CHAPTER

PROMOTING
ASSESSMENT-DRIVEN
READING INSTRUCTION



CHAPTER 5: PROMOTING ASSESSMENT-DRIVEN READING INSTRUCTION

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OBJECTIVE

Reading coaches will apply the effective use of assessment data to inform reading instruction.

WHAT IS ASSESSMENT-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION?

"Get out your pencil and number your paper for a pop quiz...."

"This is a test of the emergency broadcast system. If this were an actual emergency, you would be instructed...."

Tests are something we are all familiar with. From studying to receive your driver's license to cramming for that college final, tests are part of our everyday existence.

The term *assessment* generates much emotion in today's schools. There are those who believe that the emphasis on assessment is long overdue. To them, assessment equals accountability and numbers "do not lie." Others believe that like paint-by-number, assessments may oversimplify the art of education. They question if "teaching to the test" sacrifices enrichment curriculum and reduces teacher creativity.

In reality, both views contribute to improving education. Assessment is an important aspect of a total school reading program. By design, this chapter follows the chapters on curriculum and instruction. All three must be planned and implemented with the others in mind. The "primary colors" of curriculum, instruction, and assessment combine for a palette of multiple strategies to appeal to the most discriminating artist.

Assessment is gathering data on which to base informed decisions. Such data should be multidimensional, encompassing more than just standardized tests. They may range from <u>observations</u> and <u>interviews</u> to informal tasks and <u>performance measures</u>. Informally, teacher assessments have occurred since the one-room schoolhouse as the teacher adapted what she was doing based on the precision of student recitations. Today teachers regularly assess informally and formally, indicating grades or mastery on a skills checklist.

Formal assessment informs the design of a school-wide reading program by documenting the children's immediate instructional needs and measuring the program's success in meeting those needs. **Assessment helps the school distinguish between teaching and learning.**

Assessment-driven instruction in reading is based on data from reliable and valid assessments that measure student progress in the five essential reading components (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension). As mentioned in Chapter 3, reliable data is information you can trust. A <u>reliable</u> reading assessment consistently results in similar reading scores, even when conditions vary slightly. For example, a reading assessment can be considered reliable if similar scores are obtained even when students are tested by two different people and/or on two close, but different, days.

A valid reading assessment measures the specific reading skills and concepts that it claims to measure. <u>Validity</u> is similar to fairness. For example, asking students to read lists of words to measure their text comprehension is not a valid or fair way to assess comprehension.

Valid and reliable assessments provide valuable information about each student's reading knowledge and skills. As discussed in Chapter 4, teachers can use assessment data to group and regroup students, target instruction, and deliver interventions to address students' learning needs.

When instruction is assessment-driven, teachers view assessment as an important step in the instructional cycle. As Glazer titled his 1998 book, assessment *is* instruction. More recently, Guskey said, "When teachers' classroom assessments become an integral part of the instructional process and a central ingredient in their efforts to help students learn, the benefits of assessment for both students and teachers will be boundless" (2003, p. 11).

WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT DOES A QUALITY READING PROGRAM REQUIRE?

A coach assists his or her school develop an assessment plan to measure grade-appropriate knowledge and skills in the five essential reading components. The chart below provides target areas for the reading concepts and skills that have the highest impact on student reading achievement at each grade level. These targeted areas may be assessed through a variety of reading instruments.

K-3 Early Reading Target Areas

Assessment—Grade Level	Essential Reading Components—Target Areas
Kindergarten	
Concepts and skills to monitor as indicators of student progress toward outcomes	Phonemic awareness Vocabulary/oral language development (during instruction)
Targeted student outcomes for end of year	Letter namingLetter-sound correspondenceWord reading
1st Grade	
Concepts and skills to monitor as indicators of student progress toward outcomes	 Phonemic awareness (during first semester of instruction) Fluency (during second semester of instruction) Vocabulary (during instruction) Comprehension (during second semester of instruction)
Targeted student outcomes for end of year	Word readingFluencyVocabularyComprehension
2nd Grade	
Concepts and skills to monitor as indicators of student progress toward outcomes	FluencyComprehension (during instruction)Vocabulary (during instruction)
Targeted student outcomes for end of year	FluencyComprehensionVocabulary
3rd Grade	
Concepts and skills to monitor as indicators of student progress toward outcomes	 Fluency Vocabulary (during instruction) Comprehension (during instruction)
Targeted student outcomes for end of year	FluencyComprehensionVocabulary

From An Introductory Guide for Reading First Coaches, National Center for Reading First Technical Assistance, 2005.

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WHAT IS THE COACH'S ROLE IN ASSESSMENT?

A well-designed reading program begins by enhancing teachers' knowledge of why assessment is important. How can assessment help teachers guide their instruction? **Information from assessments can help teachers:**

- Identify students who are on grade-level or at benchmark;
- Assist students who have difficulty with some reading concepts or skills;
- Intensify interventions for students who have extreme reading difficulties;
- Group students for effective instruction;
- Target specific reading concepts and skills that students have not mastered;
- Determine instructional intensity;
- Monitor students' progress; and
- Determine areas where they need extra support, professional development, and supplemental materials.

Teachers who understand what assessment can do for them are more willing to give up teaching time for this process. An effective reading program has a clear assessment schedule which is presented to teachers during preplanning. **Assessment procedures must be coordinated to reduce classroom disruption and confusion.**Simple routines for collecting and reporting student results should also be established and monitored.



How do you schedule assessment days?

How have coaches successfully established routines in their schools on their scheduled assessment days? Make notes on ideas you glean from what they share.								

WHO ADMINISTERS THE ASSESSMENTS?

Assessments are best conducted by the classroom teachers who will be using the data to drive their instruction, but assessment training takes time. Initially, reading coaches may need to administer assessments, gradually releasing this responsibility to the teachers. Testers must administer the assessments with <u>fidelity</u> to the standardized administration and scoring procedures. **Tests not given with fidelity waste teaching and learning time.**

The reading coach is important as an assessment administrator and as assessment-process coordinator. It is critical to remember you are not alone. The role of a reading team, which is referred to in the guidelines below, will be discussed in Chapter 7. The guidance counselor at your school may also be a tremendous help. The Assessment Process Checklist serves as a resource and review for scheduling assessments, organizing materials, and collecting and managing data.

