

Basic Early Literacy Skill	<i>DIBELS</i> Indicator
Not directly linked to a basic early literacy skill	Letter Naming Fluency

### **▶ What is letter naming?**

To read an alphabetic writing system such as English, students must be able to recognize letters, name the letters, and associate the letters with their corresponding sounds (Troia, 2004). However, letter naming is not one of the five core components of early literacy. Many, though not all, students enter kindergarten with some knowledge of letter names. Many can sing the alphabet song and can recite the names of the letters in a sequence. Surrounded by environmental print, many students can easily recognize the letter shapes and print cues of their favorite stores or foods. All these experiences provide an entry point to the printed word.

The pragmatic implication of having learned letter names through rhythm and song is that teaching the visual representation for each letter follows easily and almost naturally. The value of recognizing environmental print is that students begin to understand that print has meaning. The importance of knowing letter names in mastering the alphabetic principle is ambiguous because the skill of knowing the alphabet letter names is not essential to reading outcomes. Nevertheless, knowledge of letter names in kindergarten is a strong and robust predictor of later reading performance (Adams, 1990), and has an enduring relationship with phonological awareness (Kaminski & Good, 1996; Scarborough, 1998; Stahl & Murray, 1994; Wagner, Torgesen, & Rashotte, 1994).

## Chapter 6: **DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)**

### Overview

<b>Basic Early Literacy Skill</b>	None
<b>Administration Time</b>	1 minute
<b>Administration Schedule</b>	Beginning of kindergarten to beginning of first grade
<b>Score</b>	Number of letters named correctly in 1 minute
<b>Wait Rule</b>	If the student does not name a letter within 3 seconds, mark a slash (/) through the letter and say the correct letter name.
<b>Discontinue Rule</b>	No letters named correctly in the first row

### What is LNF?

Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) is a brief, direct measure of a student's fluency in naming letters. LNF assesses a student's ability to recognize individual letters and say their letter names. Using standardized directions, the assessor presents a page of uppercase and lowercase letters arranged in random order and asks the student to name the letters. The assessor marks letter names that are read incorrectly or skipped. The total score is the number of correct letter names that the student says in 1 minute.

The purpose of LNF is to measure students' automaticity with letter naming. Fluency in naming letters is a strong and robust predictor of later reading achievement (Adams, 1990). The purpose of LNF is to measure fluency rather than identify which letters the student knows or does not know, so while all letters are included on the LNF materials, they appear in random order. As such, it provides an added risk indicator for early school-age children. Although it may be related to rapid automatized naming (RAN), it is not a measure of RAN.

Because letter naming does not appear to be essential for achieving reading outcomes, it is not a basic early literacy skill. Therefore, a benchmark goal is not provided. As an indicator of risk, scores on Letter Naming Fluency should be used in conjunction with scores on other measures, especially at the beginning of kindergarten. LNF is a strong and robust predictor of later reading achievement but is not a powerful instructional target, i.e., focusing instruction on letter names should not be expected to lead to better reading outcomes. For

students at risk, the primary instructional goals should be developing phonological awareness skills and gaining knowledge about the alphabetic principle.

## Materials

- Scoring Booklet
- Pen/pencil
- Stopwatch
- Student materials
- Clipboard

## Administration Directions

Follow these directions exactly each time with each student. Say the words in bold italic type verbatim. Begin with the practice activities. The practice activities are designed to introduce the assessment task to the student. They are untimed and include correction procedures. The correction procedures are not used once the testing begins. Put the student copy of the materials in front of the student and say the following:

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▶ ***I am going to show you some letters. I want you to point to each letter and say its name.*** (Put the page of letters in front of the student.)

▶ Begin testing. ***Start here*** (point to the first letter at the top of the page). ***Go this way*** (sweep your finger across the first two rows of letters) ***and say each letter name. Put your finger under the first letter*** (point). ***Ready, begin.***

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1. Start your stopwatch after you say ***begin.***

2. During the testing:

- Follow along in the scoring booklet. Mark a slash ( / ) through any skipped letter or letter read incorrectly.
- At the end of **1 minute**, put a bracket after the last letter named and tell the student to **Stop**. If the student completes the assessment before 1 minute, stop testing and record the student's score. Scores are not prorated.

3. Immediately after testing:

- Reset the stopwatch for the next measure.
- Mark LNF response patterns and make a note in the scoring booklet about any patterns in student responses that were not captured by the marking procedures.

4. At a later time (shortly after testing but when you are no longer with the student) compute the final score:

- Add the number of correct letters and record the number on the Total line of the LNF scoring page.
- Record the score on the front page of the scoring booklet.

## Scoring Rules

***The student receives 1 point for each letter correctly named in 1 minute.***

1. Do not mark letters named correctly. Young students sometimes confuse the lowercase L with uppercase I. Give the student a point for naming the lowercase L as either an L or an I. Do not give the student a point for calling it a number 1.
2. Mark a slash ( / ) through any letter the student names incorrectly, skips, or does not name within 3 seconds.
3. Write “sc” above any letter that had been previously slashed and was self-corrected within 3 seconds. Count the self-corrected response as correct.
4. Draw a line through any row the student skips. Do not count the row when scoring.

