

# Reading Assessment and Intervention Guidance

**WYOMING**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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## Introduction

Early identification and remediation of potential reading difficulties is the key to **preventing** reading failure and ensuring that all students are proficient readers by the end of 3rd grade. Universal Screening of students for signs of dyslexia and other reading difficulties beginning in Kindergarten is one of the first steps in this prevention process. Tier 1 core reading curricula, Tier 2 supports, and Tier 3 interventions also need to be reviewed to ensure that they are (a) evidence-based (b) being administered as intended (c) being administered with fidelity. This manual will examine these topics and more.

The use of evidence-based practices and materials in all tiers of instruction is key to ensuring mastery of foundational reading skills. Direct, explicit, and systematic instruction guided by a clear scope and sequence is essential. The use of reliable and valid (technically adequate) screening, progress monitoring, and assessment tools ensures that instruction is guided by data. Educator training in the structure and rules that govern the English language and how to explicitly teach those skills empowers educators to teach, screen, progress monitor foundational reading skills, understand their student's data, and use data to guide instruction.

This 2019 K-3 Early Literacy Guidance Manual provides information and resources related to early literacy practices and provides districts guidance on implementing the requirements of 2019 House Bill 297, now codified in W.S. § 21-3-401.

## Section I: Definitions

**Assessment Instrument** – A tool used to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or educational needs of a student.

**Comprehension** – The ability to extract, construct and apply meaning from text.

**Core Curricula** – Core Curricula is a Comprehensive Tier 1 instruction curricula that includes:

- a. Training in direct, explicit instruction in which all teachers of reading, including those supporting reading instruction, participate.
- b. Scientifically demonstrated for validity and reliability.
- c. A clear scope and sequence.
- d. A pacing guide.
- e. Sufficient material for initial and distributed skills practice and mastery.
- f. Embedded assessments at the skill level and general outcome level.

**Evidence-Based** – If something is evidence-based it has strong technical validity which means it demonstrates scientific validity and reliability. Peer-reviewed, high quality publications are good sources for information on evidence-based literacy practices. Practices that rely on tradition or intuition are not necessarily evidence-based.

**Explicit Instruction:** Characteristics of explicit instruction include:

- a. Skills are directly taught. No assumptions are made about skills or knowledge children will independently acquire.
- b. Follows a scope and sequence that is sequential and cumulative.
- c. Begins with the goal of the lesson and the relevance of skill.
- d. Provides interactive review of prior skills and knowledge.
- e. Provides step by step demonstration of skill. This modeling is critical.
- f. Uses clear and concise language.

- g. Provides a range of examples and non-examples.
- h. Includes frequent check-ins to ensure students are following.
- i. Provides supported then independent practice.
- j. Provides initial and distributed practice sufficient for student mastery.
- k. Skill mastery is progress monitored and the data collected is regularly recorded and analyzed to guide instructional planning.

Some core curricula lack guidance about explicit instruction, scope and sequence and initial and distributed practice materials/opportunities, so these must be intentionally supplemented.

### **Example of Explicit, Systematic Instruction Guide / Scope and Sequence:**

[Teacher Manual: Evidence-Based Foundational Reading Skill Instruction](#): M.A. Rooney Foundation

**Multi-Tiered** – The Response to Intervention (RTI) framework is predicated upon early identification and intervention with students who show signs of possible reading difficulties. Embedded within the RTI model are multiple Tiers of instruction: Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3. Tier 1 represents evidence-based comprehensive core reading instruction. Universal Screening data is first used to determine effectiveness of Tier 1 instruction, and then to group children for Tier 2 support. Tier 2 supports are targeted interventions to specific skill deficits and are typically offered in small groups, sometimes in the General Education Classroom. Tier 3 supports are also thought of as special education. Tier 3 supports are individualized and intensive and the result of comprehensive evaluation. Decision Rules should be established that guide the movement of students among Tiers of intervention.

**Oral Reading Fluency** – The effortless reading of text with appropriate rate, accuracy, and expression to support comprehension.

**Phonics** – The relationship between sounds (phonemes) and their corresponding printed letters (graphemes) and the use of this knowledge to read (decode) and spell (encode).

