

CORE Vocabulary Screening

Diagnosis Administration Procedures

Use these procedures *with* the CORE Vocabulary Screening directions. These procedures are designed for use of this measure when diagnosing (not screening) students for reading vocabulary knowledge.

General Procedures

- Begin administration two grade levels below student's current grade level
- Establish a basal level. Student needs to have at least first five correct within the grade level administered to continue with remainder of that grade level assessment.
 - If student does **not** have first five correct, pause testing with that grade level. Begin assessing with next lowest grade level to establish a basal.
- Establish a ceiling. Stop assessment when student has five **consecutive** incorrect responses.
 - If student does not demonstrate frustration and desires to finish the grade level task, continue until the end of the current grade level.

Administration Notes

- Have student read words aloud, not silently
- Mark if student decodes word(s) incorrectly, but do not correct the student. Use this information to support the analysis of results.

Reporting Results

- Correct ____/30
- Incorrect ___/30
- Didn't Know or No Response ___/30

CORE Vocabulary Screening

SKILL ASSESSED

Reading Vocabulary

Grade Level

1–8

Language

English

Grouping

Group/Individual

Approximate Testing Time

10–20 Minutes

Materials

- Teacher Instructions (pp.120–122)
- Pencil
- Student Record Forms and Keys (pp.123–146)

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▶ **WHAT** The *CORE Vocabulary Screening* measures how well students know the meaning of grade-level words they read silently. The task involves reading a word in a box and choosing which of three answer choices means about the same as the word in the box. It is a pure measure of reading vocabulary in that there is no need to comprehend text in order to complete the task and there is no context to provide clues to the meaning of the word.

▶ **WHY** Vocabulary knowledge is critical to understanding grade-appropriate text. Even students who are good decoders will have difficulty comprehending what they read if they do not have adequate vocabulary knowledge. The *CORE Vocabulary Screening* can identify students whose vocabulary knowledge is significantly lower than that of their peers.

▶ **HOW** Students are tested in groups or individually; they read a word in a box and choose (by underlining) one of the three answer choices which means about the same as the word in the box. The words in the boxes were chosen because they typically appear in both literature and instructional text in a given grade. The correct answer is a synonym or near-synonym from a lower grade. Two forms, A and B, are provided for each grade level.

Make a copy of the assessment for each student. Be sure students have a pencil or pen to mark their answers. Have students write their names and the date at the top of the page.

Read these directions to the students: *This activity is about word meanings. You will read a word in a box and some other words in the same row. Underline the answer that means the same or about the same as the word in the box. We will begin with a sample item. Look at the sample at the top of the page. Read the word in the box and the other words in the row. Which answer means about the same as the*

word in the box? (pause) The word in the box is scream. The answer that means about the same as scream is yell; underline yell. (Allow time for students to answer.)

Now we will do more items like the sample. For each item, read the word in the box. Think about what it means and then read the other words in the row. You should choose the answer that means the same or about the same as the word in the box; underline the answer you think is correct. Do you have any questions? (Answer any questions students have.) You may begin now.

Allow time for students to fill in their answers. If some students are lagging behind the others and need additional time, you may allow them to complete the assessment on their own at a different time.

The *CORE Vocabulary Screening Tests* for Grades 1–8 and the Answer Keys are on the following pages.

► **WHAT IT MEANS** The results of the reading vocabulary assessment are reported as the number of words correct (see chart below). A student who scores at the Intensive level (49% or less correct) may be having significant difficulty with understanding grade-level material because of insufficient vocabulary knowledge. A student who scores at the Strategic level (between 50% and 74% correct) may be having some difficulty understanding grade-level material because of insufficient vocabulary knowledge. A student who scores at the Benchmark level (75% or more correct) has adequate vocabulary knowledge for typical reading.

CORE Vocabulary Screening Scores		
Performance Level	Proportion Correct	Words Correct
Benchmark	75% or more	23-30
Strategic	between 50-74%	15-22
Intensive	49% or less	0-14

For progress monitoring purposes, the vocabulary assessment may be used more than once if the students receive no feedback about their responses. The two versions (A and B) of the assessment are approximately parallel forms and can be used for pre- and post-assessments or can be alternated for progress monitoring purposes.

It is important to keep in mind that progress monitoring for vocabulary is different from many other skill areas. Letter recognition, word decoding, and oral fluency skills reflect the application of a relatively small set of sound/spelling correspondences and are quickly responsive to direct instruction and meaningful practice. Vocabulary differs in that only a relatively small number of words are taught directly, and most vocabulary development occurs incidentally through oral interaction and reading. For these reasons, the *CORE Vocabulary Screening* is more useful for identifying students who have insufficient vocabulary knowledge than for monitoring student progress.

► **WHAT'S NEXT?** Vocabulary development may be improved somewhat through direct instruction and practice, but the greatest gains will be the result of oral interaction and reading material with a rich vocabulary. Typical conversation does little to expand a student's vocabulary because the pool of everyday words is relatively small. Hearing grade-level or higher text read aloud, paired reading of grade level text, and independent reading contribute in a meaningful way to vocabulary acquisition, particularly when it is supported by feedback from peers and adults. In addition, students' ability to understand word meanings can be enhanced through instruction and practice in structural analysis and using context.