



TEACHING READING IN BRIEF

READING ASSESSMENT

VOL. 4, NO. 2
NOVEMBER 3, 2025

Assessment of Fluency, Decoding, and Phonological Processing

by Melissa Lee Farrall, PhD

When we think about reading assessments, we typically think about performance on a reading comprehension test. Can our students reflect upon the main idea? Do they grasp supporting details? Are they equipped to learn from and enjoy what they read?

Unfortunately, many tests only provide us with a general understanding of comprehension; tests such as the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, Renaissance Star Reading, and Smarter Balanced Assessment are not designed to explain the specific causes of student errors. When students do well, all is good. When students do poorly, we are left with many questions. Perhaps we should teach more vocabulary and background knowledge? Maybe we should teach about text structure? Maybe, just maybe, however, those comprehension difficulties reflect an inability to read the words (Bishop & Adams, 1990; Gough & Tunmer, 1986; Rayner, Pollatsek, Ashby, & Clifton, 2012).

A well-designed assessment of reading skill is a process akin to peeling the wrapper off a chocolate. We must do a bit of work before we get to the juicy, delicious core of making meaning through print. Before delving into the assessment of the skills necessary for reading comprehension, it is important to think about the various types of assessment tools available to us.

Progress monitoring tools enable us to screen each student's risk status, measure discrete literacy skills (phonemic awareness, vowel sounds, vowel teams, complex consonants, decoding multisyllabic words, etc.), and progress towards specific reading goals.

Tools such as DIBELS and aimswebPlus enable classroom educators to identify students who are not achieving at a level commensurate with their peers. In an MTSS model, these students would then be provided with additional instruction. In the event that these students fail to respond, they would then be referred for a more comprehensive assessment (evaluation). This assessment would be conducted by a special educator or a specialist (school psychologist, psychologist, and/or speech-language pathologist) who is trained in both typical and atypical reading development as well as the administration and interpretation of standardized norm-referenced instruments.

In this issue of our series on assessment, we will focus on the assessments of decoding and word recognition skills that enable reading fluency and support reading comprehension.

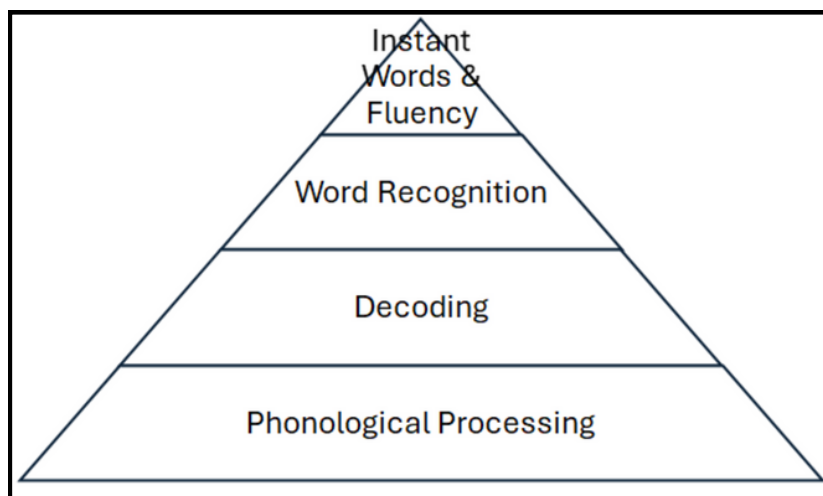
Curious Question

For informative/explanatory writing, such as in the sciences or in social studies, the author's tone is expected to sound neutral and not emotional. Given people's passion for their subject, was this always the case, and how did this change?

We will begin with phonological processing and then move on to the domains of decoding and word recognition, culminating in a discussion of the ways to assess reading fluency. In our next issue, we will shift our discussion to aspects of oral language that make it possible to think deeply about text.

Additional information regarding assessment types and recommendations for reading screeners can be found in the

Vermont Agency of Education's Review and Recommendations: K-3 Universal Reading Screeners, per [Act 139](#).



Reading Fluency Pyramid

The Three Domains of Phonological Processing

Phonological processing refers to the system by which we process the speech sounds that make up words, comprising three domains: phonological awareness, phonological memory, and rapid naming.

