Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy SkillsTM 6th Edition

DIBELS®

Third Grade Scoring Booklet DIBELS® Benchmark Assessment

Edited By:
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University of Oregon
Dynamic Measurement Group, Inc.

Available: http://dibels.uoregon.edu/

Instructions:

This packet includes 2 parts: the student response form and student stimulus materials. The student response forms are photocopied back to back and saddle stapled. The same form is used by each student for each benchmark assessment throughout the year. The second part is the reusable student stimulus materials. Make one copy for each person who is doing the benchmark testing. They can be laminated and comb bound for reuse.

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. A. (Eds.). (2002). <u>Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills</u> (6th ed.). Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. Available: http://dibels.uoregon.edu/.

Notes:			

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy SkillsTM 6th Ed. University of Oregon Third Grade Benchmark Assessment

Name:	Teacher:	
School:	District:	

	Benchmark 1 Beginning/Fall		Benchmark 2 Middle/Winter		Benchmark 3 End/Spring	
Date						
DIBELS [®] Oral Reading Fluency	Correct (median)	Errors (median)	Correct (median)	Errors (median)	Correct (median)	Errors (median)
Retell Fluency (Optional)	(middle score)		(middle score)		(middle score)	
Word Use Fluency (Optional)	(Optional)		(Optional)		(Optional)	

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. A. (Eds.). (2002). <u>Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills</u> (6th ed.). Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. Available: http://dibels.uoregon.edu/.

Benchmark 3 DIBELS[®] Word Use Fluency

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ләшштү	10 1 7 3 7 2 6 7 8 6 10 11 15 13 17 15 15 17 10	ι э—
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કા યો.	10 1 5 3 7 5 6 10 11 15 15 17 17 18 10 11 15 17 17 17 17 18 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19	г э—
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<i>ұиә</i> јиоэ	10 1 7 3 7 8 10 70 71 77 73 77 72 79 71 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 17 12 13 13 13 13 13 13 13 13 13 13 13 13 13	ι э—
yeat .	10 1 7 3 7 2 6 7 8 6 10 11 15 13 17 15 15 17 10	г э—

Total Words in Correct Sentences:

DIBELS[®] Oral Reading Fluency Short Form Directions

Make sure you have reviewed the long form of the directions in the DIBELS Administration and Scoring Guide and have them available.

Please read this (point) out loud. If you get stuck, I will tell you the word so you can keep reading. When I say, ''stop". I may ask you to tell me about what you read, so do your best reading. Start here (point to the first word of the passage). Begin.

Start your stopwatch when the student says the first word of the passage.

At the end of $\frac{1 \text{ minute}}{1 \text{ minute}}$, place a bracket (]) after the last word provided by the student, stop and reset the stopwatch, and say,

Stop. (remove the passage)

If the student reads more than 10 words correct, proceed with the retell part. Say,

Please tell me all about what you just read. Try to tell me everything you can. Begin. Start your stopwatch after you say

The first time the student does not say anything for 3 seconds, say "Try to tell me everything you can." This prompt can be used only once.

If the student does not say anything or gets off track for 5 seconds, circle the total number of words in the student's retell and say, "Stop."

At the end of <u>1 minute</u>, circle the total number of words in the student's retell and say, "Stop."

".nigəd"

Benchmark 3.3 DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency – Passage 3

My Parents

I'm Mexican-American because my parents were both born
in Mexico and I was born in America. My parents came to work
in the United States before they even finished school. They were
just a little older than I am now when they moved here. They got
married in Texas and then they moved to California because
their families lived there.

61

My mother and father worked very hard to make our lives 72 better. At first they worked on farms. They both worked seven 83 days a week when there was work and the weather was good. 95 Sometimes the farms that needed workers were far away and 105 they had to travel a long distance. Sometimes it would rain and 117 they couldn't work for days. At other times the crops weren't 128 ready when they arrived. There could be too many people to do 140 the same work and sometimes there was no work at all. 151

My mother is bilingual because she speaks both English and
Spanish. She can understand almost everyone. She was able to
get another job because lots of places need employees who can
speak English and Spanish.

