for Fluency for the story below the basal. Five points were also awarded for the unadministered Comprehension items below the basal. Note that two Fluency ceilings occurred: one at Stories 4 and 5 and another at Stories 9 and 10. The ceiling at Stories 4 and 5 is the true ceiling because it is closer to the basal. No points were awarded for stories above the ceiling (Stories 6 through 16). The scores for all stories are summed to yield Total scores for Rate (13), Accuracy (19), Fluency (32), and Comprehension (14).

## Specific Administration and Scoring Instructions

In this section, we describe in detail the procedures for scoring the GORT-5 stories. Specifically discussed are (a) prompting and timing the reader, (b) marking deviations from print, (c) administering and scoring the comprehension questions, (d) determining Rate, Accuracy, and Fluency Scores, and (e) conducting a miscue analysis.

### Prompting and Timing the Reader

Read the instructions (Examiner Record Booklet page 3) to the examinee, give him the Student Book, direct him to the story he is to read, and say, “Begin.” Start the timer or stopwatch when the examinee begins reading, and mark any deviations from print in the Examiner Record Booklet. Stop the timer when the examinee finishes reading the story. Do not stop timing if you have to provide a word for the examinee. Only stop the timer during reading if the examinee skips a line. In that circumstance, stop the timer and redirect the examinee to the correct line. Restart the timer as soon as the examinee resumes reading on the correct line. Record the number of seconds the examinee took to read the story in the Examiner Record Booklet.

### Marking Deviations from Print

Each deviation from print is recorded for the appropriate story in the Examiner Record Booklet. Deviations may be marked in one of two ways: (1) a simple slash marking system or (2) a more detailed marking system for use in miscue analysis. Each system is described below.

#### Slash Marking System

The basic system for noting reading errors (deviations from print) on the GORT-5 entails putting a slash mark on each word the student misreads. This system is suitable for obtaining standardized assessment results but will not be adequate for a more in-depth miscue analysis. If you require a more detailed marking