**Phonological Awareness** – The ability to identify and manipulate the sounds in our language. This includes individual sounds (Phonemic Awareness: Isolating, blending, segmenting, adding, deleting, substituting sounds), syllables, rhyming, onset-rime, and whole words within sentences.

**Progress monitoring** – Progress monitoring is a way to assess student growth and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. Progress monitoring may be a measure of a sub-skill or it may be a measure of, if, and how well sub-skills have collectively transferred to a general outcome. An example of a sub-skill is “short vowel i.” An example of a general outcome measure is “oral reading fluency-words correct per minute.”

Progress monitoring can be implemented with an entire class, with selected students, or 1:1. When progress monitoring is implemented effectively, the benefits include:

- Accelerated learning (because instruction is tailored to students’ individual needs resulting in more appropriate instruction);
- Informed, instructional decision making;
- Accurate documentation of student progress for accountability purposes;
- More efficient communication with families and other professionals about students’ progress;
- Higher expectations for students; and
- Fewer special education referrals.

**Rapid Automatic Naming (RAN)** – RAN is not currently a required screening tool, however it is a strong predictor of a pre-literate child’s later reading ability. It is a valuable piece of screening data.

**Reliability** – A screening or assessment measure is considered reliable when consistency of results over time is demonstrated.

**Screening Instrument** – A screening instrument is designed to identify students whose performance on the measure warrants further diagnostic investigation. Technically adequate (valid and reliable) screening instruments are designed to predict which students are likely to fail to reach grade level expectations given their current progress. Screening instruments do not directly result in a diagnosis of student needs.

**Systematic Instruction**

- a. Skills are taught in a logical sequence.
- b. Skills such as phonemic awareness and phonics build on one another to produce general outcomes like reading fluency.

**Technical Adequacy**

[Evaluating the Technical Adequacy and Usability of Early Reading Measures](#): Ravthorn, 2004

**Universal Screening Instrument** – “Universal” means that the screener is administered to all students. Best practice is to administer universal screening instruments three times a year at the beginning, middle, and end. This is to avoid students meeting benchmarks at the beginning of year but falling behind by middle of year or end of year.

**Validity** – A screening or assessment tool is considered valid when it has been demonstrated to measure what it claims to measure.

**Vocabulary** – The knowledge of words and their meanings and the ability to use those words with automaticity.

## Section II: Legal Requirements

Wyoming law directly relevant to this manual and K-3 literacy is found in W.S. § 21-3-401 Reading Assessment and Interventions (HB297) and the Wyoming Department of Education Rules Chapter 6, Section 5(i)&(ii). W.S. § 21-3-401 can be broken down into four distinct responsibilities for districts and schools:

- 1. Screening and Intervention:** Select and implement a reading assessment and intervention program administered to all students K-3 that:
  - Uses an instrument that screens for signs of Dyslexia and other reading difficulties.
  - Implements, with fidelity, an evidence based intervention program.
  - Includes instruments that progress monitor and measure student reading progress and skills to provide data that inform any intervention.
  - Implements evidence-based core curricula aligned to uniform content and performance standards and evidence-based interventions to meet the needs of all students.
  - Is Multi-Tiered and includes evidence-based intervention to facilitate remediation of any reading difficulty as early as possible.
- 2. Assessment and Measurement:** Administer a curriculum-independent assessment designed to measure the following specific skills that are predictive of grade three (3) reading proficiency:
  - Phonological Awareness.
  - Phonics.
  - Decoding Words and Non-words.
  - Oral Reading Fluency.
  - Reading Comprehension.





**3. Annual Report to the WDE:** The report should include:

- The progress of each school toward achieving 85% of all students reading at grade level upon completion of grade three. Grade three (3) reading proficiency shall be determined by the grade three (3) statewide assessment administered pursuant to W.S. § 21-2-304 (a) (v).
- The percentage of students meeting or exceeding proficiency in reading.
- Aggregate number of students identified by the screening instrument as having dyslexia or other reading difficulties.
- List of Evidence-Based interventions implemented in each school by grade.
- Progress toward 85% proficiency levels of all K-3 students in the five skills areas listed in Assessment and Measurement.