- **Phonological awareness** refers to the conscious perception of speech-sound **patterns** in words, such as syllables and onset-rime. The term **phonological awareness** is often used interchangeably with **phonemic awareness**, but they are different. Phonemic awareness refers specifically to the ability to discriminate, remember, and manipulate **individual** speech sounds in words. It is this skill that underlies the alphabetic principle. Challenges in this realm are responsible for the vast majority of reading problems (Torgesen & Mathes, 2000).
- **Phonological memory** describes the machinery by which we grasp and hold onto language-based content for further processing. Think of it as the memory we use when someone dictates a phone number to us. What happens? If we do not secure those numbers immediately in memory, they fade away without hope of recovery.
- **Rapid automatized naming (RAN)** denotes the ability to identify and say language labels in a series with speed and accuracy. Rapid naming is much like the processing speed on a computer; readers who are equipped with a fast RAN speed can execute many tasks, such as word recognition, easily and accurately. This ease frees up working memory to focus on higher-level skills. On the other hand, readers with slow and/or inaccurate RAN may have trouble executing word recognition and decoding skills with the sufficient automaticity required for reading fluency. Without additional instruction and opportunities for practice, they may ultimately struggle to read at a speed that supports reading comprehension and pleasure.

The Development of Phonological Awareness

Before we get to the types of phonological skills to be assessed, we need to understand more about how phonological awareness develops. All individuals develop their awareness of speech sounds in words in the same way (Moats, L. & Tolman, 2009) as follows:

1. Young children learn two important things about speech. They learn that words have meaning, and that oral language can be segmented into individual words.
2. Children then come to appreciate and play with words that rhyme. Think of it as the Dr. Seuss stage of phonological awareness.
3. The platform is then set for youngsters to realize that words consist of individual speech sounds. They zero in on identifying and matching the initial, final, and medial sounds in words, in that exact order.
4. They learn how to segment words into individual speech sounds and how to blend speech sounds back together into words. They start with simple syllables, and then move on to complex syllables, i.e., syllables with blends.
5. A final stage involves manipulating speech sounds in words through the deletion, addition, and substitution of sounds.

The Assessment of Phonological Processing

Given its importance, it is clear that an assessment of reading should include aspects of phonological processing, especially phonemic awareness. According to M.J. Adams (1991), the discovery of the role of phonemic awareness in reading was “the single most powerful advance in the science and pedagogy of reading this [the 20th] century” (p. 392). Below are some of the revelations that remain undisputed to this day:

- Phonemic awareness is the make-or-break skill in learning to read. Those with phonemic

awareness typically learn to read; those without do not (Byrne, Freebody, & Gates, 1992).

- Phonemic awareness is the best predictor of reading skill at the elementary school level. It outweighs intelligence and language proficiency, socioeconomic status, and even alphabet knowledge (Adams, 1990; Griffith & Olson, 1992).

Determining what to test is not straightforward because the test marketplace is rife with different types of phonological assessment tasks. There are measures of rhyming, blending, and segmenting. There are tasks of sound identification, elision (saying a word without a specified part), and manipulation. The various tests or subtests that measure these different skills often result in different scores. What is an educator to do?

David Kilpatrick (2019) tells us that not all phonological awareness tasks are created equal. They differ in the amount of skill required and in what they can tell us about a student’s reading skills. Foundational tasks such as segmenting and blending are necessary but not sufficient. In contrast, phoneme manipulation tasks (deletion, substitution, and reversal) capture more of the linguistic underpinnings that are important for the growth of word identification skills (Kilpatrick and McInnis, 2015). In addition, Kilpatrick notes that it is not just a matter of whether students can execute a particular skill; it is a matter of whether they can do so with ease. Ultimately, the development of reading fluency depends on the flawless and automatic execution of these lower-level skills. Some tests of phonological processing, such as the WIAT-4 Phonemic Proficiency Subtest, can speak not only to the command of higher-level phonological processing skills, but also to the ease with which they are executed.

