

Foundational Skills Assessment Protocol

Observation Checklist (Daily informal assessment)

Use the checklist below to monitor students during small-group instruction. Remember to cold call students and offer a range of tasks to gauge mastery. For example, when learning a new sound and spelling pattern, be sure you are asking students to write words with the associated graphemes, identify words orally that contain the graphemes, and make the associated sounds in words.

Weekly Phonics Skill(s): _____

Weekly HFWs: _____

Notes from previous week → whole group practice needed in: _____

Key:

✓ = mastery

? = inconsistent

X = area of challenge, more practice needed

Student Name	Extra support needed with (<i>provide skill</i>)	Weekly skill notes	Decodable Readers: accuracy	Decodable Readers: automaticity	Decodable Readers: high-Frequency Words

Weekly Dictation

Give a weekly assessment on the given skill. Use the written assessment that comes with your core curriculum, and/or give a quick whole-class assessment following this guide's Assessment Protocol.

- Dictate 10 words orally.
 - 7–8 words should focus on the weekly sound and spelling pattern.
 - 2–3 words can focus on previously taught sound and spelling patterns, based on errors or student concerns the teacher has noticed since instruction, or re-teaching goals from previous weeks.
 - Include a mix of make-believe and real words. (Using real words along with pseudo-words allows students to apply the sound and spelling pattern and ensures a lack of memorizing word lists, for an authentic assessment).

- Dictate one sentence.
 - The sentence should include 2–3 words that focus on the skill of the current week, along with a mix of new and previously taught high-frequency words.

- Grade weekly.
 - If students make errors on more than one of the words from the current week's sound and spelling patterns, re-teaching must happen the following week.
 - If only a few students make these errors, re-teaching can happen in small groups.
 - If a large number of students make these errors, address them in whole-class instruction.

Unit Assessments/ Stop and Check

Unit assessments should allow for students to interact with previously taught content from the past 4-8 weeks. Most core programs include unit assessments. If your program does not include one, you can create one through extended dictation and brief practice tasks.

If a unit assessment reveals high needs across a class, this is a serious problem that should be flagged accordingly. Low results in phonics based assessments show that the class is not getting much traction and extended intervention is needed.

If small groups of students are having repeated difficulties on unit assessments, small-group work must be prioritized for these students. It is recommended that this become a focus of the school/classroom based RTI system.