

Measurement in Early Childhood Rtl Models: Lessons Learned from the Field

**Assessment Panel Presentation
at the First Annual Rtl in Early Childhood Summit**

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Project ELI

Early Literacy Initiative
Prairie Children Preschool
Naperville, IL

BELLS Project

Building Early Language
and Literacy Skills
Clayton County School District
Jonesboro, GA

Prairie Children Preschool

- 2002-2006 developed local norms for IGDIs
 - Age-based → Time of Year
- Project ELI 2006 in nine classrooms
 - ELLCO evaluation and classroom improvement plans
 - Core curriculum: Creative Curriculum
 - Secondary early language and literacy curricula
 - Specific instructional strategies for early language and literacy embedded within daily activities and routines



- IGD administration three times per year
 - Identify children for Tier 2 services (25% or lower on any IGD)
 - Monitor progress using IGDs every 6 weeks
 - Monitor progress with other tools weekly and daily

- Tier 2 interventions
 - Sound Start
 - Teacher developed interventions

BELLS Project 2006 – 2009

- Nine pre-k classrooms
- Three self-contained classrooms
- ELLCO evaluation and classroom improvement plans
- Core Curriculum: High Scope
- Secondary: Building Language for Literacy



- IGDIs administered fall, winter, spring
 - Identify children for Tier 2 services using Prairie Preschool norms (25% or lower on any IGDIs assessment)
 - Identify exit from Tier 2 services (40% or higher on each IGDIs assessment)
 - Monitor progress using IGDIs every 6 weeks
 - Monitor progress with other tools weekly and daily
- BLLC progress monitoring assessments at beginning and end of each unit
- Tier 2: Stepping Stones to Literacy

Reflections and Lessons Learned

- ✓ Administration
- ✓ Using the Data
- ✓ Acceptability or Buy In
- ✓ Misunderstandings
- ✓ Suggestions from the Field
- ✓ Positive Comments from the Field

Administration

- ✓ Easy to train providers to administer assessments but....
- ✓ Conduct checkouts at each screening.
- ✓ Monitor administration fidelity, presentation rate, and scoring reliability.
“If my student says a word in Spanish I call over my teaching assistant and ask what he said and if it is right, I count it”

- ✓ Monitor fidelity of Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions.
- ✓ Plan and provide support for assessment administration and review.
 - who
 - frequency
 - timeframe
 - time in teaching schedule to administer
 - time in schedule to review results and make decisions

Using the Data

We need a system in place to guide teachers as they review assessment results and plan next steps:

- ✓ Revise Tier 1 curricula, goals, strategies.
- ✓ Determine eligibility for Tier 2 and 3 interventions.
- ✓ Identify child goals for Tiers 2 and 3.
 - Use other tools to identify child goals

Teacher _____ Child Name _____

Please identify the child's status in the following skills. There is room at the end of the checklist for you to add early language and literacy skills for this child.

Early Language and Literacy Skills	0 Needs Help	1 Emerging	2 Age Appropriate
Vocabulary/Oral Language Skills			
Receptive language skills			
Expressive language skills			
Book-related Skills			
Enjoys listening to and looking at books			
Understands concepts about print (e.g., read from left to right, author, etc.)			
Phonemic Awareness Skills			
Segmenting words into syllables, matching by length of syllables, etc.			
Rhyming			
Alliteration			
Blending sounds into words			
Segmenting words into sounds			
Early Reading and Writing Skills			
Points to or names letters of the alphabet			
Makes letter-sound associations (identifies letters by sound, identifies sound for letters)			
Copies/writes/spells own name			
Copies/writes words			
Writes using invented spelling			
Recognizes long versus short words			
Recognizes some written words			
Sequences a story			
Retells a story (comprehension)			
Answers predictable and WH questions about books (e.g., what will happen next, who is she, where are they going)			
Other Early Language and Literacy Skills: List below			

Needs Help: Cannot do any tasks that tap this skill
 Emerging: Can do some, but not all of the tasks that tap this skill
 Age-level: Can do almost all tasks that tap this skill

- ✓ Select, develop, and/or revise Tier 2 and 3 interventions, groupings, supports and services, etc.
 - Use problem solving decision making
- ✓ Identify additional progress monitoring measures.
- ✓ Determine continued need for Tier 2 and 3 interventions.

