



Primary Assessment of Reading Screener (PARS)

Teacher Guide - Kindergarten

Updated April 2024



The assessment is intended to be offered to students in the Fall to help teachers screen, identify and monitor a learner's needs for the purpose of guiding instructional decisions and critical reading skills.

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General Administration Guidelines

Record all attempts and relevant behaviors made by the student.

Keep these points in mind for **most** subtests to ensure this assessment is completed in a timely fashion:

- To ensure fluency, a student should be able to respond within 3 seconds. If the student takes longer, mark the item as incorrect and prompt for the next item.
- If the student gets the first three items incorrect, stop administration and move on to the next task.



1. Rhyme Instructions: a) Rhyme Recognition

Did you know that cup and pup sound the same at that end. That means they rhyme.

- Do these words rhyme?: hop / pop
- What about these words?: tip / car
- Prompt: **Do these words rhyme?:** / _____
Record all responses including nonsense words, which are acceptable.

cat / hat

frog / dog

ring / cat

snake / rake

key / dog

Instructions: b) Rhyme Production

Prompt: **Do you know a word that rhymes with:** _____?

cat

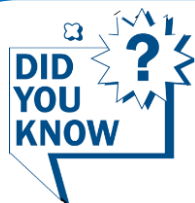
frog

ring

snake

key

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Recording Student Responses: Try recording as much information about the student behaviours during the Screener.

Commonly “ ” are used to identify letter names whereas // are used to represent a sound.

Example: “c” maybe /k/ or /s/

When asked the first sound of a word like “fish,” many students say Letter name. Try prompting **“You knew the letter name! Can you tell me the sound you heard?”**



Instruction: 2. Syllable Deletion (Phonological)

Instructions: **I will say a word that has two parts. I will ask you to say the word again without one of the parts.**

- Practice: **Say “popcorn without pop.”**
- Prompt: **Say “ _____ without ____.”**

Record all responses

cowboy – boy

baseball – ball

pepper – pe

table – ble

computer - com



Instructions: 3. Initial Sound Identification (Phonemic)

Instruction: **In “sun” /s/ is the first or beginning sound.**

- Practice: **What is the first sound in “cup?” /k/ is the first/beginning sound.**
- Prompt: **I am going to say a word. Tell me the first/beginning sound in the word _____.**

fish pin duck nose hat



When teaching letter sound correspondence avoid adding the /uh/ sound after consonants. E.g. make the sound /b/ not “buh” or /r/ not “ruh”.



Teachers are invited to use hand motions for Subtest #2: Syllable Deletion, that Would align with Tier 1 instruction of phonological skills. For example, using any Hand motions that are used in the Heggerty system.



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Phonics

Letter-name knowledge in preschool and kindergarten is one of the strongest predictors of reading in first grade (Birsh & Carreker 2018).



Instructions: 4. Letter Knowledge

Choose which letter order you wish to administer. This document offers a random letter order (pages 7-8). The Jolly Phonics letter order is an optional way to offer the letters (pages 9-10).

To ensure fluency of this task, if a student takes longer than three seconds mark the item as incorrect and prompt the next item. Record all responses.

Correct response for vowels are short sounds. If the long vowel sound is given, say to the student:

“What is another sound this letter makes?”

4a. What letter is this?

(Try lowercase and uppercase)

4b. What sound does this letter make?

(Try lowercase first)

Record all responses.

Instructions: 4c. Letter Knowledge (Optional)

Classwide or small group

- Try printing the letter ____.

Record all responses.

Skill	Abrev
Letter sounds	S
Letter names- uppercase	UC N
Letter names-lower case	LC N



Reading Words

As readers become more proficient with letter-sound correspondences, they move to putting those letter sounds together to make words. The simplest type of word for a reader to decode is a consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) word. The kindergarten PARS word list contains both CVC and high frequency words.



