

# Early Childhood Language and Literacy Assessment Crosswalk

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## Purpose

The Early Childhood Language and Literacy Assessment Crosswalk is a comprehensive guide aligning Early Childhood (EC) assessment objectives and Louisiana Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) with educational entry assessments for kindergarten. This crosswalk includes Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives, the Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS), and beginning of the year kindergarten screening criteria for the DIBELS® 8th Edition beginning of the year (BOY) screening benchmark goals. The crosswalk approach of this document will assist early childhood educators and systems x early childhood educators and systems in mapping the connections between these tools, ensuring a cohesive framework for assessing child progress, informing instructional practices, and supporting data-driven decision-making.

## Early Childhood Assessment Overview

Children ages infancy through four-years-old are assessed with the Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives for Development and Learning framework, aligned to the ELDS. Below is a crosswalk that shows how early childhood assessment works.

- **Teaching Strategies GOLD®** is a comprehensive observational assessment tool that equips educators with valuable insights into children's development and learning. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) requires all children aged birth to five who are enrolled in public and nonpublic pre-K, Early Head Start/Head Start, and publicly funded child care sites with Academic Approval to be assessed using Teaching Strategies GOLD® (TS GOLD®).

## Connection to Kindergarten Readiness

Early childhood assessment and kindergarten entry assessments are distinct processes, but both play a crucial role in supporting children's development and learning. These assessments provide valuable data about a child's developmental progress, skills, and readiness for school, ensuring a smooth transition from early learning environments to kindergarten. The following is the required assessment administered to children upon entering kindergarten:

- **DIBELS® 8th Edition:** The LDOE employs DIBELS® 8th Edition as part of its K–3 literacy assessment to identify students at risk for reading difficulties, including dyslexia, and to monitor children's literacy development.

## Crosswalk Description

The crosswalk presented in this document visually aligns the key components of TS GOLD®, the Louisiana Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS), and the DIBELS® Kindergarten Screener, in order to provide a clear and organized comparison across these tools. The table illustrates how each assessment and standard corresponds to specific developmental milestones, skills, and learning objectives for kindergarten students. By mapping out the connections between these resources, the crosswalk allows educators to easily see how the data from early childhood assessments (such as TS GOLD®) align with the

expectations outlined in the ELDS, while also integrating the early literacy measurements from the DIBELS® screener. This alignment ensures that all assessment tools work together cohesively to inform instruction and support the unique learning needs of each child.

## Guideposts of Emergent Literacy Development in Early Childhood

The LDOE Guideposts of Emergent Literacy Development in Early Childhood focus on three key emergent literacy building blocks and outline evidence-based instructional strategies that support children's development with an alignment to the state's Early Learning and Development Standards, in particular Early Childhood Language Development as outlined by the ELDS, and the Science of Reading. Each Guidepost below can be found within the following domains in the [ELDS](#) :

- Approaches to Learning Domain
- Language and Literacy Domain

The table below indicates subdomains that educators should focus on to implement early childhood language and literacy best practices.

	Guidepost	Guidepost	Guidepost
Age	Oral Language Development	Alphabetic Principle	Print Awareness
Infants	Receptive & Expressive Communication		Print Concepts
Toddlers (1 year olds)	Receptive & Expressive Communication	Phonological Awareness	Print Concepts
Toddlers (2 year olds)	Receptive & Expressive Communication Comprehension	Phonological Awareness Alphabet Awareness	Print Concepts Emergent Writing
Preschoolers (3 year olds)	Receptive & Expressive Communication Comprehension	Phonological Awareness Alphabet Awareness	Print Concepts Emergent Writing
Pre-K (4-5 years)	Receptive & Expressive Communication Comprehension	Phonological Awareness Alphabet Awareness	Print Concepts Emergent Writing

### Consistent Exposure of Language Development Skills

Language development plays a crucial role in early literacy, as it lays the foundation for children to understand and use language effectively. Exposure to language-rich environments enhances children's vocabulary, listening skills, and ability to communicate ideas, all of which are key for success in early

literacy and beyond. As children engage in conversations, storytelling, and interactions with others, they strengthen their comprehension and phonological awareness, both of which are essential for young learners' literacy development. Consistent exposure to early language skills builds children's confidence and capabilities needed to later decode, understand, and engage with texts.

**Teaching Strategies GOLD® language objectives that link language development to early literacy:**

*Objective 8: Listens and understands increasingly complex language*

Exposure to more complex language through conversations, stories, and educational materials, develops the ability to comprehend by strengthening listening skills and the ability to understand the structure and meaning of language, both spoken and written.

*Objective 9: Uses language to express thoughts and needs*

Exposure to diverse vocabulary and sentence structures helps children express themselves clearly, setting the stage for written expression in literacy.

*Objective 10: Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills*

Engagement in back-and-forth conversations, asking and answering questions, and using language in context enhances vocabulary and grammar, and also develops an understanding of how to structure thoughts and ideas effectively.

Louisiana Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) Aligned Prerequisite Indicators			Early Childhood Assessment	Kindergarten Entry Screener
Older Toddler (16 - 36 months)	3 Year Old (36 - 48 months)	Preschool (48 - 60 months)	TS GOLD® Aligned Objective	DIBELS® 8th Edition
<p><b>EL 3.1.2</b> Recognize letters of the alphabet as a special category of print, different from pictures and shapes.</p>	<p><b>EL 3.1.3</b> Recognize and name some letters of the alphabet, especially those in their own name, as well as letters that occur frequently in the environment.</p>	<p><b>EL 3.1.4</b> Recognize and name many of the letters in the alphabet, specifically letters in their own name, as well as letters that occur frequently in the environment.</p>	<p><b>Objective 16a</b> Identifies names and letters</p> <p><b>Pre-k progression towards 16a.6:</b> Identifies and names 11-20 upper- and 11-20 lowercase letters when presented in random order.</p>	<p>Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)</p> <p>BOY Benchmark <b>(25+ upper and/or lowercase letters presented in random order)</b></p>
<p><b>EL 1.2.2</b> Sing songs with multiple words that start with the same initial sound.</p>	<p><b>EL 1.2.3</b> Shows awareness that some words start with the same initial sound.</p> <p><b>EL 1.5.3</b> Blend a sequence of spoken syllables to produce words with guidance and support.</p>	<p>EL 1.2.4 Identify the initial sound in a spoken word with guidance and support.</p> <p>EL 1.5.4 Blend a sequence of spoken syllables to produce words.</p> <p>EL 1.6.4 Blend onsets and rimes of single syllable spoken words with guidance and support.</p>	<p><b>Objective 15c</b> Notifies and discriminates smaller units of sound.</p> <p><b>Pre-k progression towards 15c.6:</b> Verbally separates and blends onset and rime.</p>	<p>Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)</p> <p>BOY Benchmark <b>(5+ phonemes)</b></p>

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(not applicable)	<p>EL 1.5.3 Blend a sequence of spoken syllables to produce words with guidance and support.</p> <p>EL 3.2.3 Identify the sound for a few recognized letters.</p>	<p>EL 1.6.4 Blend onsets and rimes of single syllable spoken words with guidance and support.</p> <p>EL 3.2.4 Identify or produce the sound of many recognized letters.</p>	<p><b>Objective 15c</b> Notifies and discriminates smaller and smaller units of sound.</p> <p><b>Objective 16b</b> Uses letter-sound knowledge.</p>	<p>Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) - Correct Letter Sounds (CLS) BOY Benchmark <b>(9+ letter sounds)</b></p> <p>Words Recoded Correctly (WRC) BOY Benchmark <b>(1+ words)</b></p>