

Teachers need to know what to do, and students need to realize that adding the necessary tools for success is a *time limited process*, like putting the car in the shop to get the timing belt replaced. Once things are inserted, replaced or repaired, the car will go! Once skills are learned, assimilated and become natural, the student will pick up speed and even catch up with peers who learned earlier. Reading will begin to be something to take for granted.

Suggestions for further screening: Speech Therapist, Optometrist, Reading Specialist

Good assessment tools for **recognizing individual needs:** Slingerland, Brigance, ARI

Informal Literacy Screening

Name _____

Date _____

Directions: Observe a student while working independently. Next, add information by having the student read aloud. Use student self report to gather a picture of the issues from the student perspective. Once strengths and needs are identified, begin addressing them with the support activities listed.

Concerns	While reading	Observation	Self report	Page for support
Reads very slowly with many inaccuracies.				p.
Not aware that specific sounds are associated with letters; or some sounds are missing.				p.
Avoids reading and writing tasks.				p.
Can't focus attention on the printed marks and /or control eye movements across the page.				p.
Answering open-ended questions on tests is resisted or not possible.				p.
Not understanding words or placement in text				p.
Not capturing meaning from the passage				p.
Build ideas and images based on words decoded				p.
Able to put those ideas into words verbal or written, perhaps even utilize to answer questions				p.
Stores few ideas in memory.				p.
Spells common words incorrectly, and spells the same word differently in one sample of writing.				p.
Comparison of new ideas to current knowledge not automatic or rich.				p.
Has trouble summarizing and outlining				p.
Misreads information.				p.
Slow to start, slow going. . .				p.
Little attention to details or lost in details				p.
Foreign words present difficulties				p.
Poor memory skills				p.
Limited vocabulary				p.
Little knowledge from previous reading				p.
Forgot previously covered material				p.
Organizing and managing difficulties				p.

Quick Checks on Reading Potential, Ability, Areas to Strengthen

This is another potential checklist in this approach to assessing student reading potential. As you look at the developmental milestones that connect with learning to use language effectively, notice that many skills are sequential. The student acquires the skills, often in order, but not during the typical time, meaning the student may not have been ready for and benefited from instruction, when usually presented.

It also means that it is fine to start checking off skills at the first column, then go to the next until skills in all three columns are verified. (This is also available in the appendix in linear form).

Developmental Screening for Milestones and Occurrences related to Reading

Directions: It is most useful, when doing a developmental screening, to ask a parent to chat about language development. It can be a pleasant discussion, based on anecdotes and recollections of idiosyncratic actions and family stories. Some youth may know these, as well.

Pre-school	Younger students K-4	Grades 5-8
<p>May talk later than most children.</p> <p>? May have difficulty pronouncing words i.e., "busgetti" for "spaghetti", "mawn lower" for "lawn mower".</p> <p>? May be slow to add new vocabulary words.</p> <p>? May be unable to recall the right word.</p> <p>? May have difficulty with rhyming.</p> <p>? May have trouble learning numbers, alphabet, days of the week, colors, shapes, write or spell own name.</p> <p>? May be unable to follow multi-step directions or routines.</p> <p>? Fine motor skills may develop</p>	<p>? May be slow to learn the connection between letters and sounds.</p> <p>? Has difficulty decoding single words (reading single words in isolation).</p> <p>? Has difficulty spelling phonetically.</p> <p>? Makes consistent reading and spelling errors such as:</p> <p>. Letter reversals - "d" for "b" as in: "dog" for "bog"</p> <p>. Word reversals - "tip" for "pit"</p> <p>. Inversions - "m" for "w," "u" for "n"</p> <p>. Transpositions - "felt" for "left"</p> <p>. Substitutions - "house" for "home"</p> <p>? May confuse small words - "at" for "to," "said" for "and," "does" for "goes."</p> <p>? Relies on guessing and context.</p> <p>? May have difficulty learning new vocabulary.</p> <p>? May transpose number</p>	<p>? Is usually reading below grade level.</p> <p>? May reverse letter sequences - "soiled" for "solid," "left" for "felt."</p> <p>? May be slow to discern and to learn prefixes, suffixes, root words, and other reading and spelling strategies.</p> <p>? May have difficulty spelling; spells same word differently on the same page.</p> <p>? May avoid reading aloud.</p> <p>? May have trouble with word problems.</p> <p>? May write with difficulty with illegible handwriting; awkward pencil grip, fist-like or tight.</p> <p>? May avoid writing.</p> <p>? May have difficulty with written composition.</p> <p>? May have slow or poor recall of facts.</p> <p>? May have difficulty with comprehension.</p>

<p>more slowly than peers'.</p> <p>? May have difficulty telling and/or retelling a story in the correct sequence.</p> <p>? Often has difficulty separating sounds in words and blending sounds to make words.</p>	<p>sequences or confuse arithmetic signs (? - x / =).</p> <p>? May have trouble recalling facts.</p> <p>? May be slow to learn new skills;</p> <p>relies heavily on memorizing (often very limited, already) without understanding.</p> <p>? May have difficulty planning, organizing and managing time, materials and tasks.</p> <p>? Often uses an awkward pencil grip - fist, thumb hooked over fingers, etc.</p> <p>? May have poor "fine motor" coordination.</p>	<p>? May have trouble with non-literal language (idioms, jokes, proverbs, slang).</p> <p>? May have difficulty with planning, organizing and managing time, materials and tasks.</p>
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Reading is remarkably complex.

