



Primary Assessment of Reading Screener (PARS)

Teacher Guide – Grade 1

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

- 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.
- Commonly “ ” are used to identify letter names whereas // are used to represent a sound. Eg: “c” may be /k/ or /s/
- Teachers are invited to use hand motions that would align with Tier 1 instruction of phonemic skills. For examples, ask your SST about the hand motions used in the Haggerty system.



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?

Record all responses.

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



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 _____?

Record all responses.

man
nut
top
frog
slip

MORE INFO

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

Eg: make clipped /b/ not “buh.” This is also important for phonics instruction.



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Phonics

There are two types of books to support emergent readers who are not yet ready for trade books. Levelled books use predictable text patterns and picture clues to support early readers. Decodable books use words with phonic patterns typically taught at that stage of learning.



Instructions: 4 a/b/c. Letter Knowledge

Choose which letter order you wish to administer. This document offers a random letter order (pages 5-6). The Jolly Phonics letter order is an optional way to offer the letters and a printable version is available on the Learning Portal.

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



Instructions: 5. Digraphs

(Find the digraphs on page 5)

- Instructions: **I will point to some letters. Tell me what sound these letters make?**

Record all responses.



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

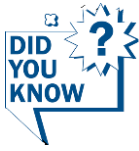


Generalized understanding from known to unknown by making connections between:

- * sound-symbol correspondences encountered in their environment
- * sound-symbol correspondences with a key word and action
- * reading and spelling of new sound-symbol correspondences
- * sound-symbol correspondences in games and print



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Reading Words

Sight vocabulary is all the words you instantly recognize. Students who are fluent readers are better able to devote their attention to comprehending the text.



Instructions: 6. Reading Words

(Find the words on page 7. An alternate word list that aligns with the Phonics Continuum can be found on the Learning Portal.)

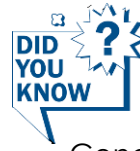
- **Can you tell me what this word is?**

Record all responses, including multiple attempts. When students sound out one letter at a time can be separated with a dash (-).



Sound walls have to ability to represent sounds beyond the 26 letters of the alphabet and represent more than one way to spell a sound.

Talk to members of your school-based team about how to create a living sound wall in your classroom.



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: 7. Concepts of Print

Choose a simple emergent picture book

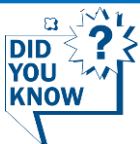
- to confirm overall understanding :Ask the student the following questions
 - **“Can you show me the front of the book?”**
 - **“Show me the title of the book.”**
 - **“Point to the author’s name”**
 - **“Point to a word on the page.”**
 - **“Point to the first/beginning letter of a word.”**
 - **“Point 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



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.



When a student has the ability to decode words using their awareness of sounds and their knowledge of phonics, they do not have to memorize individual picture-like forms for every word. This facilitates sight word learning.



Instructions: 8. Hearing and Recording Sounds

The observer selects one of five alternative sentences to use in this observation. To avoid a practice effect, choose a sentence for the initial assessment and a different sentence for subsequent re-assessment.

Sentence A	I have a big dog at home. Today I am going to take him to school.
Sentence B	Mom has gone up to the shop. She will get milk and bread.
Sentence C	The bus is coming. It will stop here to let me on.



Give the child a felt pen or pencil and have them write on a blank paper with no lines.

To introduce this task, say to the child:

- *I am going to read you a story. When I have read it through once I will read it again very slowly so that you can write down the words in the story.*

Read the sentence to the child at a normal speed. Then say:

- *Some of the words are hard. Say them slowly and think how you can write them.*
- *Start writing the words now.*

MORE INFO

Dictate slowly, word by word. When the child comes to a problem word say:

- *You say it slowly. How would you start to write it?*
- *What can you hear?*

Then add:

- *What else can you hear?*

If the child cannot complete the word say:

- *We'll leave that word. The next one is...*

Point to where to write the next word if this helps the child.

Use the marking guide that is located on the recording sheet.



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. Digraphs

ch th wh sh ph



Student View – Grade One

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



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



Student View – Grade One

5. Reading Words

the

of

and

a

to

in

is

you

that

it

he

was

for

on

are

as

with

his

they

I

at

be

this

have

from



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			



Primary Assessment of Reading Screener (PARS) Teacher Guide – Grade One

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.

Grade One Critical Reading Targets

Phonological & Phonemic awareness

Blending & Segmenting

- 3 to 4 sounds into word (/m//a//n/=man, /s//t//o//p/=stop)
- Initial, medial, and final sounds in 1-syllable words

Manipulation

- Substitute, delete, and add sounds
Delete "f" from flake
Substitute "n" in nap to "c" = cap
- Word families / onset-rimes (e.g. b-ack, s-top)

Phonics

Increasing ease with mid to end of year targets including

- Recognizing and identifying all 26 letter names and sounds
- Decoding consonant digraphs ing short vowel words such as *that, shut, sang, when* and *duck*
- Decoding consonant blends with short vowels such as *stop, slip,*
- Decoding long vowels words with silent e such as *bake*
- Familiarity with common suffixes such as *s, ing* and *ed*
- Decoding some long vowel teams such as *rain, goat, tied* and *see*
- Uses common patterns to recognize new words (-all, -ame, -ice, -ate, -ight, -ing, -op)

Fluency

- Ease and accuracy with the above mentioned phonological and phonics skills
- Reads grade level text with expression and phrasing

Vocabulary

- Uses conversational language and increasingly specific and sophisticated vocabulary
- Uses vocabulary more academic language to talk about reading and viewing (book author, title, illustrator, pictures, etc...)

