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ABSTRACT
                The Class Size/Early Intervention Program in Iowa includes
documentation of successful early literacy development as a component of a
program to support maximum success for young children. This document is
designed to support educators in identifying literacy assessment tools for
kindergarten through third grade in Iowa public schools. The specific
instruments detailed in this document were identified by the Iowa DE/AEA
Early Childhood Network. Included in the portfolio are: (1) definitions for
the criteria used to evaluate assessment instruments; (2) a grid of several
diagnostic assessment instruments that met the criteria used by the Early
Childhood Network to identify appropriate early childhood diagnostic literacy
assessments; (3) a blank grid for use in evaluating other instruments; (4) a
descriptive profile of each of the diagnostic assessment instruments that met
the criteria for appropriate early childhood literacy assessments; (5) a
synthesis of the research on literacy development in young children; (6) a
synthesis of the research on assessment of young children; and (7) a document
describing the Class Size/Early Intervention Program. (KB)

ED 435 456

The Literacy
Assessment Portfolio
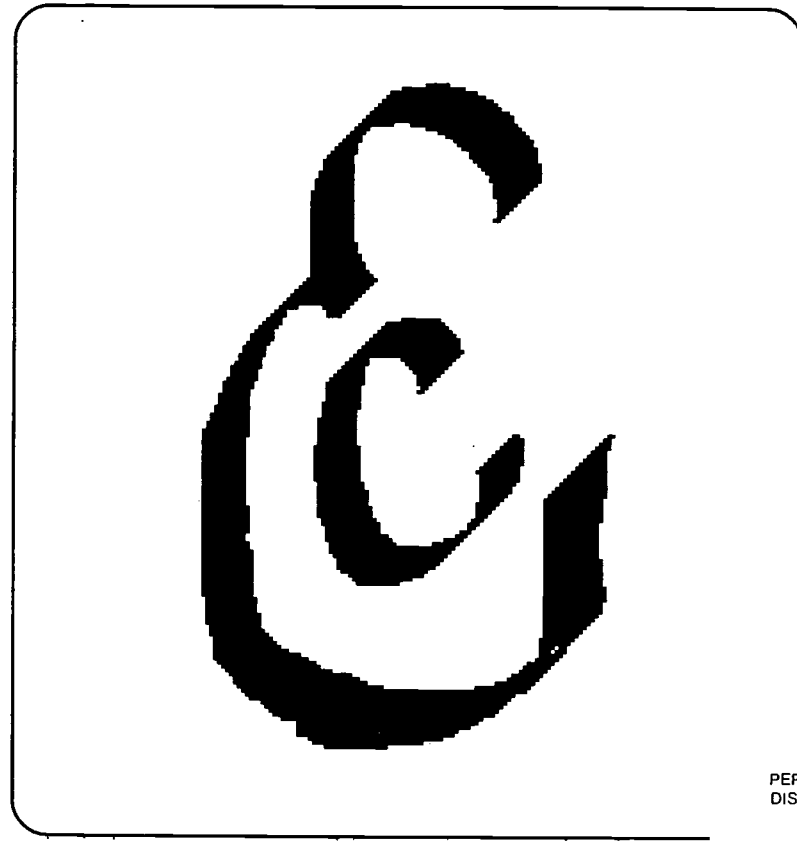
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The Iowa DE/AEA
Early Childhood Network
August 1999

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The mission of the Iowa De/AEA Early Childhood Network is: to promote the optimal development and education of all young children by providing leadership and support to the collaborative efforts of families, schools, and communities. Early childhood professionals significantly assist in developing and preparing students for success which is the goal of school improvement efforts.

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Literacy Assessment Portfolio

This portfolio is designed to support education in identifying literacy assessment tools for kindergarten through third grade. These specific instruments are not required, mandated, nor endorsed by the state agency. The DE/AEA Early Childhood Network [ECN] has identified these diagnostic assessments as meeting our criteria for appropriate early childhood literacy assessments that would meet the need of the schools to implement the class size/early intervention legislation and funding.

Included in the portfolio:

- Definitions for the criteria used to evaluate assessment instruments.
- A grid of several diagnostic assessment instruments that met the criteria used by the ECN to identify appropriate early childhood diagnostic literacy assessments.
- A blank grid for use in evaluating other instruments.
- A descriptive profile of each of the diagnostic assessment instruments that met the criteria for appropriate early childhood literacy assessments.
- A synthesis of the research on literacy development in young children.
- A synthesis of the research on assessment of young children.
- A document describing the Class Size/Early Intervention Program.

What is the Class Size – Early Intervention Program?

The Class Size/ Early Intervention Program became effective July 1, 1999. This bill is referenced in the Iowa Code 281:12.5(18). The intent of this program is to reduce class size so that all students reach challenging but achievable goals in Kindergarten through third grade. This program combines three critical elements of school improvement that will support maximum success of young children: parent participation and support, lower class size for improved student instruction and teacher-child relationships, and documentation of successful early literacy development.

Fairness:

- **Reliability:** The degree to which a test or assessment measures consistently across different instances of measurement, for example, whether results are consistent across raters, times of measurement, or sets of test items.
- **Validity:** The accuracy of a test or assessment in measuring what it was intended to measure. Validity is determined by the extent to which interpretations and decisions based on test scores are warranted and supported by independent evidence.
- **Construct Validity:** Evidence that performance on the assessment tasks and the individual student behavior that is inferred from the assessment shows strong agreement, and that this agreement is not attributable to other aspects of the individual or assessment.
- **Appropriate:** Assessments of young children should address the full range of early learning and development, including physical well-being and motor development; social and emotional development; approaches toward learning; language development; and cognition and general knowledge. Methods of assessment should recognize that children need familiar contexts in order to be able to demonstrate their abilities. Abstract paper-and-pencil tasks may make it especially difficult for young children to show what they know. The assessment should be: consistent with the child's experiences at home and school, given in context, and should include such things as observation, demonstrations and interviews.
- **Accommodations:** Supports or services provided to help a student access the general curriculum and validly demonstrate learning. Regardless of whether an assessment is intended to measure early reading skills, knowledge of color names, or learning potential, assessment results are easily confounded by language proficiency, especially for children who come from home backgrounds with limited exposure to English, for whom the assessment would essentially be an assessment of their English proficiency. Each child's first and second language development should be taken into account when determining appropriate assessment methods and in interpreting the meaning of assessment results. Teachers should also have a knowledge of child development to support a classroom environment that acknowledges the wide range of normal development in young children.

Administration:

- **Type of Test:** Defines the model of assessment: observation, teacher administered, construct, interview, on-demand, self-assessment, portfolio collection of student work over the course of a few weeks or the entire year, an informal reading inventory or self assessment. Standardization refers to a set of consistent procedures for administering and scoring a test or assessment. Standardization is necessary to make test scores comparable across individuals.
- **Cost:** States the cost to give the assessment per child or for the class.
- **Reporting Out:** Defines how the assessment may be reported: by grade equivalent, proficiency levels, narrative, or aggregate scores. Specific methods are checked when available.
- **Administration:** Defines how the assessment is given, for example: individually administered, group administered, individual or group administered.
- **Time to Administer:** States the approximate time the assessment takes to give. It may also state the time necessary to gather documentation or score the instrument.

Literacy/Reading

- **Reading Accuracy:** Achieving accuracy in recognizing words, comprehending connected text, and coordinating the two.
- **Reading Fluency:** Achieving speed and accuracy in recognizing words, comprehending connected text, and coordinating the two.
- **Phonemic awareness:** The awareness of the small units of sound that combine to form syllables and words. Phonemic awareness is typically described as an insight about oral language and in particular about the segmentation of sounds that are used in speech communication. Phonemic awareness is characterized in terms of the facility of the language learner to manipulate the sounds of oral speech. A child who possesses phonemic awareness can segment sounds in words (for example, pronounce just the first sound heard in the word *top*) and blend strings of isolated sounds together to form recognizable word forms. Phonemic awareness should not be confused with naming the alphabet letters.
- **Oral Reading:** Demonstrates the development from emergent reading to independent reading, translating written language to spoken language; reading aloud.
- **Comprehension:** Demonstrates the ability to understand written language, understand familiar ideas and to acquire new information. This includes such skills as: distinguishes fiction from non-fiction, draws conclusions, understands cause-effect, retells and sequences stories and summarizes main ideas.
- **Writing:** Demonstrates the development of skills for composing, drafting, editing and writing. This includes skills such as: beginning dictation and scribbling emergent messages, using letter sounds and stages of phonetic or invented spelling to conventional spelling, writing behaviors, conveying a sense of story, identifying a beginning-middle and end to a story.
- **Expressive/Receptive Language:** Listening, speaking, vocabulary understanding and using words to communicate a meaningful message. This includes skills such as: asking for clarification, participation in a group discussion or song, making connections, telling stories and giving oral directions.
- **Concepts of Print:** Becoming aware of the purpose of print, the need to use and understand print. This includes such skills as: labeling pictures, letter and word order, recognizing upper and lower case letters, punctuation marks and the conventions of reading and writing (left-right and top -bottom movement).
- **Curriculum Link with District Benchmarks, Standards, Curriculum:**
  The ability of this assessment model to be coordinated and integrally tied to the goals for and across the grade levels or the district.

