

Guide to the Early Literacy Alternate Assessment

Acadience Reading Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

The Early Literacy Alternate Assessment (ELAA) is the alternate to Acadience Reading for students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities.

Participation guidelines are:

- Student is in grades kindergarten, 1, 2 or 3; and
- Student has a SCD that significantly impacts intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior; and
- Student is learning content linked to the Utah Core Standards through the Essential Elements; and
- Student requires extensive, repeated, direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade-and-age-appropriate curriculum, and
- Determined by the IEP team

Participation in the ELAA is not determined by:

- A disability category or label.
- Poor attendance or extended absences.
- Native language/social/cultural or economic difference.
- Educational environment or instructional setting.
- Low reading level/achievement level.
- Anticipated student's disruptive behavior.
- Impact of student scores on accountability system.
- Anticipated emotional duress.
- Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)) to participate in the assessment process.

For students who have a sensory or significant speech impairment, where Acadience Reading may not be an accessible assessment, there are [other alternative assessments](#) available. Please contact [Tracy Gooley](mailto:tracy.gooley@schools.utah.gov) (tracy.gooley@schools.utah.gov)

About the Assessment

The ELAA, for students with significant cognitive disabilities (SCD), is a simple rubric that assesses students' early literacy skills as they relate to strands within English Language Arts that are aligned to the skills assessed with Acadience Reading (print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, fluency and comprehension). The rubric is meant to be completed for each student with a SCD (grades K-3) by their teacher, based on the student's performance on IEP goals and every day early literacy instruction within the classroom.

How to Score

For a student to score at a performance level for beginning, middle or end of year, they must be able to do each skill listed (except in the 'Not Yet Emerging' level) to a level of mastery as determined by the teacher (80% correct, or 80% independence is a general guideline for mastery). As performance levels are determined for each skill domain, the points should then be transferred to the Score Sheet. After all strands are added up, the student's reportable score will then be determined by the Scoring Guide. For beginning of year, the reportable score is dependent on points, whereas in middle and end of year, the students' reportable score is determined by progress compared to beginning of year or in scoring 'At Target' or 'Advanced' for a specified number of strands.

Examples of sources of data used to complete the ELAA include:

- Anecdotal notes
- Work samples
- Photographs
- Videos
- Performance data

There will be a great amount of variety in how each skill is assessed for each individual student. Consideration should be made for each student about whether assistive technology is required for a student to learn or demonstrate a skill. For example, a student could identify a detail in a story by selecting a message on a single message output device or they could select their answer from a field of five. Each skill should be assessed in the same way and given the same supports for all three windows.

Example scoring is on the next page.

Example student Score Sheet for First Grade

Strands	Beginning of Year (BOY)	Middle of Year (MOY)	End of Year (EOY)
Print Concepts	2/5	2/5	3/5
Phonological Awareness	1/5	1/5	2/5
Phonics and Word Recognition	2/5	2/5	3/5
Fluency	1/5	2/5	3/5
Reading (Literature)	3/5	4/5	4/5
Reading Informational)	3/5	4/5	4/5
Totals	12/30	15/30	19/30
Date	9/15/17	2/2/17	5/30/17

Beginning of Year (BOY) Scores for example student

Initial Performance	Score
6 Points	Alternate No
7 to 11 Points	Alternate No
12 to 18 Points	Alternate Yes
19 to 24 Points	Alternate Yes
25 to 30 Points	Alternate Yes

★ If student is scoring 25-30 or in 5 out of 6 strands at target or above, IEP team should consider if the student can access the regular Acadience Math Benchmark assessment.

Middle of Year (MOY) Scores for example student

Initial Performance Points: **12**

Growth	Progress	Score
Student scored 0 to 1 point more than BOY	Well-Below Typical Progress	Alternate No
Student scored 2 to 3 points more than BOY	Below Typical Progress	Alternate No
Student scored 4 to 5 points more than BOY Or has reached Approaching Target for 5/6 categories	Typical Progress	Alternate Yes
Student scored 6 to 7 or more points more than BOY Or has reached At Target for 5/6 categories	Above Typical Progress	Alternate Yes
Student scored 8 or more than BOY Or has reached Advanced for 5/6 categories	Well-Above Typical Progress	Alternate Yes

★ If student is scoring 25-30 or in 5 out 6 strands at target or above, IEP team should consider if the student can access the regular Acadience Math Benchmark assessment.

End of Year (EOY) Scores for example student

Initial Performance Points: **12**

Growth	Progress	Score
Student scored 0 to 2 points more than BOY	Well-Below Typical Progress	Alternate No
Student scored 3 to 4 points more than BOY	Below Typical Progress	Alternate No
Student scored 5 to 6 points more than BOY Or Has reached At Target for 5/6 categories	Typical Progress	Alternate Yes
Student scored 7 to 8 points more than BOY Or Has reached At Target for all categories	Above Typical Progress	Alternate Yes
Student scored 9 or more points than BOY Or Has reached Advanced for 5/6 categories	Well-Above Typical Progress	Alternate Yes

★ If student is scoring 25-30 or in 5 out 6 strands at target or above, IEP team should consider if the student can access the regular Acadience Math Benchmark assessment.

Reporting

Data are reported to the Utah State Board of Education by October 30, last day of February, and June 30.

LEAs must report through the Student Information System (SIS system) in the “Read Grade Level” field for the test session:

- If a student met benchmark or not (AY or AN).
- If a student does not have a benchmark status for any testing window, use special codes.
- See **Read Grade Level: (Conditionally Required)** in the [UTREx Data Cleaninghouse File Specification Manual](#) for a list of special codes.

LEAs must also report through the Student Information System (SIS system) in the “Reading Intervention” field:

- If a student received any reading interventions (Y or N).
- See **Reading Intervention** in the [UTREx Data Cleaninghouse File Specification Manual](#) for more information.

If a student does not have a composite score for any testing window, use special codes.

If the student does not have a BOY score for the MOY reporting period, use the BOY scoring rubric to determine if the student is alternate yes or alternate no on benchmark. Then use the MOY scoring rubric for the EOY reporting period.

If the student is does not have a BOY score for the EOY reporting period, use the BOY scoring rubric to determine if the student is alternate yes or alternate no on benchmark.

There must be a BOY score to determine growth and progress.

Please contact [Tracy Gooley](mailto:tracy.gooley@schools.utah.gov) (tracy.gooley@schools.utah.gov) with any questions.