



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

2026-2027 Universal Reading Screener Rubric

[Indiana Code \(IC\) 20-35.5](#) requires Indiana schools to conduct universal reading screening to students in kindergarten through grade two. In response to the universal reading screener, students identified as “at risk” (or “at some risk”) must participate in additional diagnostic measures. Universal reading screeners for use with Formative Assessment Grant funds must be approved by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) per [IC 20-32-5.1-17](#). IDOE partners with a committee of Indiana educators to review universal reading screeners to ensure that they meet legislative requirements prior to approval.

This rubric is used to evaluate universal reading screeners submitted for approval. Six criteria are considered:

1. **Type and Purpose:** Provides universal reading screening for kindergarten, grade one, and grade two students.
2. **Components:** Measures six specific components as developmentally appropriate.
 - Phonological and phonemic awareness
 - Sound symbol recognition
 - Alphabet knowledge
 - Decoding skills
 - Rapid naming skills
 - Encoding skills
3. **Technical Validity:** Provides an accurate and meaningful measure.
4. **Reliability:** Provides a reliable measure across forms and administrations.
5. **At Risk Indicator for Reading Proficiency:** Provides data to identify specific skill deficits related to reading proficiency.
6. **Annual Analysis of Statewide Data Trends:** Universal reading screeners must provide the department with annual analysis of statewide data trends to support identification of early literacy skill deficits.

The respondent must follow the process outlined in the *Universal Reading Screeners Approval Process: 2026-2027* to submit evidence for consideration. **To receive approval as a universal reading screener under Indiana Code 20-32-5.1-17, respondents must pass all legislated criteria.**

Universal Reading Screener Name: Click here to enter text.

Vendor Name: Click here to enter text.

Grade Levels Serviced: Click here to enter text.

Contact Name: Click here to enter text. **Email:** Click here to enter text. **Phone:** Click here to enter text.

Contact Name: Click here to enter text. **Email:** Click here to enter text. **Phone:** Click here to enter text.

IDOE Contact: Click here to enter text. **Email:** Click here to enter text. **Phone:** Click here to enter text.

Final Status: ☐ **Approved** ☐ **Not Approved**

Approval Notes:

Criterion 1: Type and Purpose

The assessment provides universal reading screening for kindergarten, grade one, and grade two students.

Research Questions	Evidence Required	Expectations for Acceptability
<p>Is the submitted product a universal reading screener?</p> <p><i>For this rubric, a universal reading screener is defined as a brief assessment designed for a wide range of students to identify students who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes due to reading deficiencies.</i></p>	<p>The respondent must provide evidence of the degree to which the program is a universal screener that screens for early literacy skill deficits.</p>	<p>The assessment must be brief and provide an initial indicator which allows educators to determine if additional diagnostic testing or intervention is needed.</p> <p>The assessment must be built from a design intended to include all student populations and could be implemented across multiple learning environments (i.e., virtual settings).</p> <p>The assessment should provide a description of how subtests are used to identify students at risk or some risk of not reaching reading proficiency.</p>
<p>Adequacy of Evidence: Not Scored ▾</p> <p>Committee Comments:</p>		

Criterion 2: Components

Indiana Code requires the assessment to measure six specific components of reading as developmentally appropriate.

Research Question	Evidence Required	Expectations for Acceptability
<p>Does the assessment measure the following components of reading as developmentally appropriate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phonological and phonemic awareness• Sound symbol recognition• Alphabet knowledge• Decoding skills• Rapid naming skills• Encoding skills	<p>The respondent should provide test design documents which define the specific skills measured on the assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Test blueprints, defined as the breadth of knowledge/skills, which are assessed (e.g., content standards or learning statements) and the degree to which they are assessed• Test design specifications, defined as a description of the overall structure of the assessment	<p>The test blueprints must confirm that knowledge/skills essential for each of the six listed components of reading are measured as developmentally appropriate.</p> <p>The test design specifications must demonstrate that listed components of reading are measured in the assessment as developmentally appropriate.</p>
<p>Adequacy of Evidence: Not Scored ▾</p> <p>Committee Comments:</p>		

(Criterion 2 Continued) Measuring Foundational Reading Skills

The assessment aligns to the breadth and depth of Indiana Academic Standards (IAS) and employs strong test development processes that support valid scores.