Professional Development

- **Technology Support:** This section defines what types of technology are available for the particular assessment. The actual profile will state what the publisher has available in 1999. This may include: video, CD ROM, computer recording or reporting systems.
- **Training Available:** This criteria specifics the training that is needed to accurately give and interpret the assessment. This may include a manual, video, or actual staff training that is available from the publishing company or locally.
- **Training Recommended:** This section makes additional comments about the needs of the staff or the district to ensure that the assessments are given, interpreted and used for purposes that are appropriate and for the development level and experience of young children.

Diagnostic Assessment Grid

Name of Instrument	Work Sampling System/Meisels	Marie Clay Observation Survey	COR High/Scope	McRel ELA Early Lit. Advisor	Basic Reading Inventory (Johns)

Fairness:

1. Reliability	✓	✓	✓		✓
2. Validity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Appropriate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Accommodations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Administration:

5. Type	Observation Portfolio	Observation Survey	Observation	Performance	Inventory
6. Cost	$5 @ Child	Minimal	$5 @ Child	$10 @ child	Minimal
7. Reporting Out	Proficiency Levels	Proficiency Levels, Quantitative	Ind. & Class Profile	Ind. Profile	Narrative/Grade Equivalents
8. Grade Equivalent	✓	✓	Develop Levels	✓	✓
9. Proficient Levels	✓	✓	✓	✓	
10. Narrative	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11. Aggregate Scores				✓	✓
12. Grade Levels	3 yrs-Grade 5	K-1-2-3	PreK	PreK-Grade 1	PreK-Grade 12
13. Administration	Individual	Individual	Individual	Individual	Ind. Or Group
14. Time to Administer	Evidence over time	30 min. per child	Evidence Over Time	1 hour	30 min. – 45 mins. Per child

Literacy/Reading:

15. Reading Accuracy	✓	✓		✓	✓
16. Reading Fluency	✓	✓		✓	✓
17. Phonemic Awareness	✓	✓		✓	✓
18. Oral Reading	✓	✓		✓	✓
19. Comprehension	✓	✓		✓	✓
20. Writing	✓	✓		✓	✓
21. Expressive/Receptive Language	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
22. Concepts of Print	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
23. Curriculum Link with District Benchmarks, Standards, Curriculum	✓		✓	✓	

Professional Development:

24. Technology Support	Software available	Software available		Computer Scored	
25. Training Available	✓	✓	✓	✓	
26. Training Recommended	✓	✓	✓	✓	Video/Manual

These specific assessments are not required, mandated nor endorsed. The DE/AEA Early Childhood Network has identified these diagnostic assessments as meeting our criteria for appropriate early childhood literacy assessments.

Diagnostic Assessment Grid

Name of Instrument	Gray Oral	The Learning Record	Yopp-Singer	

Fairness:

	Gray Oral	The Learning Record	Yopp-Singer	
1. Reliability	✓	✓	✓ .95	
2. Validity	✓	Not Yet Determined	✓	
3. Appropriate	See Profile	✓	✓ English Only	
4. Accommodations	See Profile	✓	Not for ESL	

Administration:

	Gray Oral	The Learning Record	Yopp-Singer	
5. Type	Diagnostic/Norm Referenced	Multi-Faceted	Oral	
6. Cost	$29 @	Minimal	Minimal	
7. Reporting Out	Norms	Multiple		
8. Grade Equivalent	Ages 7-18	✓		
9. Proficient Levels	✓	✓	Possible	
10. Narrative		✓		
11. Aggregate Scores	✓	✓		
12. Grade Levels	1-12th Grade	K-12th Grade	K-1st Grade	
13. Administration	Ind./Group	Ind./Group	Individually	
14. Time to Administer	15-30 Mins.	Ongoing	5-10 mins. @ child	

Literacy/Reading:

	Gray Oral	The Learning Record	Yopp-Singer	
15. Reading Accuracy	✓	✓		
16. Reading Fluency	✓	✓		
17. Phonemic Awareness	✓	✓		
18. Oral Reading	✓	✓	✓	
19. Comprehension	✓	✓	Predictor (possibly)	
20. Writing				
21. Expressive/Receptive Language	✓	✓		
22. Concepts of Print				
23. Curriculum Link with District Benchmarks, Standards, Curriculum	✓	✓		

Professional Development:

	Gray Oral	The Learning Record	Yopp-Singer	
24. Technology Support	NA	Website		
25. Training Available	Manual	Manual $15		
26. Training Recommended	✓	Imp. For Inter-rater Reliability	✓	

These specific assessments are not required, mandated nor endorsed. The DE/AEA Early Childhood Network has identified these diagnostic assessments as meeting our criteria for appropriate early childhood literacy assessments.

Diagnostic Assessment Grid

Name of Instrument					

Fairness:

1. Reliability					
2. Validity					
3. Appropriate					
4. Accommodations					

Administration:

5. Type					
6. Cost					
7. Reporting Out					
8. Grade Equivalent					
9. Proficient Levels					
10. Narrative					
11. Aggregate Scores					
12. Grade Levels					
13. Administration					
14. Time to Administer					

Literacy/Reading:

15. Reading Accuracy					
16. Reading Fluency					
17. Phonemic Awareness					
18. Oral Reading					
19. Comprehension					
20. Writing					
21. Expressive/Receptive Language					
22. Concepts of Print					
23. Curriculum Link with District Benchmarks, Standards, Curriculum					

Professional Development:

24. Technology Support					
25. Training Available					
26. Training Recommended					

Assessment Literacy Profile for: The Learning Record

Center for Language in Learning, 10610 Quail Canyon Road, El Cajon, CA 92021
619-443-6320
lrecord@cll.org
learningrecord.org/lorg
electriciti.com/lorg

Assessment Criteria: Fairness

It provides reliable support for teacher judgements as the assessments are contextual,
systematic, and well-grounded in actual classroom practice. Validity is in the process of being determined and
scores were not available at this time. Multiple evidence is gathered at both the classroom and learner level.

Accommodations can easily be made. A developmental scale is also available
for stages of English language learning.

Appropriate: Developmental scales are provided and illustrate a developmental continuum. The scales align
well with *The Primary Program: Growing and Learning in the Heartland* document.

Assessment Criteria: Administration

Multi-faceted assessment includes the following components: running records, writing samples, systematic
observations, interviews with students and parents, and a developmental rubric for individual students.

The system documents students' literacy inside and outside the classroom, can document evidence of progress
towards learning standards; and summarizes learning with recommendations about what is next to be learned.

The cost is minimal: Cost of the handbook ($15) + copying costs at the local level.
Grade Levels: K–12

Reporting out is narrative and can be reported by proficiency levels.
California has linked proficiency levels to "on grade level reading" reports.
Time to administer varies depending on how many instructional-based assessments are used.

The turnaround time is immediate with the use of assessment data for classroom instructional planning with a
longer turnaround for aggregating data for classroom/building/district performance.

Assessment Criteria: Literacy/Reading

The system documents students' literacy through writing samples, systematic observations, interviews with students and parents, and a developmental rubric for individual students. It documents: reading fluency and accuracy, phonemic awareness, comprehension, expressive and receptive language, and oral reading ability.

It can be aligned with the district curriculum. It is standards referenced and aligns with *The Primary Program: Growing and Learning in the Heartland.*

Assessment Criteria: Professional Development

Technology support is available through web site information:

lrecord@cll.org
www.learningrecord.org/lorg
www.electriciti.com/lorg/

A training manual is available at $15 per copy and is recommended to establish inter-rater reliability.

Assessment Literacy Profile for: Yopp-Singer of Phoneme Segmentation

Hallie Kay Yopp (creator/author)
Dept. of Elementary and Bilingual Education
California State University
Fullerton, California
714-278-2300
Actual test is in: The Reading Teacher, 1995 September, 49(1), pp.20-29.

Assessment Criteria: Fairness:

The test was designed for use with English speaking kindergartners and early first-graders. There are no data on using this test with non-English language learners. The creator of this assessment cites potential problems with understanding task directions and familiarity with vocabulary and that some speech sounds that exist in the English language may not exist in a student's dominant language. Reliability coefficient was .95.

Assessment Criteria: Administration:

The test is administered by an examiner (teacher) individually and requires 5-10 minutes per child. A child's score is the number of items correctly segmented into all constituent phonemes. No partial credit is given, although notes can be made in the line next to the item to record what the child can do. Proficiency levels could be developed, for example, students who obtain high scores (segmenting all or most of the items correctly) may be considered *phonemically aware*. Students segmenting some items are *displaying emerging phonemic awareness*. Students segmenting only a few *lacks appropriate levels* of phonemic awareness.

A wide range of scores should be expected. Examples are given in the article that accompanies the test that illustrate how wide the range can be and how a mean and standard deviation score could be calculated.