**4. Improvement Plan:** Each school not meeting the 85% goal shall submit an improvement plan to the school district, and the school districts shall submit an overall improvement plan to the WDE that outlines or addresses:

- The general strategy for increasing reading proficiency.
- The evidence-based program of instruction to be implemented.
- The evidence-based assessments (screening and progress monitoring tools) to be implemented.
- The evidence-based intervention being implemented.
- The specific training that those who teach reading (including certified tutors, instructional facilitators, and paraprofessionals) have received in the district-selected core curricula and intervention programs.
- The Student-to-Teacher Ratio.
- The use of certified tutors, instructional facilitators, and paraprofessionals trained in the delivery of the evidence-based core curricula and intervention programs selected by the district.

These four responsibilities may necessitate the creation of individualized reading plans (IRP). As part of the RTI (Response to Intervention) and MTSS (Multi-tiered Systems of Support) processes, students not showing appropriate reading competence under this law shall be placed on an IRP. The IRP will aim to remedy the reading-related difficulty through differentiated instruction, utilizing an appropriate evidence-based intervention program, which may include a group reading plan.

For students under an individualized education program (IEP) that addresses reading difficulties, the IEP shall be deemed sufficient to meet the requirements of an IRP.

## Section III: Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction

*"The myth (perpetuated as fact) that people learn to read naturally just by being immersed in print results in misguided instructional practices." - Moats & Tolman, 2009*

Research indicates that every student should be taught using evidence-based instructional practices. The earlier a student begins the reading process, the better the reading outcomes (Kilpatrick, 2015). For the last few decades, researchers in psychology, linguistics, neurology, speech pathology, literacy education, and special education have been developing and fine-tuning our understanding of how children learn to read and why some children have reading problems. Their findings have been very encouraging. However, the fruits of their labors have not yet made their way into all of our school systems. The *American Federation of Teachers*, the *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, and other sources have documented the gap between research and practice. (Kilpatrick, D. A. 2018).

The National Reading Panel (2000) identified five major areas in reading that need to be taught. These areas are referred to as the “Essential Five” in literacy:

1. **Phonological Awareness.**
2. **Phonics.**
3. **Oral Reading Fluency.**
4. **Vocabulary.**
5. **Comprehension.**

Best practice in reading is achieved by teaching these five areas through evidence-based literacy instruction (structured literacy) that ensures concepts are being taught explicitly (no knowledge is assumed), systematically (in a well-designed order), and cumulatively (building on each other) with plenty of opportunity for initial and on-going practice.

The following table expands on these five areas:

Skill	Ages	Instruction Examples and Resources
<b>Phonological Awareness (PA)</b> is a better predictor of future reading achievement than general intelligence (IQ) or other measures of reading readiness. (Adams, 1990; Ball, E. W. and Blachman B. A , 1991)	PreK-3rd	<a href="#">Equipped for Reading Success</a> (David Kilpatrick) <b>Phonemic Awareness: The Skills that They Need to Help Them Succeed</b> (Michael Heggerty) <a href="#">Phonological Instruction for Older Students</a>
<b>Phonics (decoding real words and nonwords):</b> In order for children to learn to read and spell, they must first understand that spoken words are composed of phonemes that can be manipulated into words <b>(PA)</b> and that these phonemes correspond to letters in written form <b>(Phonics)</b> .	PreK-3rd	<a href="#">Explicit Phonics Instruction: Not Just for Students with Dyslexia</a>
<b>Oral Reading Fluency:</b> Fluency is the ability to read accurately, quickly, and with expression. Comprehending text is very difficult without fluency. Fluency is modeled beginning in PreK through the beginning of 2nd grade.	PreK-3rd	<a href="#">Florida Center for Reading Research Resources</a>
<b>Comprehension:</b> Includes activating and using prior background knowledge, generating and asking questions, making inferences, predicting, summarizing, comprehension monitoring. Actively modeled in PreK through the beginning of 2nd grade.	PreK-3rd	<a href="#">Reading Comprehension Strategies</a> by Dr. Daniel T. Willingham
<b>Vocabulary:</b> Direct, explicit, robust vocabulary instruction, that offers engaging ways to interact with the content taught, is the most effective way to prevent and remediate vocabulary deficits for all students. (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2013)	PreK-3rd	<a href="#">Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction</a> by Isabel Beck, Margaret McKeown, Linda Kucan

