

**DIBELS – Letter Naming Fluency<sup>1</sup>**  
**Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills 6<sup>th</sup> Ed.**  
**University of Oregon**

Directions for Administration and Scoring

Target Age Range

Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)					
Beg	Mid	End	Beg	Mid	End
Kindergarten			First Grade		

Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) is intended for most children from fall of kindergarten through fall of first grade. A benchmark goal is not provided for LNF because it does not correspond to a big idea of early literacy skills (phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, and accuracy and fluency with connected text) and does not appear to be essential to achieve reading outcomes. However, students in the lowest 20 percent of a school district using local norms should be considered at risk for poor reading outcomes, and those between the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile and 40<sup>th</sup> percentile should be considered at some risk. For students at risk, the primary instructional goals should be in phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, and accuracy and fluency with connected text. Benchmark goals are listed at the end of this guide.

Description

DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) is a standardized, individually administered test that provides a measure of risk. Students are presented with a page of upper- and lower-case letters arranged in a random order and are asked to name as many letters as they can. LNF is based on research by Marston and Magnusson (1988). Students are told if they do not know a letter they will be told the letter. The student is allowed 1 minute to produce as many letter names as he/she can, and the score is the number of letters named correctly in 1 minute. Students are considered at risk for difficulty achieving early literacy benchmark goals if they perform in the lowest 20% of students in their district. That is, below the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile using local district norms. Students are considered at some risk if they perform between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> percentile using local norms. Students are considered at low risk if they perform above the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile using local norms. The 1-month, alternate-form reliability of LNF is .88 in kindergarten (Good et al., in preparation). The median criterion-related validity of LNF with the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised Readiness Cluster standard score is .70 in kindergarten (Good et al., in preparation). The predictive validity of kindergarten LNF with first-grade Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Education Battery-Revised Reading Cluster standard score is .65, and .71 with first-grade Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) oral reading fluency (Good et al., in preparation).

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Kaminski, R. A., & Good, R. H. (2002). Letter Naming Fluency. In R. H. Good & R. A. Kaminski (Eds.), Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. Available: <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>.

Materials: Student copy of probe, examiner copy of probe, clipboard, stopwatch, and colored scoring pen.

Directions for Administration:

1. Place the student copy of probe in front of the student.
2. Place the examiner probe on clipboard and position so that the student cannot see what you record.
3. Say these specific directions to the student:  
***Here are some letters (point). Tell me the names of as many letters as you can. When I say “begin”, start here (point to first letter), and go across the page (point). Point to each letter and tell me the name of that letter. If you come to a letter you don’t know I’ll tell it to you. Put your finger on the first letter. Ready, begin.***
4. Start your stop watch.
5. Follow along on the examiner probe. Put a slash ( / ) through letters named incorrectly (see scoring procedures)
6. If the student provides the letter sound rather than the letter name, say, **“Remember to tell me the letter name, not the sound it makes.”** This prompt may be provided once during the administration. If the student continues providing letter sounds, mark each letter as incorrect and indicate what the student did at the bottom of the page.
7. At the end of 1 minute, place a bracket ( ] ) after the last letter named and say, **“Stop.”**

Directions for Scoring:

1. Discontinue Rule. If the student does not get any correct letter names within the first 10 letters (1 row), discontinue the task and record a score of 0.
2. 3 second rule. If the student hesitates for 3 seconds on a letter, score the letter incorrect, provide the correct letter, point to the next letter, and say **“What letter?”** This prompt may be repeated. For example, if the letters are “t L s” and the student says, “t” (3 seconds), prompt by saying, “L” (point to s) **What letter?”**

Letters	Student Says	Prompt	Scoring Procedure
t L s U	“t” (3 sec)	<b>“L What letter?”</b> (point to s)	t <del>L</del> s U
i g W r	“i g” (3 sec)	<b>“W What letter?”</b> (point to r)	i g <del>W</del> r

3. Self correct. If a student makes an error and corrects him or herself within 3 seconds, write “SC” above the letter and do not count it as an error.

4. Incorrect letter. A letter is incorrect if the student substitutes a different letter for the stimulus letter (e.g., “B” for “D”)

Letters	Student Says	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letters
t D s U	“t...b...s...u”	t <del>Ø</del> s U	<u>3</u> /4
t D s U	“t...d...g...o”	t D <del>Ø</del> <del>Ø</del>	<u>2</u> /4

5. Omissions. A letter is incorrect if the student omits the letter.

Letters	Student Says	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letters
t D s U	“t...s...u”	t <del>Ø</del> s U	<u>3</u> /4
t D s U	“t...u”	t <del>Ø</del> <del>Ø</del> U	<u>2</u> /4

6. Similar shaped font. For some fonts, including times, the upper case letter “i,” and the lower case letter “L” are difficult or impossible to distinguish. A response of either “i” or “L” is scored as correct. For example, if the letters are “I (upper case i) D s l (lower case L)” and the student names them both L, score as correct.

Letters	Student Says	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letters
I D s l	“l...d...s...l”	I D s l	<u>4</u> /4

7. Articulation and dialect. 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 pronounces “thee” for “see” when naming the letter “C”, he/she should be given credit for naming letter correctly. This is a professional judgment and should be based on the student’s responses and any prior knowledge of his/her speech patterns.

Letters	Student Says	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letters
c D s U	“thee...d...eth...u”	c D s U	<u>4</u> /4

8. Skips row. If a student skips an entire row, draw a line through the row and do not count the row in scoring.

The assessor...	Yes	Continue Practicing
1) ...holds clipboard and stopwatch so the student cannot see what he/she records.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2) ...performs standardized directions verbatim <i>"Here are some letters (point). Tell me the names of as many letters as you can. When I say 'begin' start here (point to first letter), and go across the page (point). Point to each letter and tell me the name of that letter. If you come to a letter you don't know I'll tell it to you. Put your finger on the first letter. Ready? Begin."</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3) ...starts stopwatch after saying "begin."	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4) ...tells the letter and scores the letter as incorrect if the student does not respond in 3 seconds.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5) ...follows along on the examiner sheet and slashes incorrect letters.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6) ...writes "sc" above an error if self-corrected within 3 seconds.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7) ...discontinues the assessment if the student does not produce any correct letter names in the first 10 letters (one row) and records a score of 0.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8) ...uses this prompt no more than once: <b>"Remember to tell me the letter name, not the sound it makes,"</b> if the student says letter sounds instead of letter names. Scores letter sounds as incorrect and notes this response pattern on the score sheet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9) ...places a bracket (]) after the last letter named and says, "Stop" at the end of 1 minute.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10) ...accurately determines the number of letters named correctly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11) ...records the total number of correct letter names in 1 minute.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12) ...shadow scores with an expert examiner and is within 2 points on the final score.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>