The Assessment Process Checklist

This checklist is designed for the schoolwide administration of reading assessments. Responsibilities should be delegated to appropriate personnel (e.g., reading coach, school assessment coordinator) by the school's leadership team.

Form a School-Based Assessment Team

- Work with school administrators to identify about five people (e.g., reading coach, school psychologist, guidance
 counselor, assistant principal, one or two classroom teachers) to form a school-based assessment team that
 makes decisions about a school's reading program and students' overall needs.
- Provide opportunities for team members to receive training in the assessments being used and the datamanagement system.

Inform Teachers of Data Collection Schedule

- Provide the district or school assessment schedule.
- Let teachers know when assessment materials will be delivered and, if appropriate, when they should be returned.
- Arrange training for assessors (training may be offered at the state, district, or local level).
- Determine whether school assessment team members are fully prepared to assist with assessment administration.

Prepare Assessment Materials for Classrooms

- One to two weeks before data collection, ensure that assessment materials (e.g., administration manuals, scoring forms/protocols, electronic scoring mechanisms) have arrived at the school. Keep extra materials for later distribution, as needed.
- Divide materials into sufficient numbers for each classroom. Request extra copies, if needed.
- Create or download class lists of students; have teachers confirm and revise class lists as necessary.
- Print corresponding student labels for scoring forms/protocols which team members can affix to forms before data collection day. Place labels on the first page of the scoring form. Forms can then be easily alphabetized.
- Keep materials in a secure location until the day of assessment.

Prepare for Data Collection

- Confirm that all persons responsible for assessment have been trained.
- Designate a convenient location (e.g., workroom, library) where the assessment team can work during the day.
- Prepare maps of the school with classrooms noted for each assessment team member.
- Determine an assessment schedule for each classroom that is based on teacher's schedule, size of assessment team, grade level (e.g., typically assess younger children earlier in the day).
- Post assessment schedules at least one week in advance for teachers to review.
- Arrange a meeting to explain assessment procedures to classroom teachers.
- Establish locations to conduct assessments for each classroom. Ensure that the area is free from distraction.
 Suggestions include:
 - Using the media center (or other large area);
 - Setting up a desk and two chairs in the classroom in a quiet location for each examiner to assess students one at a time; and
 - Setting up a desk and two chairs in a location near the classroom. Two students come to the site and one waits
 while the other is assessed. After being assessed, the first student returns to the classroom and sends another
 student to the site.

Administer the Assessment

- After team members arrive, determine lunch needs. Notify the lunchroom, if necessary.
- Give each team member maps and the predetermined assessment schedule.
- Have extra pens, pencils, and other necessary materials available. Ensure that each team member has a stopwatch, calculator, clipboard, student assessment probes, test manuals, electronic data collection mechanisms, and any other materials necessary to conduct the assessment.
- Examiners should score, initial, and return all completed forms to the central assessment site. If forms for a classroom are divided among several team members, ensure that all classroom-specific forms are combined with the class list, including forms not used (note students who were not assessed, and why).

Review Data

 After all students in a classroom have been assessed, randomly select 20% of the classroom's completed examiner scoring forms, and assign them to another team member to verify scores. Verify scores by checking answer markings, totals, and score calculations. The verifying team member initials the scoring form below the examiner's initials. If errors are found, have all scoring forms reviewed for accuracy.

Enter Data into Data Management System

- Ideally within the next five school days, but no later than the date when the data collection system is closed for data entry, assess students who were absent.
- Paper and pencil administrations: Immediately after all assessments have been completed, give scoring forms to
 the person entering the data. After data entry is completed, make forms available for teacher review. Store all
 scoring forms in a secure location along with unused forms and other assessment materials.
- Electronic administrations: Immediately sync the data with the data management system and follow the appropriate data storage procedures to ensure that electronic files are not lost.

ARE DIFFERENT ASSESSMENTS GIVEN FOR DIFFERENT REASONS?

In today's schools it is critical to be aware of the advantages and limitations of different types of assessment measures. Coaches must be able to administer and interpret these measures, and to share their interpretations with all partners in the educational process. Although there are four types of assessments (screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic, and outcome), one assessment instrument may be used for multiple purposes. For example, one assessment instrument might be used to screen 1st grade students in the beginning of the school year and to monitor their progress throughout the year.

WHAT ARE SCREENING ASSESSMENTS?

Screening assessments are generally brief, individually administered tests given at the beginning of the school year. These assessments identify students who are on track academically and those who may be at risk for reading difficulties. Screening assessments focus on grade-appropriate reading components. By comparing scores from screening measures to benchmark scores, the coach and/or teacher can determine whether a student is probably on track to learn to read successfully or may need special intervention.

It is especially important that schools give screening assessments to beginning readers in Kindergarten and 1st grade. This will identify students who may become struggling readers and early intervention can be provided to prevent their difficulties from becoming increasingly challenging. Students who miss the initial assessment are screened as they enter school throughout the year.

By analyzing screening assessments, researchers have found that children's letter knowledge and phonological awareness are good predictors of future reading progress (Scarborough, 1998). For students who are beyond the initial stages of reading instruction, brief assessments of oral reading fluency are effective tools for quickly screening for reading difficulties. Fluency is based on efficient word recognition and the processing of unknown words and is strongly related to reading comprehension (Fuchs, Fuchs, Hosp, & Jenkins, 2001). The fact that oral reading fluency can be assessed with high reliability through timed, one-minute readings (Deno, Mirkin, & Chiang, 1992) makes it feasible to consider screening all students in a school for reading difficulties (Shinn, 1998).



Screening Form (Resource 5.1)

Complete the chart below with information about your school's screening procedures.

Name of Screening	Grades Administered	Date(s) Administered	Who Administers	Use of Data

Scores obtained from these brief but powerful assessments can then be compared with benchmark standards such as those developed by Hasbrouck and Tindal (1992) to determine if the child is making adequate progress with the current level of instruction.

If a child's screening scores indicate a possible problem in reading performance, interventions should be implemented along with more frequent monitoring of the child's academic progress.

WHAT ARE PROGRESS MONITORING ASSESSMENTS?