Research Question	Evidence Required	Expectations for Acceptability
Does the universal reading screener measure foundational reading skills?	<p>The respondent must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide description of the overall structure of the assessment • Provide test blueprints, defined as the breadth of reading skills, which are assessed and the degree to which they are assessed • Provide sample questions of each of the reading skills assessed. • Provide description of the assessment administration protocol that allows a test administrator unfamiliar with the particular assessment to be able to understand and administer the assessment in an appropriate and standardized manner. • Provide evidence that content is engaging with age-appropriate language given as directions that are easy to follow ensuring that the student is comfortable 	All components from evidence required must be met for acceptability.
<p>Does the universal reading screener measure the breadth and depth of identified Indiana Academic Standards as related to literacy in grades K-2?</p> <p>What evidence shows that the assessment is sufficiently rigorous?</p>	<p>The respondent must provide a formal alignment study verifying the degree of the assessment's alignment to Indiana Academic Standards for literacy, as defined in Appendix A. The alignment study must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a research-based process • Be completed by a third-party (external rather than internal) • Provide evidence of the degree to which the assessments measure the breadth and depth of the identified Indiana Academic Standards. 	<p>A third party must complete the study. A panel of experts is expected to review item alignment across grade levels While current educators are not required for inclusion in the panel of experts, it is preferred.</p> <p>The alignment study must show that a minimum of 85% of Indiana Academic Standards as listed in Appendix A. No listed standard may be excluded from the study.</p> <p>For fixed-form assessments, alignment should be verified from test forms. Independent assignment of</p>

		<p>metadata must be completed and compared to internal metadata. Independent metadata assignments must confirm internal metadata at a reasonably high rate.</p> <p>For computer adaptive tests (CATs), alignment should be verified from a representative sample of test events. Independent assignment of metadata must be completed and compared to internal metadata. Independent metadata assignments must confirm internal metadata at a reasonably high rate.</p> <p>A correlation guide or crosswalk does not provide the same level of information that an alignment study provides and therefore will not be accepted.</p>
<p>Adequacy of Evidence: Not Scored ▾</p> <p>Committee Comments:</p>		

Criterion 3: Technical Validity

The assessment provides an accurate and meaningful measure.

IDOE accepts validity evidence from the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII) or a nationally recognized dyslexia assessment expert. The dyslexia assessment expert must hold an advanced degree in related field, demonstrate significant experience in related field, and provide evidence as appropriate (i.e., signed statement) that the third-party organization is independent of the vendor.

Research Questions	Evidence Required	Expectations for Acceptability
<p>Does the test development process support accurate and meaningful scores?</p> <p>Does the scoring process support accurate and meaningful scores?</p>	<p>Option 1: The respondent may provide evidence that the National Center on Intensive Intervention awarded the assessment a “convincing” or “partially convincing” indicator for validity.</p> <p>Option 2: The respondent may provide a technical report detailing the test development process. The technical report must include a description of test design, item development and calibration, scoring methodology, and quality controls. A nationally recognized dyslexia assessment expert must confirm technical validity evidence.</p>	<p>Option 1: The National Center on Intensive Intervention’s (NCII’s) current website should reflect “convincing” or “partially convincing” for validity for the assessment. The respondent may also submit a formal statement from NCII reflecting the provision of this rating in the event website updates are delayed after a rating is provided. The statement must include a date within the last calendar year.</p> <p>Option 2: The assessment should be constructed using a research-based method that focuses on the measurement of the intended construct. Appropriate stakeholders must be included throughout both the test development process and the item development process. Criteria must be in place to ensure only high-quality items are utilized on the assessment (including field testing protocols). A research-based scoring method must be applied to the assessment to return a valid “total score.” The technical report must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the process used to determine risk indicator and cut scores • A definition of testing irregularities and how irregularities affect the assessment process • Availability of peer-reviewed validation studies (e.g., studies published in peer-reviewed

		scientific journals that utilized the screener) must be provided.
Adequacy of Evidence: Not Scored ▾		
Committee Comments:		

Criterion 4: Reliability

The assessment provides a reliable measure across forms and administrations.

IDOE accepts reliability evidence from the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII) or a nationally recognized dyslexia assessment expert. The dyslexia assessment expert must hold an advanced degree in related field, demonstrate significant experience in related field, and provide evidence as appropriate (i.e., signed statement) that the third-party organization is independent of the vendor.

Research Questions	Evidence Required	Expectations for Acceptability
Does the assessment support reliable scores over time and across forms?	<p>Option 1 (Preferred): The respondent may provide evidence that the National Center on Intensive Intervention awarded the assessment a “convincing” or “partially convincing” indicator for reliability.</p> <p>Option 2: The respondent may provide evidence showing the degree to which scoring is comparable and reliable across various forms and administrations as applicable. A nationally recognized dyslexia assessment expert must confirm whether the assessment supports reliable scores over time and across forms.</p>	<p>Option 1 (Preferred): The National Center on Intensive Intervention’s (NCII) current website should reflect “convincing” or “partially convincing” reliability for the assessment. The respondent may also submit a formal statement from NCII reflecting the provision of this rating in the event website updates are delayed after a rating is provided. The statement must include a date within the last calendar year.</p> <p>Option 2: Processes must be in place that ensure the consistency of score results across different forms and over time (if applicable). Examples include the use of stable test blueprints, computer adaptive algorithms, and test specifications. Protocols and processes must be in place that address standardization of test administration. Examples may include defined test windows, test administration manuals, instructions for test administrators or school administrators regarding administration of assessments, and/or test security information.</p>
<p>Adequacy of Evidence: Not Scored ▾</p> <p>Committee Comments:</p>		

Criterion 5: At Risk Indicator for Reading Proficiency

The assessment provides data to identify specific skill deficits related to characteristics of dyslexia. The data provided by the assessment should directly correspond to the test design.

