Universal Reading Screening for Encoding
Grades 4 – 12 Guidance

Encoding on the Minimum Universal Reading Screener (URS) Matrix

The Minimum URS Matrix outlines the subtests that LEAs must administer as part of the universal reading screening process. T.C.A. § 49-1-229, the 2016 law about dyslexia screening and dyslexia-specific interventions, requires that LEAs implement dyslexia screening procedures as part of their universal screening process required by the existing RTI[2] framework or other available means. Encoding is an area required to be addressed within these screening procedures.

The Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) outlines specific criteria that students must meet through the universal reading screener in order to qualify for an Individualized Learning Plan for Characteristics of Dyslexia, or an ILP-D. TISA requires LEAs to analyze the data of students who score below the 25th percentile on the overall URS composite for deficits in 50% or more of grade-appropriate subtests of skills, which may include phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge, sound symbol recognition, decoding skills, rapid naming, and encoding skills. Students whose URS data meets both of these parameters qualify for an ILP-D and TISA weighted funding as a student with unique learning needs.

Subject matter experts both internal and external to the department have determined that encoding skills are appropriate in grades 1 through 12. Therefore, encoding has been added to the Minimum URS Matrices for these grades.

For district-selected screeners that do not include an encoding measure, for kindergarten through grade three, LEAs should roster with the TN-URS (aimswebPlus) and administer Pearson's spelling subtest. For selected screeners without an encoding measure in grades 4-12, LEAs can utilize the following word list and cut off criteria to determine if a student has a spelling deficit for the purposes of analyzing URS data for ILP-D decisions.

General Guidance for Encoding Administration of the Elementary Spelling Inventory

The Elementary Spelling Inventory can be given whole-group, small group, or individually by any teacher, including the teacher of record (TOR). Grading of the spelling inventory for correct/incorrect should be done by a teacher other than the teacher of record. Use of the Spelling Inventory Individual Score Sheets for analysis of student spelling pattern errors can be done by the TOR, as this would be additional scoring used only for instructional decision making, not for the determination of a deficit for the purposes of qualifying for an ILP-D.

If given whole group, students should be presented with all 25 words on the list and asked to spell the words. Administrators should use the provided script and sample sentences to present the word in context. If the encoding measure is being given small group or individually where the administrator can gauge if the student misses 7 of the first 10 words presented, administration may be discontinued. Full administration is still recommended for the most thorough data regarding student skill.

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Encoding Risk Criteria

To be eligible for an ILP-D, students must first be below the 25th percentile on the URS composite nationally normed percentile. They must then have a deficit in at least 50% of the grade-appropriate subtests. The URS Decision-Making Crosswalks outline the deficit criteria for each subtest on each screener across grade levels. When using the Elementary Spelling Inventory, the following criteria should be used in determining if a student has a deficit:

Grades 4 – 6 Deficit Criteria	Grades 7 – 8 Deficit Criteria	Grades 9 -12 Deficit Criteria
Misspells 7 of the first 10 words on the list **OR** is at or below 50% accurate across the full list (misspells 13 or more words total)	Misspells 7 of the first 10 words on the list **OR** is at or below 65% accurate across the full list (misspells 9 or more words total)	Misspells 7 of the first 10 words on the list **OR** is at or below 75% accurate across the full list (misspells 6 or more words total)
Drill Down Recommendation		
If the student meets deficit criteria, we recommend administering the Primary Spelling Inventory (included at the end of this guidance document) to support data-based decision-making surrounding student intervention needs. *Note: This is not a required step to determine if a student has a deficit in encoding skills for the purposes of decision-making regarding ILP-Ds.*		

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Elementary Spelling Inventory
Teacher Administration Script

All students should have paper and pencil. They can be presented with a numbered answer template, or they can number their paper 1 – 25. Allow at least 5 seconds between each word prompt for students to write their answer. The entire word list is available at the end of this guidance document. Students should write their name, date, and the name of their ELA teacher. Educators may use the lined template available in this resource and prefill any applicable information, if appropriate. When class is ready, proceed with the following script.

Teacher: I am going to say a list of words. I will use each word in a sentence. Please listen carefully to the word and sentences. When I am done, spell the word the best you can. Think about the sounds that you hear and the letter or letters that you know make those sounds. If you make a mistake, you can cross out the word and write it again.

Ready?

[allow wait time for indication that students are ready]

Teacher: Number 1. **Speck**. Jackson had a speck of ketchup on his shirt after some fell off his French fry. **Speck**.

