



Validity Evidence for the Early Literacy Screener: Correlation to DIBELS 8

Curriculum Associates Assessment Brief | December 2024

Overview


This brief provides validity evidence for the *i-Ready* Early Literacy Screener and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, 8th Edition (DIBELS 8). The Early Literacy Screener includes the *i-Ready Diagnostic* for Reading and a fluency task selected from the *i-Ready Literacy Tasks*. Correlations between measures range from 0.81 to 0.90, all far surpassing the 0.70 benchmark considered “strong” in the field of education.

i-Ready Early Literacy Screener

The Early Literacy Screener is designed to help inform early intervention. The screener has been validated by research, is aligned to the five Science of Reading pillars, and is highly correlated with DIBELS 8th Edition.


Administering the *i-Ready* Early Literacy Screener is the first step in a two-step process. As part of the early literacy screening process, educators administer the Diagnostic followed by a fluency task. Depending on the grade and time of year, those tasks are Letter Naming Fluency, Word Recognition Fluency, or Passage Reading Fluency. Students who receive a score of “Approaching” or “Below” benchmark can then move on to Step 2, which allows educators to screen for dyslexia risk factors.

STEP 1
Early Literacy Screening



*i-Ready Diagnostic
for Reading*

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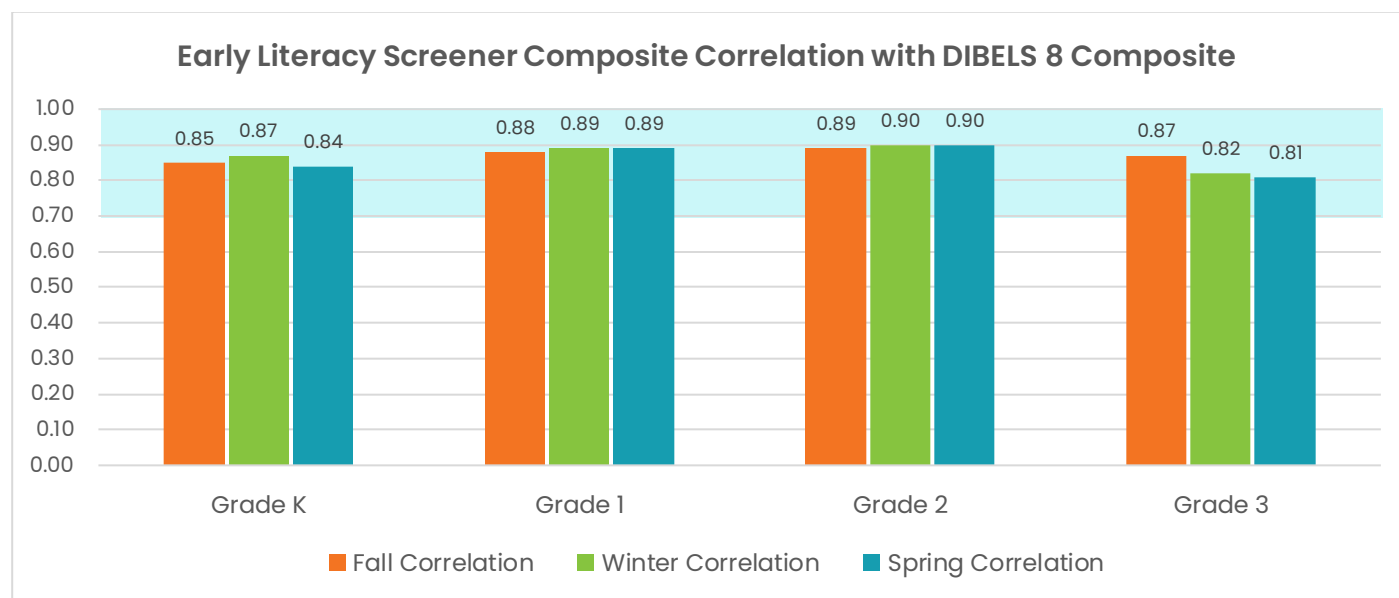
Fluency
Measure

Grade K	Letter Naming Fluency
Grade 1	Word Recognition Fluency (Fall)
	Passage Reading Fluency (Winter/Spring)
Grades 2–3	Passage Reading Fluency

Correlation with DIBELS 8

The primary source of evidence of the convergent validity of the Early Literacy Screener composite score is a strong positive correlation with the DIBELS 8 composite score. DIBELS 8 was selected as the external measure because it is commonly used in elementary schools as a universal literacy screener. DIBELS 8 aims to assess skills involved in reading; more specifically, “DIBELS 8 subtests were developed and researched as indicators of risk and progress in overall reading, as well as risk for dyslexia and other reading difficulties.”¹

Pearson correlation coefficients provide evidence for validity of the Early Literacy Screener composite score for each grade and test administration window, as shown in the following graph and table. All composite correlations exceed the .70 benchmark generally considered indicative of a strong relationship in educational research. The high correlations indicate there is a strong relationship between the Early Literacy Screener composite and the DIBELS 8 composite at each grade, providing evidence for convergent validity with a measure that claims to assess the same or similar constructs as the *i-Ready* Early Literacy Screener.



¹ University of Oregon (2023). 8th Edition of Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS®): Administration and Scoring Guide, 2023 Edition. Eugene, OR: University of Oregon. Available: <https://dibels.uoregon.edu>

Early Literacy Screener Composite Correlation with DIBELS 8 Composite: N-Counts and Correlation Indices

Grade	Fall <i>N</i>	Correlation	Winter <i>N</i>	Correlation	Spring <i>N</i>	Correlation
K	231	.85	137	.87	146	.84
1	263	.88	221	.89	230	.89
2	276	.89	104	.90	106	.90
3	254	.87	241	.82	248	.81