186

My father speaks only Spanish, but not for long. He is taking
English classes at night so he can find another job. He says
210
English is a difficult language to learn. I'm really proud of my
parents.
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Total words: ____ = words correct: ___

Retell:

Retell:
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48
49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71
72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94

Benchmark 1.1 DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

My Friend

I have a new friend at school. She can't walk so she uses a wheelchair to get around. She comes to school in a special van that can transport four people who use wheelchairs. The van brings my friend and another boy to school. My friend is in third grade with me and the boy is a fourth grader.

I like to watch my friend get in and out of the van. The driver
pushes a button and part of the van floor lowers to the driveway
to form a ramp. My friend just wheels up the ramp and goes
inside. After she is inside, the driver pushes the button and the
ramp puts itself away. When it is time to get out of the van, they
do the same thing again. Sometimes I help open the door so she
can roll right inside.

My friend and I do everything together. Our teacher lets us 155 sit together in the front row, and we always go to lunch together. 168 My friend moves so fast down the hall that she always gets the 181 best seats in the cafeteria. Sometimes we trade sandwiches. At 191 recess, we always play on the same team. My friend sure has 203 strong arms. She hardly ever misses a shot when we play 214 basketball and she can throw the farthest of anyone in third 225 226 grade.

Total words:____ = words correct:__

Retell:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94

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DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency Benchmark 3.2

Animal Tracks

747	person just from the footprints.
Z32	girls. A good tracker also can tell the height and weight of a
777	who is really good can tell men from women and boys from
717	use their knowledge to help track people who are lost. A tracker
700	A person who learns how to read the story in the tracks can
<i>L</i> 81	squirrels.
981	front and five in back. Rodents could be mice, rats, chipmunks or
7/I	raccoons. Most members of the rodent family have four toes in
163	weasel family. The weasel family includes skunks, otters, and
12t	Animals with five toes on each foot are members of the
143	much larger than their front feet.
LEI	tell a rabbit from a cat or dog because a rabbit's back feet are
173	cats. Rabbits have four toes on all four feet also. A tracker can
110	when they walk. Cats could be mountain lions, bobcats, or pet
66	toenails don't show. That is because cats pull their toenails in
88	The cat family also has four toes on all four feet but their
SL	and all pet dogs.
ĪΖ	in the footprint of a dog. The dog family includes foxes, coyotes,
6 \$	have four toes on each foot. A tracker can see the toenail marks
97	animal made the tracks. For instance, members of the dog family
32	Each track tells a story. A good tracker can tell what kind of
77	and people leave their footprints, or tracks, wherever they go.
15	I saw a show on TV last night about animal tracks. Animals

14 04 69 89 49 99 59 t9 89 79 19 09 65 85 45 95 55 t5 85 75 15 05 6t

0 1 7 3 7 8 9 10 11 17 13 17 18 19 10 11 18 70 71 77 73 77 79

— errors:

Retell:

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Total words:

DIBELS[®] Oral Reading Fluency Benchmark 1.2

Going to Family Camp

The camp director leads everyone in songs. He plays the dark. all snuggle together watching the flames because it's cold after down to the edge of the water where a big bonfire is going. We the lake. We wait until the stars and moon are out. We walk My favorite part of family camp is the campfire program at

Sleeping?" sing rounds like "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" and "Are You Around the Mountain." Then he divides the group in two and we banjo. We sing "You are My Sunshine," and "She'll be Coming

rescuing a cat. The skits are always silly. brave thing that they did. One story was about my older brother about campers at family camp in previous years, and a funny or Then we have stories and skits. The stories are usually tales

Now we are all sleepy and ready to go back to our cabin. We are really sticky! Everyone has to wash up before bed. marshmallow. They taste so good you want some more, but they graham crackers with chocolate that is topped with a hot toast marshmallows to make 'Some Mores.' 'Some Mores' are toast them and eat their marshmallows right out of the bag. We brown. Other people like theirs crispy. Some kids can't wait to marshmallows. Some people like their marshmallows golden When the campfire burns down to coals, it's time to toast

little kids like me. say they have been singing "Taps" at campfires since they were stand together and sing a song called "Taps." My mom and dad