A Sample of Tests Measuring Aspects of Phonological Processing

Progress Monitoring Tools	Progress Monitoring	Achievement/ Diagnostic	Qualified to Administer
*Acadience Reading K-6 (Acadience Learning, 2021) Grades K-3	✓		Classroom Educators
aimswebPlus (Pearson, 2025) Grades PK-12	✓		Classroom Educators
*Amplify mCLASS DIBELS 8th Edition (Amplify, n.d.) Grades K-3	✓		Classroom Educators
*Dynamic Inventory of Basic Early Literacy Skills, Eighth Edition (DIBELS-8; University of Oregon, 2023) Grades K-6	✓		Classroom Educators
Standardized Norm-Referenced Tests	Progress Monitoring	Achievement/ Diagnostic	Qualified to Administer
Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Third Edition (KTEA-3; Kaufman & Kaufman, 2014) Ages 4-25		✓	Special Educators & Specialists
Phonological Awareness Test, Second Edition NU (PAT2 NU; Robertson & Salter, 2018) Ages 5-9		✓	Special Educators & Specialists
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Fourth Edition (WIAT-4; Breaux, 2020) Ages PK-12+		✓	Special Educators & Specialists
Woodcock-Johnson IV (WJ IV; Schrank, McGrew, Mather, Wendling, Dailey, 2014) Ages 2-90+		✓	Special Educators & Specialists
Always ensure a test is appropriate for each student. Be sure to check hearing and vision. *Strongly recommended by the Vermont Agency of Education's Review and Recommendations: K-3 Universal Reading Screeners, per Act 139.			

Decoding

Decoding, also referred to as **word attack**, is the process by which students sound out words. It is best assessed with nonsense words because only in this way can we determine whether readers have

mastered and internalized letter-sound correspondence. The ability to decode nonsense words is one of the hallmarks of an independent reader, and it easily distinguishes those who can accurately decipher print from those who rely on memorizing or guessing at words.

While decoding is not the end game, it is the platform upon which we develop the ability to recognize words with automaticity, as if by sight.

Assessing decoding skill with nonsense words provides a unique opportunity to determine which skills a reader has mastered and which skills require instruction. Standardized, norm-referenced tests, such as KTEA-3, WIAT-4, and WJ-IV/V, all offer the opportunity to assess the command of letter-sound correspondence and syllable patterns. Because these tests offer a small sample of the actual skills measured, it is a good idea to also use an informal criterion-based measure, such as the Core Phonics Survey (Consortium on Reading Excellence, 2000) or the Informal Decoding Inventory (Walpole, McKenna & Philiakos, 2011), that provides an inventory of skills (all letter and digraph sounds, complex consonants, syllable types, vowel teams, etc.) for a more detailed assessment.

Example of Nonsense Word Decoding Task			
Nonsense Word	Syllable Pattern	Student Response	Comment
<i>mab</i>	CVC	✓	
<i>dep</i>	CVC	dip	Confusion between / ă/ and /ě/
<i>gom</i>	CVC	gam	Confusion between / ö/ and /ă/
<i>flun</i>	CCVC (blend)	fun	Difficulty with /l/ blend
<i>mave</i>	VCe	mav	Difficulty with the silent-e rule

Analysis: This is a student who is struggling with the basics of sound-symbol correspondence and the short-vowel sounds. This data, in combination with other sources of information, suggests that this student requires instruction in phonemic awareness, the alphabet, and the closed syllable pattern (CVC words). If you are not certain about how to categorize different syllable patterns and structural analysis skills (examination of syllables and morphemes), most tests of achievement provide a key to documenting performance.

Word Recognition/Identification, Spelling, and the Alphabet

Word recognition subtests provide a measure of skill with letter identification and real words, both regular and irregular. They do not assess knowledge of word meanings. Because these subtests are not timed, they only measure the ability to recognize words, not word-level automaticity. Young children may be asked to provide letter names and sounds and point to letters as prompted. Older students are asked to identify a selection of words that include an increasingly difficult random sample from the Anglo Saxon, Latin/French, and Greek layers of the language. Educators with knowledge of the morphological structure of the English language will find it easier to draw conclusions about where instruction should begin in a given scope and sequence.

Classroom teachers can administer progress-monitoring assessments. Special educators and specialists administer standardized norm-referenced tests.