Assessment Criteria: Literacy/Reading:

This test is intended to provide teachers with a tool to assess phonemic awareness and identify those children who may experience difficulty in reading and spelling. "Predictive validity was determined by collecting data on the reading achievement of the same students each year beginning in kindergarten and concluding when the students were in sixth grade; spelling achievement data were obtained in grades 2 to 6. Thus, 7 years of longitudinal data are available. Correlations were determined between performance on the Yopp-Singer Test of Phoneme Segmentation administered in kindergarten and all subtests on reading and spelling achievement batteries (mentioned in the article) throughout the grades as well as with a kindergarten non-word reading measure. Each of the correlations was significant: performance on the Yopp-Singer Test had a moderate to strong relationship with performance on the nonword reading that was given in kindergarten and with the subtests (mentioned in the article)— throughout grade 6.

Assessment Criteria: Professional Development:

Educators would need to read the article in The Reading Teacher, 1995, September, 49(1), to learn how to administer the test and to learn the potential uses of the data. The creator of the assessment tool advocates that the instrument's use be geared toward determining a child's phonemic awareness, and use this information to help those early on who are likely to experience difficulty in reading and spelling and give them appropriate instructional support.

Other uses of the test:
- Use as a general assessment tool for teachers to learn more about their students and develop appropriate experiences
- Could be used selectively as the teacher observes individual children experiencing difficulty with literacy-related tasks
- Reading/language arts specialists or clinicians that work with children may utilize this tool as part of a larger diagnostic survey.

Assessment Literacy Profile for: High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR)

High/Scope Educational Research Foundation
600 North River Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48198-2898
1-734-485-2000
e-mail: info@highscope.org

Assessment Criteria: Fairness:

- **Reliability:** Inter-rater reliability ranged from .80 to .93 with the mathematics and logic section scoring the highest at .93 and the music section the lowest at .79-.84.
- **Validity:** Correlations of COR ratings with the McCarthy Scales of Children's Abilities ranged from .27 to .66. There are strong positive correlations between COR ratings and children's ages, ranging from .53 to .61. This is to be expected since the COR is designed to measure aspects of children's development that are influenced by early childhood education. COR ratings were virtually uncorrelated with children's sex, suggesting a lack of gender bias in either COR behaviors or perceptions of the observers.
- **Appropriateness for age:** The COR covers all domains for development and correlates well with children's ages. Based on systematic observation rather than artificial testing situations, the COR provides a true picture of children's performance, skills and knowledge.
- **Accommodations for diverse/special needs:** COR is used internationally. This observation system is tolerant of children's cultural and ethnic differences. Since the COR is observation based and not based on prior knowledge, the COR may be used for non-English speaking children and for children with mild to moderate delays who are functioning above the 2 year 6 month developmental level.

Assessment Criteria: Administration:

- **Cost:** Complete kit - $90.95 includes manual, 25 student assessment booklets, 50 parent report forms, and 4 sets of anecdotal note cards. Computer programs exist for both Mac and PC at a cost of $149.95. Site licenses are available for $70.
- **Ages:** Measures the development of children aged 2 years 6 months to 6 years 0 months.
- **Time:** The systematic observation is conducted on an on-going basis over the entire year. The COR may be scored 2 or 3 times a year depending on the needs of the family and program. The COR may be administered at various points during the program to measure change over time or at a single point in time to measure the current developmental level of a child.
- **Turnaround time:** Initial assessment may require several weeks of observation in order to complete the COR. Subsequent scoring is based on the on-going observations of children and may be scored at any time.

- **Reporting out:** Individual records are kept on children. The computer program does have a class profile section that allows teachers to look at the group as a whole. The assessment may be used to report the educational progress of individual children or groups of children, evaluate the curriculum as a whole or in specific areas, report on changes over time, and identify characteristics of the children being served. The Parent Report form is used to report to parents at conferences.
- **Method of administration:** The High/Scope COR is based on systematic observation of children over time. Daily anecdotal notes are taken and categorized according to the ten key experiences categories (High/Scope curriculum) or the six sections on the COR. The COR is scored by the teachers when at least two anecdotal notes exist at the same developmental level on each item on the COR. For initial assessment, the observations may require several weeks to complete before the COR is scored. On-going observations provide the information for subsequent scoring on the COR.
- **Scoring:** there are thirty items on the COR (in six categories) with 5 developmental levels under each item. Children are scored at the developmental level where they consistently perform.
- **Storing:** The anecdotal notes taken on each child are kept in an orderly, systematic way to allow for easy retrieval. Each child has a COR booklet. The COR-Mac and COR-PC may be used to store and score anecdotal notes as well as the COR test items.

Assessment Criteria: Literacy/Reading:

There are six items in the Language and Literacy section of the COR:
1. Understanding speech
2. Speaking
3. Showing interest in reading activities
4. Demonstrating knowledge about books
5. Beginning reading
6. Beginning writing

Assessment Criteria: Professional Development:

- **Training:** The High/Scope COR is suitable for programs that use the High/Scope curriculum in their program and in those that do not. Inservice on systematic observation, anecdotal note-taking, and the COR would be beneficial.
- **Technologies:** The High/Scope COR is available on both Mac and PC platforms.

Assessment Literacy Profile for: McRel Early Literacy Advisor

2550 South Parker Road, Suite 500, Aurora, Colorado 80014
Phone: 303-337-0990
FAX: 202-337-3005
www.mcrel

Assessment Criteria: Fairness:

- Validity – The Early Literacy Advisor (ELA) validity was established using a combination of empirical and judgmental procedures including evaluation by experts in the reading field, side-by-side comparison with content of district-wide assessments. Reliability and validity coefficient scores were not available.

- Accommodations – ELA accommodates children of different languages because of the ability to individualize.

Assessment Criteria: Administration:

- Type of test -- individually administered using a protocol
- Cost – Currently $10/child; site licenses will be available next year
- Reporting out – grade equivalent/proficient levels/narrative/aggregate scores
  Numerical scores of student performances are given
- General level of performance as well as particular error patterns are represented in a graphic format as indicator bars.
- Narrative describes student performance

The student profile report uses the following four-part format:
- **Report** -- Describes match between the difficulty of the test and the child's current level of performance, gives general performance scores, and lists the particular test items that the child answered (or did not answer) correctly.
- **Analysis** – Shows detected error patterns
- **Interpretation** – more detailed description of the error patterns as well as a description of the child's level of development with regard to concepts and skills assessed on the battery.
- **Suggestions** – suggests teaching techniques that might be most appropriate to use with the child. Additional assessments may be recommended.
- **Grade levels** – Pre-kindergarten through first grade.
- **Methods of Administration** – individual— tester sits with each child and writes the child's responses on the computer-generated protocols. Protocol is sent to MCREL for scoring.

Assessment Criteria: Literacy/Reading:
Developmental levels of concepts and skills necessary for literacy are identified as literacy benchmarks which can be directly aligned with national, state, and/or district standards in language arts.

1. **Reading and Writing Concepts**

The following concepts of *reading* are tested by the ELA:
- ability to distinguish between print and the pictures as different sources of information
- knowledge of the concept of a word
- knowledge of the conventions of reading at a word level (left to right, reading ALL letters in a word)
- knowledge of the concept of a sentence
- knowledge of the conventions of reading at a sentence level (left to right, reading ALL words in a sentence including the repeated ones)
- knowledge of the conventions of reading at a paragraph level (top-bottom, left-right, sweep at the end of the line)
- ability to match spoken words with the written ones
- ability to correctly answer questions about the story read

The following concepts of *writing* are tested by the ELA:
- knowledge of the writing conventions (left to right, words are separated by spaces)
- ability to read own message in a consistent way
- ability to generate a meaningful message
- ability to generate a complex message by combining high frequency words with attempts to spell novel words

2. **Specific Literacy Skills**

The following specific *reading and writing* skills are tested by the ELA:
- Visual recognition of all (upper-and lowercase letters of the alphabet)
- Knowledge of sound-to-symbol correspondences for all consonants & some vowel sounds
- Visual recognition of high frequency words found in early reading materials
- Ability to form letters correctly
- Ability to spell conventionally some of the high frequency words
- Knowledge of orthographic principles in spelling

The following metalinguistic skills are tested by the ELA:
- Ability to distinguish between the attributes of a word and the attributes of the object this word denotes
- Use of phonological awareness to spell novel words independently
- Use of phonological awareness to decode own writing

Assessment Criteria: Professional Development:

Technology support: Protocols are scanned into the computer. The computer processes the information and automatically prints out the student profile. Profiles are made available through Internet access and can be downloaded via E-mail. Hard copies or the results and/or a diskette with results can be requested from McRel.

Training Provided/Needed: One day training for test administrators; one day follow-up teacher training to help teachers interpret the results of the battery of tests; extended teacher training in the suggested teaching strategies found in the student profiles. In the extended training, which can be offered separate from the testing, participants learn about the most common patterns of development and learning and the rate of progress they can expect from students. They also learn how to vary the suggested techniques depending on the current literacy level of their students.