= words correct: — errors: Total words:

14 04 69 89 49 99 59 t9 89 79 19 09 68 88 48 98 58 t8 88 78 18 08 64 0 1 7 3 7 8 9 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 18 19 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 28 Retell:

= words correct:

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Benchmark 3.1 DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

Pots

My family makes pots out of clay at our pueblo. These aren't just any pots, though. They are pretty special. Our pots are on display all over the world. People travel for miles to visit our pueblo and collect our pots. We have shown many of our pots in competitions and we have won lots of awards. Someone even wrote a book about my aunt and the pots that she makes.

I am learning to make our pots from my family. From my
grandfather I am learning about the clay. We collect the clay
from special areas of the river and process it just right. We have
to keep the clay moist and we have to work the clay to force any
air bubbles out. If there is an air bubble in the clay the pot will
break when it is fired.

83

142

We hand build our pots. That means we don't use a wheel or a mold. Instead, we have a picture in our mind of how we want the pot to look. We build the pot layer by layer from the base. 183

We are careful to make the pot match the shape in our mind at each step. 199

Our pots are decorated with designs that tell a story or have a 212 meaning. If you know how to read the designs, you can learn 224 many important lessons about life. I can tell if a pot was made by 238 one of my relatives from the designs. I can tell who made it, and 252 sometimes I can tell you about when it was made. 262

Total words: ____ = words correct: ____

Retell:

Retell:
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48
49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71
72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94

Benchmark 1.3 DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

Planting a Garden

We eat lots of fresh vegetables at our house. Mom is an
excellent cook and she has lots of recipes for making them taste
delicious. Sometimes they are expensive to buy at the store so
Dad suggested we grow our own.

41

Dad asked all the members of my family what our favorite 52 vegetables were. I said carrots, broccoli, and beans. My mother 62 likes tomatoes the best. Dad said he wanted to grow green 73 onions, spinach, potatoes, and corn. 78

We went to the hardware store and bought seeds and little
broccoli and tomato plants. We all helped prepare the garden in
our backyard. We turned over the dirt with shovels. Then we
111
used a hoe to make little ditches for planting the vegetable seeds.
123
We dug deeper holes for the broccoli and tomatoes. We watered
everything and sprinkled some fertilizer around.
140

I checked the garden every day to see if any vegetables were coming up. After about a week I saw tiny green leaves where the carrots were planted. Then each day more seeds sprouted.

In two months we could eat the spinach, onions, and
184
broccoli. It was almost the end of summer before we could
195
harvest the other vegetables. Everything we grew in our garden
205
was delicious. It was worth the wait, especially for the fresh
green beans that my mother cooked with bacon and onion. My
227
dad said the corn was the best he ever tasted.
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Total words: ____ = words correct: ___

Retell:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94

$\overline{\mathrm{BELS}_{@}^{\mathbb{B}}\,\mathrm{Word}\,\mathrm{Use}\,\mathrm{Fluency}}$

	Total Words in Correct Sentences:	
Г Э	10 1 7 3 4 2 6 7 8 5 10 11 12 13 14 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15	skirt
Ι Э	19 12 18 16 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 2 10 11 12 13 14 12	<i>junp</i>
г э—	19 12 18 16 20 21 22 23 24 22 26 27 10 1 1 1 13 14 12	gnihziw
г э—	LZ 9Z SZ TZ ZZ IZ 0Z 6I 8I LI 9I SI TI 8	g nissim
г э—	LZ 9Z SZ 7Z SZ 7Z IZ 0Z 6I 8I LI 9I SI 7I 8	pnosd
г э—	LZ 9Z SZ 7Z SZ 7Z IZ 0Z 6I 8I LI 9I SI 7I 8	рьаг
г э—	LZ 9Z SZ 7Z SZ 7Z 1Z 0Z 6I 8I LI 9I SI 71 SI 71 II 0I 6 8 L 9 S 7 S Z I 0	ллвипу
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г э—	19 12 18 16 20 21 22 23 24 28 26 27 10 11 12 13 14 12	นอมฺณ
г э—	LZ 9Z SZ 7Z SZ TZ SZ SZ 1Z 18 18 L1 19 S	<i>1uv</i>