A Sample of Tests Measuring Word Recognition/Identification and/or Spelling			
Progress Monitoring Tools & Inventories	Progress Monitoring	Inventory	Achievement/Diagnostic
*Acadience Reading K-6 (Acadience Learning, 2021) Grades K-3	✓		
aimswebPlus (Pearson, 2025) Grades PK-12	✓		
*Amplify mCLASS DIBELS 8th Edition (Amplify, n.d.) Grades K-3	✓		
Core Phonics Survey (Consortium on Reading Excellence, 2000)		✓	
*Dynamic Inventory of Basic Early Literacy Skills, Eighth Edition (DIBELS-8; University of Oregon, 2023) Grades K-6	✓		
Informal Decoding Inventory (Walpole, McKenna, & Philiakos 2011)		✓	
Spellography (Moats & Rosow, 2021)		✓	
Words Their Way (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnson, 2003)		✓	

A Sample of Tests Measuring Word Recognition/Identification and/or Spelling

Standardized Norm-Referenced Tests	Progress Monitoring	Inventory	Achievement/ Diagnostic
Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Third Edition (KTEA-3; Kaufman & Kaufman, 2014) Ages 4-25			✓
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Fourth Edition (WIAT-4; Breau, 2020) Ages PK-12+			✓
Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement (WJ IV ACH; Schrank, McGrew, Mather, 2014) Ages 2-90+			✓
Always ensure a test is appropriate for each student. Be sure to check hearing and vision. *Strongly recommended by the Vermont Agency of Education's Review and Recommendations: K-3 Universal Reading Screeners, per Act 139 .			

Spelling

Spelling is important; it plays a role in both reading and writing. Poor spellers rely more on single-syllable words to express their thoughts in writing than their peers (Sterling, Farmer, Riddick, Morgan, and Matthews, 1998). Unfortunately, these single-syllable words, usually from the Anglo-Saxon layer of the language, lack the precision and descriptive power of multisyllabic words with Latin prefixes, roots, suffixes, and/or Greek combined forms.

Spelling also plays an important role in assessing reading skills. Spelling provides a window into the degree to which students have internalized the rules for converting oral language into written language. An examination of spelling samples can potentially reveal a student's awareness of speech sounds in words, mastery of sound-symbol correspondence and decoding, and structural analysis skills that support expression with higher-level vocabulary. When considering a student's spelling, three questions rise to the surface (Moats, 1995):

1. Are the sounds represented accurately?
2. Are words spelled according to the rules?
3. Are the meaningful parts of words spelled correctly?

Answering these questions can help to establish a baseline for spelling and measure progress over time. In the fourth issue of the *Reading Assessment* series of *Teaching Reading in Brief*, Dr. Bruce Rosow will delve into how to use spelling analysis to identify underlying gaps and develop effective instructional responses.

Alphabet

Asking students to say and write their alphabet during an evaluation can provide significant insight into their futures as readers (Badian, 1995). Letter-name knowledge is a strong predictor of reading skills for children in first grade, as well as for students in middle and high school. A command of the alphabet is also foundational for written expression. Automatic letter writing is the best predictor of length and quality of writing at the primary school level (Graham, Berninger, Abbott, Abbott, & Whitaker, 1997) and at the secondary and college levels (Connelly, Campbell, MacLean, & Barnes, 2006).

Challenges with the alphabet can reveal fundamental gaps and difficulties in acquiring the code of print. Confusion over letter names and sounds, coupled with difficulty forming letters, all indicate challenges that have a profound impact on reading progress.

Developing Reading Fluency

There is significant evidence that oral reading fluency is a powerful measure of skilled reading (Torgesen, 1986). Reading with fluency permits us to focus our intellectual resources and think deeply about the author's message. Supporting the development of reading fluency, however, is not simply a matter of telling children to read faster.

Reading fluency develops on a foundation of phonemic awareness, accurate alphabet and letter-sound knowledge, and connections that are made between the word's pronunciation and how the word is represented in print. This process is referred to as **orthographic mapping** (Miles & Ehri, 2019). When we are concerned about a

student's reading fluency, we need to assess and ensure they have the underlying skills that facilitate reading with accuracy and ease. Tests of reading fluency and automaticity are highly sensitive to progress in reading over the short term. As a result, they have become the *sine qua non* of progress monitoring. In 2000, the National Reading Panel identified reading fluency as one of the five major areas of reading. Since that time, reading fluency has occupied an important position in reading assessment.

Despite its designation as a core area of reading skill, reading fluency should not be considered as a separate and distinct entity that can be treated all on its own. Fluent reading occurs when students are proficient in the following:

- phonological processing,
- alphabet and letter-sound correspondence skills,
- the fundamentals of decoding,
- and word recognition.

