

How to Administer the PAST
Adapted from Kilpatrick, Equipped For Reading Success Chapter 11
Assessment of Phonological Awareness: The Phonological Awareness Screening Test (PAST)

1. Read and understand the directions.
2. Practice pronouncing phonemes in isolation.
3. Practice on someone, preferable with feedback before testing a student.

There are no practice items. Feedback is given for every incorrect item. All items at any given level are administered the same way. Always delete or substitute the sound represented by the letter or letters in the parentheses or between slash marks. For example, with cow(boy) “boy” gets deleted. When you see / / remember that is the sound not the letter. Uppercase letters represent long vowels for example, /A/ is the long a sound. Do not add the schwa sound. (/m/ is mmmmm not muh)

Assessment of automaticity

When administering an item, immediately start counting in your head *one thousand one, one thousand two*, as soon as you finish speaking the question.

If a student responds correctly before the end of the word *two* they receive credit for an automatic response. (put an X in the blank to indicate the response was automatic)

Continue the mental count until the student responds. If you get to one thousand five before a response, repeat the same item and resume mental counting starting over. If they respond correctly give them a score of 1 for correct but not automatic.

An automatic is only awarded if they answer within the first 1001, 1002 count.

Automatic responding typically takes place in about a second or less.

Repeating an Item

If a student seems confused or to have a lapse in attention, it is okay to repeat an item. When you repeat an item it cannot be scored as automatic. It can only receive a correct score (1) or an incorrect (0).

Providing Feedback

Every incorrect item should receive corrective feedback. This lets students know what you want. No visual clues. Positive feedback is permitted (that’s right!) if a child responds correctly. Especially if they respond tentatively.

1. Do not teach any item or level. This is a test, not a teaching session. Spoken feedback is provided, but no teaching, manipulatives or explanations are allowed.
 2. Never say anything about the position of the sound within the word because this is a big part of what you are testing.
- Everyone who is administered the PAST, including older students and adults, start at Level D1. Explain to students that this “word game” starts out very easy. The easy ones help students understand the nature of the task without ever having to explain the

nature of the task. There are no explanations or practice items when administering the PAST.

- For kindergarteners and potentially at-risk beginning first graders, give every item at levels D and E and follow the discontinue rule.
- For most first graders and all students beyond first grade, if the first item of D1 is responded to automatically, skip down to the first item of D2. If that is automatic, skip to first item of E2, then E3. When you score later, if the first D1 through E3 items are automatic, score any un-administered items at those levels as automatic (thus a 3/3 at that level)
- If any item is either incorrect, or correct but not automatic, administer all items at that level and score normally.
- For Kindergarten to second grade, if the first three F or G items are automatic, skip the final two items at that level and score them as automatic.
- If any of the first three F or G items are incorrect, or correct but not automatic, administer all five items at that specific level and score normally.
- For levels H through M, give all items at each level. Continue administering until the discontinue rule is reached or you come to the end of the test.

Discontinue Rule

If the combined “correct” score on two levels in a row is 0, 1, or 2 out of 10, discontinue the test. Consider all items in the levels beyond the discontinue level as incorrect.

Passing a level

A level is considered passed if either all items or all items except one are correct. A level is considered automatic if all or all but one of the items at that level were responded to automatically. Levels with 3 out of 5 or fewer are not considered passed and represent a level that should receive instructional attention. Keep in mind, each level yields two scores, a correct score and an automatic score. Students commonly pass a level with their correct score, but not their automatic score. Only levels passed at the automatic level do not require instructional attention.

Scoring Notation:

Automatic Response	X
Correct Answer after two second count	1
Incorrect Response	0