$\frac{\text{DIBELS}^{@} \text{ Word Use Fluency}}{\text{Short Form Directions}}$

Make sure you have reviewed the long form of the directions in the DIBELS Administration and Scoring Guide and have them available. Say these specific directions to the student:

Listen to me use this word, "green." (pause) The grass is green. Here is another word, "jump" (pause) I like to jump rope. Your turn to use a word, (pause) "rabbit."

Listen to me use the word rabbit, (pause) "The rabbit is eating a carrot." Your turn, "rabbit."	Very good.
	correctly in a phrase, say
If student gives any other response, say,	If student uses the word
INCOBECT RESPONSE:	COKKECT RESPONSE:

OK. Here is your first word.

Benchmark 2.3 DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency

Getting Email

12233749

At our house, the mail carrier isn't the only one who brings
us messages. Our computer also brings mail. Our family has an
email address. All we have to do is turn on the computer and get
on the Internet. Our computer tells us if we have new mail.

Email is much faster than regular letters. If I send a regular

letter to my cousin who lives in Japan it can take weeks to get an

answer. If I email my cousin, she usually emails back the

same day. She lives 4,000 miles away and across the Pacific

Ocean but our email messages come and go very quickly.

108

My cousin is nine years old, just like me. We send email to 121 each other almost every day. We tell each other about our 132 schools, our friends, and our soccer teams. Sometimes we send 142 jokes back and forth. Sometimes we ask questions about what 152 we hear in the news about our countries. Sometimes we play 163 chess with each other using the computer. We think of our 174 moves on separate chess sets and then use email to send our 186 moves back and forth. 190

My dad and mom send email messages back and forth to

201

Japan as well as to Hawaii, where we have many relatives.

212

Because our relatives live so far apart, it is hard for us to get

226

together. If it weren't for email, we wouldn't be able to stay in

239

touch as easily. With email, we can communicate without having

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to wait for a letter or buy expensive stamps.

258

Total words: ____ = words correct: ___

Retell:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94

Benchmark 1 DIBELS® Word Use Fluency

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hint	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
bird	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
castle	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
downstairs	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
duck	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
shiny	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	С І
takes	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	С І
roots	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
dark	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
sails	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
porch	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
toad	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
crystal	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
mate	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
dream	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
advantage	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	C I
pounded	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	С І
	Total Words in Correct Sentences:	

$DIBELS^{\otimes}$ Oral Reading Fluency Benchmark 2.2

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	= mords correct:	— errors:	Total words:
797		rcas.	O to ylimst lsnigiro sid bnit
526	gain. Maybe he will	s bliw ant otni b	they hope he will be release
243	own fish. Someday	rn to eatch his o	Trainers are helping him lea
737	an, not a tank.	a pen in the oce	Keiko's new home is in
516			of the plane.
516	k up the entire inside	h a pool that too	tiw ənalq laiəəqe a ni nwolf
707	ed ot bad ed gid os	ocean. He was	back to his new home in the
981	ell he was moved	Mhen he was we	tons and got healthy again.
7LI	Owt tuods bening eH	sised every day.	Keiko ate well and exerc
163			it was like to be wild again.
9 S I	him remember what	bəqləd bas mid	water. Trainers took care of
StI	ull of cool ocean	ery large tank fi	in the ocean. He lived in a v
131	nave caught himself	ish he would h	aquarium, he ate the kind of
611	othe wild. At the	leased back into	healthy and eventually be re
108	tag ot muirsup	A tegon Coast A	Keiko was taken to the
86			was not a happy whale.
63	se to be healthy. He	t enough exerci	comfortable. He couldn't ge
83	ed of mid rof	ot cold enough	he lived in. The water was n
04	too big for the tank	. His body was	skin was covered with sores
LS	c. He was thin and his	t the theme park	Keiko was not healthy a
77	se they feed on seals.	st whales becaus	whale. Orcas are called kille
33	iko is an Orca	in a movie! Ke	theme park. He even starred
17	who did tricks at a	ons berformer	California. He became a fan
10	ot thguord bas bas	ptured near Icela	Keiko the whale was cap
	ряје	ko the Killer W	iэХ