Instructions: 5. Reading Words

(Words can be found on pages 5)

- Prompt: **Can you tell me what this word is?**

Record all responses, including multiple attempts.

MORE

INFO

When students sound out a word one sound at a time, record by separating letters with a dash (-).

When offering words to students, try to reduce the visual impact by using a masking card to frame or isolate the word.

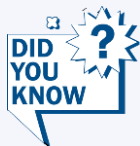


When teaching letter and sounds, use a variety of approaches that encourage generalized understanding such as:

- Pointing to letters and print in the environment or in students' names
- Talking about letters and their sounds when you encounter them in everyday activities



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Concepts of Print

Concepts of print is the understanding that print (letters and words) carries meaning. Print awareness also includes an understanding of what books are used for and how a book “works”.



Instructions: 6. Concepts of Print

- Choose a simple emergent picture book
- to confirm overall understanding :Ask the student the following questions
 - “Can you show me the front of the book?”
 - “Show me the title of the book.”
 - “Point to the author’s name”
 - “Point to a word on the page.”
 - “Point to the first/beginning letter of a word.”
 - “Point to the last/end letter of a word.”
 - “Point to a period and ask, “What is this for?”

Record if the learner demonstrated print awareness: **Y/N**

MORE INFO

When offering a book for CoP, try to find something that may match the students’ interest or reading ability.

If the child is struggling with CoP, stop the assessment and finish reading the book to keep the experience positive.



Explicitly reference words, letter, sentences, punctuation, directionality (left-right, top bottom) in big books or when you model writing.

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Optional Assessments for January or May

- These assessments are from the Grade One PARS and can be administered in term two or three as an indication of students' ability to decode and encode language later on.
- To ensure fluency, a student should be able to respond within 3 second. If the student takes longer, mark the item as incorrect and prompt for the next item.
- If the student gets the first three items incorrect stop administration and move on to the next task.
- Record all attempts and relevant behaviours made by the student.

Instructions: 1a/b. Initial & Final Sound (Phoneme)

- Instruction: In "Sun," /s/ is the first/beginning sound.
- Practice: What is the first sound in "Cup?" /k/ is the first/beginning sound.
- Prompt: I am going to say a word. Tell me the beginning/first sound in the word _.

Record all responses.

- Repeat the same word and ask What is the last/end sound of the word?

fit
pal
dog
nib
ham

Instructions: 2. Phoneme Blending

Instruction: I am going to say the sounds in a word. Put the sounds together and tell me the word?

- Practice: /s/ /i/ /t/ What is the word?
- Prompt: /_//_//_/. What is the word?

g-o
m-a-n
b-ea-ch
t-r-i-p
s-t-o-p

Record all responses.

Instructions: 3. Phoneme Segmentation

Instruction: I'm going to say a word Tell me the sounds that you hear.

- Practice: What sounds do you hear in the word "cat?"
- Prompt: What sounds do you hear in the word _____?

man
nut
top
frog
slip

Record all responses.

MORE INFO

When teaching phonological awareness, avoid adding the /uh/ sound after consonants.

Eg: make the sound /b/ not "buh" or /r/ not "ruh". This is also important for phonics instruction.



4. Letter Knowledge - Random

c z j a k m
r v t w n o
b s u d e p
f g q x h i
l y

5. Reading Words

it can and the to



4. Letter Knowledge - Random

C Z J A K M

R V T W N O

B S U D E P

F G Q X H I

L Y



4. Letter Knowledge – Jolly Phonics Order

s a t i p n

c k r h m d

e g o u l f

b j z w v y

x q

5. Reading Words

it can and the to



4. Letter Knowledge – Jolly Phonics Order

S A T I P N

C K R H M D

E G O U L F

B J Z W V Y

X Q



Primary Assessment of Reading Screener (PARS)

Planning for Reading Instruction (Optional)