- ✓ Look at trend lines and progress versus single data points.
- ✓ Look at % children making progress in addition to % of children meeting benchmarks.
- ✓ Think outside the box.
- ✓ Examine data for groups of children (e.g., ELL, children with IEPs).

Acceptability

Buy In of Staff and Administrators

- ✓ Direct service staff should be part of the Rtl planning and decision making process for Tiers 1, 2, and 3.
- ✓ Teams need to own the data.
- ✓ Teams need support from administrators.
- ✓ Shared understanding of the purpose and appropriate use of GOMs.

Misunderstandings

1. The IGDIs can be used to determine what to teach and how to teach in Tiers 2 and 3

- ✓ Directly teach the IGD I skill(s) with low scores.
- ✓ Teach using the IGD I assessment formats.
- ✓ Teach using the IGD I cards.

Misunderstandings

2. GOMs are not appropriate or useful for early childhood

- ✓ They are not developmentally appropriate.
- ✓ We should not use on demand testing.
- ✓ They are not authentic assessments of skills in the natural environment. Don't give a true picture of skills.
- ✓ We already do enough progress monitoring, we don't need more assessments.
- ✓ *“The IGDIs don't tell me what goals to have or interventions to use. I thought assessment was supposed to do this”.*

Misunderstandings

3. Universal screening = child find in a Rtl framework

- ✓ Programs administer “child find” screening assessments frequently as the universal screening tool (e.g., DIAL, DDST).
- ✓ Results from these screenings used to determine eligibility for Tier 2 and 3 services.
- ✓ *“If we do screening and the kids are fine then we don’t need to do progress monitoring”.*

Misunderstandings

4. IGDIs are not useful for children with disabilities

“We always grumble when we’re told it is time to do the IGDIs. Our kids have IEPs—of course they are delayed”.

“All of our students will be eligible for Tier 3. We don’t need Tiers 1 and 2”.

A Small Survey

- Teachers and other providers generally like the IGDIs and find them
 - Useful
 - Acceptable
 - Feasible
- They also have suggestions for us to consider

	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	NA
Easy to Administer	73%	27%				
Use to identify children to receive Tier 2 and 3 instruction	36%	43%	7%	7%		7%
Rhyming provides useful information	40%	33%	13%		7%	7%
Picture Naming provides useful information	72%	28%				
Alliteration provides useful information						100%
Follow standardized procedures	93%	7%				
Effective progress monitoring assessments	47%	47%	6%			
Use information to make changes in classroom, child goals, and/or teaching strategies	40%	40%	7%		7%	6%
Good measure of young children's knowledge	21%	43%	14%	21%		
Use as benchmark of children's current level of knowledge	7%	60%	20%	7%	6%	

Suggestions From The Field

- *“We would like a consistent order for picture presentation so each child gets the same pictures and there is a blend of easy and more difficult pictures”.*
- *“Update the pictures—better contrast between pictures and backgrounds, more meaningful pictures, clearer pictures”.*
- *“We need a system for nonvocal children who can’t name the pictures”.*
- *“We stopped using alliteration because our kids always got zeros”.*

- *“Please provide instructions in Spanish and let us accept answers in Spanish. Based on what the research says about language acquisition for young children, it would be beneficial to know if they know the words in Spanish”.*
- *“We need Spanish versions of the IGDIs”*
- *“The rhyming and alliteration instructions are difficult for my kids to understand especially for the ELL students. We weren’t sure if students didn’t understand the directions or didn’t have the skill”.*

Positive Comments From The Field

- *“Quick and easy to administer”.*
- *“Materials are basically free”.*
- *“Easy to analyze data and see what words to teach”.*
- *“I’ve changed my instructional practices and now push new words and rhyming”.*
- *“Can track progress over time”.*
- *“Can use to assess and develop curriculum”.*
- *“I would love to see IGDIs for blending and segmenting. That is what we teach”.*

- *“I never would have thought my kids could make progress in these areas” (self-contained teacher).*
- *“Helps us identify struggling children” (pre-K teacher).*
- *“Teachers benefit from seeing 1st hand how their students perform” (literacy coach).*
- *“The teachers and literacy coaches are pleased with and now use the data that is provided” (administrator).*

Many early childhood providers are interested in Response to Intervention and understand that assessment is an important component of the Rtl framework

BUT

We need to do a better job of providing information and support to providers about the appropriate use of assessment within the Rtl framework. That information needs to be meaningful and useful to providers and fit within an early childhood perspective.