Phonological Awareness assessment.

This test measures the child's ability to identify, blend and manipulate the sounds of speech.

Learning to read and write words is about learning to match the printed word to its spoken counterpart. Children who struggle with recognising, analysing and manipulating the sounds of speech cannot process words as other children do. When these skills are weak, the child will inevitably struggle, and every older child I have assessed with reading difficulties has found these tasks challenging. The ability to delete, add and substitute components of words allows the child to find the patterns in language, to quickly figure out and remember new words as they are encountered.

This test is a **version of the Gough Kastler Roper** test, which is freely available on the internet. For younger children, I recommend the **PAST test**, also freely available on the internet. There are two tests that go by this acronym. Make sure you user the Phonological Awareness *Screening* Test.

The primary goal of any intervention must be to develop and solidify these skills, until completing these tasks is easy, instant and automatic. **The best measure of progress** is growing competency with these skills, a higher test score.

Dyslexic students typically struggle with these tasks. However, do not assume that a low score indicates dyslexia. It may be that the child has simply never tried to think like this. If, after plenty of practice, the child continues to struggle, or makes much slower progress than other students, then a full professional assessment may be warranted.

For all of these tasks, ALWAYS use the sound the letter makes, never the letter name. All the way through, give examples of what you expect the student to do. The tasks become progressively more difficult. Stop when the student is clearly struggling.

1. *Blending sounds to make a word*

p   i   g;   r   oa   d;   sh   ou   t;   s   t   o   p;   b   a   n   d;   s   p   e   n   t;   f   u   nn   y

2. *Isolating sounds within a word*

dog   seat   shed   flat   hand   task   stump

3. *Deleting initial sound*

bus   road   bend   flop   crab   dread   strip

4. *Deleting final sound*

name   mess   muck   trim   stop   send   stamp

5. *Changing initial sound*

the d in dog to l;   the m in mate to l ;   the h in head to b;   the l in look to t;   the sh in shop to ch;
the th in thin to w;   the c in clop to s

Note: Children whose working memory is weak may always struggle with the following tasks. These kids can be taught strategies to by-pass their processing difficulties.

6. *Changing final sounds*

the g of dog to t;   the n of can to p;   the n of mean to t;   the s of bus to d;
the g of rug to sh;   the d of bend to ch;   the t of night to ce (s sound).

7. *Changing middle sound*

the i of bit to e;   the e of bed to u;   the u of hut to o;   the a of stamp to u;   the u of crush to a;   the u of truck to i;   the a of black to o

8. Deleting sounds in blends

**What do I have left if I take the r (sound) out of brand?   The t out of stand?   The l out of blank?
the m out of clamp?   the n out of bent?   the n out of stink?   the n out of munch?**

9. Changing sounds in blends

**Change the l in gland to a r;   the p in Spain to t   the r in frame to l   the p in sped to an l;
the s in best to n;   the r in crime to l;   the st in bluster to nd**

This completes 63 tasks. There are no clear norms for these activities, but expect a normally developing reader to achieve the following without excessive effort:

6 years: 15 - 18

6 ½: 20 - 25

7 :   30 - 35

7 ½: 35 - 50

8 + :   60+

The Wordchain apps are designed to develop these essential skills, with the many hours of practice most struggling children need.

Answers

1. Blending sounds to make a word

pig   road   shout   stop   band   spent   funny

2. Isolating sounds within a word

d - o - g   s - ea - t   sh - e - d   f - l - a - t   h - a - n - d   t - ar -s - k   s - t - u - m - p

3. Deleting initial sound

us   oad   end   lop   rab   read   trip

4. Deleting final sound

na   me   mu   tri   sto   sen   stam

5. Changing initial sound

log   late   bed   took   chop   win   slop

Note: Children whose working memory is weak may always struggle with the following tasks. These kids can be taught strategies to by-pass their processing difficulties.

6. Changing final sounds

dot cap meat bud   rush   bench   nice

7. Changing middle sound

bet bud hot stump crash   trick   block

8. Deleting sounds in blends

band sand   bank   clap   bet   stick   much

9. Changing sounds in blends

grand   stain   flame   sled   bent   climb   blunder