Class Overview			
Tier 1 Classroom Teacher	Whole Group instruction - What critical skills do all the students require instruction on?		
	Phonological and Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Reading Words
Targeted Skill			
Tier 1 & 2 Classroom Teacher	Small Group Instruction - Which students can I group together to reinforce skills previously taught?		
	Phonological and Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Reading Words
Student(s)			
Targeted Skill			
Tier 3 Collaborative Approach	Individual Instruction - Which students can I group together to reinforce skills previously taught?		
	Phonological and Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Reading Words
Student(s)			
Targeted Skill			



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MORE

INFO

The PARS is a K-3 reading assessment based on **end of year learning targets** derived from the current BC Curriculum. The assessment is intended to be offered to students in the Fall to help teachers screen, identify and monitor a learners' needs for the purposes of guiding instructional decisions around critical reading skills.

Critical Reading Targets

Phonological & Phonemic awareness

Rhyming - recognition & production

Alliteration - Initial sound / word recognition and production

Blending

- syllables (mon-key) & onset-rimes (m-ilk) into a word
- two words into compound word
- 2 or 3 phonemes into 1 syllable word (/m//e/=me)

Segmenting

- Clap or count syllables (1-3 syllable words)
- Identify two words in a compound words
- Beginning and ending sound in 1-syllable word
- Identify sounds in 2-3 phoneme words (run=/r//u//n/)

Phonics

Alphabetic Principle

Understand that letters and letter patterns represent the sounds of spoken language.

Letter-Sound Association

- most common sounds for letters (at least 20)
- most letter names (at least 20 – both upper and lower case)
- within student's names and the names of others (i.e. classmates)
- gives a word that starts with sound

Reading Words

- a few sight words
- some familiar names
- environmental print (e.g. stop sign)

Fluency

Ease with early literacy skills includes:

- Rhyming, alliteration, blending and segmenting
- Identifying letter names & sounds (at least 20)
- Reading some CVC words and high frequency words

Vocabulary

Begin to use appropriate social words

Experimenting with language and demonstrating vocabulary usage that:

- Describes feelings
- Classifies objects, pictures, etc...
- Describes people, places & things

Comprehension

In discussions, uses strategies before during and after reading and viewing to make meaning:

- Accessing prior knowledge
- Predicting
- Making connections
- Asking questions

Definitions of Critical Reading Components

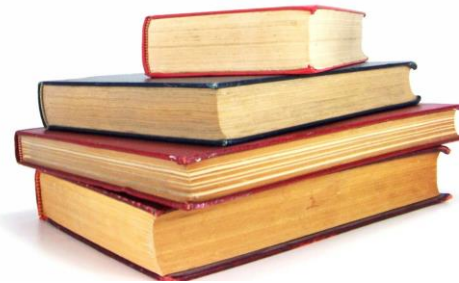
Phonological & Phonemic awareness

Phonological awareness is the ability to notice the sound structure of spoken words (Kilpatrick, 2015). It includes recognizing words, recognizing and producing rhymes, segmenting words into syllables, and segmenting and blending onset and rime.

Phonemic awareness is the ability to identify, isolate and manipulate language at the individual sound level. It is a part of phonological awareness. It includes isolating, segmenting, blending and manipulating individual sounds (Honig, Diamond & Gutlohn, 2008).

Phonics

A system for approaching reading that focuses on the relationship between letters and sounds (Kilpatrick, 2015).



Fluency

Reading words at an adequate rate, with a high level of accuracy, appropriate expression, and understanding (Birsh & Carreker 2018).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings (NIL, 2007; Honig, Diamond & Gutlohn, 2008).

Comprehension

Comprehension is making sense of what we read. Comprehension depends on good word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, word knowledge, and language ability (Birsh & Carreker 2018).

Sequence of Phonological Awareness Competencies

“The combination of explicit phonics and phonological training for all students in kindergarten and first grade provides far greater results in word-level reading skills than any other teaching practice that has been studied”
(Kilpatrick, 2012)

