



**Simple Diagnostic Assessments  
for beginning readers and spellers**

**KINDERGARTEN**

Reading Assessment  
Spelling Assessment

*and*

**YEAR 1**

Reading Assessment  
Spelling Assessment

Lin Meeks

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# Simple Diagnostic Assessments for beginning readers and spellers

## Introduction

These simple diagnostic assessments have been designed to test **very** early reading and spelling skills: single sounds, two letter blends, and c-v-c words.

There are two main reasons for the assessment process in the classroom

1. To collect information that allows a teacher to write programs that match the needs of the class student-body.
2. To prepare a remediation program for students who have gaps in their knowledge, or who have mis-learnt information.

## Assessment Instructions

### Reading (Decoding)

1. The student holds the master sheet
2. The assessor marks the corresponding record sheet.  
(If the student gives an incorrect answer, record *exactly* what the student says as this will help in analysing student remediation needs later.)
3. Instructions to the student  
Single sounds: "Read the sounds that these letters make." (If the first few responses are the letter names, say "That's its name. Can you tell me the sound that it makes?")  
Two- and three-letter blends (v-c; c-v-c): "Read the words across the line."

### Spelling (Encoding)

1. The assessor holds the master sheet, the student writes on the test sheet (see page 6 for kindergarten and page 13 for Year 1)
2. Instructions to the student:  
Single sounds: "Listen to my sound /mmm/. Write the letter that says /mmm/."  
(Note: the assessor **must** say the letter **sound** NOT the letter name.)  
Two-letter blends: "I will say a word. Write down the two letters that go together to make my word."  
Three-letter blends (c-v-c), digraphs (th, sh, ch), and irregular words: "Write these words."

## Error analysis

Error analysis is concerned with isolating *specific* remediation requirements. Generally, decoding and spelling errors may be due to poor phonemic awareness, poor phonics (coding skills) or not having been taught a particular concept (prior knowledge). At this early level, errors may be classified as follows:

**Phonemic awareness** errors include:

1. **sound** reversals, or confusions, such as  
/ă/ and /ü/;      /i/ and /ě/;      /j/ and /g/;      /b/ and /d/;  
/s/ and /z/      /c/ and /g/;      /t/ and /d/      /y/ and /ŭ/
2. inability to isolate separate phonemes within a word, e.g.  
'bed' /b/ /e/ /d/  
'top' /t/ /o/ /p/  
'shut' /sh/ /u/ /t/

3. the omission of sounds, e.g. 'pram' /p/ /a/ /m/; 'went' /w/ /e/ /t/
4. the addition of sounds, e.g. 'sob' /s/ /o/ /n/ /b/
5. the incorrect sequence of sounds, e.g. 'clap' written as 'calp'
6. the inability to blend, or chunk, for reading, e.g. /a/ + /t/; /f/ + /in/

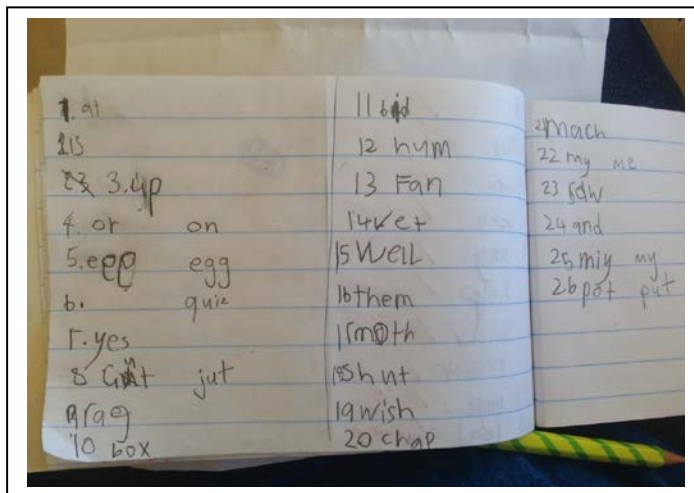
**Phonics** (coding) errors include:

1. not knowing the difference between a letter sound and a letter name
2. spelling rules
3. not knowing the two letters that make up a digraphs (th; sh; ch; wh)

### Handwriting

Handwriting is important and letter formation needs to be correct, legible and fluent. "Evidence is accumulating that handwriting has an important role in written composition. In particular, handwriting automaticity appears to relate to success in composition." (Medwell & Wray, 2014, p.34). Three main skills need to be considered: pencil grip, letter formation, letter placement on the lines. As students complete the spelling assessment, it would be useful to observe and to make notes regarding a student's handwriting abilities in order to provide handwriting remediation, if required.