**Examples of Explicit, Systematic, Evidence-Based Method Training:**

- [Academy of Orton Gillingham Practitioners and Educators](#)
- [LETRS: Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling](#)
- [Neuhaus Education Center](#)
- [The Windward Institute](#)
- [AIM Institute for Learning and Research](#)
- [Orton Gillingham International](#)
- [Dyslexia Training Institute](#)

**Examples of Explicit, Systematic, Evidence-Based Curriculum/Program Training:**

- [Institute for Multisensory Instruction \(IMSE\)](#)
- [Reading Street](#)
- [SPIRE](#)
- [Voyager Sopris Literacy](#)
- [Wilson Language Training: Foundations, Just Words, Wilson Reading System](#)
- [Zaner-Bloser Superkids Reading Program](#)

**Examples of Explicit, Systematic, Evidence-Based Tutoring Programs and Resources:**

- [AIM Institute for Learning and Research](#)
- [Ascend Smarter Intervention](#)
- [Barton Reading System](#)
- [Literacy Nest](#)
- [Pride Reading Program](#)

**Accrediting Organizations:**

- [IMSLEC](#)
- [International Dyslexia Association](#)
- [IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading](#)

**Suggested Evidence-based Screening Tools:** (WY-TOPP is a general outcome measure instrument. WY-TOPP does not screen for specific foundational reading skill deficits).

Universal Screening Progress Monitoring Tools	Publisher	Grade	Skills Assessed					
			Phonological Awareness	Phonics	Decoding Words and Nonwords	Oral Reading Fluency	Reading Comp	Rapid Automatic Naming
aimsweb	<a href="#">Pearson Assessments</a>	K-8	X	X	X	X	X	
DIBELS 6th Ed (8th Ed in beta)	<a href="#">University of Oregon</a>	K-6 (8th Ed will be K-9)	X	X	X	X	X	8th Ed
Acadience Reading	<a href="#">Acadience Learning</a>	PreK-6 (will be PreK-9)	X	X	X	X	X	
FastBridge	<a href="#">FastBridge Learning</a>	PreK-8	X	X	X	X	X	X



