Your Child’s PALS–K Score

What Parents Should Know

**PALS** stands for **Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening**, a tool teachers use with all Wisconsin kindergarten students to

- identify students who are struggling with learning to read,
- find out what each student is ready to learn next, and
- check on each student’s reading progress during the school year.

Teachers must give all kindergarten students the PALS–K assessment at the beginning and end of the school year. Each time your child takes PALS–K, s/he receives an overall score, called a **Summed Score**, as well as scores for individual reading tasks. Some students may need extra help, called “intervention,” to get on track to becoming a reader. The PALS Summed Score is used to identify students who would benefit from additional instruction beyond what is provided in the regular classroom.

Here are three ways PALS scores tell you about your child’s progress to becoming a reader:

1. **Look at your child’s Summed Score** on the PALS Student Summary Sheet. Now find the Summed Score benchmark. Is your child’s Summed Score above or below the Summed Score benchmark?

   The school is required to give extra reading help, or intervention, to students who do not meet the Summed Score benchmark.

   Intervention should happen **in addition to** regular reading and language arts time in the classroom. The extra instruction will focus on helping each child strengthen specific skills s/he needs to become a good reader. Intervention should continue until each student meets the Summed Score benchmark on the next PALS assessment.

2. **Look at your child’s scores for each specific task.** Did s/he meet the benchmark for rhyme? Beginning sound? Recognizing letters? If your child’s score fell below the benchmark score in any task, the teacher will do activities with your child individually and in small groups to strengthen this skill. Even if your child met the overall Summed Score benchmark, s/he may need extra help with individual skills.

3. **If this Summary Sheet includes mid-year and/or spring scores, look at the progress your child has made.** Compare spring and fall scores. What skills has your child improved on? Has s/he reached or exceeded benchmarks on individual tasks? Which tasks need strengthening?

   **Ask your child’s teacher:**

   - What s/he will do in the classroom to improve your child’s reading skills.
   - If needed, what **additional help (intervention)** your child will receive in reading during the day.
   - What you can do at home to continue to grow your child’s reading skills.

   Reading instruction should be based on your child’s strengths and needs in reading. PALS gives teachers specific information about each student’s level of knowledge in recognizing letters, sounds, and words so they can design the best instruction possible for each student to grow in reading and spelling.

   In addition, parents play a very important role in helping children to become readers by reading to them, talking about new experiences, and encouraging them to write, spell, and learn. Visit [https://pals.virginia.edu/parents-monthly-activity.html](https://pals.virginia.edu/parents-monthly-activity.html) for ideas to support literacy development at home.