



FIRST READ GLOBAL CONFERENCE

*“Developing a Vision for Assessment Systems”*

# Assessing Foundation Skills in Reading

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# Outline

1. Rationale
2. Development: the case of EGRA
3. Results and implications

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# Rationale

- Why reading?
- Why early?
- Why oral reading?
- How can foundation assessments improve teaching and learning?

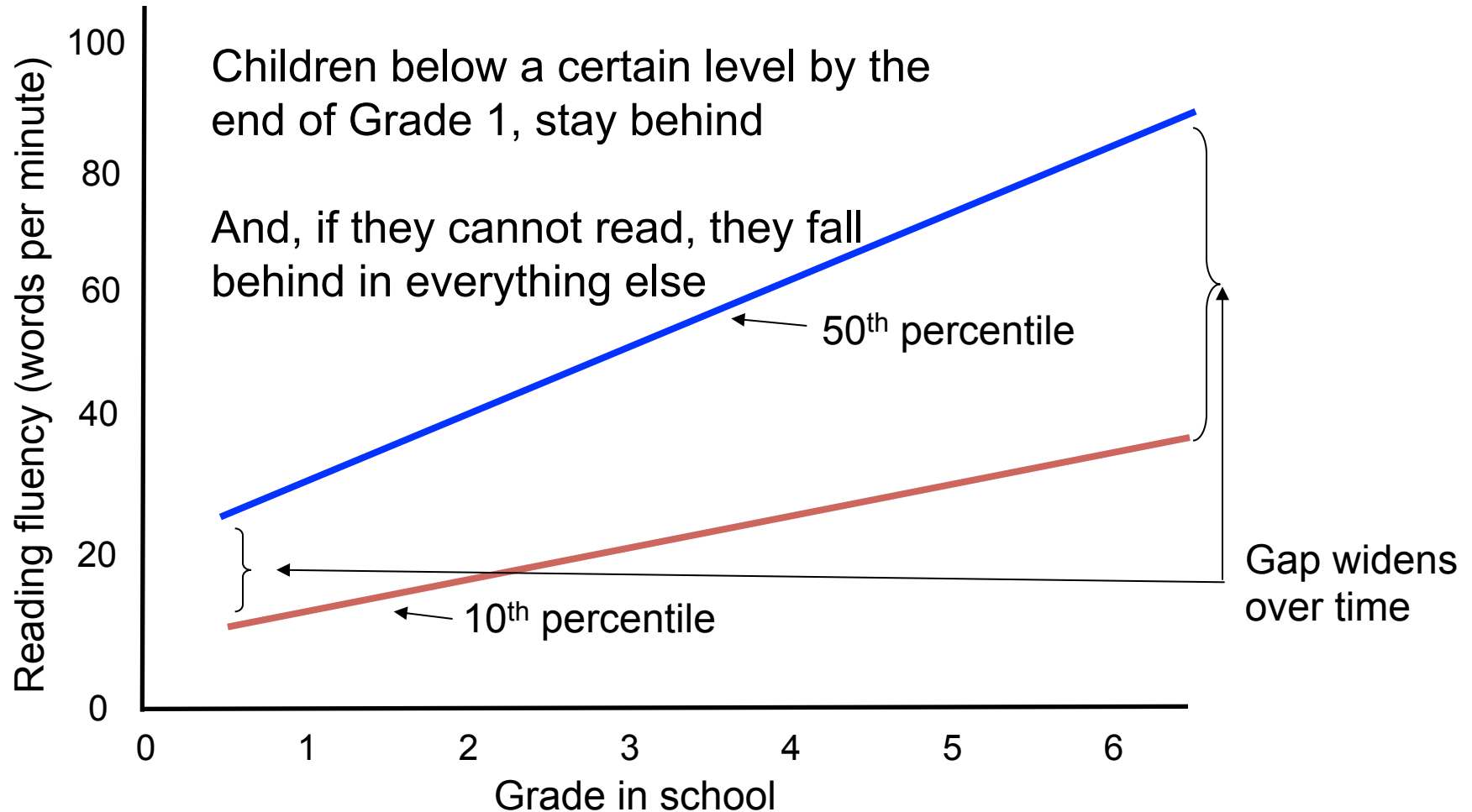


# Why reading?

- No, it is not “the only thing that matters”
- But it is a good one to start with . . .
  - It is a (***the***?) foundation skill. Difficult to imagine anything else going well if children can’t read well and soon.
  - It can be used as a marker. Difficult to imagine a good school that can’t teach children to read; if children are not reading, the school (district, country) needs serious help.



