Using Classworks Assessments to
Determine the Need for Dyslexia Evaluation

Classworks Universal Screeners have been validated by the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII), and they received the highest ratings for reliability and validity. Classworks Universal Screeners for Reading are formal assessments used to measure readiness for grade-level instruction, help identify baseline learning levels, and measure growth. The Universal Screeners were specifically designed for the purpose of screening students who may need additional intervention and can be used as part of the RtI or MTSS process.

Once all students have completed a Universal Screener, educators can develop a grade or class profile and identify students whose performance indicates that they are having difficulty with literacy-related skills. Recent brain-related research explains that kindergarten through second grade is a critical time for screening due to the rapid growth of children's brains and their response to instruction during this time (Nevills & Wolfe, 2009). Therefore, it's critical for K-2 teachers to have the right assessment tools.

About Dyslexia

Dyslexia is one of the most common literacy-related disabilities, affecting nearly one in every five individuals. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) describes dyslexia as a brain-based learning disability that specifically impairs a person's ability to read. Dyslexia impacts regions of the brain that are related to language and reading.

Often, individuals with dyslexia struggle with tasks that require them to sound out or segment sounds, accurately spell words, and quickly decode written words as they read.

"Dyslexia is a neurobiological disorder. Research has shown that brain plasticity decreases through childhood. It takes four times as long to intervene in fourth grade as it does in late kindergarten (NICHD) because of brain development and because of the increase in content for students to learn as they grow older. Children at risk for reading failure can be reliably identified even before kindergarten (Gaab, 2017). … Struggling readers who do not receive early intervention tend to fall further behind their peers (Stanovich, 1986)."

– International Dyslexia Association, 2017

Assessments to Indicate Further Testing

The Classworks Universal Screeners measure student performance with key domains that are indicative of future reading performance: phonological awareness, letter-sound correspondence, decoding, and reading comprehension. Each of these strands has been identified as early predictors for further screening for learning disabilities, specifically dyslexia.

In addition to measuring performance of key domains, Classworks Universal Screeners are recommended by NCII because of:

- The breadth of content assessed
- The fact that Individualized Learning is generated that meets the child at their instructional level
- The automated connection to Progress Monitoring probes that will continually fine-tune lessons included in each child's intervention.

This continuation of assessment follows the Data-Based Intervention (DBI) model and is easily acted upon by educators.

Research indicates that universal screeners for kindergarten to second grade students are most effective for indicating when further Dyslexia testing is appropriate when they include:

- Phonological processing
- Spelling, and
- Decoding tasks

Academic screeners measure some, but not all, of the discrete skills that should be considered when determining whether a learning disability is present. The Classworks K-2 Reading screeners indicate whether further testing for dyslexia is needed.

The table below shows specific indicators correlated to the specific skill domains from the Classworks Universal Screeners.

International Dyslexia Association Recommended Strands	Classworks Universal Skill Domains
Phonemic Awareness • Phoneme segmentation • Phone manipulation tasks • Phonological Memory **Phonics** • Letter Naming Fluency • Letter-sound association • Onset-Rime • Blending	**Phonemic Awareness** • Recognize and produce rhyming and non-rhyming words • Recognize short and long vowels • Understand that a new word is created when any of the letters are substituted, added, or deleted • Segment spoken words into phonemes • Use onset and rime to read common word families
Word Level Decoding • Word identification • Word recognition fluency	**Concepts of Print** • Differentiate between upper and lower case letters • Understand that words move left-to-right and top-to-bottom across the page • Differentiate between individual letters and printed words
Oral Vocabulary	**Vocabulary** • Develop vocabulary by classifying words • Develop vocabulary by using compound words
Reading Comprehension*	**Reading Comprehension*** • Paraphrase and summarize texts • Identify main ideas and supporting details • Ask and answer questions while reading

* - Included beginning with BOY/Fall of 2nd Grade

The Universal Screeners were specifically designed to determine a students' risk for reading difficulty and the need for intervention. This data is often used as part of the RtI or MTSS process. Once the Universal Screener has been administered; teachers review overall and domain specific scores and use this data to develop a grade or class profile. Individuals who struggle with phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary test items are evident. Specifically, students who score below the 25 percentile on specific skills that may indicate further dyslexia testing is needed are identified. Teachers have the data they need to ensure that if additional evaluation for dyslexia or related learning disabilities is needed, it can happen quickly!

About Classworks

Since 2003, millions of students have used Classworks to close learning gaps, keep pace, and grow! Our mission is to deliver the most compelling individualized learning experience that helps teachers create an equitable learning environment for students of all abilities and ethnic and social backgrounds.

POWERFUL INSTRUCTION. PERFECT TIMING.