

PHONOLOGY

WHAT?

The letter knowledge/sound knowledge assessment measures the child's ability to:

- recognize letters
- make letter-sound relationships

WHY?

Knowledge and flexibility with the letters of the alphabet is a powerful predictor of early reading success. Whether the child makes the discrimination first on the basis of alphabetic names, sound equivalents, or some rather personal association like, "The first letter in my brother's name," is not as important as the fact that the discrimination has been made.

HOW?**Administration**

The Letter Knowledge Assessment is administered one-on-one to individual children. A letter "flip book" is provided for the teacher to use when asking the child to identify each letter. To administer this task:

Point to each letter and ask:

- *What is this one?*

If a child does not respond, use one or more of these questions:

(Try to avoid bias towards any one of them.)

- *Do you know its name?*
- *What sound does it make?*
- *Do you know a word that starts like that?*

Then moving to other letters, ask:

- *What is this? And this?*

Scoring and Analysis

Use the Letter Knowledge Checklist and mark the N column if the child gives the Letter Name, mark the S column for Sound, or write the word the child gives in the Word column. (Write the child's response with a capital letter if he/she is responding to the capital letter, and use a lower case if he/she is responding to the lower case letter.)

We gratefully acknowledge the work and expertise of Marie M. Clay, as published in An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement. Heinemann Education, a division of Reed Publishing, New Zealand, 1993, in the development of this assessment tool.

Correct responses are recorded with a ✓, incorrect answers with the actual response, and no response with a •.

Note response speed, any attempts, efforts, or confusions the child makes. Circle the child's dominant mode of identifying letters at the top of the column (N, S, or Word).

There are three sets of columns so the teacher can use the same sheet periodically during the year, as appropriate. One column is provided for each letter (upper and lower case forms) to enable the teacher to record responses.

Score 1 point for every correct response. Score as correct:

- either a letter name
- or a sound that is acceptable for that letter
- or a word for which that letter is the initial letter or sound.

Total score (___/54) represents alphabet knowledge and is recorded on the checklist.

ASSESSING LETTER-SOUND RELATIONSHIPS

To assess letter-sound relationships, repeat the Alphabet Knowledge Assessment using the lower case letters, this time asking the child, "What sound does this letter make?" Record the child's response in the S column for sound.

Correct responses should be clear and appropriate, while distorted sounds are scored as incorrect. The teacher should record which sounds are distorted, e.g., "fuh" for /f/. Note: "fuh" for /f/ is a higher level response than /k/ for /f/, even though both responses would be scored as incorrect.

Total score (___/28) represents knowledge of letter-sound relationships and is recorded on the checklist.

PHONEMIC AWARENESS

WHAT?

Phonemic awareness measures the ability of the child to identify, think about, or manipulate the individual **sounds** in words. Phonemic awareness **precedes** the ability to match sounds to letters.

This assessment has four components:

1. Sound Matching
2. Isolating Sounds
3. Blending Sounds
4. Separating Sounds

WHY?

Phonemic awareness is “the single most powerful determinant” of successful reading and writing development. (Adams, 1990) Before phonics can be taught, phonemic awareness is essential. Children must be able to hear and manipulate oral sound patterns before they can relate them to print.

HOW?

Administration

The Phonemic Awareness Assessment is an **oral task** administered individually in a relaxed and playful manner. An assessment script is provided for the teacher in a flip book format. Student responses are recorded on a separate scoring sheet.

Scoring and Analysis

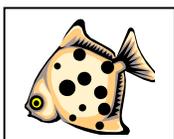
There is a space provided on the student response sheet for the teacher to record the child’s exact oral response to each item. There is also a space provided to record the total number of correct items within each subtest. In order to determine instructional needs, the teacher must evaluate each subtest in order to be more aware of the child’s understanding of each of the skills evaluated.

PART I – BEGINNING SOUNDS

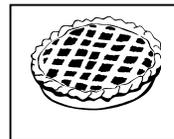
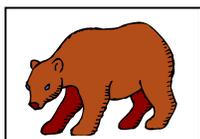
SAMPLE



1.



2.

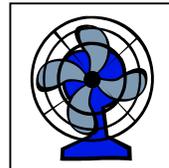


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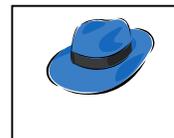
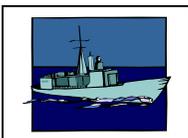


PART II – ENDING SOUNDS

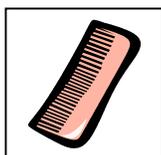
SAMPLE



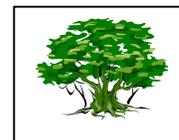
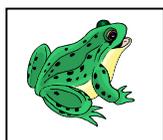
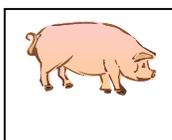
4.