Number 2. **Switch**. I asked Sam to turn off the light switch so the room was dark for the movie. **Switch**.

Number 3. **Throat**. After spending the weekend out in the snow, Abigail woke up with a sore throat. **Throat**.

Number 4. **Nurse**. Joann's mother was a nurse at the hometown hospital and worked long shifts. **Nurse**.

Number 5. **Scrape**. When Billy fell off his bicycle, he got a scrape on his knee. **Scrape**.

Number 6. **Charge**. I charge my phone every night so that it lasts me all day. **Charge**.

Number 7. **Phone**. Jill's little sister was excited to play a game on a smart phone. **Phone**.

Number 8. **Smudge**. Oliver was worried his mom would notice the smudge his black boots left on her clean kitchen floor. **Smudge**.

Number 9. **Point.** The team won the basketball game by a single point. **Point**

Number 10. **Squirt.** Jasmine always has to be careful not to squirt mustard on her shirt when opening the tiny packets. **Squirt.**

Number 11. **Drawing.** Drawing is my favorite activity in art class. **Drawing.**

Number 12. **Trapped.** They finally trapped the mouse that was loose in the house. **Trapped.**

Number 13. **Waving.** The flag was waving because of the strong wind. **Waving.**

Number 14. **Powerful.** I feel powerful when I reach my goals. **Powerful.**

Number 15. **Battle**. In class, we learned about a famous battle from the American Revolution. **Battle.**

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Number 16. **Fever.** I use a thermometer to check for a fever when I am sick. **Fever.**

Number 17. **Lesson.** The math lesson today was about fractions. **Lesson.**

Number 18. **Pennies.** Pennies are worth one cent. **Pennies.**

Number 19. **Fraction.** A fraction has a numerator and a denominator. One-fourth is a fraction. **Fraction.**

Number 20. **Sailor.** My friend thinks he's a sailor just because he's been on a boat once. **Sailor.**

Number 21. **Distance.** I didn't think one mile was a long distance until I had to run it in gym class. **Distance.**

Number 22. **Confusion.** The class schedule mix-up caused a lot of confusion. **Confusion.**

Number 23. **Discovery.** The scientists working with dinosaur fossils made an interesting discovery about the triceratops. **Discovery.**

Number 24. **Resident.** You are a resident of where you live, whether it's an apartment, house, or other. **Resident.**

Number 25. **Visible.** He wrote so small on his paper that his letters were barely visible. **Visible.**

[Offer to reread any words/sentences needed. Prompt students to check their paper for name, date, and ELA teacher name. Collect papers.]

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Elementary Spelling Inventory
Teacher Word List

The administration of this word list and scoring of student answers fulfils the 4 – 12 Encoding requirements per the Minimum URS Matrix. Student scores can be used to determine if a student exhibits a deficit in encoding skills, which is a required skill area in the determination of whether a student meets criteria for an Individualized Learning Plan for Characteristics of Dyslexia (ILP-D). Utilize the URS Decision-Making Crosswalks to analyze student URS data for data-based decision making surrounding ILP-Ds and Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA).

1. speck
2. switch
3. throat
4. nurse
5. scrape
6. charge
7. phone
8. smudge
9. point
10. squirt
11. drawing
12. trapped
13. waving
14. powerful
15. battle
16. fever
17. lesson
18. pennies
19. fraction
20. sailor
21. distance
22. confusion
23. discovery
24. resident
25. visible

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Elementary Spelling Inventory
Student Answer Sheet

Student Name: _____   **ELA Teacher Name:** _____

Date: _____

Write the spelling of the words you hear for each number.

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. _____

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Primary Spelling Inventory
Teacher Word List

This word list is for additional drill down assessment for students who exhibit a deficit on the Elementary Spelling Inventory. Administration of this word list is not required per the Minimum URS Matrix but can be administered for additional instructional information about student encoding skills.

1. fan
2. pet
3. dig
4. mob
5. rope
6. wait
7. chunk
8. sled
9. stick
10. shine
11. dream
12. blade
13. coach
14. fright
15. snowing
16. talked
17. camping
18. thorn
19. shouted
20. spoil
21. growl
22. chirp
23. clapped
24. tries
25. hiking

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Primary Spelling Inventory
Student Answer Sheet

Student Name: _____   **ELA Teacher Name:** _____

Date: _____

Write the spelling of the words you hear for each number.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
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