

## Florida Department of Education

### Office of Early Learning

#### Frequently Asked Questions about changes to FLKRS

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##### **What are the New Reading Assessments?**

The Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) include: Broad Screening, a Broad Diagnostic Inventory, and a Targeted Diagnostic Inventory. The Broad Screening includes measures of Letter Naming and Phonemic Awareness, which are included in the VPK Education Standards. These data are used to calculate a student's Probability of Success in Reading score.

##### **In addition to ECHOS™, which of the several areas that the broad screen covers in the first kindergarten assessment window will be part of FLKRS?**

There is a possibility that several of these broad screen measures (letter names and sounds, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and listening comprehension) will be used as part of FLKRS. This will be determined by the State Board of Education during 2009.

##### **How will the Readiness Rate be calculated for programs that participated in the 2008-09 VPK Instructional Year?**

This has not yet been determined. Rule Development Workshops related to the 2008-09 VPK Provider Readiness Rate (Rule 6A-1.099821, FAC) will be held in several locations around the state in Spring 2009. The DOE will use public comment from these workshops to make recommendations to the State Board of Education.

##### **How will this impact instruction in my program?**

The key to good instruction is alignment with the VPK education standards delivered in a developmentally appropriate manner. If each VPK teacher continues to address the standards in developmentally appropriate ways and maintains a focus on important skills, such as emergent literacy and language and vocabulary development, the new reading assessments will reflect positively on your VPK programs. For more information on choosing appropriate VPK curricula, read the [Learning Activities and Choosing Curricula for VPK Education Programs Flyer](#) (PDF, 362KB).

##### **How can I prepare for these changes?**

One way to prepare for the changes in the assessment is to review your lesson plans and activities to make sure they align with the 2008 VPK Standards. For sample lesson plans in all standard domains, please visit <http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/plans.asp>. Instructional strategies that are linked to specific standards are available on the Bright Beginnings website at <http://www.brightbeginningsfl.org>.

To become more familiar with the 2008 standards, participants can attend a free standards training and receive the 2008 Standards book. To find out about upcoming standards trainings in your area, see the training calendar or contact VPK Regional Facilitator at <http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/regionalfacilitators.asp>.

### **Why is there a measure called “Phonemic Awareness” when we don’t use that term in VPK?**

It’s true, the term Phonological Awareness is used in VPK, but this is how it all fits together. Phonological Awareness is the umbrella term that covers everything from sentence segmenting (the large chunky sounds of language) all the way to phonemic awareness (ex: being able to segment the three sounds in the word cat: /k/ /a/ /t/).

The VPK Standard for phonological awareness (V.(A)(4)) has four benchmarks. The most challenging benchmark (d) states “Child combines onset and rime to form a familiar one-syllable word with pictorial support (e.g., when shown several pictures, and adults says /c/ + “at”, child can select the picture of the cat).

In K-3 reading instruction, the term Phonemic Awareness is used to identify sound segmentation and blending skills children are developing. Most children in K-3 are working at the phoneme level, so the term Phonemic Awareness is most commonly used. Phonemic awareness is a part of phonological awareness.

The “Phonemic Awareness” screening that will be a part of kindergarten screening includes ten items. Eight of the ten items are onset-rime activities similar to the example given above in Benchmark d. An example from the “Phonemic Awareness” screen would include the adult saying, “Tell me what word I am making: /c/ + “at”.” The child would respond, “cat.” The last two items will screen children to see if they are able to do some work on the phoneme level, such as: “Tell me what word I am making: /b/ /oa/ /t/?” The child would respond, “boat.”

### **Where can I learn more about the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading?**

Both the Just Read, Florida! and the Florida Center for Reading Research have information listed on their respective Web sites:

Just Read, Florida!: <http://www.justreadflorida.com/instrreading.asp>

Florida Center for Reading Research: <http://www.fcrr.org/fair/index.htm>

Just Read, Florida!’s brochure about the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading, can be found at the following link: <http://www.justreadflorida.com/pdf/FLAiRBrochureVer3.pdf> (PDF).

If you have additional questions about the components of FLKRS, including the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading, please call 1 (866) 447-1159 or email [earlylearning@fldoe.org](mailto:earlylearning@fldoe.org)

### **What information is available on the VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate Web site?**

The Web site is [www.VPK.fldoe.org](http://www.VPK.fldoe.org). This site allows the public to access customized views of VPK Provider Readiness Rates for School-Year and Summer Programs. It also includes lists of

2005-06, 2006-07, and 2007-08, Low Performing Providers. Low Performing Providers login to acknowledge their status, create, and maintain an improvement plan on this site. Additionally, all VPK providers can login at specified times during the year to monitor and verify data of children served, and to view their preliminary rate.