14 04 69 89 49 99 99 49 89 79 19 09 68 88 48 98 98 78 78 78 18 08 64

0 1 7 3 7 8 9 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 18 19 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 28

DIBELS[®] Oral Reading Fluency Benchmark 2.1

The Field Trip

on their sides. The ranger let us take handfuls of pellets to feed fish were rainbow trout. You could see the colors of the rainbow 138 At the hatchery, we saw ponds full of fish. We learned the 176 class. Two of my friends rode in our car. 114 102 friends. Three cars and two vans were needed to take the whole take a vacation day and that our car could hold a couple of my 86 My dad surprised me by volunteering to go. He said he could supposed to bring a snack and a sack lunch. *L*9 some parents to help provide transportation. Everyone was 88 90 to ask our parents if they would like to come along. We needed be signed by our parents before we could go. She encouraged us Lε the fish hatchery. She gave us permission letters to take home to 52 Last week our teacher said we were going on a field trip to ξI

maybe he will catch some of them and bring them home for our have to learn to find their own food. When my dad goes fishing, fish to nearby rivers and release them. In the river, the fish will scooped up and put inside a tanker truck. The truck will take the When the trout grow to about six inches long they will be the food coming from far away.

very excited. Some leaped out of the water. The fish could see

the trout. When we threw the pellets into the ponds the fish got

= mords correct: __ — errors:_ Total words:_

14 04 69 89 49 99 99 49 89 79 19 09 68 88 48 98 88 78 78 18 08 64 2 7 2 7 2 7 2 7 8 9 10 11 17 13 14 17 19 14 18 19 50 51 57 53 54 58 Retell:

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dinner.

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy SkillsTM 6th Edition

DIBELS®

Third Grade Student Materials DIBELS® Benchmark Assessment

Edited By:
Roland H. Good III
Ruth A. Kaminski
University of Oregon
Dynamic Measurement Group, Inc.

Available: http://dibels.uoregon.edu

<u>Instructions:</u>

These are reusable student stimulus materials. Make one copy for each person who is doing the benchmark testing. They can be laminated and comb bound for reuse.

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. A. (Eds.). (2002). <u>Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills</u> (6th ed.). Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. Available: http://dibels.uoregon.edu/.

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My Friend

I have a new friend at school. She can't walk so she uses a wheelchair to get around. She comes to school in a special van that can transport four people who use wheelchairs. The van brings my friend and another boy to school. My friend is in third grade with me and the boy is a fourth grader.

I like to watch my friend get in and out of the van. The driver pushes a button and part of the van floor lowers to the driveway to form a ramp. My friend just wheels up the ramp and goes inside. After she is inside, the driver pushes the button and the ramp puts itself away. When it is time to get out of the van, they do the same thing again. Sometimes I help open the door so she can roll right inside.

My friend and I do everything together. Our teacher lets us sit together in the front row, and we always go to lunch together. My friend moves so fast down the hall that she always gets the best seats in the cafeteria. Sometimes we trade sandwiches. At recess, we always play on the same team. My friend sure has strong arms. She hardly ever misses a shot when we play basketball and she can throw the farthest of anyone in third grade.

Going to Family Camp

My favorite part of family camp is the campfire program at the lake. We wait until the stars and moon are out. We walk down to the edge of the water where a big bonfire is going. We all snuggle together watching the flames because it's cold after dark.

The camp director leads everyone in songs. He plays the banjo. We sing "You are My Sunshine," and "She'll be Coming Around the Mountain." Then he divides the group in two and we sing rounds like "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" and "Are You Sleeping?"