5.



6.



SOUND MATCHING

Skill: Indicate which word (picture) begins or ends with the same sound as a target word (picture).

Directions:

Part 1 Beginning Sounds

Sample Item

- We're going to play a game with words. I will show you pictures to help you remember the words.
- Look at the first picture. This is a sock.
- Now look at these 3 pictures. Point and say, This is a dog. This is a cup. This is a star.
- The word, sock, starts with the /s/ sound. Which of these pictures starts with the /s/ sound? dog, cup, star?

Proceed with items 1 through 3 in the same manner.

1. fish: foot mouse kite
 2. leaf: bear lamp pie
 3. duck: cat moon dog
-

Part 2 – Ending Sounds

Sample Item

- We're going to change our word game.
- Look at this picture. This is a sun.
- Now look at these three pictures. Point and say, "This is a ball. This is a house. This is a fan.
- The word sun end with the /n/ sound. Which of these pictures ends with the /n/ sound, ball, house, fan?

Proceed with items 4 through 6 in the same manner.

4. boat: doll train hat
2. mouse: comb bus coat
3. pig: frog chair tree

ISOLATING SOUNDS

Skill: Isolating the beginning sounds (phonemes) in words.

Sample Item:

Directions:

- I'm going to say your name. Then I'm going to say the sound I hear at the beginning of your name.
- Mandy. The sound I hear at the beginning of Mandy is /m/.
- Now I'm going to say another word, jello.
- The sound I hear at the beginning of jello is /j/.
- Now you listen to the words I say and tell me the sound you hear at the beginning.
 1. nose
 2. five
 3. car
 4. log
 5. shoe

BLENDING SOUNDS

Skill: Blending sounds together to form a word

Directions:

- I'm going to say a word slowly. Listen to the parts you hear and put them back together.
- If I say, /m/ /e/, you will say me.
- If I say /s/ /o/, you will say so.
- Let's try a few together:
 - /l/ /ay/ - lay
 - /b/ /u/ /g/ - bug
- Now you listen to the parts you hear in the words I say slowly, and tell me what word I am saying.

1. /n/ /o/	(no)	6. /m/ /a/ /p/	(map)
2. /s/ /ay/	(say)	7. /f/ /l/ /i/	(fly)
3. /sh/ /ee/	(she)	8. /m/ /a/ /n/	(man)
4. /u/ /p/	(up)	9. /k/ /a/ /k/	(cake)
5. /z/ /oo/	(zoo)	10. /l/ /i/ /k/	(like)

SEPARATING SOUNDS

Skill: Pronouncing the individual sounds (phonemes) in words

Directions:

- Now we're going to change the game. I'm going to say the word, and you get to say the sounds you hear. Be sure to say the sounds, not the letters, in the word.
- If I say *ride* you should say, /r/ /i/ /d/.
- If I say, *go*, you should say /g/ /o/.
- Now it's your turn:

Notes to the teacher: An answer is only considered correct if the word has been segmented into all its sounds. Simply saying a word slowly is not considered a correct response.

- | | |
|---------|-----------|
| 1. dog | 6. wave |
| 2. keep | 7. that |
| 3. fine | 8. red |
| 4. no | 9. ice |
| 5. she | 10. three |

**Phonemic Awareness
Student Response Sheet**

Name _____ Grade _____

Sound Matching Part 1 <i>Beginning Sounds</i>	Date _____ Student's Oral Responses	Date _____ Student's Oral Responses
1. fish		
2. leaf		
3. duck		
Part 2 – Ending Sounds		
4. boat		
5. mouse		
6. pig		
	Score ___/6	Score ___/6
Isolating Beginning Sounds		
1. nose		
2. five		
3. car		
4. log		
5. shoe		
	Score ___/5	Score ___/5
Blending Sounds		
1. /n/ /o/ - no		
2. /s/ /ay/ - say		
3. /sh/ /e/ - she		
4. /u/ /p/ - up		
5. /z/ /oo/ - zoo		
6. /m/ /a/ /p/ - map		
7. /f/ /l/ /i/ - fly		
8. /m/ /a/ /n/ - man		
9. /k/ /a/ /k/ - cake		
10. /l/ /i/ /k/ - like		
	Score ___/10	Score ___/10
Separating Sounds		
1. dog (d – o – g)		
2. keep (k – ee – p)		
3. fine (f – i – n)		
4. no (n – o)		
5. she (sh – e)		
6. wave (w – a – v)		
7. that (th – a – t)		
8. red (r – e – d)		
9. ice (i – ce)		
10. three (th – r – ee)		
	Score ___/10	Score ___/10

Comments:

SENTENCE DICTATION

WHAT?