Comprehension

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

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

Retells most key events or ideas in sequence / identifies basic story elements / makes basic inferences about characters and situations



Primary Assessment of Reading Screener (PARS)

Student View – Grade One

Definitions of Critical Reading Components

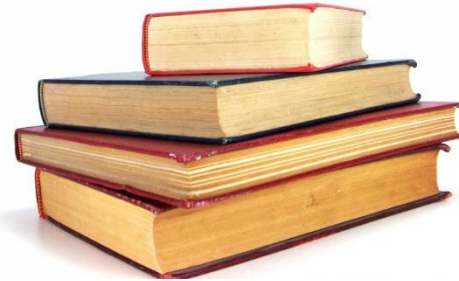
Phonological & Phonemic awareness

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).

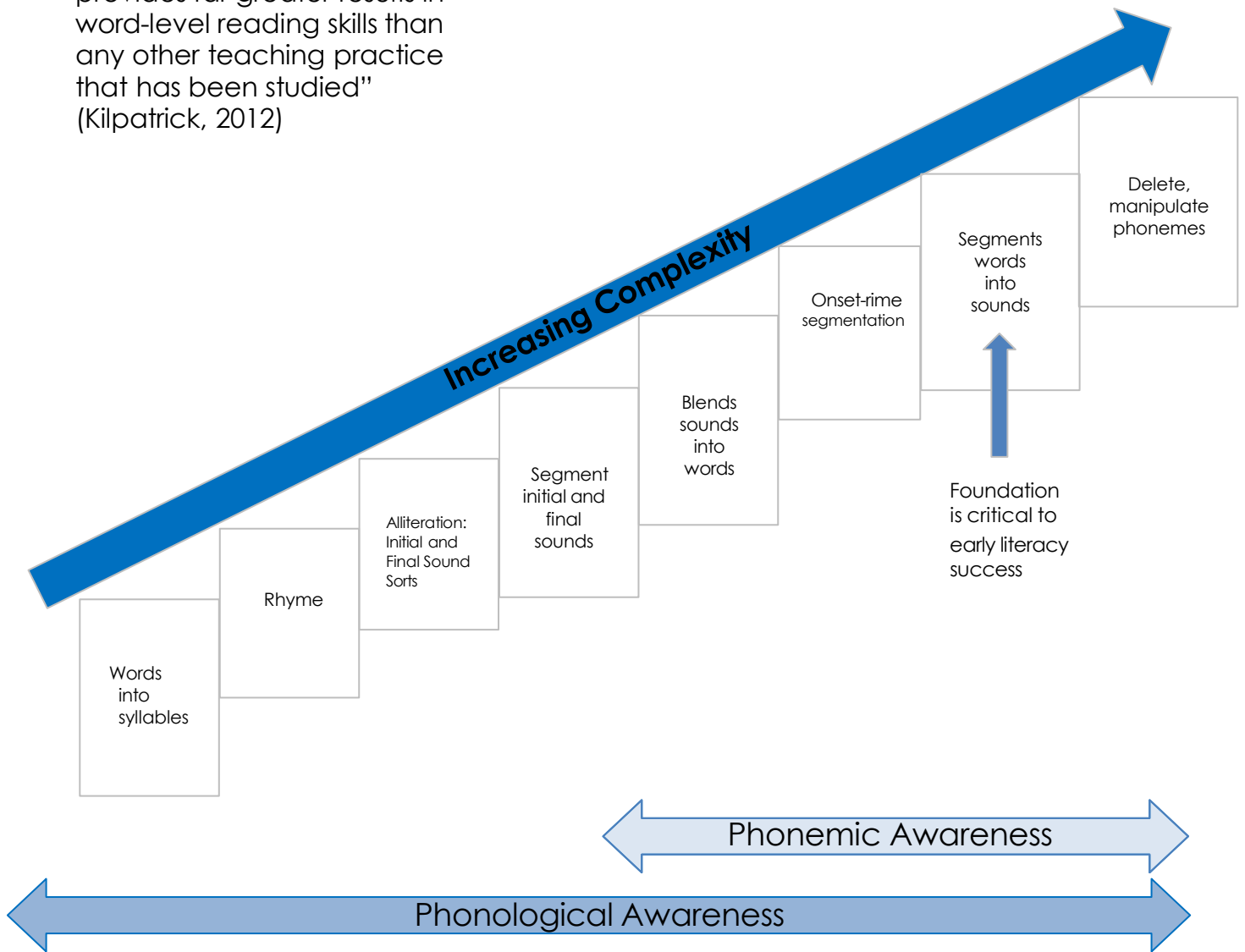


Primary Assessment of Reading Screener (PARS)

Student View – Grade One

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)





Phonics Continuum