Students must also have frequent opportunities to read, which will help them develop a vocabulary of words whose meanings they can recognize instantaneously. Only when these skills are in place are students able to read with fluency and devote their intellectual resources to thinking deeply about the author's message.

The terms fluency and automaticity are often used interchangeably by test publishers; however, they are not the same. Fluency is typically reserved for student performance on reading paragraphs or passages. Automaticity is generally applied to performance on word lists. Fluency and automaticity are measured orally; it is only in this way that we can document errors that stand in the

way of comprehension. There are, however, some tests that permit us to measure reading fluency silently, an approach that may be sufficient if we are only looking to establish an overall level and not drill down into why students made specific errors, such as phonemic, decoding, or morphological mistakes.

Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM) and Accuracy

Reading fluency can also be assessed informally with classroom materials. Hasbrouck (n.d.) and Betts (1946) provides recommendations for determining reading fluency.

1. Select the passage and determine its grade-level equivalent using a readability formula such as the Dale-Chall Readability Formula (2025) or the Flesch-Kincaid Readability Index (Flesch, 1946). This scale provides a measure of text difficulty based on the average number of syllables in words and the average number of words in sentences. Passages with multisyllable words and long sentences will receive higher grade-level designations. More recent research (Trott & Rivière, 2024) suggests that large language models like GPT-4 can now provide a more nuanced assessment of text difficulty that would also take into consideration cognitive load and aspects of genre.

2. Have the student read for one minute.

3. Record all errors (misread words, omissions, insertions, and substitutions). Words that are not read within three seconds are counted as errors; in these cases, provide the word and gesture for the student to continue. Do not penalize for repeated words or words that are corrected within three seconds. Penalize for each word

missed in a skipped line.

Words Correct Per Minute is calculated by subtracting the total number of errors from the total number of words read in one minute.

- $WCPM = \text{Total Number of Words Read} - \text{Total Number of Errors}$

Accuracy is calculated by dividing the total number of words read correctly by the total number of words attempted.

- $\text{Accuracy} = \frac{\text{Total Number of Words Read Correctly}}{\text{Total Number of Words Attempted}}$

Both WCPM and Accuracy can be assessed as a measure of progress over time. Classroom teachers can administer progress-monitoring assessments. Special educators and specialists administer standardized norm-referenced tests.

Answer to this issue's Curious Question:

In 17th-century England, the Royal Society was a research clearinghouse. Its leaders were concerned about controversy and conflicting reports, especially when loaded with contentious or accusatory language. The Society determined that scientific writing needed to be “stripped of ornamentation and emotive language,” “plain, precise, and clear,” and in a “nonassertive” style (p. 248). In addition, scientists were expected to write with humility and an open mind to new evidence. The “force of evidence and reasoning” should educate readers (p. 248). This replaced the classical approach to rhetoric dating back centuries, when scientists wrote to persuade as much as inform. Researchers across the world continue this standard today.

Baugh, A.C. & Cable, T. (2013). *A history of the English language* (6th ed.). Routledge.

A Sample of Tests Assessing Automaticity and Fluency

Progress Monitoring Tools	Progress Monitoring	Achievement	Word Lists	Passages/Sentences
*Acadience Reading K-6 (Acadience Learning, 2021) Grades K-3	✓		✓	✓
aimswebPlus (Pearson, 2025) Grades PK-12	✓		✓	✓
*Amplify mCLASS DIBELS 8th Edition (Amplify, n.d.) Grades K-3	✓		✓	✓
*Dynamic Inventory of Basic Early Literacy Skills, Eighth Edition (DIBELS-8; University of Oregon, 2023) Grades K-6	✓		✓	✓
Standardized Norm-Referenced Tests	Progress Monitoring	Achievement	Word Lists	Passages/Sentences
Gray Oral Reading Tests, Fifth Edition (GORT-5; Wiederholt & Bryant, 2012) Ages 6-23		✓		✓
Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Third Edition (KTEA-3; Kaufman & Kaufman, 2014) Ages 4-25		✓	✓	✓
Test of Word Reading Efficiency, Second Edition (TOWRE2; Torgesen, Wagner, & Rashotte, 2012) Ages 6-24		✓	✓	
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Fourth Edition (WIAT-4; Breaux, 2020) Ages PK-12+		✓	✓	✓
Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement (WJ IV ACH; Schrank, McGrew, Mather, 2014) Ages 2-90+		✓		✓

Always ensure a test is appropriate for each student. Be sure to check hearing and vision.