Assessment Literacy Profile for: Observation Survey by Marie Clay

Heinneman Publishing NJL Associates, INC., 6750 School Street #906,
Des Moines, IA 50311,
Phone 800-484-9618, code 7915 e mail: njlbooks@aol.com FAX: 515-255-5527)
Contact person Mary Lose at the Reading Recovery ® Center of Iowa (515)242-8171

Assessment Criteria: Fairness:

The Observation Survey is reliable and valid with a trained teacher who records accurately a child's
reading and listening. Reliability and validity coefficient scores were not available.
Appropriate:
*for any K-3 student, but it may be used at higher grade levels
   with students who are struggling,
*any passage may be used from a child's classroom materials,
*a district may choose selected passages for various levels to
   standardize assessments for groups of students,
*alternate materials for assessment allow for progress monitoring,
*the six sub tests may be used individually or in combination.

Accommodations:
*can probe for additional comprehension in story retellings,
*reading passages used are chosen according to a students current
   reading performance (regardless of age / grade level)

The Observation Survey is a quality classroom assessment. Its use is not tied only to Reading
Recovery. Training in the use of the Observation Survey is recommended for reliability in reporting
purposes, but Reading Recovery training is not required for using this assessment.

The Observation Survey is composed of six sub tests: Letter Identification, Word Test, Concepts
About Print, Writing Vocabulary, Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words (Dictation) and Text
Reading. Although the Observation Survey is used in Reading Recovery for identification, it is
appropriate for use with any child.for progress monitoring in any classroom. The assessment can be
aligned with district curriculum and standards and benchmarks. The Text Reading sub test can help
determine independent, instruction, and frustration levels of reading. All six sub tests can be used
over time to show student growth and progress.

Assessment Criteria: Administration

The Observation Survey is composed of six sub tests and is performance task assessment. It is individually administered to the child.. It takes 30-45 minutes to administer. It is hand scored by the classroom teacher, thus the individual scoring is immediate. Stanine tables are available in the manual for determining national norms. The child's performance can be equated with a grade equivalent/reading level, then aggregated for reporting purposes. Planning for instruction would require more time to aggregate the class/building/or district performance.

It is most appropriate for kindergarten through grade 3, but can be used for individual needs at higher levels.

The cost of the manual is $19.00 (copies of testing materials may be made for each child.)

Assessment Criteria: Literacy/Reading

The Observation Survey is composed of six sub tests including: phonemic awareness, fluency, writing, oral vocabulary, oral reading, and comprehension. They may used individually or in combination. It is appropriate for the age group stated and has accommodations for individual learners. The teacher can probe for additional comprehension in story retellings; reading passages that are used are chosen according to a student's current reading performance regardless of age or grade level. A district may choose selected passages for various levels to standardize assessments for groups of students. The alternate use of materials allows for progress monitoring.

A district would need to determine proficiency levels to match comprehensive school improvement (HF 2272) legislation and subsequent rules.

Assessment Criteria: Professional Development:
A video is available for administering the reading portion of the survey. Training in the use of The Observation Survey is recommended for reliability in reporting purposes, but Reading Recovery training is not required for using this assessment. You may contact the early childhood consultant at the local AEA for training opportunities.

Assessment Literacy Profile for: The Work Sampling System (WSS)

REBUS
P.O. Box 4479
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106
Phone: 1-800-435-3085
www.rebusinc.com

Assessment Criteria: Fairness

Reliability: The internal and the interrater reliability data demonstrate that The Work Sampling checklist and summary report are highly dependable.

Validity: The Work Sampling System accurately predicts performance on a norm-referenced achievement battery, even when the potential effects of gender, maturation (age), and initial ability are controlled. Reliability and validity coefficient scores were not available.

Appropriateness for age: WSS is based on child development and looks at the whole child in seven domains: personal & social development, language & literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, the arts, physical development. Based on systematic observation and collections of student work, the WSS takes place in the classroom on an ongoing basis.

Accommodations for diverse/special needs: The emphasis for the WSS is on the continuum of children's development which allows teachers to see what comes before and what comes after each indicator. This makes the system especially accommodating for children with special needs, high ability learners, and for use in multi-age children.

The Work Sampling System (WSS) is a curriculum-embedded performance assessment system that offers an alternative to product-oriented standardized achievement tests in preschool through grade 5. It allows teachers to continuously assess children's progress by monitoring their skills, knowledge, behavior, and accomplishments. The system is grounded in child development and is organized around seven broad curriculum areas, or domains. The Work Sampling consists of three interrelated elements that are designed to work together: observations by teachers using developmental guidelines and checklists, a collection of children's work in portfolios, and summary reports.

Assessment Criteria: Administration

Type: Criterion-referenced, performance-based includes observation, portfolio, and summary report.

Cost: $5 per child the first year and $3 per child after the initial investment in materials. Initial training costs and technology support materials are not included in this figure.

Reporting Out/Proficiency Levels/Aggregate Scores:
Guidelines and checklists include performance indicators based on national standards. The teacher records observational data to support decision-making of a child's performance on a 3 level mastery scale (not yet/in process/ proficient) for each indicator. Portfolios illustrate student work in a purposeful collection of core items representing specific areas of learning in the curriculum, and individual items that reflect goals, interests, and abilities unique to a child. Summary reports are meant to replace conventional report cards and transform information from the guidelines and checklists, and portfolios into evaluations of student performance. Summary reports provide narrative information as well as brief rating scales. In addition to reporting progress individually to parents, there are methods to develop group information for district-wide reporting. Grade Levels: 3 years of age through 5th grade.

Method of Administration: The Work Sampling System is based on systematic observation and collection of work in the classroom over time. This information is evaluated by the teacher based on a standard of performance and then summarized in a report.

Time to Administer: Ongoing throughout the year and takes place in the regular context of the classroom.

Assessment Criteria: Literacy/Reading

There are five components in the Language and Literacy section of The Work Sampling System:
Listening; Speaking ;Literature & Reading; Writing & Spelling

Curriculum Alignment: Guidelines & Checklists were developed based on national standards and benchmarks and align well with most district curriculum. In addition, the portfolio allows local districts to determine areas of learning which provide district alignment of the portfolio collection.

Assessment Criteria: Professional Development

Technology Support: The summary report manager is available in both MAC and Windows versions. This assists you in printing narrative summary reports, information for families, attendance forms, and Title 1 reports.

Training Available: One day awareness sessions, three day implementation workshops, four day trainer of trainers workshops, and follow-up sessions available for through REBUS at www.rebusinc.com or contact your AEA Early Childhood Consultant for Iowa training opportunities.

Training Recommended: Three day implementation workshop with ongoing follow up is highly recommended.

Assessment Literacy Profile: Basic Reading Inventory

Basic Reading Inventory
by Jerry L. Johns
Kendall-Hunt Publishers 1997
Dubuque, IA
Phone: 1-800-542-6657
www.kendallhunt.com

Assessment Criteria: Fairness
- **Fairness:** The Basic Reading Inventory (BRI) is reliable and valid with a trained teacher who records accurately the child's reading and listening (norm-referenced tables can be used). Specific coefficient scores for reliability and validity were not available.
- **Appropriate:** It is appropriate for young learners as it provides word lists and reading passages from pre-primer-Grade 12 and it is individually administered to student. It also has a section for children who are not at pre-primer level in early literacy development. Appendix A includes: alphabet knowledge; phoneme awareness; phoneme segmentation; auditory discrimination; writing; literacy knowledge; wordless picture reading; word knowledge; picture story; pre-primer passage.
- **Accommodations:** The Basic Reading Inventory accommodates learners with diverse or special needs because you can probe for additional comprehension- in story retellings and the word lists/ reading passages used are chosen according to the student's current reading performance regardless of age/grade level.

Assessment Criteria: Administration
- **Type:** Individually administered assessment to determine independent, instructional, and frustration level of reading ability.
- **Cost:** manual- $30.95 and print copy costs of word lists/reading passages/ recording booklet per student per time given.
- **Method of Administration:** 1 on 1 interview with student.
- **Time to administer:** 30 - 45 minutes per student. This also depends upon the number of assessments that are given and the number of times it is given throughout the year.
- **Grade levels:** Preschool or early literacy through Grade 12.
- **Method of reporting:** There are narrative reports, norm referenced tables and grade equivalent tables
- **Turnaround:** The scoring is immediate for the classroom teacher. To use for planning for instruction, it would take longer to aggregate class, district or building performance scores.

Assessment Criteria: Literacy/Reading
The areas assessed are:
  phonemic awareness
  reading fluency
  writing
  oral vocabulary
  comprehension.

Appendix A includes: alphabet knowledge; phoneme awareness; phoneme segmentation; auditory discrimination; writing; literacy knowledge; wordless picture reading; word knowledge; picture story; pre-primer passage.

Other information:
  Form A is designed for oral reading assessment
  Form B is designed for silent reading assessment

The purpose is to determine independent, instructional, and frustration level of reading ability. It can be used, over time, to show student growth and progress.

Curriculum Alignment: A district would need to determine proficiency levels to match Comprehensive School Improvement (HF2272) legislation & subsequent rules. It is possible to develop curriculum links with district standards and benchmarks.

