What counts as an error?

Description	Example	
Mispronunciations or dropped endings If a student mispronounces a word or does not pronounce an ending, count it as an error.	Sentence: John caught a bass. Student: John caught a base.	Errors: 1
Transpositions (out of sequence) If a student transposes two or more words, count each word read out of order as an error.	Sentence: Tim walked quietly away. Student: Tim quietly walked away.	Errors: 2
Hesitations (words supplied by the examiner) If a student hesitates for three seconds, tell the word to the student, and count the word as an error.	Sentence: Tom walked his dog. Student: Tom . . . (3-second pause) Examiner: walked Student: his dog.	Errors: 1
Omissions If a student skips a word, several words, or an entire line, count each skipped word as an error.	Sentence: He is in the big chair. Student: He is in the chair.	Errors: 1
Substitutions If a student substitutes one word for another, even if the substitution is a synonym, count it as an error.	Sentence: I went to my house. Student: I went to my home.	Errors: 1
Repeated errors If a student makes the same error more than once, count each instance as an error.	Passage: The cat likes milk. She drinks it every day. The cat likes me. Student: The cat licks milk. She drinks it every day. The cat licks me.	Errors: 2

Note: All guidelines for counting errors, including the repeated errors rule, apply to proper nouns.

What doesn't count as an error?

Description	Example	
Mispronunciations or dropped endings due to speech problems or dialect Mispronunciations due to speech problems or dialect are typically not counted as errors.	Sentence: Pam made it for him. Student: Pam made it fo him.	Errors: 0
Self-corrections If a student self-corrects an error, count the word(s) as correct.	Sentence: I ran to the park. Student: I ran to the pan . . . park.	Errors: 0
Repetitions If a student repeats words or phrases while reading, do not count the repetitions as errors.	Sentence: I am happy. Student: I am . . . I am happy.	Errors: 0
Insertions If a student adds words, do not count the words as errors. Counting insertions as errors would result in subtracting them from the number of words read correctly, giving the student a lower number of wcpm than s/he actually read.	Sentence: Sheila cried hard. Student: Sheila cried very hard.	Errors: 0

Firewalkers

In 1959, some people watched something strange. It happened on the island of Bora Bora. They watched men walk on fire. The firewalkers walked on a pit of hot coals with bare feet. The coals were so hot they could burn through thick boots in a few seconds. The firewalkers walked all the way down the pit. The pit was 40 feet long. They walked back again. The men were hot, but their feet were not hurt.

There are firewalkers in other parts of the world. There are firewalkers in India, Japan, and North Africa.

The feet of many firewalkers have been looked at by doctors after they have walked on the coals. Their feet have not been burned. Most people cannot walk on hot coals. Firewalkers train for a long time. It is very dangerous. Boys and girls should not try firewalking.

Gorilla

Gorilla! The very word terrifies people. They think gorillas are monsters who would like to tear them limb from limb. And, to be sure, gorillas look frightening. Their faces look mean, and they are big and strong. But the truth is, gorillas are very shy. They don't want to eat people. They eat only grass and leaves. When they pound their chests, it is only to frighten an enemy. If that doesn't work, the gorilla will just run away.

The most famous gorilla was Gargantua the Great. He was in the circus. Circus posters called him, "The World's Most Terrifying Living Creature." They showed pictures of him looking terrible. Before he was in the circus, Gargantua belonged to a woman in New York. She raised him from a baby. And she thought he was very sweet. One night it was stormy out. Gargantua was afraid. So he broke out of his cage and crawled like a frightened child into bed with the woman! That was when she decided to give him to the circus.