

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy

(DIBELS)

In Kindergarten



# **DIBELS:**

## **Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy**

### **What is DIBELS Next?**

In kindergarten, DIBELS are a series of four short tests given to children (at least) three times a year to screen and monitor their progress in learning the necessary skills to become successful readers. The tests help teachers locate, monitor, and intervene with at-risk students.

All DIBELS measures are timed. Each of the four tests given in kindergarten takes one minute. The reason for timing the tests is to find out if a child is able to recall the information automatically and not take a long time to think about an answer. Having these basic reading skills at the automatic level allows children to focus on understanding the meaning of what they are reading.

### **Who gives the DIBELS assessments?**

Teachers and reading specialists trained to administer the assessments give the screenings individually to all students. These screenings are given three times per year (fall, winter and spring). In addition, progress monitoring assessments are given more frequently to students who are shown to be "at risk".

### **How are the scores used?**

DIBELS Next is just one of several measures we use to formally assess the students. The scores help us to make teaching decisions based on student need. Scores on DIBELS provide an indication of performance only.

## What four measures are given in kindergarten?

### LETTER NAME FLUENCY

The students are given a page with upper case and lower case letters and asked to name each one. The letters are in random order on this test.

This test is given to everyone in the fall, winter and spring of kindergarten.

### FIRST SOUND FLUENCY (FSF)

Students are given a word and asked to say the first sound of the word. The child is told a word like "sand" and asked to tell the teacher the first sound that he hears in the word. The first sound the child hears in "sand" is /s/.

This test is given to everyone in the fall and winter of kindergarten.

### PHONEME SEGMENTATION FLUENCY (PSF)

This is a measure of children's awareness of the many sounds that make up words we speak. It is a skill that should be mastered by the end of kindergarten. The child is told a word like "cat" and asked to say all the sounds in the word.

There are three sounds in "cat."

This test is given to everyone in the winter and spring of kindergarten.

### NONSENSE WORD FLUENCY (NWF)

The ability to blend together the sounds represented by letters to make words is a very important skill in learning how to read. This skill helps children in kindergarten and first grade to use their knowledge of the relationship between letters and sounds to read unfamiliar words. Children are shown a page of make-believe words (nonsense words), like "tob" or "miv" and asked to read them by saying the individual sound of each letter in the word. The goal is for your child to be able to read the whole word itself (without having to say each sound in the word).

This test is given in the winter and spring of kindergarten.

## How can parents help at home?

Read books with rhymes. Teach your child rhymes, short poems and songs. Read rhyming books (Dr. Seuss books are great!) with your child. Play simple word games.

*Let's think of words that rhyme with "bat".*

Help your child separate the sounds in words, listen for beginning, middle and ending sounds and put separate sounds together.

Practice the alphabet by pointing out letters where you see them and by reading alphabet books.

Point out the letter-sound relationships your child is learning in books, on labels, on boxes, in magazines and on signs.

Listen to your child read words and books from school. Let your child know you are proud of his reading.

When your child brings home library books and 100 Book Challenge books from school, spend 15 minutes each night reading and rereading familiar books to and with your child.

## Check Out These Websites for Fun Games & Activities

[www.abcya.com](http://www.abcya.com)

[www.starfall.com](http://www.starfall.com)

[www.primarygames.com](http://www.primarygames.com)

[www.billybear4kids.com](http://www.billybear4kids.com)

[www.funbrain.com](http://www.funbrain.com)

[www.scholastic.com/home/](http://www.scholastic.com/home/)

(go to the Kids Page/Family Playground Home)