<u>Progress monitoring</u> assessments help teachers determine whether students' skills are improving at a sufficient rate to achieve a year's worth of learning by the school year's end. Two types of progress monitoring are typically used to assess students' progress in the essential reading components. The first occurs during or after a lesson: Teachers monitor their students' proficiency and mastery of instructional objectives and use the information to adjust instruction to better meet students' needs.

The second type of progress monitoring is a more standardized process that occurs at least three times per year. Expected Rates of Growth Charts are helpful in evaluating student progress with this type of monitoring. The Fuchs, Fuchs, Hamlett, Waltz, & Germann (1993) chart below gives "realistic" and "ambitious" growth rates for the number of additional words a student should be able to read correctly per week.

Expected Rate of Growth Chart

Grade	Realistic Weekly Increase in Words Read Correctly Per Minute	Ambitious Weekly Increase in Words Read Correctly Per Minute
1	2.00	3.00
2	1.50	2.00
3	1.00	1.50
4	0.85	1.10
5	0.50	0.80
6	0.30	0.65

If a faculty is new to data use, you may initially have to provide the data in user-friendly formats. One option is the coach reviews the assessment data and divides the students into two learning groups—developed and still developing. Another option is to use four main learning groups: advanced (above grade level), benchmark (at grade level), strategic (in need of extra support), and intensive (in need of intervention). These categories can describe individual students, individual teachers, and their classrooms.

At the individual student level, <u>advanced students</u> perform consistently above the benchmark goals and perform quite well with the grade-level material. They can manage a variety of materials designed as challenge or enrichment resources. Challenge materials are found in most of the latest editions of reading programs and may be delivered during homogeneous small-group instruction time.

Benchmark students perform consistently on goals and meet standards for their grade level. They can manage grade-level materials and content well. At times, they may need some re-teaching, but typically, such occasional interruptions cause only small delays in their overall achievement.

Strategic students are struggling with some specific content and frequently perform one or two grade levels below standards on their schoolwork. Strategic students need additional support during small-group time to reach benchmarks on progress monitoring assessments. Typically this support can be given in the regular classroom with about 30 minutes of additional time, pacing adjustments, pre-teaching, and re-teaching. Most recent reading program editions provide numerous recommendations and explicit information for strategic classroom instruction. There are several different service delivery models to consider. These students require more frequent progress monitoring.

Intensive students consistently perform poorly, are two or more standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests, and are considerably below the benchmark on progress monitoring assessments. These students require focused, intensive support with pre-teaching and re-teaching as well as additional, specialized instruction during small-group time. Some of this instruction may need to be provided outside of the regular classroom in a 1:1 tutoring situation or in a uniquely designed small-group intensive intervention program. Intensive instruction students require an additional 30–60 minutes of focused attention. The intensive materials in many reading programs may be helpful for these students but are typically insufficient. Specially designed intervention programs may be required to accelerate learning and should be considered. Students in this intensive category need progress monitoring every one to two weeks and diagnostic testing as deemed necessary.

At the classroom level, **advanced level classrooms** contain consistently large numbers of students who meet or perform above the benchmark. These classrooms provide excellent models for others. The teachers and students in these classrooms can effectively use the challenge materials provided in their reading program. Typically, they can move at a quick pace, while still addressing the needs of the few students who may be in a different category.

In benchmark level classrooms almost all of the students meet the benchmarks. Teachers in these rooms can be positive models for others, can mentor colleagues, and most likely need minimal assistance other than recognition and support from their administrators and coaches.

Strategic level classrooms are those where approximately 25–35% of the students are not meeting benchmark goals. Teachers in strategic classrooms need more support and specific assistance from their administrators and coaches to implement an effective classroom literacy program. When a well-constructed program designed to improve outcomes is in place, and students in a heterogeneously grouped classroom are still not meeting the targets, the teacher may not be implementing the program as designed.

Intensive classrooms are those in which more than half of the students consistently fail to meet benchmark goals. Teachers need substantial support and directed coaching from both the administrator and coach. These teachers need to be taught how to use the reading program with fidelity and to be held accountable for effective classroom implementation. They should also choose appropriate intensive interventions if needed. Finally, they most likely need a deeper level of professional development to help them understand the reading process and how to use data to inform instruction.

It is practical for teachers to focus only on their students in their classrooms. It is imperative, however, that the administration thinks about a schoolwide plan based on the entire student population. Coaches can assist by supplying needed information in the decision-making process. The following form provides a reading program status report to ensure that decisions at the administrative level are also data-driven.

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Reading Program Status Report (Resource 5.2)

Select a grade level. Review the classroom data and identify by teacher name those classrooms that fall in the benchmark, strategic, or intensive categories.

Key: L – Below Benchmark B – At Benchmark A – Above Benchmark

Teacher	Fluency		Vocabulary			Comprehension			
	L	В	А	L	В	А	L	В	А
									·
									·

Level	Teacher/s	Grade Level
Advanced In which classrooms are 80–100% of students meeting benchmarks?		
Benchmark In which classrooms are 75–80% of students meeting benchmarks?		
Strategic In which classrooms are 50–75% of students meeting benchmarks?		
Intensive In which classrooms are fewer than 50% of students meeting benchmarks?		



Example: Reading Program Status Report (Resource 5.2)

Review the data provided for second grade students at Any Town Elementary. Complete the chart below by identifying the classrooms as advanced, benchmark, strategic, or intensive.

Key: L – Below Benchmark B – At Benchmark A – Above Benchmark

Teacher	Fluency			Vocabulary			Comprehension		
16aciiei	L	В	А	L	В	А	L	В	А
Leno	16	18	66	13	21	65	9	33	58
Skelton	18	77	5	20	74	6	52	45	3
Tomlin	4	14	81	4	11	85	5	5	90
Williams	34	56	20	24	59	17	22	62	16

Level	Teacher/s	Grade Level
Advanced In which classrooms are 80–100% of students meeting benchmarks?	Leno in Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension	2
Benchmark In which classrooms are 75–80% of students meeting benchmarks?		2
Strategic In which classrooms are 50–75% of students meeting benchmarks?		2
Intensive In which classrooms are fewer than 50% of students meeting benchmarks?		2

In the language of No Child Left Behind, students who are on target for expected growth are achieving adequate yearly progress (AYP). AYP is measured by students' performance in achieving grade-level standards and benchmarks, and is established annually by each state to determine the achievement of each school district and each school. When students do not make AYP, teachers can immediately enter a problem-solving process to make adjustments that may support their students in making more accelerated progress (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Stecker, 1989). **Valuable instructional time is lost when student progress is left to guesswork and not monitored.**

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This checklist can prompt quality reflection in the progress monitoring process and help avoid lost instructional time. Some teachers may use the checklist independently to identify their next step in assisting a struggling student. At other times, coaches may need to facilitate this discussion.

