

COWICHAN VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

EARLY LEARNING INVENTORY

GRADE 1

LITERACY ASSESSMENT

COWICHAN VALLEY
School District

September 2026

This page intentionally left blank.

Early Learning Inventory (ELI)
Grade 1

The Cowichan Valley Early Learning Inventory (ELI) Reading Assessment has been designed as a common formative assessment and universal screener for our district. This assessment is done with and for our learners. The design honours that our learners often progress at different rates. Our assessment aligns with the Ministry of Education and Child Care mandated screeners.

The information gained from this tool will serve as a universal screener for our district's tiered instruction model. The data will inform individual, small group, and class instruction. It will also help identify patterns of instructional needs in a class, school or across the district as we work to ensure students master these critical components.

Each fall, classroom teachers and school teams will work together to identify each student's strengths and needs with early literacy skills. The ELI provides mid-year and end of year opportunities to monitor students' progress and can be used for communication of student learning as well as class planning. Teachers are invited to administer the assessments in small parts.

Each grade level screener is an inventory of skills and does not represent the full, complex set of skills necessary for independent reading. Our district's Literacy Framework provides more in-depth information, instructional resources, and intervention strategies.

Key Information:

- Oral Language can be administered on-line (iPad, laptop, etc.). Scoring is automated.
- Letter and Sound Recognition assessment only requires a total for each section to be entered.
- Teachers use paper administration and enter raw scores.
- Sub-tests can be administered prior to timelines if appropriate for learners.
- All students are expected to complete each subtest, unless a student is unable to engage due to a documented barrier. If they are unable to complete, enter "0" for the item. This is not punitive, simply the learner's truth at this time.
- A blank entry will indicate that the student has been absent, and the teacher has not yet administered the assessment. Please administer and enter score as soon as possible.

Early Learning Inventory (ELI)
Grade 1

Fall *(by the end of October)*

- ☐ Oral Language
- ☐ Letter/Sound Correspondence
- ☐ Letter Naming Fluency
- ☐ Phoneme Segmentation Fluency
- ☐ Nonsense Word Fluency
- ☐ Writing Sample: Optional

** Throughout the term, reassess Oral Language and Letter-Sound Correspondence for students whose fall score was yellow or red and update the dashboard.*

Winter *(by the middle of February)*

- ☐ Nonsense Word Fluency
- ☐ Oral Reading Fluency

* Conduct a reassessment of Oral Language and Letter-Sound Correspondence for mastery and update the dashboard with the new score for any students whose fall score is yellow or red.

Spring *(by the end of May)*

- ☐ Nonsense Word Fluency
- ☐ Oral Reading Fluency
- ☐ Writing Sample

* Conduct a reassessment of Oral Language and Letter-Sound Correspondence for mastery and update the dashboard with the new score for any students whose winter score was yellow or red.

Learning Inventories Quick Start Guide: Grade One

Oral Language: Fall *(Continue to reassess for mastery if student is at risk)*

- Paper recording: make one copy of Page 9 for each student and record responses
- Enter values in the assessment portal (District Website – Staff – SSDAS)
- Electronic recording of scores: login to the dashboard using an iPad or computer and complete the subtest (scoring is automatic)

Letter Sounds: Fall *(Continue to reassess for mastery if students is at risk)*

- Paper recording: make one copy of Pages 11& 12 as visuals
- Access the slide decks using the QR code on the page, or on Cowichan Learns
- Make one copy of page 10 for each student and record responses

Letter Naming Fluency (LNF): Fall

- See scoring booklet
- Make one copy of Student Letter Naming page from Acadience
- One minute timer is required
- Total score is based on the number of correct responses the student says in one minute
- See pages 59-64 in the Acadience manual for additional information

Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF): Fall

- See scoring booklet – oral only
- One minute timer is required
- Score is number of correct sound segments (different, correct parts of the words) the student says in 1 minute
- See pages 66-74 in the Acadience manual for additional information

Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF): Fall, Winter, Spring

- See scoring booklet
- Make one copy of Student Nonsense Word Fluency page from Acadience
- One minute timer is required
- There are two scores: one is number of correct letter sounds (CLS) & the second is number Whole Words Read (WWR) with automaticity (not sounded out)
- See pages 75-88 in the Acadience manual for additional information

Oral Reading Fluency (ORF): Winter, Spring

- See scoring booklet
- Make one copy of student ORF passage from Acadience
- One minute timer is required
- Scoring is Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM)
- Retell response is for your own information, and not entered into dashboard
- See pages 89-110 in the Acadience manual for additional information