Then we have stories and skits. The stories are usually tales about campers at family camp in previous years, and a funny or brave thing that they did. One story was about my older brother rescuing a cat. The skits are always silly.

When the campfire burns down to coals, it's time to toast marshmallows. Some people like their marshmallows golden brown. Other people like theirs crispy. Some kids can't wait to toast them and eat their marshmallows right out of the bag. We toast marshmallows to make 'Some Mores.' 'Some Mores' are graham crackers with chocolate that is topped with a hot marshmallow. They taste so good you want some more, but they are really sticky! Everyone has to wash up before bed.

Now we are all sleepy and ready to go back to our cabin. We stand together and sing a song called "Taps." My mom and dad say they have been singing "Taps" at campfires since they were little kids like me.

Planting a Garden

We eat lots of fresh vegetables at our house. Mom is an excellent cook and she has lots of recipes for making them taste delicious. Sometimes they are expensive to buy at the store so Dad suggested we grow our own.

Dad asked all the members of my family what our favorite vegetables were. I said carrots, broccoli, and beans. My mother likes tomatoes the best. Dad said he wanted to grow green onions, spinach, potatoes, and corn.

We went to the hardware store and bought seeds and little broccoli and tomato plants. We all helped prepare the garden in our backyard. We turned over the dirt with shovels. Then we used a hoe to make little ditches for planting the vegetable seeds. We dug deeper holes for the broccoli and tomatoes. We watered everything and sprinkled some fertilizer around.

I checked the garden every day to see if any vegetables were coming up. After about a week I saw tiny green leaves where the carrots were planted. Then each day more seeds sprouted.

In two months we could eat the spinach, onions, and broccoli. It was almost the end of summer before we could harvest the other vegetables. Everything we grew in our garden was delicious. It was worth the wait, especially for the fresh green beans that my mother cooked with bacon and onion. My dad said the corn was the best he ever tasted.

The Field Trip

Last week our teacher said we were going on a field trip to the fish hatchery. She gave us permission letters to take home to be signed by our parents before we could go. She encouraged us to ask our parents if they would like to come along. We needed some parents to help provide transportation. Everyone was supposed to bring a snack and a sack lunch.

My dad surprised me by volunteering to go. He said he could take a vacation day and that our car could hold a couple of my friends. Three cars and two vans were needed to take the whole class. Two of my friends rode in our car.

At the hatchery, we saw ponds full of fish. We learned the fish were rainbow trout. You could see the colors of the rainbow on their sides. The ranger let us take handfuls of pellets to feed the trout. When we threw the pellets into the ponds the fish got very excited. Some leaped out of the water. The fish could see the food coming from far away.

When the trout grow to about six inches long they will be scooped up and put inside a tanker truck. The truck will take the fish to nearby rivers and release them. In the river, the fish will have to learn to find their own food. When my dad goes fishing, maybe he will catch some of them and bring them home for our dinner.

Keiko the Killer Whale

Keiko the whale was captured near Iceland and brought to California. He became a famous performer who did tricks at a theme park. He even starred in a movie! Keiko is an Orca whale. Orcas are called killer whales because they feed on seals.

Keiko was not healthy at the theme park. He was thin and his skin was covered with sores. His body was too big for the tank he lived in. The water was not cold enough for him to be comfortable. He couldn't get enough exercise to be healthy. He was not a happy whale.

Keiko was taken to the Oregon Coast Aquarium to get healthy and eventually be released back into the wild. At the aquarium, he ate the kind of fish he would have caught himself in the ocean. He lived in a very large tank full of cool ocean water. Trainers took care of him and helped him remember what it was like to be wild again.

Keiko ate well and exercised every day. He gained about two tons and got healthy again. When he was well he was moved back to his new home in the ocean. He was so big he had to be flown in a special plane with a pool that took up the entire inside of the plane.

Keiko's new home is in a pen in the ocean, not a tank. Trainers are helping him learn to catch his own fish. Someday they hope he will be released into the wild again. Maybe he will find his original family of Orcas.