Progress Monitoring Problem-Solving Checklist (Resource 5.3)

When a student is not making adequate progress, reflect on the following questions.

How are you defining lack of progress?	
What are your data points?	
1. 4.	
2. 5. 6.	
What substantiating evidence supports lack of progress?	
whilet substantiating evidence supports tack of progress:	
Are there significant external contributors to the student's lack of progress?	
Are there significant external contributors to the student's fack of progress:	
How many weeks has the student received explicit and systematic instruction in this setting?	
now many weeks has the student received explicit and systematic instruction in this setting:	
What has been the response of other students in this setting?	
what has been the response of other stations in this setting:	
How many weeks has the student received intervention? What is the group size? How much instruction tir	ne?
now many weeks has the statent received intervention: what is the group size: now much instruction th	10:
What has been the response of other students in this intervention group?	
Trink had book the response of earth example in the intervention group.	
Other factors:	

Answering the questions posed in the Progress Monitoring Problem-Solving Checklist will be productive only if it leads to action. The Progress Monitoring Action Steps (Resource 5.4) offers a format to record what will be done, by whom, and when.



Progress Monitoring Action Steps (Resource 5.4)

In the left column, based on the assessment data, identify students who are struggling readers. Record key words to prompt the action steps to improve each weakness in column two. In the other columns, identify who will be responsible to take the steps, the date of implementation, and the anticipated date of completion.

Student's Name	Action Steps	Who Is Responsible	Date of Implementation	Date of Completion

CAN ASSESSMENT DATA BE USED TO EVALUATE PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS AND PLAN ON-SITE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

Completion of the Progress Monitoring Action Steps above may prompt evaluation of program effectiveness as well as professional development. Assessment data, then, can also "provide meaningful guidance in the process of continuous improvement" (National Staff Development Council, 2001, p. 4). For example, assessments can help evaluate teacher and program effectiveness. Summary assessment reports can be used to determine individual teacher, grade level, and overall reading program effectiveness from year to year. When assessment results indicate areas of concern, using the data to make changes and adjustments (e.g., to instructional reading programs, schedules, teaching assignments, or school procedures) can ensure that students' reading achievement improves.

Refer to the Reading Program Status Report (Resource 5.2) on page PG 5.14. Recall the advanced, benchmark, strategic, and intensive categories. The assessment data can lead to identifying interventions for students and classrooms and be valuable in targeting professional development. Review the following chart for an example of using assessment data this way.

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Example: Teacher Professional Development/Coaching Plan

School: Any Town Elementary School Date: October 15

Advanced Classrooms	Who Provides PD	Target Goals	PD Strategies	Progress Monitor (Test & Frequency)
Leno: Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension	Principal Coach	Continue with current reading program	Serve as a model classroom in the building and district	DIBELS & GRADE benchmark (Fall, Winter, Spring)
Tomlin: Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension	Outside consultants Publishers	Plus challenge materials	Receive standard district and DOE reading PD	
Benchmark Classrooms	Who Provides PD	Target Goals	Professional Development Strategies	Progress Monitor (Test & Frequency)
Williams: Vocabulary, Comprehension, Fluency Skelton: Fluency	Principal Coach Outside consultants Publishers	Continue with current reading program	Serve as a model classroom in the building and district Receive standard district and DOE reading PD	DIBELS & GRADE Benchmark (Fall, Winter, Spring)
Strategic Classrooms	Who Provides PD	Target Goals	Professional Development Strategies	Progress Monitor (Test & Frequency)
Skelton: Vocabulary	Principal Coach District coordinator Outside consultants Publishers	Fidelity to reading program Pre-teach and re-teach Explicit and systematic intervention Data-driven Instruction	Coordinate intervention plan for focused and strategic PD Increase coaching time from principal, coach, district coordinator Visit model classrooms	DIBELS & GRADE Benchmark (Fall, Winter, Spring) Progress monitor every 2–3 weeks
Intervention Classrooms	Who Provides PD	Target Goals	Professional Development Strategies	Progress Monitor (Test & Frequency)
Skelton: Comprehension	Principal Coach District coordinator Outside consultants Publishers	Fidelity to reading program Pre-teach and re-teach Explicit and systematic intervention Data-driven instruction	Coordinate intervention plan for intensive PD Increase coaching time from principal, coach, district coordinator substantially Visit model classrooms	DIBELS & GRADE Benchmark (Fall, Winter, Spring) Progress monitor every 1–2 weeks

Adapted from Pathways to Literacy: Leading Literacy Change for Coaches and Facilitators, and Data Meeting Instructional Plans, Hanson Initiative for Literacy Development, 2006.

If a student does not respond to interventions as measured by frequent progress monitoring, it may be appropriate to use diagnostic assessments to gain additional information for instruction.

WHAT ARE DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENTS?

<u>Diagnostic assessments</u> are more in-depth measures that provide specific information about students' reading ability and instructional needs in the five essential reading components. They are generally administered to K–3 students when teachers need additional information to pinpoint effective interventions for students at risk.

Diagnostic measures function mainly to identify student strengths and weaknesses and then guide instructional decisions. Researchers have repeatedly demonstrated that teachers who assess student performance directly *and* use that information to plan instruction have better educational outcomes (Ysseldyke, 2001).

On page PG 5.49 the chart named Diagnostic Measures Appropriate for Primary and Secondary Grades (Resource 5.8) shows diagnostic measures based on appropriate grade level, test design, administration, and reading components. This information is also available online through the Florida Center for Reading Research: www.fcrr.org/assessment/PDFfiles/DiagnosticTools.pdf.

WHAT ARE OUTCOME ASSESSMENTS?

While screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments all yield important information, outcome assessments are what the public hears about. <u>Outcome assessments</u> are end-of-the-year assessments used to evaluate the effectiveness of a school's overall progress in improving reading achievement. State departments of education, district and school administrators, teachers, and community members are all stakeholders in the results of outcome assessments, which show whether their schools are performing satisfactorily. At least 44 states have <u>high stakes testing</u>; that is, assessments that are used to make major decisions about student retention and graduation (Bean, 2004). States and the federal government may also use high stakes assessments to identify and make decisions about schools that are low-scoring and need to make major improvements in their instructional performance.

The outcome measure used most frequently is a <u>norm-referenced test</u> (NRT) that compares students from a specific district or school with others like them. Such information can help the school determine areas in which their program is strong or in which it may need improvement.

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Digging into the Data

Review the Reading National Percentiles on the Norm-Referenced Tests taken by a sample of students at Any Town Elementary School. Record your observations about each student's progress in the space provided.

Student	2004–2005	2005–2006	Observations of Student Progress
Meg	15	21	
Eric	44	36	
Don	38	30	
Jane	56	26	
Randy	67	66	
Trisha	67	75	
Liz	75	81	
Debby	44	24	
Susan	81	60	
Ed	5	10	

HOW DO TEACHERS ANALYZE ASSESSMENT DATA TO INFORM INSTRUCTION?

Assessment-driven instruction goes beyond administering assessments and collecting data. It requires educators to use the results to form student groups, plan targeted instruction based on identified needs, and regularly monitor student progress. **Assessment analysis helps teachers pinpoint what is and is not working so they can adjust instruction quickly and efficiently.**

Teachers compile their data by transferring individual student scores to an assessment class summary chart. These charts are generally included with assessment instruments. Transferring all the individual students' scores onto a single sheet helps teachers see similar reading strengths and difficulties among students.

Teachers then examine students' scores for each set of tasks related to the grade-appropriate essential reading components. They can compare students' scores to grade-level standards and benchmarks that students are expected to achieve by the end of the year.

Example: Examining Data

Miranda, a second grader, has a fluency score of 50 words correct per minute (wcpm) on the beginning-of-the-year assessment. Her teacher compares her score of 50 wcpm to the end-of-year state standard/benchmark of 90 wcpm. This comparison helps Miranda's teacher plan the intensity and focus of instruction to help Miranda meet or exceed the end-of-year standard/benchmark.

Let's hear other examples of how teachers examine their data.

WATCH A VIDEO CLIP
Record names of teachers at your school who are currently analyzing data to improve their instruction or who wou be willing to try this approach.
Facilitating data analysis is one of the most important of the many services coaches provide. Data analysis ensure your efforts are concentrated in the areas of greatest need. The Coach's Checklist for Facilitating Data Analysis can help you in this process.
Coach's Checklist for Facilitating Data Analysis (Resource 5.5)
Use as an organization tool by checking or dating each item below.
1. Schedule a meeting with the principal.
2. Prepare and analyze the assessment data.
3. Identify classrooms with a high percentage of students not meeting grade-level standards and benchman
4. <u>Disaggregate the data</u> by all sub-groups.
5. Facilitate a discussion with the principal for each grade level:
 In which classrooms do large numbers of students consistently meet or exceed grade-level standard and benchmarks?
 In which classrooms do most (approximately half) students consistently meet or exceed grade-level standards and benchmarks?
 In which classrooms do a significant number of students NOT meet grade-level standards and benchmar In which classrooms do most students experience extreme difficulty with most reading concepts and skil Which essential reading components are being implemented effectively? Which teachers can provide positive models and demonstration classrooms?
Which teachers need assistance?
6. Set your school goal for the percentage of students meeting your targets schoolwide and by classroom
7. Clarify the procedures for discussing grade-level and individual data with teachers.
8. Organize a meeting with each grade-level group (include special education teachers and other classro educators).
9. Request that teachers bring class assessment data (e.g., student profiles, summary sheets, or assessment data worksheets).
10. Identify students who are not meeting grade-level standards and benchmarks in each class.

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11. Lead participants in a discussion based on these questions for each grade level:Which students are meeting grade-level standards and benchmarks?

- Which students are having difficulty with some reading concepts and skills?
- Which students are having extreme difficulty with most reading concepts and skills?
- On which reading concepts and skills are most students meeting standards and benchmarks?
- With which reading concepts and skills are most students having difficulty?
- Which essential reading components address the concepts and skills with which students are having the most difficulty?
- What changes to instruction need to be made to improve students' reading achievement?
- What professional development and assistance do you need?
- 12. Identify actions to improve reading instruction and reading outcomes.

Actions to improve reading instruction may range from visits to high performing schools, observations among peers, to alternative groupings of students. Student grouping will be the next topic of discussion.

HOW DOES ASSESSMENT FACILITATE STUDENT GROUPING?

Teachers can use a variety of grouping practices during reading instruction. The amount of time scheduled for each group depends on the students' knowledge and skills. Struggling readers need more instructional time and support than other students. For example, teachers can schedule two different time periods during the day to help struggling readers, such as 15–20 minutes in the morning and 10–15 minutes in the afternoon.

While whole-group heterogeneous classrooms engage teachers and students in shared learning experiences, small-group instruction provides more opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know. Feedback from the teacher and other students occurs more readily during small groups. Small groups can consist of same-ability or mixed-ability students. Small same-ability groups of three to five students allow the teacher to provide the explicit and intensive instruction struggling readers need. Small mixed-ability groups give students opportunities to work collaboratively with classmates who share similar interests. Mixed-ability groups may also create opportunities for English Language Learners to develop their language skills.

Pairing students is another grouping method that can be used for reading practice. Students work together and typically take turns reading text. For example, during fluency practice (e.g., partner reading), a more proficient reader is paired with a less proficient reader to read and reread text.

Working one-on-one with a student allows for even more attention and intensive instruction. It should be noted however, that **research shows few differences between one-on-one instruction and small-group instruction of two to three students** (Elbaum, Vaughn, Hughes, & Moody, 2000).

Flexibility is the key. Groups should be formed and reformed at regular intervals, based on new student achievement data. Regrouping provides a way to meet the individual needs of children who are first grouped into heterogeneous classroom groups and then regrouped for a specific portion of time for specific reasons. Examples of flexible grouping could include:

- Within-class regrouping;
- Same-grade regrouping; and
- Across-grade regrouping.