## Suggested Dyslexia Screener:

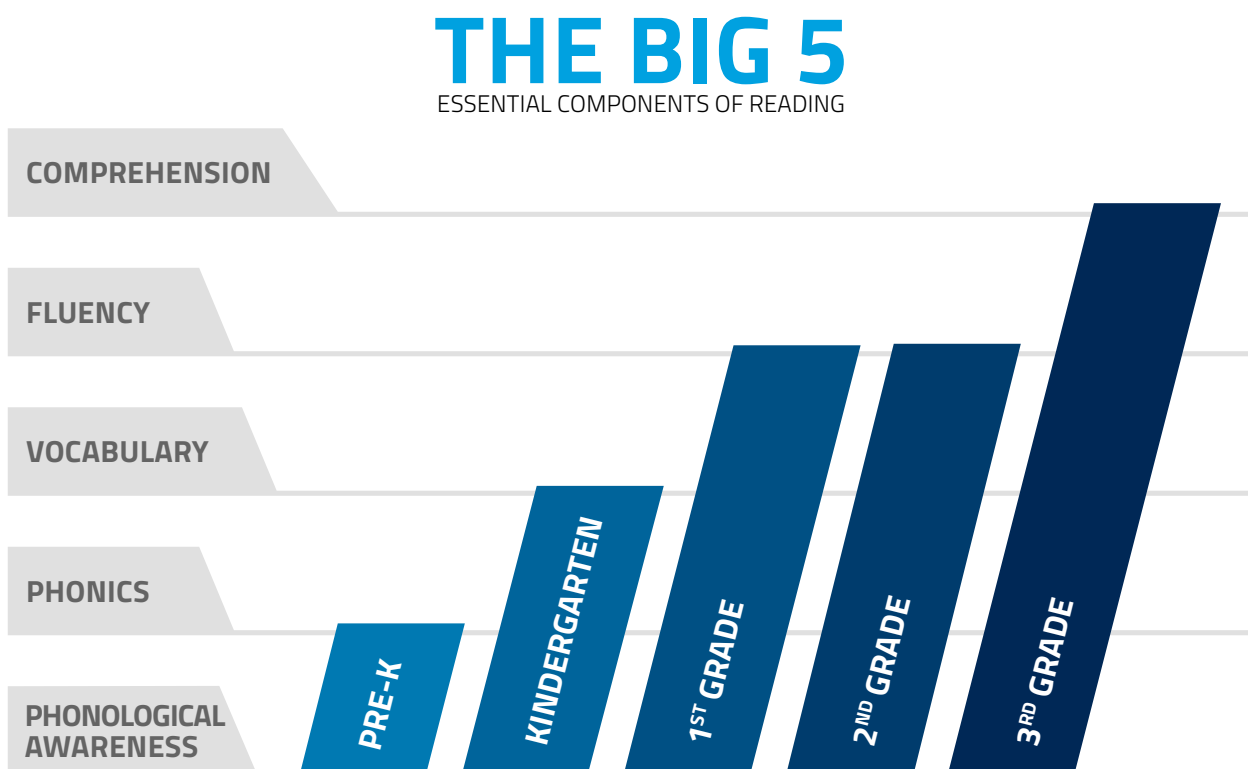
Dyslexia Screener	Publisher	Skills Assessed: Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, Alphabet Knowledge, Decoding Skills, Encoding Skills, and Rapid Naming				
		Grade	Cost	Admin Time	Pass/Fail Criteria	Qualifications to Administer
Mississippi College	<a href="#">Mississippi College</a>	K-1, 2-3	\$35/school	25 min	Yes	None
Lexercise	<a href="#">Mindful InFormation</a>	K-1	Free	15 min	Yes	None
aimswebPlus	<a href="#">Pearson Assessments</a>	K-3	Varies	N/A	Yes	<a href="#">Level B</a>