These interlocking activities occurring simultaneously.

Skill	Definition	Assessment Example
Configuration	visual image of the word - sees the word as a visual	Can fill in letters to fit the shadow space of a word - almost automatically
Context analysis	clues from position in sentence, on the page, and punctuation clues	Guesses a proper name since the word starts with a capital; Question because of punctuation, recognizes noun position
Sight words	instant recognition of word	Recognizes own name immediately
Phonics analysis	use sound rules to give voice to the word	Can figure out how to say a word based on sounding out the letters
Syllabication	dividing the word into sound bits, cadence when reading	Knows to break down word into consonant / vowel bits senses a rhythm
Structural analysis	recognizing prefixes and suffixes, plurals, compound words, part if speech	Uses complex understanding of words to decode a word and its meaning - skill acquired as reading becomes advanced
Dictionary analysis	last resort -look it up	Words like charisma and fatigue defy the rules and may require referencing.
Comprehension skills	Definition	Assessment
Vocabulary development	Meaning, layers of meaning and word subtitles emerge	This shows up in two ways - ability to "get" the meaning while reading, and utilize the word in personal writing
Literal meaning	Recognize and understand the story line, plot, outcome	When asked, can explain the story line, sequence of events, main character, plot
Inferred meaning	Glean ideas and opinions that are embedded	Sense of what comes next in the story, can provide intentions for characters
Evaluation	Moving beyond meaning to	Can discuss fiction or non fiction nature

	judge the writing and its impact, fact, value to self	of the material, assess if the author made a point, inaccuracies, opinions
Appreciation	Connecting emotions to the material	Enjoys or dislikes the material, is excited about sharing the ideas with others
Personalization	Project ideas and opinions	Chooses to write, tells a personal story even uses varying genre

Wish to get started now? Strengthen your teaching repertoire and personalize this information by choosing one of the skills and develop a strategy to support student competency, focusing on your current students and abilities.

How to watch and informally assess reading and literacy skills

- How does the student focus attention on the printed marks?
- What kind of eye movements occur as the student looks across the page?
- Does the reader recognize the sounds associated with letters?
- Is there a specific group of sounds that are elusive or troublesome for the reader?
- Test for sound and letter recognition in two different directions.
 - Use an alphabet, printed out in large font. Point to the various letters and ask for the name of the letter
 - Now use the alphabet letters, combined in word form. A common example is
The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog.
- How much understanding of words and grammar seems to be happening simultaneously with reading?
- Is there evidence that the student builds ideas and images while reading?
- Does the student automatically compare new ideas to previous learning? If asked, can the student do it?
- How much does the student remember --- store ideas in memory, right after reading, next day, in a later unit?
- Did the student capture meaning from the passage?
- Can the student put those ideas into words -- verbal or written, perhaps even utilize to answer questions?

Guidelines for LD and Dyslexia

- Announce readings as well as assignments well in advance.
- Find materials paralleling the textbook, but written at a lower reading level. (Also, include activities that make the reading assignment more relevant.)
- Introduce simulations to make abstract content more concrete.
- Make lists of required readings available early and arrange to obtain texts on tape from Recording for the Blind or a Reading/Typing Service.
- Offer to read written material aloud, when necessary.
- Read aloud material that is written on the chalkboard and on the overhead transparencies.
- Review relevant material, preview the material to be presented, present the new material then summarize the material just presented.
- Suggest that the students use both visual and auditory senses when reading the text.
- Rely less on textbooks. Reading for students with learning disabilities may be slow and deliberate, and comprehension may be impaired for the student, particularly when dealing with large quantities of material. Comprehension and speed usually dramatically increase with the addition of auditory input.
- Spend more time on building background for the reading selections and creating a mental scheme for the organization of the text.
- Encourage students to practice using technical words in exchanges among peers.
- Choose books with a reduced number of difficult words, direct non convoluted syntax, and passages that deliver clear meaning. Also, select readings that are organized by subheads because this aids in the flow of ideas.
- When writing materials for reading by students with learning disabilities, some of the following strategies are useful for students who have hearing issues, dyslexia or LD