*Strongly recommended by the Vermont Agency of Education's Review and Recommendations: K-3 Universal Reading Screeners, per [Act 139](#).

Word Recognition Skills to Assess When Comprehension is Poor: A Top-Down Approach

When we think about designing an assessment of reading, it is helpful to consider the many skills that support reading fluency. Skill (or lack thereof) in each of these domains may support or undermine a student's efforts to read for meaning.

Area	Comments
Fluency	Always assess both rate (Words Correct Per Minute) and accuracy. Reading with fluency presumes accurate word recognition skills. We cannot teach students to read with greater fluency if they are not reading with accuracy.
Word Identification & Spelling	Document skills with syllable patterns, structural analysis skills, and irregular words. Analyze spelling errors because poor spelling skills are often indicative of phonemic awareness challenges and decoding issues.
Nonsense Word Decoding	Document skills with unfamiliar words. Be alert to confusion over speech sounds that are similar in their articulation (such as b/p and f/v), sound-symbol correspondence, the six syllable types, and higher-level structural analysis skills (such as Latin or Greek morphemes).
Alphabet	Have students say and write the alphabet. Challenges with the alphabet speak volumes about a student's preparedness to read and spell. Students, young and old, must master all the letters of the alphabet, i.e., letter formation, letter names, and letter sounds.
Phonological Processing	Phonological Awareness: Assess lower-level skills such as segmenting and blending. Also assess higher-level manipulation tasks such as elision/deletion and substitution. These skills are indicative of the ease with which a student will learn to read. Phonological Memory: The recall of sounds, words, and sentences supports the development of phonemic awareness, decoding, word recognition, and spelling. It also supports vocabulary acquisition and listening comprehension. Rapid Automatized Memory: RAN speaks to the ability to retrieve language labels from memory with ease and accuracy, usually letters, numbers, colors, or objects. Many students with slow RAN require additional instruction and practice to support automaticity in sound-symbol correspondence, decoding, and word recognition.
Working Memory & Processing Speed	Limitations in WM and PS can also undermine reading fluency. When WM is low, the cognitive workspace for taking in and manipulating new learning can be easily overloaded. When PS is reduced, students may struggle to execute basic skills with ease and automaticity.

Making Decisions Based on Data

There is no one-size-fits-all answer for students with poor reading comprehension. While we may first think of challenges with vocabulary and background knowledge, poor reading comprehension often has its roots in poor decoding and word recognition skills. This issue has highlighted what should be examined when comprehension is limited and fluency is lacking. In our next issue, we will look at the verbal skills that support reading comprehension and thinking deeply about an author's message.

References

Amplify. (n.d.). mCLASS®: K–6 literacy assessment & dyslexia screening.

Breaux, K. (2020). *Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Fourth Edition (WIAT-4)*. Pearson.

Connelly, V., Campbell, S., MacLean, M., & Barnes, J. (2006). Contribution of lower-order skills to the written composition of college students with and without dyslexia. *Developmental Neuropsychology*, 29(1), 175–196.

Consortium on Reading Excellence. (2008). CORE phonics survey. CORE.

Farrall, M. (2012). *Reading assessment: Linking language, literacy and cognition*. Wiley.

Flesch, R. (1946). A new readability yardstick. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 32(3), 221–233.

Graham, S., Berninger, V. W., Abbott, R. D., Abbott, S. P., & Whitaker, D. (1997). Role of mechanics in composing of elementary school students: A new methodological approach. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 89(1), 170–182.

Gray, J. S., Warnock, A. N., Good, R. H., III, and Powell-Smith, K. A. (2021). *Acadience Reading K–6 national norms* (Technical Report No. 32). Acadience Learning Inc.

Invernizzi, M., Johnston, F. R., Bear, D. R., & Templeton, S. (2017). *Words their way: Word sorts for within word pattern spellers* (3rd ed.). Pearson.

Kaufman, A. S., & Kaufman, N. L. (2014). *Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Third Edition (KTEA-3)*. NCS Pearson.

Kilpatrick, D. A., Joshi, R. M., & Wagner, R. K. (Eds.). (2019). *Reading development and difficulties: Bridging the gap between research and practice*. Springer.