Assessment Criteria: Professional Development
There is a reading and self-study manual available. A video tape of administering <u>Basic Reading Inventory</u> is also available for $49.95.
Local staff development opportunities are also available.
This is a tool that has been used for over 30 years and has been revised numerous times. Emily Calhoun has recommended this tool to the K-3 Every Child Reads teams.

Assessment Literacy Profile for: Gray Oral Reading Tests
Third Edition
Wiederholt, J.L. & Bryant, B.R. (1994)
PRO-ED, Inc.

Assessment Criteria: Fairness

Reliability and Validity: Cronbach's coefficient alpha for internal consistency was reported as .80. Cautions have been noted for the comprehension score as being sufficiently unreliable for test-retest interpretations. Criterion-validity data, construct validity data, and content validity data report moderately strong correlation suggesting that the GORT-3 is a valid instrument for its stated purposes.

<u>Areas Accessed:</u>

Oral Reading Rate and Accuracy: The student's ability to read passages orally with speed and accuracy.

Oral Reading Comprehension: The student's responses to orally presented multiple choice questions.

Total Reading Ability: The combination of the student's performance on the Passage score and Comprehension score to yield an overall index of the student's reading ability.

Miscues: An analysis of oral reading miscues as a judgment of the student's use of comprehension strategies in reading

Caveats: Because this assessment is norm referenced, caution should be used when making individual interpretations of the data.

One weakness of the GORT-3 appears to be the omission of normative data stratified along race/ethnicity/SES lines.

Assessment Criteria: Administration

Gray Oral Reading Test is a group or individually administered assessment suitable for ages 7-18. The purpose of the Gray Oral Reading Test is to be an objective measure of growth in oral reading and an aid in the diagnosis of reading difficulties. This assessment is a standardized norm referenced assessments, allowing for group interpretations. The norm group was improved upon since its earlier versions, providing a larger, stratified, sample reflective of the 1990 U.S. Census data Percentile scores and grade equivalents are provided. The Gray Oral Reading Test also provides alternate forms allowing pre and post test comparisons to assess intervention effects. Time to administer this assessment is approximated at 15-30 minutes.

Assessment Criteria: Literacy/Reading

Phonemic Awareness:
Oral Reading: Yes
Reading Accuracy:
Fluency: Yes
Writing:
Oral Vocabulary:
Comprehension:

Assessment Criteria: Professional Development

"Assessment is the process of collecting data to measure the performance or capabilities of a student or group." Accurate assessment of young children is important and at the same time difficult. The assessment of young children is difficult because it is the period when their rates of physical, motor, and linguistic development - including early literacy development - outpace growth rates of later ages and can be sporadic or uneven.

"Early Childhood assessment affects more than the child in the classroom. Parents want to know how their children are progressing. Teachers and school administrators want to know if their programs are effective and if they are providing children the right programs and services. Policymakers want to know which program policies and expenditures will help children and their families, and whether they are effective over time. Yet young children are notoriously difficult to assess accurately, and well-intended testing efforts in the past have done unintended harm."[A]

To help early childhood professionals and policymakers meet their particular information needs by assessing young children appropriately and effectively the National Education Goals Panel established the following general principles to guide both policy and practice for the assessment of young children:

General Principles:
Assessment should bring about benefits for children.
Gathering accurate information from young children is difficult and potentially stressful. Formal assessments may also be costly and take resources that could otherwise be spent directly on programs and services for young children. To warrant conducting assessments, there must be a clear benefit— either in direct services to the child or in improved quality of educational programs.

Assessments should be tailored to a specific purpose and should be reliable, valid, and fair for that purpose. Assessments designed for one purpose are not necessarily valid if used for other purposes. In the past, many of the abuses of testing with young children have occurred because of misuse.

Assessment policies should be designed recognizing that reliability and validity of assessments increase with children's age.
The younger the child, the more difficult it is to obtain reliable and valid assessment data. It is particularly difficult to assess children's cognitive abilities accurately before age 6. Because of problems with reliability and validity, some types of assessment should be postponed until children are older, while other types of assessment can be pursued, but only with necessary safeguards.

Assessments should be age-appropriate in both content and the method of data collection.
Assessments of young children should address the full range of early learning and development, including physical well-being and motor development; social and emotional development; approaches toward learning; language development; and cognition and general knowledge. Methods of assessment should recognize that children need familiar contexts in order to be able to demonstrate their abilities. Abstract paper-and-pencil tasks may make it especially difficult for young children to show what they know.

Assessments should be linguistically appropriate, recognizing that to some extent all assessments are measures of language.
Regardless of whether an assessment is intended to measure early reading skills, knowledge of color names, or learning potential, assessment results are easily confounded by language proficiency, especially for children who come from home backgrounds with limited exposure to English, for whom the assessment would essentially be an assessment of their English proficiency. Each child's first- and second-language development should be taken into account when determining appropriate assessment methods and in interpreting the meaning of assessment results.

Parents should be a valued source of assessment information, as well as an audience for assessment results.
Because of the fallibility of direct measures of young children, assessments should include multiple sources of evidence, especially reports from parents and teachers. Assessment results should be shared with parents as part of an ongoing process that involves parents in their child's education.

THE PURPOSES OF ASSESSMENT FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

The intended use of an assessment— its purpose— determines every other aspect of how the assessment is conducted. Purpose determines the content of the assessment (What should be measured?); methods of data collection (Should the procedures be standardized? Can data come from the child, the parent, or the teacher?); technical requirements of the assessment (What level of reliability and validity must be established?); and, finally, the stakes or consequences of the assessment, which in turn determine the kinds of safeguards necessary to protect against potential harm from fallible assessment-based decisions.) NEGP 1998

Serious misuses of testing with young children occur when assessments intended for one purpose are used inappropriately for other purposes. At the same time, assessments designed for instructional planning may not have sufficient validity and technical accuracy to support high-stakes decisions An appropriate assessment system may include different assessments for different categories of purpose, such as:
• assessments to support learning,
• assessments for identification of special needs,
• assessments for program evaluation and monitoring trends, and
• assessments for high-stakes accountability.

Assessment is the systematic process of gathering evidence of what a child can do. Assessment techniques must be authentic, continuous, and free from cultural, gender and linguistic biases. In the school environment, assessment begins in the classroom. Assessment techniques occur in the context of the classroom environment; they mirror the actual learning experiences in the classroom; and they are carried on in an unobtrusive manner. Observing children, conferencing and examining multiple samples of children's representation of their learning, provide the evidence upon which to plan learning experiences appropriate for each child.

Assessment is the process of observing, recording, and otherwise documenting the work children do and how they do it, as a basis for a variety of educational decisions that affect the child. Assessment is integral to curriculum and instruction. In early childhood programs, assessment serves several different purposes: (1) to plan instruction for individuals and groups and for communicating with parents, (2) to identify children who may be in need of specialized services or intervention, and (3) to evaluate how well the program is meeting its goals.B

In a joint position statement addressing appropriate curriculum content and assessment in programs serving children ages 3 through 8, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE) defined assessment as: "the process of observing, recording, and otherwise documenting decisions that affect what children do and how they do it as a basis for a variety of educational decision that affect the children (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991). The purpose of early childhood assessment is:
• to plan for instruction for individuals and groups
• to effectively communicate with parents;
• to identify children who may require specialized programs or interventions (screening and diagnostic assessment);
• to provide information for program evaluation and accountability.

<u>Guidelines for Program Evaluation and Accountability:</u>
Whenever children are served in a program, it is essential that the program be evaluated
regularly to ensure that it is meeting its goals and that children and families are benefiting
from participation. In recent years standardized test scores have become the primary vehicle
for demonstrating that schools and teachers are accountable. Too often, this practice has led to
blaming children who are ill served by the program or to punishing districts that do not
measure up to expectations without examining all components of the program. Over reliance
on standardized achievement test scores as the only indicator of program effectiveness has had
a detrimental effect on curriculum; therefore, any effort to reform curriculum must be
matched by testing reform. Data obtained through program evaluation should be used to
identify areas in need of staff development or other support.C

| In Conclusion: Questions to ask in evaluating screening/diagnostic procedures |

Are screening test results used only as a first step in a systematic diagnostic procedure for
identifying children with special needs? Are results never used to deny children entrance to a
program or as the sole criterion for assignment to a special program?

Are the screening tests used reliable and valid for the purpose for which they are used? Are the
technical adequacies of standardized measures carefully evaluated by knowledgeable
professionals?

Are parents informed in advance when children are screened? Is the purpose and procedure
carefully explained and are parents are given time to review results and ask questions about the
results?

Is the screener knowledgeable about young children and able to relate to them in a positive
manner?

Does the screening procedure involve concrete, hands-on activities and multiple forms of
assessment?

Does the screening procedure lead to systematic diagnosis of potential handicapping conditions
or health problems for the children for which this step is warranted?