## Additional Screening Tools

### Phonological Awareness

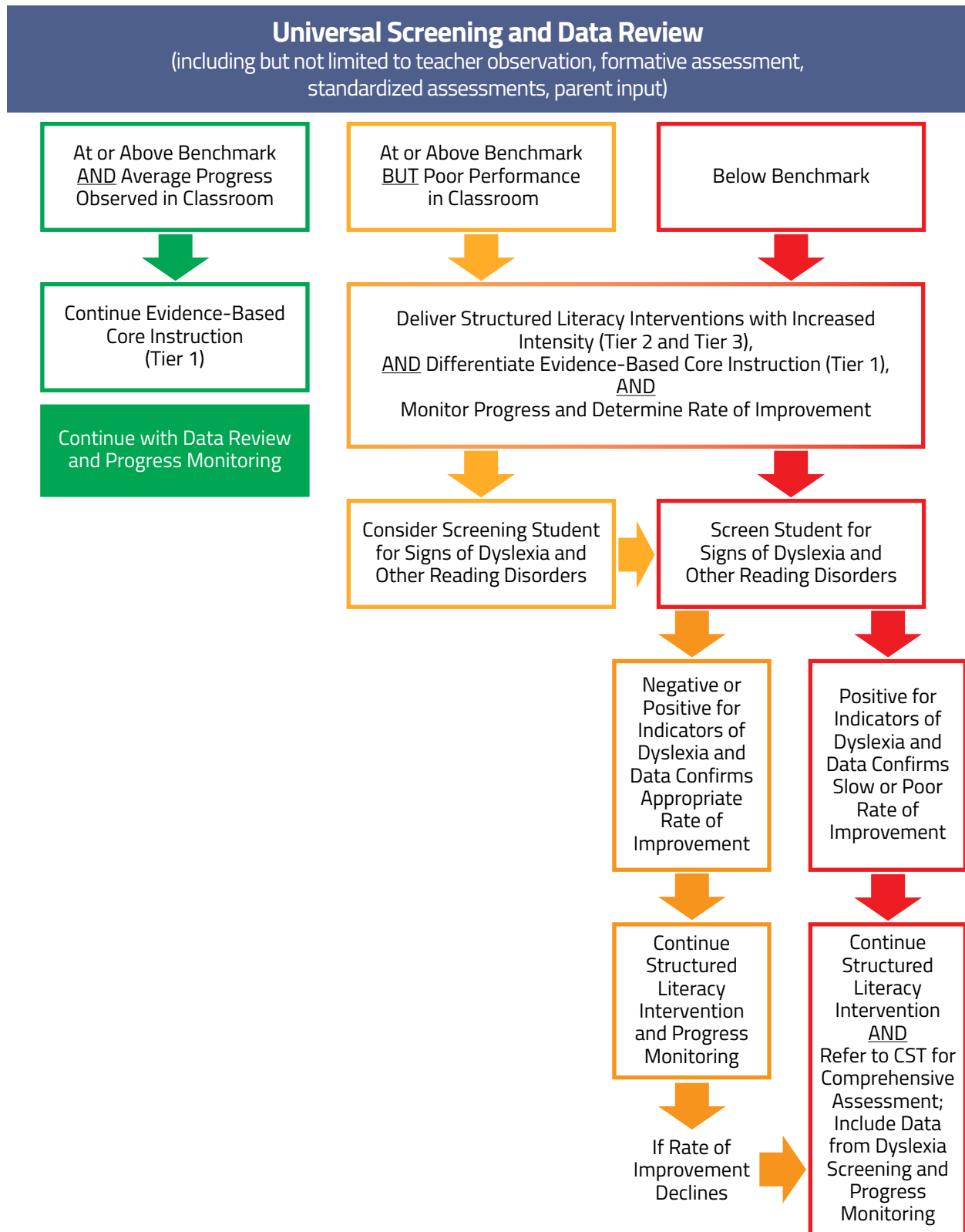
- **Equipped for Reading Success** by David Kilpatrick
- **Dyslexia Family Questionnaires:** Because Dyslexia is inherited, a family reading history questionnaire is helpful in screening for dyslexia:
  - [Parent Dyslexia Screening Questionnaire](#)
  - [School Age Child Screening Questionnaire](#)
  - [Parent Screener for Preschoolers](#)

The following infographic breaks down the five major areas and associates them with their most pertinent years in the K-3 grade band:



## Section IV: Flow Chart for Screening, Progress Monitoring, and Evaluation Process

### Signs of Dyslexia Flowchart



## Section V: Indicators of Dyslexia and other Reading Difficulties by Grade

**Dyslexia** – Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. (International Dyslexia Association, 2002).

Facts about dyslexia and related language-based learning disabilities:

- Fifteen to twenty percent of the population has a reading disability.
- Eighty percent of students identified as having a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) have deficits in reading.
- Dyslexia is the **most common cause** of reading, writing and spelling difficulties.
- If dyslexic children receive explicit, systematic reading instruction in kindergarten and first grade, they have significantly fewer problems learning to read at grade level than children who are not identified or supported until third grade.
- Evidence-based (explicit, systematic) reading instruction raises the reading rates of all children, not just dyslexic children.
- First grade reading levels are predictive of high school reading levels. Reading level in first grade is an excellent predictor of reading achievement in high school (Catts et al., 1999; Cunningham and Stanovich, 1997; Shaywitz et al, 1999; Fletcher et al. 1994). It is unusual for a student to “catch up.”
- Dyslexia is likely an inherited trait. This is why a Family Questionnaire is valuable as a screening tool.
- Dyslexia impacts males and females, and people from different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, equally.

**In Preschool through second grade**, a student with dyslexia may demonstrate:

- Difficulty pronouncing words correctly.
- Delayed language development.
- Difficulty reciting the alphabet and days of the week sequentially.
- Delay learning the connection between letters and sounds (phonics).
- Difficulty quickly naming things (RAN) like letters, colors, shapes, familiar objects when shown pictures of objects.
- Difficulty rhyming: Poor memory for nursery rhymes and chants.
- Inability to recall the word they want to say (word retrieval). “Describes” the word they are trying to say.
- Frustration with and avoidance of reading and writing tasks leading to “behavior issues.”
- Reading is slow, labored, lacks expression and contains unexpected errors.
- Skips words or lines of text, replaces small words with other small words, says the first part of a word correctly and guesses the second part “canyon” for “castle.”
- Difficulty telling time and understanding time concepts such as before and after, yesterday, tomorrow, last night.