By taking the time and effort to group students, teachers can differentiate reading instruction to target each student's needs within the same classroom. **Differentiated instruction involves flexible grouping,** that is, using

a variety of grouping formats that change to reflect students' knowledge, interests, and progress. Flexible grouping allows students to be members of more than one group.

Opportunities for student self-assessment and reflection on how they learn best should be built into the program. Although assessment and accountability are major concerns in schools today, unfortunately, less consideration is given to the importance of students' self-assessments. Nevertheless, there is strong support for involving even the youngest students in evaluating their own work (Weber, 1999) and making decisions about their own learning.

Using flexible grouping and gathering student input requires more effort and adaptation of instruction than whole-class instruction, although the effort required is typically not the issue as much as having the experience base to make such changes. The reading coach's role is to share the information needed to make this happen.

Let's look at some examples for scheduling small group instruction.

Examples for Scheduling Small-Group, Teacher-Led Instruction

Example A:—1st Grade

One classroom teacher—Mrs. Evans

Students are grouped into three same-ability groups for reading instruction:

8:00	Whole-class reading instruction		
8:30	Small-group, teacher-led reading instruction:		
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
	Independent work	Independent work	Independent work
9:00	Learning centers	Teacher-led small group	Learning centers
9:30	Learning centers	Learning centers	Teacher-led small group
10:00	Teacher-led small group	Learning centers	Learning centers

The small groups participating in learning centers are further divided into five mixed-ability groups. For example, at 9:00 the six students in Group 1 and the six students in Group 3 scheduled for learning centers may be regrouped into pairs, triads, or groups of four, depending on their needs and the design of the five learning centers. The groups are assigned each day to different learning centers.

Learning Centers Management Chart

Reading	Writing	Vocabulary	Comprehension
Group A	Partner reading	Response journals	Listening
Group B	Poetry	Post office	Computer
Group C	Theme books	Writing the room	Making words
Group D	Author study	Theme investigation	Pocket chart
Group E	Reading the room	Daily news	Story elements

Example B:—2nd Grade Three classroom teachers—Blackburn, Shannon, Wallace One intervention teacher—Miller

9:00–10:30 Same-ability small-group rotations

(Red Group = below grade level; Blue = grade level; Green = above grade level)

• Teacher-led small-group reading instruction

• Independent work and/or partner reading

10:30–11:00 Learning centers—mixed-ability small groups

• Computer, spelling/making words, listening, board games, etc.

	Blackburn	Shannon	Wallace
9:00	Red – Miller	Red — Shannon	Red – Independent work
	Blue – Independent work	Blue — Partner reading	Blue – Wallace
	Green – Blackburn	Green — Independent work	Green – Partner reading
9:30	Red — Independent work	Red — Miller	Red –Wallace
	Blue — Blackburn	Blue — Independent reading	Blue – Partner reading
	Green — Partner reading	Green — Shannon	Green – Independent work
10:00	Red — Blackburn	Red — Independent work	Red – Miller
	Blue — Partner reading	Blue — Shannon	Blue – Independent work
	Green — Independent work	Green — Partner reading	Green – Wallace
10:30	Learning centers Teacher is available for additional	al small-group intervention, as needed	,



Flexible Grouping?

Use Examples A and B on pages 5.22–23 to answer the questions below for each sample schedule.

	Example A	Example B
Who teaches the struggling readers?		
Is the teacher using flexible grouping?		
Are struggling readers receiving instruction in groups of 3–5?		
Which group of students receives the most time during teacher-led small-group instruction?		

Scheduling may appear to be impossible. Once a workable rotation is found, some teachers may be reluctant to make any changes. **The key to successful flexible grouping, however, is regularly monitoring students' progress and regrouping students based on their changing needs.** Using the data on page PG 5.14, complete the Reading Program Status Report to monitor different scheduling options.

Reading Program Status Report (Resource 5.2)

Review the classroom data and identify by teacher name those classrooms that fall in the benchmark, strategic, or intensive levels.

Level	Teacher(s)	Grade Level
Advanced In which classrooms are 80–100% of students meeting benchmarks?		
Benchmark In which classrooms are 75–80% of students meeting benchmarks?		
Strategic In which classrooms are 50–75% of students meeting benchmarks?		
Intensive In which classrooms are fewer than 50% of students meeting benchmarks?		

PG 5.24 Center on Instruction

Reading Program Support Options (Resource 5.6)

Small-group instruction is an important element of effective reading interventions provided in addition to the scheduled reading block. Complete the information below based on how your school implements reading interventions for each grade level.

Status	Grade	Grade	Grade
# of total classrooms per grade level			
Average # of students per classroom			
# of classrooms providing regular block of uninterrupted reading			
# of students who receive small-group instruction in this grade			
# of classrooms where the special education teacher collaborates and/or co-teaches with the general education teacher			
# of classrooms providing additional daily interventions for struggling learners (in addition to reading block)			
Personnel available to provide small-group reading instruction to struggling readers in this grade			
Programs or materials available to provide small-group reading instruction to struggling readers in this grade			

WHEN AND TO WHOM ARE THE DATA AVAILABLE?

Outcome data are typically made public to all of the school's stakeholders. There are two internal sets of stakeholders—the entire staff and the individual classroom teachers—and two external sets of stakeholders—the district office and parents. All stakeholders should be well informed about the instructional program's strengths and weaknesses as identified by the data.

Summaries of assessment data across grade levels should be communicated in public; analyses of particular classroom variables should be communicated in private. Individual teachers should compare their own students' data to data across their grade level in order to see whether their own classes are contributing positively or negatively to the overall mean, and to identify those children whose achievement is especially low.

One of the coach's jobs is to help teachers interpret their data and to reflect on their practice in relation to those data in an environment safe from judgment and evaluation. The coach should give each teacher a summary sheet, in whatever format is most familiar to the school, to direct his or her thinking. The summary sheet should direct the teachers to note the strengths and weaknesses in each curriculum area. A section for teachers to form needs-based groups in their own classrooms, based on the data, may also be helpful.

