

D.I.B.E.L.S.

(Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills)

DIBELS are a series of short test given to children in kindergarten through third grade to screen and monitor their progress in learning the necessary skills to become successful readers. All DIBELS measures are timed for one minute. The reason for the timing is to find out if a child is able to answer the questions automatically and not take a long time to think about how to answer the questions or read the words correctly. Having these basic reading skills at the automatic level allows children to focus on understanding the meaning of what they are reading.

Phoneme Segmentation:

This is a measure of children's awareness of the many sounds that make up words we speak. The child is told a word like "cat" and asked to say all of the sounds in the word. There are three sounds in "cat." The children are given one minute to break apart as many words as possible.

Nonsense Words:

The ability to blend together the sounds represented by letters to make words is an important skill in learning to read. This skill helps children in kindergarten, first and second grade to use their knowledge of the relationship between letters and sounds to read unfamiliar words. Children are shown a page of make-believe words, like "tob" or "miv" and asked read them by saying the individual sound of each letter in the word or the whole word itself. The test is given is timed for one minute.

Oral Reading:

This is a measure of how fluently and accurately children can read passages written at their grade level. Children are given three passages and asked to read each one aloud for one minute. Children who read accurately and fluently are better able to understand what they read.