**In grades three through eight**, in addition to the above difficulties, a student with dyslexia may demonstrate:

- Lack of a systematic approach to sounding out unfamiliar and multisyllabic words.
- Lack of reading fluency (rate, accuracy, expression).
- Poor spelling: Spelling remains phonetic.
- Strong listening comprehension but weak reading comprehension.
- Difficulty learning math facts, notably multiplication tables.
- Difficulty following multistep directions.
- Messy handwriting.

- Difficulty getting ideas onto paper.
- Growing anxiety and lack of self-esteem related to inability to do school work and humiliation by peers and, at times, educators.
- Difficulty with word problems in mathematics.
- Difficulty with rote memorization.
- Strong oral self-expression, weak written expression.
- Anxiety and poor self-image may worsen; thoughts or actions of self-harm are not uncommon.

**In high school**, in addition to the above, a student with dyslexia may demonstrate:

- Poor written composition.
- Difficulty summarizing, inferencing.
- Problems organizing work and managing assignments.
- Difficulty learning a foreign language.

## Section VI: Examples of Screeners, and Progress Monitoring Tools

Screener Examples	Progress Monitoring Examples
DIBELS	DIBELS
FastBridge	FastBridge
Easy CBM	aimsweb
aReading	mClass
MAP Growth	Acadience Reading
aimsweb	
mClass	
Acadience Reading	

## Section VII: Resources

### Exemplar Reading Plan Template

- [Individualized Reading Plan](#) (IRP)

### Videos: How does the brain learn to read? What can get in the way? What can we do about it?

- [Reading Rockets: Reading in the Brain](#) (interviews of scientists by Henry Winkler)
- [Cracking the Code of Dyslexia](#)
- [Children of the Code Project](#)

### Free Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Instruction Guidance

- [Teacher Manual Evidence-Based Reading Instruction](#): M.A. Rooney Foundation
- [Reading Rockets: Reading Basics](#)
- [Reading Rockets Videos: Reading and Writing Instruction 101](#) (free, self-paced course)

### Free Evidence-Based Teaching Resources

- [Florida Center for Reading Research: Student Center Activities](#)
- [How to Differentiate Reading Instruction Grades 1, 2, 3](#)
- [K-5 Student Center Activities](#)
- [Differentiated Reading Instruction: Small Group Alternative Lesson Structures](#)
- [Critical Elements of Classroom and Small Group Instruction](#)

### Additional Teaching Resources:

- [Ascend Learning Center](#) (Teaching Resources)
- [The Literacy Nest](#) (Teaching Resources)
- [Nessy](#) (Online Learning)

### Supplemental Instructional Programs:

- [How to Teach Spelling: Using Spelling Rules and Patterns](#)
- [Megawords: Decoding, Spelling, Multisyllabic Words](#)

### Community Education:

- [Decoding Dyslexia Wyoming](#)
- [International Dyslexia Association Rocky Mountain Branch](#)
- [Learning Ally](#)
- [Universal Design for Living \(Center for Applied Special Technology: CAST\)](#)
- [Understood](#)
- [Wyoming Afterschool Alliance](#)
- [Wyoming Kids First](#)
- [WY LIT](#)
- [Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity](#)

## Section VIII: District Reporting Responsibilities

Of the four legal requirements outlined in Section II, Districts have two reporting responsibilities;

- Each district shall report through the WDE626, by school, their identified K-2 reading assessment, the number of students who took the assessment, and the percentage of those students who met or exceeded proficiency on the identified reading assessment. Grade 3 reading proficiency shall be determined by WY-TOPP.
- Schools not meeting the eighty-five (85%) proficiency goal shall submit an improvement plan to their district and the district shall submit an overall improvement plan to the WDE. The district improvement plan is submitted to the WDE in November 1.