



What are Universal Screeners

Universal Screeners are assessments that measure a learner's proficiency in different skills. In The Calgary Board of Education, teachers administer mandatory Alberta Education and Childcare literacy and numeracy screening assessments in Kindergarten to Grade 5. More information about Literacy and Numeracy Screening, is available at [Literacy and numeracy screening | Alberta.ca](https://literacyandnumeracy.screening.alberta.ca).

Specific Kindergarten to Grade 5 Universal Screeners are administered in different grades at predetermined times within the school year.

Universal Screeners assess students' foundational skills in literacy and numeracy skills but are not necessarily aligned with the curriculum.

Alberta Education and Childcare Screeners

Alberta Education and Childcare provided assessments include:

- The **Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN) Digits** test requires naming digits as quickly as possible, thus revealing the automaticity of many of the same cognitive and linguistic skills central to reading.
- The **Phonological Awareness Screening Test (PAST)** purpose is to assess phonemic awareness. Phonological awareness, or the awareness of and ability to work with sounds in spoken language is foundational for decoding, blending, and word reading.
- **Letter Name and Sound Test (LeNS)**, assesses knowledge of the names and sounds of letters, and common multi-letter graphemes. The LeNS is designed to screen learners for foundational phonics skills to develop into independent readers.
- **The Castles and Coltheart Reading Test 3 (CC3)** is a word reading test of single word reading (decoding and whole word recognition). It is designed to identify the nature of reading difficulties and provides next steps for instruction and intervention.
- **The Maze** passages can be used to screen for possible reading difficulties and to monitor progress in reading development beyond basic skills development, using topic-based texts. It provides a broad indication of how well a student independently reads and understands text and can help identify students who may benefit from reading comprehension supports.
- The **Provincial Numeracy Screening Assessments** look at knowledge of symbolic numbers. Results of the assessment can be used to help teachers identify and address gaps in foundational understanding of numbers.

Alberta Education and Childcare approved assessments include:

- **Acadience Reading K-2** is a universal screening assessment made up of brief measures of important early literacy and reading skills. These measures include **Letter Naming Fluency** (LNF), **Phoneme Segmentation Fluency** (PSF), **Nonsense Word Fluency** (NWF), **Oral Reading Fluency** (ORF), and **Rapid Automated Naming** (RAN). Together, these measures provide information about foundational reading skills, including recognizing letters and sounds, working with sounds in words, reading words, and reading connected text accurately and fluently. These skills are important indicators of future reading performance.

Note | Acadience Reading K-2 is only for schools participating in the Early Years Assessment Initiative

Why are Assessments Needed?

Literacy and numeracy are important skills that develop during early childhood. Assessing learners in their early years:

- Provides essential information to teachers, schools, parents and Alberta Education and Childcare about potential learning issues and needs.
- Ensures learners get the help they need early in their education.
- Monitors growth over time.
- Supports a transparent, accountable, and responsive education system.

Results of Assessments

Information learned from Universal Screeners will be communicated with parents / legal guardians within the time identified by Alberta Education and Childcare.

Teachers engage in ongoing communication with parents / legal guardians throughout the year to support students and families in building an understanding of student growth and achievement.

Universal Screeners do not replace day-to-day teacher observations and classroom assessment and do not have any impact on formal reporting processes such as report cards. Rather, the results of Universal Screeners help inform planning for next steps such as targeted interventions or instructional planning and are not used to determine grades.

There are number of ways you can learn more about your child's learning, progress, and achievement. For more information, please see: [How is My Child Doing in School?](#)

Please speak to your child's teacher if you have questions or concerns about their learning.