[A] National Education Goals Panel 1998. <u>Principles and Recommendations for Early Childhood
Assessment</u>. Washington, DC. Author

[B] <u>The Primary Program: Growing and Learning in the Heartland</u> 1993. Nebraska and Iowa
Departments of Education. Lincoln, NE. Author

[C] <u>Guidelines for Appropriate Curriculum Content and Assessment in Programs Serving Children Ages 3
Through 8</u>. Produced jointly with the NAEYC and adopted by both Associations in 1990. Published in
<i>Young Children</i>, March 1991, 46(3), pp. 21-38 and in <u>Reaching Potentials: Appropriate Curriculum and
Assessment for Young Children</u>, Volume 1, 1991, pp. 9-27.

"The picture that emerges from research in the first years of children's reading and writing is one that emphasizes wide exposure to print and to developing concepts about it and its forms and functions. Classrooms filled with print, language and literacy play, storybook reading, and writing allow children to experience the joy and power associated with reading and writing while mastering basic concepts about print that research has shown are strong predictors of achievement."[A]

There are numerous documents that address early literacy development in young children. One of the most recent is a joint position statement of the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The following statements are drawn from that position statement and other significant resources.

Conclusions About Literacy Development:

- Achieving high standards of literacy for every child is a shared responsibility of school, early childhood programs, families, and communities.
- Learning to read and write is a complex, multifaceted process that requires a wide variety of instructional approaches, a conclusion similar to that reached by an esteem panel of experts for the National Academy of Science (Snow, Burn, & Griffin 1998).
- The Child is an active constructor of his or her own learning, while at the same time, it is critical that an engaged adult provides scaffolding for the children's development of greater skill and understanding.
- Goals for reading and writing in the early years must be challenging but achievable, with sufficient adult support.
- Teachers must set appropriate literacy goals and then adapt instructional strategies for children and base their decisions upon their knowledge of reading and writing, current research, and the individual child's strengths and needs.
- Teachers need to respect the child's home language and culture and use it as a base on which to build and extend children's language and literacy experiences.

Teaching Practices in Kindergarten and the Primary Grades:
Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices
for Young Children.

NAEYC/ IRA Position Statement

Knowledge of the forms and functions of print serves as a foundation from which children become increasingly sensitive to letter shapes, names, sounds, and words. However, not all children typically come to kindergarten with similar levels of knowledge about printed language. Estimating where each child is developmentally and building on that base, a key feature of all good teaching, is particularly important for the kindergarten teacher. Instruction will need to be adapted to account for children's differences. For those children with lots of print experiences, instruction will extend their knowledge as they learn more about the formal features of letters and their sound correspondences. For other children with fewer prior experiences, initiating them to the alphabetic principle, that a limited set of letters comprises the alphabet and that these letters stand for the sounds that make up spoken words, will require more focused and direct instruction. In all cases, however, children need to interact with a rich variety of print (Morrow, Strickland, & Woo 1998).

In this critical year kindergarten teachers need to capitalize on every opportunity for enhancing children's **vocabulary development**. One approach is through listening to stories (Feitelson, Kita, & Goldstein 1986; Elley 1989). Children need to be exposed to vocabulary from a wide variety of genres, including informational texts as well as narratives. The learning of vocabulary, however, is not necessarily simply a byproduct of reading stories (Leung & Pikulski 1990). Some explanation of vocabulary words prior to listening to a story is related significantly to children's learning of new words (Elley 1989). Dickinson and Smith (1994), for example, found that asking predictive and analytic questions before and after the readings produced positive effects on vocabulary and comprehension.

Repeated readings appear to further reinforce the language of the text as well as to familiarize children with the way different genres are structured (Eller, Pappas, & Brown 1988; Morrow 1988). Understanding the forms of informational and narrative texts seems to distinguish those children who have been well read to from those who have not (Pappas 1991). In one study, for example, Pappas found that with multiple exposures to a story (three readings), children's retelling became increasingly rich, integrating what they knew about the world, the language of the book, and the message of the author. Thus, considering the benefits for vocabulary development and comprehension, the case is strong for interactive storybook reading (Anderson 1995). Increasing the volume of children's playful, stimulating experiences with good books is associated with accelerated growth in reading competence.

Activities that help children clarify the **concept of word** are also worthy of time and attention in the kindergarten curriculum (Juel 1991). Language experience charts that let teachers

demonstrate how talk can be written down provide a natural medium for children's developing word awareness in meaningful contexts. Transposing children's spoken words into written symbols through dictation provides a concrete demonstration that strings of letters between spaces are words and that not all words are the same length. Studies by Clay (1979) and Bissex (1980) confirm the value of what many teachers have known and done for years: Teacher dictation of children's stories help develop word awareness, spelling, and the conventions of written language.

Many children enter kindergarten with at least some perfunctory knowledge of the alphabet letters. An important goal for the kindergarten teacher is to reinforce this skill by ensuring that children can recognize and discriminate these letter shapes with increasing ease and fluency (Mason 1980; Snow, Burns, & Griffin 1998). Children's proficiency in **letter naming** is a well-established predictor of their end-of-year achievement (Bond & Dykstra 1967, Riley 1996), probably because it mediates the ability to remember sounds. Generally a good rule according to current learning theory (Adams 1990) is to start with the more easily visualized uppercase letters, to be followed by identifying lowercase letters. In each case, introducing just a few letters at a time, rather than many, enhances mastery.

At about the time children are readily able to identify letter names, they begin to **connect the letters with the sounds** they hear. A fundamental insight in this phase of learning is that a letter and letter sequences map onto phonological forms. Phonemic awareness, however, is not merely a solitary insight or an instant ability (Juel 1991). It takes time and practice. Children who are phonemically aware can think about and manipulate sounds in words. They know when words rhyme or do not; they know when words begin or end with the same sound; and they know that a word like bat is composed of three sounds /b/ /a/ /t/ and that these sounds can be blended into a spoken word. Popular rhyming books, for example, may draw children's attention to rhyming patterns, serving as a basis for extending vocabulary (Ehri & Robbins 1992). Using initial letter cues, children can learn many new words through analogy, taking the familiar word *bake* as a strategy for figuring out a new word, *lake*. Further, as teachers engage children in shared writing, they can pause before writing a word, say it slowly, and stretch out the sounds as they write it. Such activities in the context of real reading and writing help children attend to the features of print and the alphabetic nature of English.

There is accumulated evidence that instructing children in phonemic awareness activities in kindergarten (and first grade) enhances reading achievement (Stanovich 1986; Lundberg, Frost, & Petersen 1988; Bryne & Fielding-Barnsley 1991, 1993, 1995). Although a large number of children will acquire phonemic awareness skills as they learn to read, an estimated 20% will not without additional training. A statement by the IRA (1998) indicates that "the likelihood of these students becoming successful as readers is slim to none . . . . This figure [20%], however, can be substantially reduced through more systematic attention to engagement with language early on in the child's home, preschool and kindergarten classes."

In kindergarten many children will begin to read some words through recognition or by processing letter-sound relations. Studies by Domico (1993) and Richgels (1995) suggest that children's ability to read words is tied to their **ability to write words** in a somewhat reciprocal relationship. The more opportunities children have to write, the greater the likelihood that they will reproduce spellings of words they have seen and heard. Though not conventional, these spellings likely show greater letter-sound correspondences and partial encoding of some parts of words, like SWM for swim, than do the inventions of preschoolers (Clay 1975).

To provide more intensive and extensive practice, some teachers try to integrate writing in other areas of the curriculum like literacy-related play (Neuman & Roskos 1992), and other project activities (Katz & Chard 1989). These types of projects engage children in using reading and writing for multiple purposes while they are learning about topics meaningful to them.

Early literacy activities teach children a great deal about writing and reading but often in ways that do not look much like traditional elementary school instruction. Capitalizing on the active and social nature of children's learning, early instruction must provide rich demonstrations, interactions, and models of literacy in the course of activities that make sense to young children. Children must also learn about the relation between oral and written language and the relation between letters, sounds, and words. In classrooms built around a wide variety of print activities, then in talking, reading, writing, playing, and listening to one another, children will want to read and write and feel capable that they can do so.

> *"The stages of development in reading and writing continue throughout life. The view of the child in the primary program is one of a developing reader and writer speaker and listener. Regardless of the stage a child is in, the learning environment supports his or her progress within that stage."*[B]

Teaching Practices in the Primary Grades:
Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices
for Young Children.

NAEYC/ IRA Position Statement

Instruction takes on a more formal nature as children move into the elementary grades. Here it is virtually certain that children will receive at least some instruction from a commercially published product, like a basal or literature anthology series.

Although research has clearly established that no one method is superior for all children (Bond & Dykstra 1967; Snow, Burns, & Griffin 1998), approaches that favor some type of **systematic code instruction along with meaningful connected reading** report children's

superior progress in reading. Instruction should aim to teach the important letter-sound relationships, which once learned are practiced through having many opportunities to read. Most likely these research findings are a positive result of the Matthew Effect, the rich-get-richer effects that are embedded in such instruction; that is, children who acquire alphabetic coding skills begin to recognize many words (Stanovich 1986). As word recognition processes become more automatic, children are likely to allocate more attention to higher-level processes of comprehension. Since these reading experiences tend to be rewarding for children, they may read more often; thus reading achievement may be a by-product of reading enjoyment.