The Sentence Dictation assessment measures the child’s understanding of:

- hearing and recording the sounds in words.

In addition, the assessment provides an opportunity for the teacher to observe:

- directionality
- word boundaries
- punctuation.

WHY?

The Sentence Dictation assessment utilizes a formatted sentence containing specific phonemes, letter patterns, and conventions of print.

HOW?

Administration

The Sentence Dictation assessment is administered in a small group setting or one-on-one. The teacher states the entire sentence then reviews the sentence, word by word, as students write it down. Teachers should be cautioned not to stretch out the sounds in words, but to say them naturally.

Scoring and Analysis

There is a total possible score of 22 points for the Early Emergent Sentence and 38 points for the Emergent Sentence. Score 1 point for each phoneme the child has analyzed and recorded.

Teacher Direction: “I’m going to say a sentence. See if you can write each word as I say it.” Teacher reads the complete sentence, then reads word-by-word, pausing for the child to write. Teacher will be repeating the sentence several times.

KINDERGARTEN CORE ASSESSMENT

Early Emergent Sentence: A bus is going to stop for me.

Total Points: 22 points

Scoring Key: Score one point for each correct letter/sound correspondence represented (i.e., iz for is = 2 points. A
b u s i s g o i n g t o s t o p f o r m e.

Upper or lower case form and/or reversals are considered correct. Teacher observation and judgement must be used when letter order within a word is out of sequence.

FIRST GRADE CORE ASSESSMENT

Emergent Sentence: My cat likes to hide in the grass and sleep on my bed. I love my cat.

Total Points: 38 points

Scoring Key: Score one point for each correct letter/sound correspondence represented (i.e., luv for love = 3 points). My cat likes to hide in the grass and sleep on my bed. I love my cat.

Phonemes that are repeated are only scored once.



No Excuses Words

WHAT are No Excuses words?

No Excuses words are words that are most often used in writing. The attached word lists are sequenced in order from most (#1) to least (#100) commonly used. Many of these words are among the oldest words in our language and therefore have archaic etymologies.

WHERE did the words come from?

Numerous studies have identified these words. (See references.) The list of PUSD No Excuses words is derived from looking at word frequency in the contexts of children's writing, content area books and children's literature.

WHY teach No Excuses words?

The 100 most frequently used words in writing comprise 50% of all words used in adult writing! Knowing these words quickly, effortlessly and automatically gives students opportunities to think about the content of their writing rather than struggle over the spelling of a word.

Spelling is used as a "literacy yardstick" and we want our students to "measure up" as literate communicators. A word spelled incorrectly in a written piece sends a message that the writer is illiterate or careless, and the message being conveyed is compromised.

HOW are No Excuses (high frequency) words different from the words I teach in Houghton Mifflin?

All of the No Excuses words appear SOMEWHERE in the Houghton Mifflin program, though they do not appear in order of frequency. Rather, they appear whenever they happen to fit in with the linguistic element being featured. No Excuses words also appear as "Words for Writing" or "blue elephant" words. Since the focus of the Houghton Mifflin program is teaching children linguistic features and patterns, memorization, as a learning /teaching strategy, is not emphasized. In other words,

**Houghton Mifflin words, features, and patterns are GENERALIZED,
whereas "No Excuses" words are MEMORIZED!**

If you think of the No Excuses words like you think of math facts you will have a clear understanding of how these words fit into the overall spelling competence of our students. We expect children to simply know these words automatically, regardless of their developmental stage. Even a very poor speller should have at least the first 100 (grades 3-8) words memorized and used correctly in all of their written work all of the time!

No Excuses Words Grade Level Expectations (by end of the year)

Grade Level	Words to be Learned from the No Excuses List
Kindergarten	Words # 1 – 10
First	Words # 1 – 50 (#11-50 instructional)
Second	Words # 1 – 100 (#51-100 instructional)
Third – Eighth	Words # 1 – 100 Reinforce Only

The words are found on the attached list of No Excuses Words.

NO EXCUSES WORDS KINDERGARTEN



a
and
in
is
it
of
that
the
to
you

Teaching No Excuses and Commonly Misspelled Words

The Focus is on Memorization.

Word Sorting activities are ineffective for memorizing words. Sorts are for learning to generalize!