### Discontinue Rule

Discontinue administering LNF if the student does not correctly name any letters in the first row. Tell the student to **Stop**. Record a score of 0 on the Total line on the scoring page and in the LNF score box on the cover page of the student booklet.

### Wait Rule

Wait 3 seconds for the student to respond. If the student does not name a letter within 3 seconds, mark a slash ( / ) through the letter and say the correct letter name.

### Reminders

If the student names letters from top to bottom, or points randomly, say **Go this way**. (Sweep your finger across the row). *This reminder may be given only once.*

If the student skips four or more consecutive letters, but does not skip the whole row, say **Try to say each letter name**. *This reminder may be given only once.*

If the student says letter sounds rather than letter names, say **Say the letter name, not its sound**. If the student continues saying letter sounds, mark each letter as incorrect and indicate the pattern of response at the bottom of the page. *This reminder may be given only once.*

If the student stops and it is not a hesitation on a specific item, say **Keep going**. *This reminder may be used as often as needed.*

If the student loses his/her place, point. *This reminder may be used as often as needed.*

### Note:

Students are not penalized for differences in pronunciation due to dialect, articulation delays or impairments, or speaking a first language other than English.

### Examples of Scoring Rules

The following are examples of how to score responses on LNF. Please pay attention to the notes included with the examples as they provide scoring explanations and indicate variations and nuances related to the scoring. The examples do not encompass all possible responses. If in doubt about how to score a student response, refer to the scoring rules on page 50.

#### Scoring Rule 1: Do not mark any letter the student names correctly.

Example:

	<b>Student response</b> B...N...r...d...W...u...H...eth...I...thea																				
<b>How to score</b>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">B</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">N</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">r</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">d</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">W</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">u</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">H</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">s</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">l</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Z</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="9"></td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">Total: <u>10</u></td> </tr> </table>	B	N	r	d	W	u	H	s	l	Z										Total: <u>10</u>
B	N	r	d	W	u	H	s	l	Z												
									Total: <u>10</u>												
<p>Notes: In the font used on LNF, the lowercase L may look like an uppercase I. Give the student a point for naming the lowercase L as either an L or an I. Do not give the student a point for calling it a number 1. Students are not penalized for differences in pronunciation due to dialect, articulation delays or impairments, or for pronunciations due to speaking a first language other than English.</p>																					

#### Scoring Rule 2: Mark a slash ( / ) through any letter the student names incorrectly, skips, or does not name within 3 seconds.

Example:

	<b>Student response</b> B...M...r...d...u.../h... (assessor says, "Say the letter name, not its sound")...s...l... (3 seconds)... (assessor says, "Z")...Z																				
<b>How to score</b>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">B</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><del>M</del></td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">r</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">d</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><del>W</del></td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">u</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><del>H</del></td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">s</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">l</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><del>Z</del></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="9"></td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">Total: <u>6</u></td> </tr> </table>	B	<del>M</del>	r	d	<del>W</del>	u	<del>H</del>	s	l	<del>Z</del>										Total: <u>6</u>
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									Total: <u>6</u>												
<p>Note: The first time the student says a letter sound rather than the letter name, say <b>Say the letter name, not its sound</b>. This reminder may be used only once.</p>																					

**Scoring Rule 3: Write “sc” above any letter that had been previously slashed and was self-corrected within 3 seconds. Count the self-corrected response as correct.**

Example:

**Student response** B...N...r...b...l mean d...W...u...H...s...l...Z

	B	N	r	<sup>sc</sup> <del>d</del>	W	u	H	s	l	Z
<b>How to score</b>										Total: <u>10</u>

**Scoring Rule 4: Draw a line through any row the student skips.**

Example:

**Student response** B...N...r...d...W...u...H...s...l...Z...  
U...h...k...d...S...K...q...O...n...P

	B	N	r	d	W	u	H	s	l	Z
<b>How to score</b>	<del>e T o V m z p G C a</del>									
	U	h	k	d	S	K	q	O	n	P
										Total: <u>20</u>

### Model LNF Scoring Sheet

The following is an example of a completed scoring sheet. The scoring rules and scoring calculation are shown. This scoring sheet serves as a model and can be used during training and practice to support accurate administration and scoring of *DIBELS*.

## 1 DIBELS® Letter Naming Fluency

▶	T	B	x	g	e	V	Z	R	<del>Ø</del>	k
	H	I	J	y	u	f	a	S	z	t
	<del>w</del>	<del>N</del>	<del>L</del>	<del>d</del>	<del>s</del>	<del>U</del>	<del>G</del>	<del>r</del>	<del>i</del>	<del>D</del>
	W	<del><sup>sc</sup>Ø</del>	E	h	n	c	l	m	j	O
	C	P	<del>X</del>	F	b	Y	K	A	v	M
	p	o	P	I	R	i	d	G	o	j
	x	L	T	E	f	y	B	n	A	w
	r	N	v	s	a	C	u	Z	H	e
	Q	K	h	b	Y	J	l	z	X	U
	p	F	O	g	k	D	q	t	m	S
	W	c	M	V	T	B	x	g	e	V

Total Correct: 34

LNF Response Patterns:

<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Makes random errors</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Makes consistent errors on specific letter(s)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Says letter sound instead of letter name</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doesn't track correctly</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other</p>
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