One of the hallmarks of skilled reading is **fluent, accurate word identification** (Juel, Griffith, & Gough 1986). Yet instruction in simply word calling with flashcards is not reading. Real reading is comprehension. Children need to read a wide variety of interesting, comprehensible materials, which they can read orally with about 90 to 95% accuracy (Durrell & Catterson 1980). In the beginning children are likely to read slowly and deliberately as they focus on exactly what's on the page. In fact they may seem "glued to print" (Chall 1983), figuring out the fine points of form at the word level. However, children's reading expression, fluency, and comprehension generally improve when they read familiar texts. Some authorities have found the practice of repeated re-readings in which children reread short selections significantly enhances their confidence, fluency, and comprehension in reading (Samuels 1979; Moyer 1982).

Children not only use their increasing knowledge of letter-sound patterns to read unfamiliar texts. They also use a variety of strategies. Studies reveal that early readers are capable of being intentional in their use of **metacognitive strategies** (Brown, & DeLoache 1978; Rowe 1994) Even in these early grades, children make predictions about what they are to read, self-correct, reread, and question if necessary, giving evidence that they are able to adjust their reading when understanding breaks down

But children also need time for **independent practice**. These activities may take on numerous forms. Some research, for example, has demonstrated the powerful effects that children's reading to their caregivers has on promoting confidence as well as reading proficiency (Hannon 1995). Visiting the library and scheduling independent reading and writing periods in literacy-rich classrooms also provide children with opportunities to select books of their own choosing. They may engage in the social activities of reading with their peers, asking questions, and writing stories (Morrow & Weinstein 1986), all of which may nurture interest and appreciation for reading and writing.

Supportive relationships between these communication processes leads many teachers to **integrate reading and writing** in classroom instruction (Tierney & Shanahan 1991). After all, writing challenges children to actively think about print. As young authors struggle to express themselves, they come to grips with different written forms, syntactic patterns, and themes. They use writing for multiple purposes: to write descriptions, lists, and stories to communicate with others. It is important for teachers to expose children to a range of text

forms, including stories, reports, and informational texts, and to help children select vocabulary and punctuate simple sentences that meet the demands of audience and purpose. Since handwriting instruction helps children communicate effectively, it should also be part of the writing process (McGee & Richgels 1996). Short lessons demonstrating certain letter formations tied to the publication of writing provide an ideal time for instruction. Reading and writing workshops, in which teachers provide small-group and individual instruction, may help children to develop the skills they need for communicating with others.

Although children's initial writing drafts will contain invented spellings, learning about spelling will take on increasing importance in these years (Henderson & Beers 1980; Richgels 1986). **Spelling instruction** should be an important component of the reading and writing program since it directly affects reading ability. Some teachers create their own spelling lists, focusing on words with common patterns, high-frequency words, as well as some personally meaningful words from the children's writing. Research indicates that seeing a word in print, imagining how it is spelled, and copying new words is an effective way of acquiring spellings (Barron 1980). Nevertheless, even though the teacher's goal is to foster more conventionalized forms, it is important to recognize that there is more to writing than just spelling and grammatically correct sentences. Rather, writing has been characterized by Applebee (1977) as "thinking with a pencil." It is true that children will need adult help to master the complexities of the writing process. But they also will need to learn that the power of writing is expressing one's own ideas in ways that can be understood by others.

As children's capabilities develop and become more fluent, instruction will turn from a central focus on helping children learn to read and write to helping them read and write to learn. Increasingly the emphasis for teachers will be on **encouraging children to become independent and productive readers,** helping them to extend their reasoning and comprehension abilities in learning about their world. Teachers will need to provide challenging materials that require children to analyze and think creatively and from different points of view. They also will need to ensure that children have practice in reading and writing (both in and out of school) and many opportunities to analyze topics, generate questions, and organize written responses for different purposes in meaningful activities.

Throughout these critical years **accurate assessment** of children's knowledge, skills, and dispositions in reading and writing will help teachers better match instruction with how and what children are learning. However, early reading and writing cannot simply be measured as a set of narrowly-defined skills on standardized tests. These measures often are not reliable or valid indicators of what children can do in typical practice, nor are they sensitive to language variation, culture, or the experiences of young children (Shepard & Smith 1988; Shepard 1994; Johnston 1997). Rather, a sound assessment should be anchored in real-life writing and reading tasks and continuously chronicle a wide range of children's literacy activities in different situations. Good assessment is essential to help teachers tailor appropriate instruction to young children and to know when and how much intensive instruction on any particular skill or strategy might be needed.

By the end of the third grade, children will still have much to learn about literacy. Clearly some will be further along the path to independent reading and writing than others. Yet with high-quality instruction, the majority of children will be able to decode words with a fair degree of facility, use a variety of strategies to adapt to different types of text, and be able to communicate effectively for multiple purposes using conventionalized spelling and punctuation. Most of all they will have come to see themselves as capable readers and writers, having mastered the complex set of attitudes, expectations, behaviors, and skills related to written language.

A separate IRA statement:
 The International Reading Association's statement on beginning reading also reminds us that a strong research base supports the position that multiple methods must be available to support the varying needs of individual learners.

"There is no single method or single combination of methods that can successfully teach all children to read. Therefore, teachers must have a strong knowledge of multiple methods for teaching reading and a strong knowledge of children in their care so that they can create the appropriate balance of methods needed for the children they teach."[C]

CIERA researchers have also identified research-based principles of improving the reading achievement of children. Among those principles are those which point to the importance of partnerships with the community, families and colleagues.[D]

Literacy Partnerships

Home language and literacy experiences that lead to the development of key print concepts are plentiful among children who enter school prepared to learn to read. Joint book reading with family members helps children develop a wide range of knowledge that supports them in school-based reading. Once students are in school, parental help in the form of modeling good reading habits and monitoring homework and television viewing is associated with gains in student achievement. Programs that assist families in initiating and sustaining these sorts of activities show positive benefits for children's reading achievement.

Preschool programs are particularly beneficial for children who do not experience informal learning opportunities in their homes. These preschool experiences include opportunities to listen to and examine books, say nursery rhymes, write messages, and see and talk about print. Such preschool experiences lead to improved reading achievement in the school years, with some effects proving durable through grade 3.

Skills that predict later reading success can be promoted through a variety of classroom language and meaningful reading and writing events in kindergarten and grade 1. The two most powerful of these predictors are letter-name knowledge and phonemic awareness (the conscious awareness of the sounds in spoken words). Instruction that promotes phonemic awareness engages children in hearing and blending sounds. Activities that promote this attention to sounds can be motivating and playful for young children, including oral renditions of rhymes, poems, and songs, as well as writing their own journals and messages. Such instruction has demonstrated positive effects on primary-grade reading achievement, especially when it is coupled with letter-sound instruction.

Primary-level classroom environments in successful schools provide opportunities for students to apply what they have learned in teacher-guided instruction to everyday reading and writing. In these classrooms, teachers read books aloud and hold follow-up discussions, children read independently every day, and children write stories and keep journals. These events are monitored frequently by teachers, ensuring that time is well spent and that children receive feedback on their efforts. Teachers design these events carefully, using information from ongoing assessment of children's strengths and needs as the primary basis for new activities.

Cultural and linguistic diversity among America's children reflects the variations within the communities and homes in which they live and is manifest in differences in their dispositions toward and knowledge about topics, language, and literacy. Effective instruction includes assessment, integration, and extension of relevant background knowledge and the use of texts that recognize these diverse backgrounds. The language of children's homes is especially critical for schools to build on when children are learning to speak, listen to, write, and read English. There is considerable evidence that the linguistic and orthographic knowledge students acquire in speaking and reading their first language predicts and transfers to learning to read a second language. When teachers capitalize on the advantages of bilingualism or biliteracy, second language reading acquisition is significantly enhanced.

Children who are identified as having **reading disabilities** benefit from systematic instruction, but not at the cost of opportunities to engage in meaningful reading and writing. These children profit from the same sort of well-balanced instructional programs that benefit all children who are learning to read and write. Programs are characterized by intensive one-on-one or small-group instruction, attention to both comprehension and word recognition processes, thoroughly individualized assessment and instructional planning, and extensive experiences with an array of texts.

Professional opportunities to improve reading achievement are prominent in successful schools and programs. These opportunities allow teachers and administrators to analyze instruction, assessment, and achievement, to set goals for improvement, to learn about effective practices, and to participate in on-going communities in which participants deliberately try to understand both successes and persistent problems.

Entire school staffs, not just first-grade teachers, are involved in bringing children to high levels of achievement. In successful schools, goals for reading achievement are clearly stated, high expectations for children's attainment of these goals are shared with all participants, instructional means for attaining these goals are articulated, and shared assessments are used to monitor children's progress. Instructional programs in successful schools may have many different components, including a range of materials and technology, but they maintain a focus on reading and writing. Successful programs extend into the home by involving parents in their children's reading and homework. Community partnerships, including volunteer tutoring programs, are common in such schools.