To review, a reading coach must collaborate in establishing a unified, building-level assessment program by selecting assessments that address key components of reading development, creating a calendar for assessment, training teachers to conduct the assessments, sharing assessment results with school stakeholders, and using data to evaluate continually the program's success and to make adjustments. This job is much too big for one person; the reading leadership team will provide great support in this area.

Although numbers don't lie, you should approach data analysis with caution. Some testing limitations may influence outcomes. For example, a test is a sample of all questions that can be asked about a subject and a sample of a student's performance at a single point in time. Therefore, although test companies work to ensure that the

items selected constitute a representative sample of important knowledge and skills, the fact remains that some students might have done better if a different sample of equally adequate questions had been used on the test. Furthermore, on any given day, an external factor such as illness or a disagreement with a parent may have affected a student's performance. Finally, changes in the student population can change the school's scores. With high mobility or attrition, there can be significant differences in the population that takes the test from one administration date to another.

Test results should be used to plan continuous school improvement. In their study of teachers' perceptions about a state assessment test, Beresik and Bean (2002) found that teachers did not feel they had received sufficient professional development to help them implement instruction that addressed state standards as measured by that outcome test. This complaint was especially common among teachers who taught at grade levels below the level at which the test was administered.

The considerations below may be helpful as the administration and coach assess professional development needs based on the school's outcome assessments.

Considerations for topics and participants in data-driven professional development:

- Identifying instructional methods that work with groups of students who are having reading difficulties.
- Replicating practices of teachers whose students meet or exceed grade-level standards and benchmarks in high numbers. An example of a professional development activity would be using these teachers' classrooms as model sites for observation.
- Concentrating on parts of the reading programs and interventions that need to be reviewed. A professional
 development example would be having a representative from the reading program model sample lessons on each
 of the five essential reading components, give examples of how the program's many elements are used in other
 schools, and walk through online program supports.

There is no shortage of applications for data gathered through screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic, and outcome assessments. Many schools are data-rich but analysis-poor. Providing information in a usable format can help focus instruction and make student achievement soar. What are your aspirations for assessment?

PG 5.26 Center on Instruction



Review the key ideas and information presented in this chapter. Think about what needs to happen in your school for assessment-driven instruction to make a difference in student reading outcomes, then list goals for promoting assessment-driven instruction in your school. Finally, prioritize your goals and number them in the left-hand column, with 1 as the highest priority.

Example: Goals for Promoting Assessment-Driven Instruction (Resource 5.7)

Priorities	Goals
3	Meet with district and school-level administrators to analyze assessment data
1	Demonstrate to teachers how to group students for reading instruction using assessment information
2	Establish a process for administering assessments across grade levels

Goals for Promoting Assessment-Driven Instruction (Resource 5.7)

Priorities	Goals

LEARNING CENTERS

Make and Take Center

Coaches provide resources to help teachers in effective reading instruction. Use this learning center time to create materials to add to your coaching collection.

Option A: Design a cover and table of contents for a data notebook for your teacher. Use clip art and color to make the notebooks easily identifiable.

Option B: Create a calendar with dates of reading assessments, professional development opportunities, and grade-level group meetings already noted. Use motivational quotes or seasonal themes.
Notes to self on make and take ideas for teachers:
Reflection Center As you coach, you will ask many teachers to reflect on their instructional practices. Review each reflection prompt below. Select one and record a response.
Option A: Is your school data-rich but analysis-poor? Justify your answer. What are some ways you can improve your current status?
Option B: The principal has asked you to sit in on a parent conference. The parent is upset about her child's lack of progress in reading. You know the teacher's data confirm this parent's concern, not only for her child, but for the other students in the class. The principal is documenting the teacher's poor performance. How do you advise the concerned parent and the inexperienced teacher?
Notes to self on reflection prompts:

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Technology Center

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Websites offer information not covered in the <i>Leading for Reading Participant's Guide</i> . Search your state's department of education website and review your curriculum standards and assessment program. Make a note to bookmark this site on your personal computer as a future reference.
Note to self on resources found at this website:
Research Center The website below presents the Digest of Education Statistics through the Institute of Education Sciences. Browse for benchmarks of interest in your own action research.
http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest
Notes to self on what these findings mean for our school:

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Resource 5.1 Screening Form

Resource 5.2 Reading Program Status Report

Resource 5.3 Progress Monitoring Problem-Solving Checklist

Resource 5.4 Progress Monitoring Action Steps

Resource 5.5 Coach's Checklist for Facilitating Data Analysis

Resource 5.6 Reading Program Support Options

Resource 5.7 Goals for Promoting Assessment-Driven Instruction

Resource 5.8 Diagnostic Measures Appropriate for Primary and Secondary Grades

Master copies of the forms used in Chapter 5 follow.

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Screening Form (Resource 5.1)

Complete the chart below with information about your school's screening procedures.

Name of Screening	Grades Administered	Date(s) Administered	Who Administers	Use of Data

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Reading Program Status Report (Resource 5.2)

Select a grade level. Review the classroom data and identify by teacher name those classrooms that fall in the benchmark, strategic, or intensive levels.

Key: L – Below Benchmark **B** – At Benchmark **A** – Above Benchmark

Teacher	Fluency		Vocabulary		Comprehension				
Todolloi	L	В	А	L	В	А	L	В	А

Level	Teacher(s)	Grade Level
Advanced In which classrooms are 80–100% of students meeting benchmarks?		
Benchmark In which classrooms are 75–80% of students meeting benchmarks?		
Strategic In which classrooms are 50–75% of students meeting benchmarks?		
Intensive In which classrooms are fewer than 50% of students meeting benchmarks?		

Answers to Practice Exercise on PG5.14: Teacher/s column will be Advanced: Leno in Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension; Benchmark: Williams in Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension; Skelton, Fluency; Strategic: Skelton in Vocabulary; Intensive: Skelton in Comprehension. Grade Level column should all be 2s.

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Progress Monitoring Problem-Solving Checklist (Resource 5.3)

When a student is not making adequate progress, reflect on the following questions.