Teach students to MEMORIZE by using:

Flashcards	Dictate and Write (timed)
Partner Checks	“Mad Minute”
Dry Erase Boards	Writing in the Air
Rainbow Writing	Ghost Writing on the Board
Magnetic Letters	Copy-cover-write and check

Assessment and Accountability for No Excuses and Commonly Misspelled Words:

1. Check accuracy in student writing, not just on a spelling test. With these words in particular students very often will spell them correctly in isolation on a spelling test. However, in the context of writing they misspell the “No Excuses” words. Check these words in the context of their writing by counting down the first 10 lines of a piece of student writing. Check for accuracy of No Excuses Words and Commonly Misspelled Words.
2. Option Pre-Test at the beginning of the year.
3. Random inclusion of these words on other spelling tests.
4. Issue “Spelling Tickets” for spelling “violations” of the No Excuses and Commonly Misspelled Words.
5. Have students “sign-in” in a spelling log every time they miss one of the No Excuses or Frequently Misspelled Words. Set up the spelling log in alphabetical order with one page for each of the words. Students sign in on the page of the word they missed.

WHAT?

This assessment measures the ability of the child to look at print and

- Identify short vowels in isolation
- Identify digraph sounds
- Blend words with short vowels
- Blend words with long vowels using silent e
- Blend words with long vowel teams (ea, oa, etc.)
- Blend words with other vowel teams (oi, aw, etc.)
- Blend words with r controlled vowels
- Blend words with more than one syllable

WHY?

Acquisition of phonics is sequential. It is based on the developmental stages children progress through as they gain knowledge of the alphabetic code. The Phonics Skills Assessment is a check on the child's understanding of the alphabetic code and the developmental sequence of this code.

Phonics instruction is an important foundation of a balanced reading program, and should provide readers with strategies they can use when they need to identify an unfamiliar word. Phonics is a vital tool (along with context and structural analysis) used by readers to identify new words. Phonics gives students a means to associate sounds with letters and letter combinations, so they can pronounce a word that is not known at sight. Although there are over forty sounds (phonemes) in the English language, there are only 26 letters (graphemes) in the alphabet.

HOW?

Administration

The Phonics Skills Assessment is administered one-on-one to individual children. A "flip book" is provided for the teacher to use when asking the child to identify each letter-sound correspondence and word. The teacher assesses phonics skills by recording exactly what the child responds (examples: map or m-a-p)

Scoring and Analysis

Student responses are recorded on a separate scoring sheet. There are two columns available for the teacher to use in order to enable the same sheet to be used twice during the school year. Correct answers should be clear and appropriate, while distorted sounds are scored as incorrect. The teacher should record which sounds are distorted sounds (e.g. "fuh" for /f/. Note "fuh" for /f/ is a higher level response than /k/ for /f/ even though both responses would be scored as incorrect).

There are 9 subtests, each with their own number of total responses. The teacher records the number of correct responses within each subtest in the appropriate column. If the child responds correctly to half or more items within a subtest, the teacher should move to the next subtest and continue the assessment. It will become apparent that a stopping point is reached when the child can answer correctly half or fewer of the items within each subtest.

Subtests within the Phonics Skills Assessment are scored individually, so the teacher will be more aware of the child's understanding of the 9 skills evaluated. By noticing when the child levels off, it will become clear to the teacher where instruction needs to be focused for phonics skills.

Phonics Skills

Name _____ Grade _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Total
Score

30

Total
Score

30

Consonant Sounds	21	21
m		
s		
f		
l		
r		
m		
h		
v		
w		
z		
b		
c		
d		
g		
p		
t		
j		
k		
y		
x		
q		
Note: If score is less than 11, stop and administer the Phonemic Awareness Assessment.		
Diagraphs	4	4
sh		
th		
ch		
wh		
Short Vowels in Isolation	5	5
i		
o		
a		
u		
e		

Short Vowel Words	10	10
map		
rip		
met		
rub		
mop		
lip		
lot		
zap		
fell		
nut		
Long Vowels Silent e	5	5
fine		
rope		
rake		
tune		
kite		
Long Vowel Teams	5	5
soap		
leak		
pain		
feed		
ray		
Other Vowel Teams	5	5
coin		
moon		
round		
lawn		
foot		

r-controlled Vowels	5	5
fur		
sort		
sir		
tar		
serve		
2 Syllable Words	5	5
silent		
ladder		
napkin		
locate		
cactus		

Developmental Stage:
(circle one or more)

- Consonants
- Diagraphs
- Short Vowels in Isolation
- Short Vowel Words
- Long Vowels, Silent e
- Long Vowel Teams
- Other Vowel Teams
- r-controlled Vowels

2 Syllable Words

Note: Appropriate stopping point for Kindergarten.

Adapted from John Shefelbine's
Phonics Basic Skills Assessment