Research Questions	Evidence Required	Expectations for Acceptability
Does the universal reading screener provide an indicator which identifies students who may be at risk for not reaching reading proficiency?	The respondent must submit evidence of the data provided by the universal reading screener.	<p>There must be a clear way for schools to use the data provided to identify students who may be at risk for not reaching reading proficiency. This may be a single indicator based on data from all components or the use of a system of indicators working in tandem. If the assessment provides a system of indicators working in tandem, the respondent must provide clear instructions for schools to use to interpret those indicators and identify students at risk.</p> <p>The assessment must provide instructions for schools to use and interpret indicators to set flagging criteria.</p>
Does the universal reading screener provide parents and schools with data analysis guidance for interpreting results and comprehensive support for schools to guide classroom instruction and the implementation of reading interventions?	<p>The respondent must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide evidence of guidance for interpreting scores for English learners • Provide evidence of supportive resources to guide school-based administrators and educators in effective assessment administration; data access; and data-based instruction decision-making • Provide evidence of data analysis guide to schools for interpreting results • Provide progress monitoring tools to assess students' academic performance to quantify a student's rate of improvement or responsiveness to instruction, and 	All components from evidence required must be met for acceptability.

	<p>to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide evidence of data analysis guide to parents for interpreting results• Provide evidence that summary of results are in an understandable format for parents that is easy to read• Provide evidence of a variety of reports and data views, including district-, school-, classroom-level data, and student-level data by student groups/sub-populations, and parent/family-facing	
<p>Adequacy of Evidence: Not Scored ▾</p> <p>Committee Comments:</p>		

Criterion 6: Annual Analysis of Statewide Data Trends

Universal reading screeners must provide the department with annual analysis of statewide data trends to support identification of early literacy skill deficits.

Research Questions	Evidence Required	Expectations for Acceptability
Does the universal reading screener provide the department with an annual analysis of statewide data trends to support identification of early literacy skill deficits and guide targeted intervention effort?	The respondent must agree to provide a statewide analysis each year.	Respondents must provide a statement of assurance.
Adequacy of Evidence: Not Scored ▾ Committee Comments:		

Appendix A - Indiana Academic Standards Required for Alignment of Grades K-2 Assessments
Measuring Foundational Literacy Skills

Standards required for alignment to receive approval for a K-2 assessment focusing on foundational literacy (universal reading screener).		
Grade	2023 Standard Indicator	Standard Language
K	K.RF.3	Identify and name all uppercase (capital) and lowercase letters of the alphabet.
K	K.RF.6	Identify and produce the beginning, middle (medial), and final sounds in three and four phoneme words. (E)
K	K.RF.8	Use letter-sound knowledge to decode words, including open and closed syllables, consonant digraphs, and blends. (E)
K	K.W.8	c. Encoding – Spelling simple words phonetically, drawing on phonemic awareness.
Grade	2023 Standard Indicator	Standard Language
1	1.RF.3	Identify and produce beginning, middle (medial), and final sounds in single-syllable words. (E)
1	1.RF.4	Segment the individual sounds in one-syllable words. (E)
1	1.RF.6	Decode one-syllable words in the major syllable patterns (CVC, CVr, V, VV, VCe), independent of context. (E)
1	1.W.8	c. Encoding – I. Spelling unknown words phonetically, drawing on phonemic awareness and spelling conventions. II. Correctly spelling words with common spelling patterns. III. Correctly spelling common irregularly-spelled, grade-appropriate words (e.g., said, does, gone). (E)
Grade	2023 Standard Indicator	Standard Language
2	2.RF.1	Use knowledge of the six major syllable patterns (CVC, CVr, V, VV, VCe, Cle) to decode two-syllable words, independent of context. (E)
2	2.RF.2	Apply knowledge of short and long vowels (including vowel teams) when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words.
2	2.RF.4	Orally read decodable/grade-level appropriate or higher texts with fluency (rate, accuracy, and prosody) while reading.
2	2.W.8	c. Encoding – I. Correctly spelling words with short and long vowel sounds, r-controlled vowels, and consonant-blend patterns. II. Generalizing learned spelling patterns (e.g., word families) when writing words. III. Correctly spelling common irregularly-spelled, grade-appropriate words (e.g., said, does, gone). (E)