Getting Email

At our house, the mail carrier isn't the only one who brings us messages. Our computer also brings mail. Our family has an email address. All we have to do is turn on the computer and get on the Internet. Our computer tells us if we have new mail.

Email is much faster than regular letters. If I send a regular letter to my cousin who lives in Japan it can take weeks to get an answer. If I email my cousin, she usually emails back the same day. She lives 4,000 miles away and across the Pacific Ocean but our email messages come and go very quickly.

My cousin is nine years old, just like me. We send email to each other almost every day. We tell each other about our schools, our friends, and our soccer teams. Sometimes we send jokes back and forth. Sometimes we ask questions about what we hear in the news about our countries. Sometimes we play chess with each other using the computer. We think of our moves on separate chess sets and then use email to send our moves back and forth.

My dad and mom send email messages back and forth to Japan as well as to Hawaii, where we have many relatives. Because our relatives live so far apart, it is hard for us to get together. If it weren't for email, we wouldn't be able to stay in touch as easily. With email, we can communicate without having to wait for a letter or buy expensive stamps.

Pots

My family makes pots out of clay at our pueblo. These aren't just any pots, though. They are pretty special. Our pots are on display all over the world. People travel for miles to visit our pueblo and collect our pots. We have shown many of our pots in competitions and we have won lots of awards. Someone even wrote a book about my aunt and the pots that she makes.

I am learning to make our pots from my family. From my grandfather I am learning about the clay. We collect the clay from special areas of the river and process it just right. We have to keep the clay moist and we have to work the clay to force any air bubbles out. If there is an air bubble in the clay the pot will break when it is fired.

We hand build our pots. That means we don't use a wheel or a mold. Instead, we have a picture in our mind of how we want the pot to look. We build the pot layer by layer from the base. We are careful to make the pot match the shape in our mind at each step.

Our pots are decorated with designs that tell a story or have a meaning. If you know how to read the designs, you can learn many important lessons about life. I can tell if a pot was made by one of my relatives from the designs. I can tell who made it, and sometimes I can tell you about when it was made.

Animal Tracks

I saw a show on TV last night about animal tracks. Animals and people leave their footprints, or tracks, wherever they go. Each track tells a story. A good tracker can tell what kind of animal made the tracks. For instance, members of the dog family have four toes on each foot. A tracker can see the toenail marks in the footprint of a dog. The dog family includes foxes, coyotes, and all pet dogs.

The cat family also has four toes on all four feet but their toenails don't show. That is because cats pull their toenails in when they walk. Cats could be mountain lions, bobcats, or pet cats. Rabbits have four toes on all four feet also. A tracker can tell a rabbit from a cat or dog because a rabbit's back feet are much larger than their front feet.

Animals with five toes on each foot are members of the weasel family. The weasel family includes skunks, otters, and raccoons. Most members of the rodent family have four toes in front and five in back. Rodents could be mice, rats, chipmunks or squirrels.

A person who learns how to read the story in the tracks can use their knowledge to help track people who are lost. A tracker who is really good can tell men from women and boys from girls. A good tracker also can tell the height and weight of a person just from the footprints.

My Parents

I'm Mexican-American because my parents were both born in Mexico and I was born in America. My parents came to work in the United States before they even finished school. They were just a little older than I am now when they moved here. They got married in Texas and then they moved to California because their families lived there.

My mother and father worked very hard to make our lives better. At first they worked on farms. They both worked seven days a week when there was work and the weather was good. Sometimes the farms that needed workers were far away and they had to travel a long distance. Sometimes it would rain and they couldn't work for days. At other times the crops weren't ready when they arrived. There could be too many people to do the same work and sometimes there was no work at all.

My mother is bilingual because she speaks both English and Spanish. She can understand almost everyone. She was able to get another job because lots of places need employees who can speak English and Spanish.

My father speaks only Spanish, but not for long. He is taking English classes at night so he can find another job. He says English is a difficult language to learn. I'm really proud of my parents.