### Example of diagnostic spelling analysis



#### 1. Phonemic Awareness

- a/u? ('up', 'jut', 'much')
- i/e? ('bid', 'will')

#### 2. Phonics

- letter-sound relationships:                      qu      z              j/g
- irregular words                                      me      put            my
- digraphs: th; sh; ch                              all correct

#### 3. Handwriting

- use of capitals                                      G      L              F
- incorrect letter formation                      g      a              u
- incorrect numeral formation                    3      7              8              9

# Kindergarten Assessments

KINDERGARTEN Reading Assessment  
**TEACHER TO MARK THIS SHEET**

**Instructions:**

Give the next page to the student to hold. Photocopy *this* page for each student to be tested, and use it to record what the student says for each individual letter, 2-letter blend or 3-letter blend.

Ask the student to read across the page. If a student cannot read, or mis-reads, a word, write what they say next to the letter or word. *Keep going to the end of the test.* Add any notes at the end about what you observe for each student as they complete the test.

Student's Name:	Date tested:
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a m s t i f  
d r o g h l  
u c n k v b  
e p j w  
y x qu z  
at in ox up  
mud big yes  
jet bag zip

**NOTES**

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KINDERGARTEN Reading Assessment

STUDENT TO READ FROM THIS SHEET

a m s t i f

d r o g h l

u c n k v b

e p j w

y x qu z

at in ox up

mud big yes

jet bag zip

Name

Date

## KINDERGARTEN Spelling Assessment

**Instructions:**

Write the student's name and the date at the top of this page. Read out each sound, and then each word, on the reading list (page 5) for the student to write on this page. You may repeat the sound or the word, if asked, but **DO NOT HELP THE STUDENT IN ANY OTHER WAY**. Add any notes at the end of the test about what you observe for each student as they complete the test – especially handwriting and pencil grip!

1		14		27	
2		15		28	
3		16		29	
4		17		30	
5		18			
6		19		31	
7		20		32	
8		21		33	
9		22		34	
10		23		35	
11		24		36	
12		25			
13		26			



Name

Date

# KINDERGARTEN **Spelling** Assessment

Teacher Notes/Observations

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## Year 1 Assessments

# Year 1 Reading Assessment

## EXAMPLE

### Instructions:

Use this page as a recording sheet. Give the student the master reading sheet (see page 12). Ask the student to read across the rows of words on the master sheet. As they read, record any words they cannot read, or mis-read. Write what the student says in the column of cells under each student's name. You may repeat a word, if asked, but **DO NOT HELP THE STUDENT IN ANY OTHER WAY. Keep going to the end of the test.** Add any notes at the end of the test about what you observe for each student as they complete the test.

Assessment Date: _____								
Student names →	John	Eli						
Two-letter blends								
1. at	ut							
2. is	✓							
3. up	✓							
4. on	✓							
Three-letter blends								
5. egg	✓							
6. quiz	kiz							
7. yes	✓							
8. jut	get							
9. rag	rug							
10. box	bo..							
11. bid	did							
12. hum	ham							
13. fan	No idea							
14. vet	etc							
15. will	etc							
Digraphs								
16. them	etc							
17. moth								
18. shut								
19. wish								
20. chap								
21. much								
Irregular Words								
22. me								
23. saw								
24. and								
25. my								
26. put								

### Notes

John was very slow – he did not know all of his sounds. John was extremely anxious. Poor pencil grip.

# Year 1 Reading Assessment

## TEACHER TO MARK THIS SHEET

**Instructions:**

Use this page as a recording sheet. Give the student the master reading sheet (page 12). Ask the student to read across the rows of words on the master sheet. As they read, record any words they cannot read, or mis-read. Write what the student says in the column of cells under each student's name. You may repeat a word, if asked, but **DO NOT HELP THE STUDENT IN ANY OTHER WAY**. *Keep going to the end of the test.* Add any notes at the end of the test about what you observe for each student as they complete the test.

<b>Assessment Date:</b> _____								
<b>Student names</b> →								
<b>Two-letter blends</b>								
2. at								
2. is								
3. up								
4. on								
<b>Three-letter blends</b>								
5. egg								
6. quiz								
7. yes								
8. jut								
9. rag								
10. box								
11. bid								
12. hum								
13. fan								
14. vet								
15. will								
<b>Digraphs</b>								
16. them								
17. moth								
18. shut								
19. wish								
20. chap								
21. much								
<b>Irregular Words</b>								
22. me								
23. saw								
24. and								
25. my								
26. put								



YEAR 1 Reading Assessment

STUDENT TO READ FROM THIS SHEET

at is up on

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egg quiz yes

jut rag box

bid hum fan

vet will

---

them moth shut

wish chap much

me saw and

my put

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## Year 1 Spelling Assessment

**Instructions:**

Photocopy this page. Ask the student to write his/her name and the date at the top of the table. Read out each word on the reading list (see previous page) for the student to write on *this* page. You may repeat a word, if asked, but **DO NOT HELP THE STUDENT IN ANY OTHER WAY**. *Keep going to the end of the test*. Add any notes at the end about what you observe for each student as they complete the test – especially handwriting and pencil grip!

Name:	Date:
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
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10	
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12	
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## Some useful references

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