Miles, K.P. & Ehri, L. C. (2019). Orthographic mapping facilitates sight word memory and vocabulary learning. In D.A. Kilpatrick, R.M. Joshi & R.K. Wagner (Eds.). *Reading development and difficulties: Bridging the gap between research and practice* (pp. 63-82). Springer.

Moats, L. C. (1995). *Spelling: Development, disabilities, and instruction*. York.

Moats, L. C., & Rosow, B. (2021). *Spellography: A fun way to learn to spell and read*. Learning By Design.

Moats, L., & Tolman, C. (2009). *Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS): The Speech Sounds of English: Phonetics, Phonology, and Phoneme Awareness (Module 2)*. Sopris West.

Pearson. (n.d.). aimswebPlus.

Robertson, C., & Salter, W. (2017). *Phonological Awareness Test, Second Edition: Normative Update (PAT-2: NU)*. Western Psychological Services.

Schrank, F., Mather, N., & McGrew, K.S. (2014). *Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement Manual*. Riverside.

Scott, B. (2025, May 20). Learn about the New Dale-Chall Readability Formula. ReadabilityFormulas.com.

Sterling, C., Farmer, M., Riddick, B., Morgan, S., & Matthews, C. (1998). Adult dyslexic writing. *Dyslexia*, 4(1), 1–15.

Trott, S., and Rivière, P. D. (2024). Measuring and modifying the readability of English texts with GPT-4.

University of Oregon, Center on Teaching and Learning. (2020). 8th edition of Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS®): Administration and scoring guide. Author.

Vermont Agency of Education (2025). Review and Recommendations: K-3 Universal Reading Screeners Per Act 139.

Wagner, R. K., Torgesen, J. K., Rashotte, C. A., & Pearson, N. A. (2013). *Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing–Second Edition (CTOPP-2)*. PRO-ED.

Wiederholt, J. & Bryant, B. (2012). *Gray Oral Reading Tests, Fifth Edition (GORT – 5)*. Pro-Ed.

Meet the Writer and Editors



Melissa Farrall, PhD

Dr. Melissa Farrall is the author of *Reading Assessment: Linking Language, Literacy, and Cognition*, and the co-author of *All About Tests & Assessments* published by Wrightslaw. Melissa Farrall recently retired as Director for Evaluation at the Stern Center for Language and Learning in Williston, Vermont. Melissa also held an appointment as a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Neurological Sciences at the Robert Larner College of Medicine at the University of Vermont where she trained medical professionals about learning disabilities and reading. She continues to train evaluators and teaches courses on the assessment of reading, writing, and language through the Stern Center and Vermont State University.

In the past, Melissa taught the structure of language and assessment in the Language and Literacy program at Simmons College in Boston, MA, and at The Reading Institute in Williamstown, MA. She worked as a learning disability specialist in the public schools for several years. Dr. Farrall received her doctorate from Brown University in 1981 in the area of Slavic Linguistics. She received her Master's Degree from Rivier College in Learning Disabilities in 1994, and her certification as a Specialist in the Assessment of Intellectual Functioning in 1999.

Dr. Brenda Warren has been studying and evaluating reading instruction for the past 20 years through three different lenses: as a pediatrician, school board member, and parent of a now-adult son with dyslexia. Her main interest has been examining how districts can overcome barriers preventing scientific reading research from fully impacting classroom practice, with a goal of ensuring that academic equity is present in our schools. In 2010, her work led her to pursue a doctorate in Education Leadership to study this topic in more depth. She graduated with her PhD in 2018. Her dissertation title is: *Closing the Science-to-Practice Gap for Reading Instruction: A Case Study of Two Schools Transitioning from Balanced Literacy to Scientifically Based Reading Instruction*.



Dorinne Dorfman, Ed.S., Ed.D., OG/A, has served as a teacher and principal for nearly 30 years in Vermont schools. After completing her undergraduate studies at Goddard College, she earned her Master's and Doctorate in Educational Leadership at the University of Vermont. As a postdoctoral Fulbright Scholar, she taught at the Technical University of Berlin and conducted research on democratic education in Germany. Since completing an Education Specialist Degree in Reading and Literacy Instruction at Bay Path University, Dr. Dorfman teaches evidence-aligned literacy at Barre Town Middle School.