

Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators- Mississippi

Literacy learning does not begin abruptly at age five or six; rather, it is an ongoing process that begins even earlier in life as children are learning language.

—Mary Knight-McKenna

Beginning in the 1990s, when the term school ready first began appearing in the research literature, and now, with the development of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for grades K–12, policymakers are seeking information about young children’s knowledge and skills as they enter kindergarten. Many states in the US are adopting benchmarks that align to the CCSS and will be used to guide instruction in language and emergent literacy. Educators want an early picture of children’s skills so that problems can be identified and addressed as soon as possible. Half the states are now mandating kindergarten assessments. Renaissance Learning is ready to assist states and their educators with an early picture of a child’s literacy readiness for kindergarten.

What Are the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators?

Through research and empirical data, Renaissance Learning has identified a list of skills that designate a student’s readiness to meet kindergarten literacy expectations. These skills are the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators. These Indicators, paired with STAR Early Literacy, are one tool—a trusted, valid, and reliable tool—that educators can use to gather and report objective data with respect to literacy development and language at the beginning of formal schooling. That data can drive the development of relevant instructional opportunities and minimize achievement disparities as soon as possible.

How to Use the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators

After you administer a STAR Early Literacy assessment, compare your student’s scaled score to the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness scaled score. A scaled score at or above the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness scaled score indicates your student’s readiness to begin kindergarten with the initial early literacy skills expected of kindergarteners. A scaled score below the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness scale indicates the student does not yet have the initial early literacy skills expected of kindergarteners.

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| Kindergarten Literacy Readiness | Scaled Score 530 |
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To help students who do not yet have the initial early literacy skills expected of kindergarteners, focus on the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators listed in the following table. Each indicator is associated with a Core Progress reading learning progression skill. You will find guidelines and resources for teaching the skills in the learning progression. Suggestions for additional learning resources are also included in the following table.

| Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators | Learning Progression Skill |
|---|--|
| *Associate words with pictorial representations | Associate words with pictorial representations |
| *Hold a book upright and know that printed text is read from left to right | Hold a book upright and know that printed text is read from left to right |
| *Track printed words from left to right and top to bottom on a page | Track printed words from left to right and top to bottom on a page |
| *Compare the lengths of different words based on how many letters they contain | Compare the lengths of different words based on how many letters they contain (e.g., explain that <i>sit</i> is longer than <i>it</i> because <i>sit</i> has more letters) |
| *Distinguish letters from words | Distinguish letters from words (e.g., identify which is a word, not a letter, from choices <i>c, t, cat</i> ; identify which is a letter, not a word, from choices: <i>this, b, fox</i>) |
| *Distinguish letters from numbers | Distinguish letters from numbers (e.g., select <i>J</i> from choices <i>J, 8, 7</i>) |
| Clap the number of words in a given sentence | Clap and count the number of words in a given sentence |
| *Distinguish between the shapes of upper- and lowercase letters | Distinguish between the shapes of upper- and lowercase letters (e.g., pick the letter that is different in <i>S, S, C</i> ; pick the letter that is different in <i>E, f, f</i>) |
| *Identify the letters of the alphabet | Identify the letters of the alphabet (e.g., pick the letter <i>a</i> from <i>s, a, o</i>) |
| Name most letters of the alphabet | Name all the letters of the alphabet and recognize their lower- and uppercase forms |
| *Recognize and produce rhyming sounds in words | Recognize and produce rhyming sounds in words (e.g., pick the picture that has the /at/ sound from pictures of a cat, can, and cup) |
| *Identify the primary sounds most frequently represented by initial consonants of written words | Identify the primary sounds most frequently represented by initial consonants of written words (e.g., pick the word that begins with the sound /g/, <i>get</i> ; pick the first letter you hear in <i>mop, m</i>) |
| Identify and produce groups of words that begin with the same initial sound (alliteration) | – |
| Blend onsets and rimes | Blend onsets and rimes in single-syllable words (e.g., pick the picture of a shoe from the audio prompt: /sh/ /oo/) |
| With modeling and support, identify, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words. | Blend, count, and segment syllables in spoken words |
| Recognize own name in print | Recognize own name in print |

| Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators | Learning Progression Skill |
|---|---|
| Write one's own name | Write one's own name |
| Read and tell the meaning of familiar signs and symbols in or from the environment | Read and tell the meaning of familiar signs and symbols in or from the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign) |
| Understand that high-frequency words and oral vocabulary have categorical relationships | Sort objects into categories (e.g., color, shape, size, use) and by position (e.g., beside, under, and behind) |
| Complete a sequence of numbers between 0 and 10 in ascending order | Count out a given number of objects from 1 to 20 |
| Add numbers with a sum up to 10 (pictures) | Model addition within 10 using pictures |
| Subtract 1 from a set | Subtract within 20 by counting on |
| Add 1 to a set | Determine the number that is one larger than a given number within 20 |
| Recognize numbers 0–20 | Read a whole number from 0 to 20 |

* Students who do well on these skills are most likely to become successful readers.

Sample Parent Letter

Following is a sample letter to parents to report on a student's readiness to begin kindergarten with the initial early literacy skills expected of kindergarteners. Teachers need to fill in *two* pieces of information—one for the student's name and another to indicate the score. This fill-in information can be entered into paragraph two of the letter. You will also want to sign the letter at the end.

The letter also contains a sample of at-home activities.

Dear Parent or Guardian,

As you know, reading is a skill all students need. Our school wants to understand whether students are ready to learn to read as soon as they begin kindergarten. We want to give you the information you need about your child's reading progress.

_____ 's Kindergarten Readiness score is _____. Students with a score of 530 or above are typically ready to learn kindergarten-level skills. Students with a score below 530 usually need additional help.

Here are some skills you can work on at home.

| Skills | At-Home Activities |
|---|--|
| For early reading skills | Read and reread stories to your child. |
| Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet | Find the letters in his or her name in other print; sing the alphabet song. |
| Recognize rhyming words | Share a book with repeated rhyming phrases (e.g., <i>Brown Bear</i>) aloud with your child. Stress the rhyming words and encourage your student to find words which rhyme. (e.g., "Brown bear, brown bear what do you see? I see a green frog looking at <i>me</i> ." "Which word rhymes with <i>see</i> ?") |
| Pick out the letter that is the same or different | Play games with letter shapes: Match uppercase letters with their lowercase forms; tell which letter is different in a set of 3; pick out a number that is in a set of letters; pick out letters that have tails. |
| Recognize numbers 0–20 | Play this game while shopping together in the grocery store. For starters, find a number in clear view. For example, you might say, "I spy with my little eye the number 3." Invite your child to look around and figure out where you saw the number 3. Once your child spies the number you've chosen, switch roles and invite your child to spy a number for you to look for. |

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Thank you for supporting your child's reading progress.

Sincerely,