

How Are Early Literacy Skills Assessed?

DIBELS – Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills is one of the common assessments used in Granby to monitor the early literacy skills of our K-2 students at Kearns Primary School. In the fall of each year, our incoming kindergarten students are asked to demonstrate proficiency in two subtests of DIBELS - letter naming fluency and initial sound fluency. For both of these assessments, fluency (rate), as well as accuracy, is used as an indicator of mastery. When you are comfortable with a skill, your response is fairly immediate.

Assessing Letter Naming Fluency

Letter Naming Fluency is assessed by presenting children with a full page of upper and lower case letters. The children are asked to start at the beginning, point to each letter and tell the name of as many letters as they can in one minute.

S l u n s X k U x i

l D H h T c r D g t

u a n r U w C M J i

n q R m t X O R B F

S d l d w a f E f W

Note: If a child doesn't know a letter or takes too much time on one, the teacher simply provides the name of the letter and asks the child to name the next one.

Expectations: The fall benchmark for kindergarten is 8 correct in one minute.

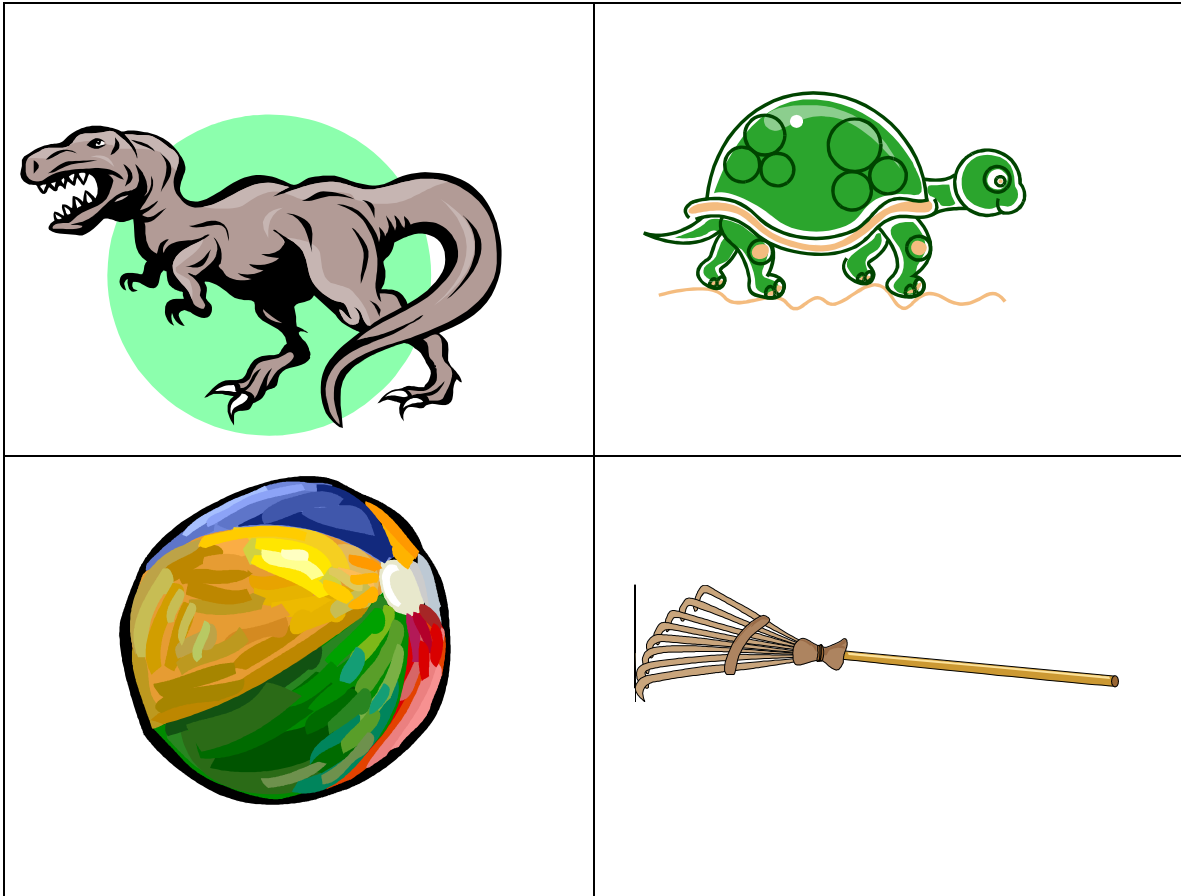
Assessing Initial Sound Fluency

First the teacher says: “This is dinosaur, turtle, ball, rake.”

(The teacher points to pictures as she names them).

Then the teacher asks:

1. Which picture begins with /t/? (The child should point to the turtle)
2. Which picture begins with /b/? (The child should point to the ball)
3. Which picture begins with /r/? (The child should point to the rake)
4. What sound does “dinosaur” begin with? The child should produce the sound /d/.



Note: It is important for the teacher to use the specific *sound* of the letter in her question. When you ask – Which picture begins with /t/? Be sure you only say the SOUND of the letter t. Do not say the name of the letter or add a vowel sound that would make it sound like “tuh.” When the child has to produce the initial sound for dinosaur, they should tell you the *sound* of the letter d – not simply tell you the name of the letter. (The sound is written as /d/.) Remember this is a *sound* activity. No letters are involved.

Expectations: The fall benchmark for kindergarten is 8 correct per minute. The teacher records correct responses over several pages and keeps a running total of the amount of time a child takes to respond.