Enter values in the assessment portal: District Website – Staff – SSDAS

Data Dashboard Procedures – Click Here for manual

COWICHAN VALLEY School District

Grade One Early Learning Inventory: Assessment Guide

Oral Language

This measure helps us understand each child's early oral language and listening skills — foundational abilities that support all later learning, including reading, writing, and social communication. The *Following Directions* tasks show how well students can listen, process spoken language, and follow multi-step instructions, which are essential for classroom routines. The *Sentence Repetition* activity gives us a window into a child's expressive language, grammar development, vocabulary, and working memory by allowing us to hear how they naturally produce sentences when the model is removed. The *Questionnaire* helps teachers reflect on how children use language in real classroom situations — interacting with peers, expressing needs, using age-appropriate grammar, being understood, and choosing accurate vocabulary. Together, these three components help identify early speech or language concerns. Teachers should revisit these skills throughout the year to monitor growth and share any concerns with the School-Based Team.

Letter and Sound Recognition

Letter name and letter sound recognition refers to a student's ability to identify letters of the alphabet and state the sounds they represent. Unlike timed fluency measures, this type of assessment focuses on accuracy and completeness, helping teachers know exactly what a student has mastered. This knowledge is critical because understanding letter-sound relationships is the foundation of the alphabetic principle, which enables decoding and spelling. When students can confidently recognize letters and their sounds, they are prepared to blend sounds into words and progress toward fluent reading. Assessing this skill ensures teachers can target gaps early, provide explicit instruction where needed, and build a strong base for phonics and word recognition, which are key predictors of future reading success.

Letter Naming Fluency

Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) is a quick assessment that measures how fluently a student can name letters of the alphabet when presented in random order. LNF is a strong predictor of later reading achievement because it reflects a child's familiarity with print and automaticity in letter recognition. This measure is important because it serves as an early risk indicator for reading difficulties, helping educators identify students who may need additional instruction. LNF is typically administered at the beginning of kindergarten through the start of first grade, and the next steps after identifying low performance should focus on building phonemic awareness and the alphabetic principle—skills that directly impact reading outcomes— rather than spending extensive time on letter names alone. Instruction should prioritize letter- sound knowledge and blending skills to prepare students for decoding and fluent reading.

Phoneme Segmentation Fluency

Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) measures a student's ability to break spoken words into their individual sounds (phonemes), a critical component of phonemic awareness. This skill is essential because phonemic awareness is strongly linked to successful reading acquisition. Students who can segment words into sounds are better prepared to decode and spell words. PSF is administered from the middle of kindergarten through the beginning of first grade. It involves asking students to say all the sounds in a word within one minute.

Low performance on PSF signals a need for targeted instruction in phonemic awareness, such as activities that involve listening for, identifying, and manipulating sounds in words. Next steps should include explicit, systematic instruction using strategies like sound-by-sound segmentation, Elkonin boxes, and blending practice to strengthen the foundation for phonics and fluent reading.

Nonsense Word Fluency

Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) is a brief measure of the alphabetic principle and basic phonics skills. It assesses students' knowledge of letter-sound correspondences and their ability to blend sounds into vowel-consonant (VC) and consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words. The test items used for NWF are phonetically regular make-believe (nonsense or pseudo) words. Because nonsense words are unfamiliar, students must rely on decoding skills rather than memory. NWF is administered from the beginning of Grade 1 through the beginning of Grade 2. After a model and practice item, students read randomly ordered VC and CVC nonsense words (e.g., dif, ik, nop). They may say individual sounds or read the whole word. The assessor underlines each correct letter sound produced either in isolation or blended together. Whole words read without sounding out are underlined in their entirety. If NWF is challenging for a student, next steps include providing explicit instruction and practice in phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondences, and blending sounds into words. Instruction should include modelling, guided practice, and repeated opportunities to read and build words. Students may also benefit from targeted small-group intervention, decodable text practice, and frequent progress monitoring to track growth and adjust instruction as needed.

Oral Reading Fluency

Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) is a measure of advanced phonics and word attack skills, accurate and fluent reading of connected text, and reading comprehension. There are two parts to ORF: orally reading a passage and retelling the passage. Only the correct number of words per minute is entered into the dashboard. Administer retell for your own information. To calculate the score, errors are subtracted from the total number of words read in one minute. This generates a score known as WCPM (Words Correct Per Minute).

Steps for accessing Acadience Screening Materials Online:

1. Go to Acadience Website: https://acadiencelearning.org/acadience-reading/k-grade6/
2. Hover on Our Assessments at the top and then click on Acadience Reading
3. Scroll down the page to Ready to Get Started? And click on Resource Hub
4. Choose the Assessments tab
5. Select Acadience Reading K-6 and click until you see Grade 1 Benchmark Forms below and scroll to your grade. (Clicking will either show Benchmark & Progress Monitoring Forms or the next click will show diagnostics which are also free)
6. Found your grade? Click on the download arrow, and the file will include all Scoring Materials and Student Materials
7. * You may be asked to: Click PDF download – enter email and click agree

Grade One Early Learning Inventory: Oral Reading Fluency Guidance

What is ORF: Oral Reading fluency is the ability to read aloud with appropriate rate, expression, automaticity, and accuracy. Fluency is the bridge between decoding and comprehension.