> "We can begin by observing children, learning with them and from them as they learn with us and from us. In this way we can create philosophical and theoretical frames for our observations of the learning environments we make for one another."[E] Denny Taylor

Resources:

Single copies of <u>Using Multiple Methods of Beginning Reading Instruction: A Position Statement of the International Reading Association</u> may be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped #10 envelope to: Beginning Reading Position Statement, International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139, USA.

CIERA: Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement. CIERA is a collaboration of the University of Michigan, University of Virginia and Michigan State University with the University of Minnesota and the University of Southern California. 610 E. University Av. Rm. 1600 SEB, Ann Arbor , MI 48109-1250. 734-647-6940 Numerous reports and presentations are available from CIERA on the web.

<u>The Primary Program: Growing and Learning in the Heartland</u>@1993 Iowa and Nebraska Departments of Education.

NOTES:

[A] <u>Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children</u> A joint position of the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC

[B] <u>The Primary Program: Growing and Learning in the Heartland</u>.@1993 .Iowa and Nebraska Departments of Education.

[C] IRA (International Reading Association). 1993 <u>Using Multiple Methods of Beginning Reading Instruction: A Position Statement</u>. Newark, DE: Author.

[D] CIERA: Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement

[E] Taylor, Denny. <u>From the Child's Point of View</u>. 1993 Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH.

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What is the Class Size – Early Intervention Program?

The Class Size/ Early Intervention Program was signed into law by Governor Vilsack on April 3, 1999 and became effective July 1, 1999. This bill is referenced in the Iowa Code 281:12.5(18). The intent of this program is to reduce class size and to reach challenging but achievable student goals in Kindergarten through third grade.

The bill specifies that school districts:
- use the state funding for school districts to meet the state goal of 17 students to every one teacher in core subjects in kindergarten through third grade;
- develop a class size management plan by September 15, 1999 and report progress as a part of the comprehensive school improvement plan;
- have flexibility to use the funding in other areas when reduction of class size is not possible;
- shall notify parents at least twice each school year of the reading progress of the individual students and of steps that are being taken to improve the student's reading ability; and
- shall support families in improving the child's learning.

The Department of Education is required to work in collaboration with the AEAs, school districts and the institutions of higher education to:

- identify literacy assessment tools for kindergarten through 3rd. grade;
- serve as a clearinghouse for research-based strategies and programs for teacher training in diagnosis and appropriate interventions.

Why is Early Intervention Important?

"The overall effectiveness of an early childhood program is dependent upon several factors: quality staff, suitable environment, appropriate grouping practices, consistent schedules, and parent involvement." (NCREL, 1997)

This program combines three critical elements of school improvement and of school success for young children: parent participation and support, lower class size, and documentation of early literacy development. The early intervention bill is designed to support the child, the family and the teacher in achieving greater school success. It requires bi-annual **reports to the parents** of the child. This required communication with the family incorporates the research stating the value and long term benefits of parent support and involvement in the child's school success. The Early Intervention program places the emphasis on the reporting to the family. It does not require that the district report proficiency levels of students younger than 4th. grade to the community. This is consistent with good early childhood assessment practices.

The National Education Goals Panel has stated that: parents should be a valued source of assessment information, as well as an audience for assessment results. Because of the fallibility of direct measures of young children, assessments should include multiple sources of evidence, especially reports from parents and teachers. Assessment results should be shared with parents as part of an ongoing process that involves parents in their child's education.(NEGP 1998)

In Iowa, school improvement is localized, with student achievement goals developed by each school district. The school becomes a system designed for all students, prekindergarten through post-secondary, rather than a collection of fragmented programs. The process for this change and its outcomes are both unique yet similar. A characteristic consistent with school improvement and early childhood is creating and maintaining a *system where there are high expectations for all.* "All" includes children and families from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Consequently, early childhood assessments should be linguistically appropriate, recognizing that to some extent all assessments are measures of language. Regardless of whether an assessment is intended to measure early reading skills, knowledge of color names, or learning potential, assessment results are easily confounded by language proficiency, especially for children who come from home backgrounds with limited exposure to English, for whom the assessment would essentially be an assessment of their English proficiency. Each child's first- and second-language development should be taken into account when determining appropriate assessment methods and in interpreting the meaning of assessment results.(NEGP)

A system that is <u>student focused,</u> basing decisions on what is "good" for students, and that will have an impact on increasing student achievement is another characteristic consistent with school improvement and early childhood. Recognizing that there is an individually appropriate dimension as well as an age appropriate dimension in developmentally appropriate programming is critical in this area. Student achievement is measured using reliable and valid assessment measures for the child. In early childhood individual performance assessments, collected over time, are documented and used to plan for appropriate instruction and to report growth and progress. Observation surveys, running records, portfolio assessment, teacher observation with anecdotal records, etc. are types of diagnostic performance assessments used regularly in early childhood classrooms. These assessments are used for instructional decision making and reporting progress to others (DE/AEA Fact Sheet: School Improvement).

The **Assessment Literacy Portfolio** is included in the appendix and is also available from the DE/AEA Early Childhood Network. It is designed to help districts select appropriate and reliable measures for assessment and includes a profile of a variety of assessments, and a synthesis of the research on literacy and assessment related to young children.

To increase student success in literacy development, the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of young Children (NAEYC) have called for a shared responsibility of school, early childhood programs, families, and communities. Goals for reading and writing in the early years must be challenging but achievable, with sufficient adult support. This includes teachers setting appropriate literacy goals and then adapting instructional strategies and decisions upon their knowledge of reading and writing, current research, and the individual child's strengths and needs.

Resources;

Bredekamp, Sue & Copple, Carol (editors). (1997). *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs (revised edition)*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Bredekamp, Sue & Rosegrant, Teresa (editors). (1995). *Reaching Potentials: Appropriate Curriculum and Assessment for Young Children, Volume I.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Bredekamp, Sue & Rosegrant, Teresa (editors). (1992). *Reaching Potentials: Transforming Early Childhood Curriculum, Volume II.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Iowa Department of Education (1989). DE/AEA Early Childhood Network, Fact Sheet on Class Size. Des Moines, Iowa. Author

Iowa Department of Education (1989). DE/AEA Early Childhood Network, Fact Sheet on Standards and Benchmarks. Des Moines, Iowa. Author

National Association for the Education of Young Children. In *Young Children*, July 1998, 53(4); 30-46.). *Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children: A joint poisition statement of the International Reading Association and the National Association for the Education of Young Children.* Washington, DC

NAEYC Position Statement on Guidelines for Appropriate Curriculum Content and Assessment in Programs Serving Children Ages 3 Through 8 (1990). Washington, DC.

National Education Goals Panel 1998. Principals and Recommendations for Early Childhood Assessments. Washington, DC. Author

Nebraska Department of Education, (1993). *The Primary Program: Growing and Learning in the Heartland.* Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Department of Education.

Internet Web Sites
Iowa DE/AEA Early Childhood Network http://www.state.ia.us

NCREL (1997)- Pathways to School Improvement- Early Childhood-Critical Issue: Assessing Young Children's Progress Appropriately
http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/earlycld/ea500.htm

NCREL (1997) - Pathways to School Improvement- Critical Issue: "Organizing for Effective Early Childhood Programs and Practices"
http//www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/earlycld

Exceeds the Requirement	Meets the Requirements	Does Not Meet the Requirements
School district reports their progress toward meeting this state goal more than once a year.	Annually report the district's progress toward reducing class size to the state goal of 17 students for every one teacher, or maintaining class size at that level by 9/15/99 and thereafter every September in the comprehensive school improvement plan.	Goals for reducing class size are not included in the comprehensive school improvement plan.
School district reports their activities to improve instruction more than once a year. This report includes the basis for the actions and a plan for implementation and monitoring. District's activities to improve instruction are data driven and closely monitored.	Annually report the district's activities to improve instruction in the basics for K-3 students in the comprehensive school improvement plan.	Activities designed to improve instruction in the basics for K-3 students are not included in the comprehensive school improvement plan.
Policy exists to inform parent(s) of their child's performance on all districtwide assessment measures PK-12.	School board shall adopt a policy indicating the methods the school district will use to inform parent(s) of their individual child's performance on diagnostic assessment in K-3.	No policy exists to inform parent(s) of their individual child's performance on diagnostic assessment in K-3.
School districts provide parents with information about their child's performance on an on-going basis throughout the school year, i.e. more than twice a year.	At a minimum, biannually inform parent(s) of their individual child's performance on diagnostic assessments in K-3. If appropriate, inform the parents of the actions (interventions) the district will take to improve the child's reading skills and provide parent(s) with strategies to enable the parent(s) to improve their child's skills.	School district informs the parent(s) less then two times a year on the performance of their child on the diagnostic assessments in K-3. If interventions are required for the individual child, the district does not inform the parent(s) of the intended actions or strategies the parent(s) could use to improve their child's skills.

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For additional information on the Literacy Portfolio contact the Early Childhood Consultant in your AEA.

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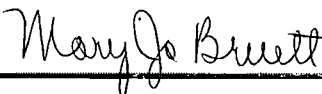
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