How are you defining lack of progress?	
What are your data points?	
1. 4.	
2. 5.	
3. 6.	
What substantiating evidence supports lack of progress	?
And the continue of the state o	de la de afona en esta
Are there significant external contributors to the studen	ITS TACK OF Progress?
How many weeks has the student received explicit and	systematic instruction in this setting?
What has been the response of other students in this se	tting?
How many weeks has the student received intervention	? What is the group size? How much instruction time?
What has been the recognics of other students in this in	tornantian group?
What has been the response of other students in this in	tervention group:
Other factors:	

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Progress Monitoring Action Steps (Resource 5.4)

In the left column, based on the assessment data, identify students who are struggling readers. Record key words to prompt the action steps to improve each weakness in column two. In the other columns, identify who will be responsible to take the steps, the date of implementation, and the anticipated date of completion.

Student's Name	Action Steps	Who Is Responsible	Date of Implementation	Date of Completion

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Coach's Checklist for Facilitating Data Analysis (Resource 5.5)

Use as an organization tool by checking or dating each item below.

 1. Schedule a meeting with the principal.
 2. Prepare and analyze the assessment data.
 3. Identify classrooms with a high percentage of students not meeting grade-level standards and benchmarks.
 4. Disaggregate the data by all sub-groups.
 5. Facilitate a discussion with the principal for each grade level:
 In which classrooms do large numbers of students consistently meet or exceed grade-level standards and benchmarks?
 In which classrooms do most (approximately half) students consistently meet or exceed grade-level standards and benchmarks?
 In which classrooms do a significant number of students NOT meet grade-level standards and benchmarks? In which classrooms do most students experience extreme difficulty with most reading concepts and skills? Which essential reading components are being implemented effectively?
Which teachers can provide positive models and demonstration classrooms?Which teachers need assistance?
 6. Set your school goal for the percentage of students meeting your targets schoolwide and by classroom.
 7. Clarify the procedures for discussing grade-level and individual data with teachers.
 8. Organize a meeting with each grade-level group (include special education teachers and other classroom educators).
 9. Request that teachers bring class assessment data (e.g., student profiles, summary sheets, or assessment data worksheets).
 10. Identify students who are not meeting grade-level standards and benchmarks in each class.
 11. Lead participants in a discussion based on these questions for each grade level:
Which students are meeting grade-level standards and benchmarks?
Which students are having difficulty with some reading concepts and skills?
Which students are having extreme difficulty with most reading concepts and skills?
On which reading concepts and skills are most students meeting standards and benchmarks?
 With which reading concepts and skills are most students having difficulty?
 Which essential reading components address the concepts and skills with which students are having the most difficulty?
What changes to instruction need to be made to improve students' reading achievement?
 What professional development and assistance do you need?
12. Identify actions to improve reading instruction and reading outcomes.

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Reading Program Support Options (Resource 5.6)

Small-group instruction is an important element of effective reading interventions provided in addition to the scheduled reading block. Complete the information below based on how your school implements reading interventions at each grade level.

Status	Grade	Grade	Grade
# of total classrooms per grade level			
Average # of students per classroom			
# of classrooms providing regular block of uninterrupted reading			
# of students who receive small-group instruction in this grade			
# of classrooms where the special education teacher collaborates and/or co-teaches with the general education teacher			
# of classrooms providing additional daily interventions for struggling learners (in addition to reading block)			
Personnel available to provide small-group reading instruction to struggling readers in this grade			
Programs or materials available to provide small-group reading instruction to struggling readers in this grade			

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Goals for Promoting Assessment-Driven Instruction (Resource 5.7)

Think about what needs to happen in your school for assessment-driven instruction to make a difference in student reading outcomes, then list goals for promoting assessment-driven instruction in your school. Finally, prioritize your goals and number them in the left-hand column, with 1 as the highest priority.

Priorities	Goals

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Diagnostic Measures Appropriate for Primary and Secondary Grades (Resource 5.8)

Diagnostic	Appro Grade	Appropriate rade Range	Test D	Test Design	Available on CD or Online	Adı	Administration	uo		Majo	Major Components	ents	
	Primary	4–12	Criterion	Norm Referenced		Individual	Group	Time in minutes	PA	Phonics	Fluency	Vocab.	Сотр.
(CTOPP) Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing	K -3	A		×		×		30	×				
(DAR) Diagnostic Assessment of Reading	2–3	All		×		×		20–30		×	×	×	×
(DRP) Degrees of Reading Power	2–3	III	×	×	Administer	×	×	45					×
(ERDA) Early Reading Diagnostic Assessment	2–3			×		×		45–90	×	×	×	×	×
(EVT) Expressive Vocabulary Test	K-3	All		×		×		15				Oral	
Fox in a Box	K-2		X		E-reporting	×		30	X	×	X	×	Listening
(GMRT) Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, 3rd ed.	Pre-K-3	All		×		×	X	55–105	Level PR	Level BR		Reading	×
(GORT-4) Gray Oral Reading Test-4	1–3	M		×		×		20–30			×		×
(GRADE) Group Reading Assessment & Diagnostic Evaluation	Pre-K-3	MA		×	Scoring & Reporting	×	×	45–90	Levels P&K	Levels K		Reading Levels 1-A	Levels 1–A
(PPVT-III) Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III	Pre-K-3	All		×		×		12				Oral	
(SRI) Scholastic Reading Inventory	1–3	4–11		×	Administer	×		40–60					×
(SDRT) Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test, 4th ed.	1–3	All		×			×	100		×		Reading	×
(TPRI) Texas Primary Reading Inventory	K-2		×		Palm Recording & Scoring	×			×	×		Listening K only	×
(WDRB) Woodcock Diagnostic Reading Battery	K-3	AII		×		×		20–60	×	×		Reading	×
(WRMT) Woodcock Reading Mastery Test	V -3	All		×		×		10–30		×		Reading	×

NOTE: This chart was generated through a review conducted by the Just Read, Florida! Office in consultation with the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR).* It is not a statement of endorsement. Rather, it is intended to inform users of the growing pool of diagnostic measures appropriate for grades K–12 that meet educational and psychological testing standards developed by the American Psychological Association. Each instrument listed below meets criteria for reliability and validity.

2002 Analysis of Reading Assessment Instruments for K-3 (National Assessment Committee) 2002 Commissioner's (Texas) List of Reading Instruments: Recommendation for Approval 2002 Florida Department of Education's list of approved diagnostic measures

^{*}Reviewers examined the following resources:

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