

Guidelines for Speech Language Pathologists and DIBELS

The DIBELS measures are designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of early literacy and early reading skills. These research-based measures are linked to one another and predictive of later reading proficiency.

The guidelines for scoring specifically state that the student is not penalized for imperfect pronunciation due to dialect, articulation, or second language interference. For example, if the student consistently says /th/ for /s/, and he or she says, /r/ /e/ /th/ /t/ for “rest,” he or she should be given credit for correct segmentation. This is a professional judgment and should be based on the student’s responses and any prior knowledge of his/her speech patterns.

In a situation where the tester has no prior knowledge of a student’s speech patterns, it is recommended that the speech pathologist aid the tester. The speech pathologist may assist in supporting the student and the tester to obtain an accurate estimate of the student’s skills.

Recommended practice

- Sit close enough to the child during testing that you can hear the responses
- Remind the tester that you will need to confer about scoring before he/she clicks “DONE” for the measure.
- After a measure has been administered, but before the scorer clicks “DONE” to begin a new measure, review any sounds that should be marked as correct.
- Check on your students’ progress in Amplify when DIBELS testing is finished.

Work with classroom teachers and whomever at your school is responsible for scheduling and overseeing DIBELS to make them aware of which students you will be sitting in on and how you can schedule those students.

Since scoring of responses is the tester’s responsibility, scoring guidelines are not included in these materials. However, full scoring guidelines and example measures are always available from the DIBELS official assessment manual which can be downloaded free from DMG:

<https://dibels.org/dibelsnext.html>