Why is it important: Assessment of reading fluency is a good overall estimate of students' reading proficiency and a strong predictor of success in reading comprehension.

How do we do it:

1. Provide a student copy of the 1-minute oral reading fluency passage
2. Read (or paraphrase) the directions to the student as written on the teacher copy
3. Begin timing when the student says the first word of the reading passage
4. If a student does not read a word within 3 seconds tell the student the word and mark the word as incorrect
5. If an error is self-corrected within 3 seconds, write "SC." It is not counted as an error
6. Place a bracket after the last word read (60 seconds)
7. Score total words reads. Subtract number of errors from the total words read (=WCPM)

Errors	Not Errors
Mispronunciations	Self-corrections (mark as sc)
Omissions- leaving out a word	Insertions of words
Substitutions	Repetitions (re-reading a word or phrase)
Reversing the order of words	Dialect or accent differences
Hesitations (waiting 3 seconds) * Provide the word and move on.	

Early Learning Inventory (ELI) Grade One

Fall: Oral Language

1. Following Directions

- ☐ Clap your hands and touch your head
- ☐ Touch the table, put the pencil on the paper, then shake your head

2. Sentence Repetition

- ☐ 6 words with pronoun: "He was eating hotdogs for lunch."
- ☐ 9 words with passive: "The little dog was chased by the big cat."

3. Questionnaire – Can they?

- ☐ Retell stories accurately? (Retell beginning, middle and end)
- ☐ Answer questions on topic?
- ☐ Be understood 100% of the time?
- ☐ Use appropriate vocabulary and grammar for subject and situations?

*Do these assessments identify speech and language concerns or other concerns not identified here? If so, please share this information with the School-Based Team.

Continue to reassess for mastery throughout the school year for students whose results fall within the yellow or red range.

Fall

Grade One ELI: Letter Sounds & Digraphs Recording Sheet

- This is the teacher recording page. Please use QR to access student visuals or use letter tile, magnets, flash cards, or other tools your class is familiar with. **Numerical total for sounds is all that is entered into Dashboard. Letter names for teacher's information only, if needed.**

Student Name: _____

Letter/ Sound Recognition

Consonants ordered by frequency of use in the English Language:

s m t p c d h

n w b r f k g

l v j z y qu x

Date:	Names: /21	Sounds: /21	Date:	Names: /21	Sounds: /21	Date:	Names: /21	Sounds: /21

e i u a o

Date:	Long: /5	Short: /5	Date:	Longs: /5	Short: /5	Date:	Longs: /5	Short: /5

sh ck th ch wh

Date:	Digraphs: /5	Date:	Digraphs: /5	Date:	Digraphs: /5

	Letter Names	Letter Sounds
s		
m		
t		
p		
c		
d		
h		
n		
w		
b		
r		
f		
k		
g		
l		
v		
j		
z		
y		
qu		
x		

e	
i	
u	
a	
o	
	Short Vowel

ē	
ī	
ū	
ā	
ō	
	Long Vowel

sh	
ck	
th	
ch	
wh	
	Digraphs

Grade One Early Learning Inventory : Letters & Sounds

s	m	t	p	c
d	h	n	w	b
r	f	k	g	l
v	j	z	y	qu
x				

Grade One Early Learning Inventory : Letters & Sounds

e i u a o

sh ck th ch wh

Learning Inventory – 30 Minute Writing Sample: Grades 1-9

The purpose of collecting a writing sample is to provide teachers with a quick snapshot of a learner's writing skills at a given moment. This is intended to be a quick write, not a fully developed piece following the entire writing process. All students will respond to the same writing style – personal writing – across grade levels.

Prompts may be based on a shared classroom experience, your own visuals, or one of the two photo prompt sets provided to schools. A shared experience could include a school or community connection (e.g., a forest walk, a field trip, school murals, or buddy activities).

Procedure

Before introducing the write:

- Consider a shared class, school, or community experience (e.g., forest walk, field trip, school murals, buddy activities, or district photo prompts).
- Take photos to display in the classroom
- Introduce precise vocabulary during experience
- Plan your guiding questions
- Use a Sensory Brainstorm (see Writing Framework)
- Use Class Discussion Strategies (see Writing Framework)

Introducing the Topic

"Today you will write about _____ (topic). We are going to do some different activities to get ready to write."