# Why early?



(Source: Good, Simmons and Smith, 1998)

# Why oral reading?

- Oral reading seems to be a good predictor (relationship between fluency and comprehension— a bit like riding a bicycle)
- Students frequently bottom out (floor-effect problems) on paper-and-pencil tests
- Elements of oral reading are in accord with curricular frameworks but frequently there are no specific (teacher-level) guidelines on how to assess



# Classroom assessment of foundation skills . . .

- is based on curriculum and learning goals
- is adequate in scope, valid, reliable, practical and provides timely feedback
- is part of an integrated cycle of classroom improvement designed to improve teaching and learning (see diagram)



## PLANNING

- Establish goals
- Develop/modify scope and sequence for instruction
- Identify instructional needs based on assessment
- Provide support

## TEACHING

- Communicate learning goals
- Effectively use instructional time
- Deliver content while engaging all students in learning

## MONITORING

- Assess student learning
- Analyze (and report on) student results
- Use information to improve teaching and learning

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# Development thus far

- 2006: Expert consultative process, creation of draft EGRA instrument
- 2007: 8 initial efforts, funded by World Bank, USAID and directly by countries
- 2008: 11 additional efforts; March workshop in Washington, DC (200 participants);
- 2009: 27 in Latin America and Africa



# Summary of test components

<b>Component</b>	<b>Skill demonstrated by:</b>
1. Letter name knowledge	Provide the name of upper- and lowercase letters in random order
2. Phonemic Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Segment words into phonemes</li><li>•Identify the initial sounds in different words</li></ul>
3. Letter sound knowledge	Provide the sound of upper- and lowercase letters distributed in random order
4. Familiar word reading	Read simple and common one- and two-syllable words

# Summary of test components (*cont'd*)

<b>Component</b>	<b>Skill demonstrated by:</b>
5. Nonsense word reading	Make grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) through the reading of simple nonsense words
6. Oral reading fluency with comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Read a text with accuracy, with little effort, and at a sufficient rate</li><li>•Respond to literal and inferential questions about the text they have read</li></ul>
7. Listening comprehension	Respond to questions about the text the assessor reads to them
8. Dictation	Translate sound to print, write, spell, and use grammar properly



**60 words  
per minute**



**5 words per  
minute?**

NON FLUENT

(Click on icons to play. Note it might not play in the full screen display mode, but only in the “normal” or “edit” model of PowerPoint. If it asks you to click, say Yes.

John had a little dog. The little dog was fat. One day John and the dog went out to play. The little dog got lost. But after a while the dog came back. John took the dog home. When they got home John gave the dog a big bone. The little dog was happy so he slept. John also went to sleep.

# Other characteristics

- Many segments timed to 1 minute
  - Meant to measure fluency (critical skill), also more efficient – whole test can be done in less than 15 minutes
- Can be done on sample basis; easy to score
- Can provide essentially instant results for a village (Pratham, UWEZO)
- Applied by trained assessor (or teacher), one-on-one, not pencil-and-paper in whole class



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# Sample results for Grade 2

Language	CWPM goal	% tested students who met goal	% comprehension	% zero scores
English	45	2.6%	92%	66%
French	45	11%	70%	16%
Spanish	60	33%	89%	9%

# Possible uses

- Policy awareness and motivation
  - Macro
  - Community-based
- Impact tracking and evaluation
  - Project monitoring
  - Project impact and evaluation
  - System monitoring over time
- Teacher-based assessment (with adaptation)
  - Link to community-based awareness, social mobilization
  - Motivating and driving instructional practice

# Sample uses to date

- Peru: national debate and a presidential pledge to have all children reading by end of grade 2;
- The Gambia: government revamped approaches to teacher professional development to focus on the early grades and begin mother-tongue instruction;
- Mali: renewed focus on teacher professional development and instructional materials in local languages;



# Sample uses to date (*cont'd*)

- Liberia: spurred development of reading intervention programs and continuous monitoring by teachers;
- Nicaragua and Honduras: ministry requested additional training seminars in teacher use of the tool for continuous assessment;
- South Africa: the Department for Education is using EGRA on their own to assess mother tongue instruction in several languages.