

Teacher Checklist - At Risk Language-based Reading Disabilities¹

Student's Name:

Date:

Teacher:

Grade:

Language spoken at home/school:

This checklist is designed to identify children who are at risk for language-based reading disabilities. It is intended for use with children at the end of kindergarten or beginning of first grade. Each of the descriptors listed below should be carefully considered and those that characterize the child's behavior/history should be checked. A child receiving a large number of checks should be referred for a more in-depth evaluation.

Speech Sound Awareness

Doesn't understand and enjoy rhymes

Doesn't easily recognize that words may begin with the same sound

Has difficulty counting the syllables in spoken words

Has problem clapping hands or tapping feet in rhythm with songs and/or rhymes

Demonstrates problems learning sound-letter correspondences

Word Retrieval

Has difficulty retrieving a specific word (e.g., calls a sheep a "goat" or says "you know, a woolly animal")

Shows poor memory for classmate's names

Speech is hesitant, filled with pauses or vocalizations (e.g., "um", "you know")

Frequently uses words lacking specificity (e.g., "stuff," "thing," "what you call it")

Has a problem remembering/retrieving verbal sequences (e.g., days of the week, alphabet)

Verbal Memory

Has difficulty remembering instructions or directions

Shows problems learning names of people or places

Has difficulty remembering the words to songs or poems

Has problems learning a second language

Speech Production/ Perception

Has problems saying common words with difficult sound patterns (e.g., animal, cinnamon, specific)

Mishears and subsequently mispronounces words or names

Confuses a similar sounding word with another word (e.g., saying "The Entire State Building is in New York")

Combines sound patterns of similar words (e.g., saying "excavator" for escalator)

Shows frequent slips of the tongue (e.g., saying "brue blush" for blue brush)

Has difficulty with tongue twisters (e.g., She sells seashells by the seashore.)

Comprehension

Only responds to part of a multiple element request or instruction

Requests multiple repetitions of instructions/directions with little improvement in comprehension

Relies too much on context to understand what is said

Has difficulty understanding questions

Fails to understand age-appropriate stories

Has difficulty making inferences, predicting outcomes, drawing conclusions

Lacks understanding of spatial terms such as left-right, front-back

Expressive Language

Talks in short sentences

Makes errors in grammar (e.g., "he goed to the store" or "me want that")

Lacks variety in vocabulary (e.g., uses "good" to mean happy, kind, polite)

Has difficulty giving directions or explanations (e.g., may show multiple revisions or dead ends)

Relates stories or events in a disorganized or incomplete manner

May have much to say, but provides little specific detail

Rules of conversation difficulties (e.g., turn taking, staying on topic, indicating lack of understanding)

Other Important Factors

Has a prior history of problems in language comprehension and/or production

Has a family history of spoken or written language problems

Has limited exposure to literacy in the home

Lacks interest in books and shared reading activities

Does not engage readily in pretend play

Comments:

¹Note. See "The early identification of language-based reading disabilities," by H.W. Catts, 2007, *Language Speech and Hearing Services in the Schools*, 28, p. 86-87. Copyright 2007. Reprinted with permission.