Use a class discussion strategy for whole class brainstorming. (See Writing Framework)

"You will have about 30 minutes to write about _____ (topic). If you finish early, you may re-read your work. You may begin."

Provide a 5-minute warning before the end so students can complete their ideas.

For Immersion or second language learners, you may provide up to 60 minutes and/or spread the task over multiple days.

Note: This is a 30-minute writing sample and does not need to be proofread, edited, or polished. Consider the aspects on the rubric from the lens of a draft piece of writing.

Accommodations

This writing sample is designed to be accessible to all learners. Any IEP accommodations must be maintained.

If using a scribe, the scribe must record only what the student says – no adult prompting.

Universal Supports

- Extra time
- Spell check
- Repetition of instructions
- Visual reminders
- Graphic organizers

Marking

Rubrics are available to help teachers identify students' writing strengths and areas for growth.

- Rubrics based on the BC Curriculum are available on Cowichan Learns – Literacy Assessment website page (www.cowichanlearns.ca)
- On the rubric, highlight statements that apply to the writing
- Use the rubrics for Assessment for Learning (AFL), to support students, and to identify writing goals
- Collaborative marking with colleagues is encouraged
- Enter scores into dashboard

Teacher Notes

- Prepare photos or prompts to display around the room
- Have chart paper or tools ready for the class brainstorm
- Provide 30 minutes of sustained writing time (or more for Immersion/IEP students)
- Students may write with pen/pencil, word processing, or, if applicable, speech-to-text tools
- Offer a 5-minute warning before the end
- Collect the writing samples and make copies if needed
- You may continue teaching and revising this sample after collecting the rough draft.

Learning Inventories Cut Points

Grade One - English									
Assessment	Fall			Winter			Spring		
	Red	Yellow	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Red	Yellow	Green
Oral Language - Following Directions	0	1	2						
Oral Language - Sentence Repetition	0	1	2						
Oral Language - Can They	0-1	2	3-4						
Letter Sound: Consonants	0-11	12-16	17-21						
Letter Sounds: Vowels	0-5	6-7	8-10						
Letter Sounds: Digraphs	0-2	3	4-5						
Letter Naming Fluency*	0-31	32-41	42+						
Phoneme Segmentation Fluency	0-25	26-39	40+						
Nonsense Word Fluency: Correct Letter Sounds	0-18	19-26	27+	0-33	34-42	43+	0-47	48-57	58+
Nonsense Word Fluency: Whole Words Read	0	1	2+	0-3	4-7	8+	0-6	7-12	13+
Oral Reading Fluency				0-16	17-22	23+	0-32	33-46	47+

- **Green** – Student exhibits mastery of the skill assessed.
- **Yellow** – Supplemental instruction needed to ensure mastery of the skill(s) assessed. Initiate progress monitoring.
- **Red** – Direct instruction and/or intervention needed to move learner forward in the specific skill(s). Initiate progress monitoring.

*While LNF is a strong indicator of risk, Acadience does not provide progress monitoring materials because letter naming is not considered an essential foundational skill to monitor, with the focus shifting to phonics and decoding.

Learning Inventories Cut Points

Grade One French									
Assessment	Fall			Winter			Spring		
	Red	Yellow	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Red	Yellow	Green
Oral Language - Following Directions	0	1	2						
Oral Language - Sentence Repetition	0	1	2						
Oral Language - Can They	0-1	2	3-4						
Letter Sound: Consonants	0-11	12-15	16-20						
Letter Sounds: Vowels	0-2	3-4	5-6						
Letter Naming Fluency*	0-31	32-41	42+						
Facilité à segmenter les phonemes Phoneme Segmentation Fluency	0-11	12-29	30+						
Facilité à lire les non-mots: nombre de sons corrects Nonsense Word Fluency: Correct Letter Sounds	0-11	12-26	27+	0-14	15-26	27+	0-34	35-49	50+
Facilité à lire les non-mots: mots lus en entire Nonsense Word Fluency: Whole Words Read		0-2	3+	0	1-2	3+	0-4	5-8	9+
Facilité en lecture orale Oral Reading Fluency				0-8	9-14	15+	0-20	21-29	30+

- **Green** – Student exhibits mastery of the skill assessed.
- **Yellow** – Supplemental instruction needed to ensure mastery of the skill(s) assessed. Initiate progress monitoring.
- **Red** – Direct instruction and/or intervention needed to move learner forward in the specific skill(s). Initiate progress monitoring.

*While LNF is a strong indicator of risk, Acadience does not provide progress monitoring materials because letter naming is not considered an essential foundational skill to monitor, with the focus shifting to phonics and decoding.