

13

Case Studies—Analyses & Instructional Recommendations

This chapter discusses the **Diagnostic Decoding Survey** scores for four students, including an analysis of the Survey data and suggestions for recommendations or further assessment. The **Diagnostic Decoding Surveys** and other information presented are taken from actual students, but the names have been changed.

Brief descriptions of the four students are shown below.

| Name | Grade | Month | Reason Surveys Were Administered |
|-------------|-------|-------|---|
| 1. Felicia | 1 | Jan. | DIBELS scores below benchmark |
| 2. Tyvon | 2 | May | DIBELS scores below benchmark |
| 3. Brittany | 5 | Sept. | Scored “Basic” on high-stakes state reading test |
| 4. Roy | 8 | June | Language Arts teacher suspected a reading problem |

The following information is provided for each student:

- Screening Assessment Scores
- **Diagnostic Decoding Survey** Scores
- Instructional Recommendations or Recommendation for Additional Assessment
- Detailed Analysis of **Diagnostic Decoding Surveys**

I. Felicia – 1st Grade

The **Beginning DS** was administered to Felicia because she was below benchmark on all her DIBELS scores. DIBELS placed her in the lowest category for instructional recommendation. At Felicia’s school, the **Diagnostic Decoding Surveys** are given to all students in grades K–3 who score below benchmark on the ORF screening measure or who receive an instructional recommendation of Strategic or Intensive from DIBELS.

Felicia’s Screening Assessment Scores

DIBELS - Middle of Year

Instructional Recommendation: *Intensive - Needs Substantial Intervention*

| Measure | Score | Risk Category |
|------------------------------------|-------|---------------|
| Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) | 33 | Emerging |
| Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) | 11 | Deficit |
| Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) | 12 | Some Risk |

Felicia's Diagnostic Decoding Surveys Scores

| | | Felicia <i>Beginning Decoding Survey Scores</i> | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|--|------------------------|-----------|-------|-------------|----------------------|-------|
| Words Read Correctly (out of 50 total) | Error Column Totals | | | | | | | |
| | No Try | Sight Word | Sound Added or Omitted | Consonant | | Short Vowel | Digraph & Letters qu | Blend |
| | | | | Initial | Final | | | |
| 18 | 18 | 3 | 4 | 12 | 15 | 23 | 11 | 9 |

Advanced Decoding Survey was not administered because Felicia is in first grade.

Felicia's Recommendation for Additional Assessment

Felicia's **Beginning DS Words Read Correctly** score of 18 is very low compared to the benchmark of 36 (see Chapter 12 for benchmarks). Her error column scores show that she has significant decoding weaknesses across the board. This indicates that Felicia needs to solidify some pre-reading skills before she is ready to learn and practice phonics.

Administer the REALLY GREAT READING **Pre-Reading Skills Survey** to learn which pre-reading skills Felicia has already learned and which are weak. To request a complimentary copy of the **Pre-Reading Skills Survey**, go to www.PreReadingSurveys.com. The skills assessed on the **Pre-Reading Skills Survey** are: *Letter Names*, *Letter Sounds*, *Phonological Awareness* (blending syllables, blending onset and rhyme, matching initial and final sounds, producing initial and final sounds), and *Phonemic Awareness* (blending and segmenting phonemes in 3 and 4 sound words).

Detailed Analysis of Felicia's Decoding Survey

Exhibit 13.1 is Felicia's **Beginning DS**.

Overview

The **Beginning DS** benchmark for mid-year first grade is 36 (see Chapter 12 for benchmarks). Felicia's score of 13 Words Read Correctly out of 50 total words is considerably below the benchmark. In addition, Felicia's error types are distributed among the columns, not concentrated in one or two columns.

Felicia did not attempt to read 18 words total: 6 real words in isolation, 7 nonsense words in isolation and 5 words in sentences. She accurately read 3 of 5 sight words in isolation and 6 of 7 sight words in the sentences.

Strengths

- **Beginning to learn the alphabetic code** (letters represent sounds)
 - She read 10 decodable real words correctly (3 in isolation and 7 in sentences)
 - In 10 of the 11 decodable real words she attempted but misread, she missed only one letter sound per word and read the other letter sounds accurately.
- **Reads single consonant sounds well**
 - In 5 of the 7 misread decodable words in isolation, she read all the consonants correctly. The consonants she missed were in blends.
- **Knows some high frequency words**
 - She read 3 sight words in isolation correctly and only misread one sight word in the sentences.

Weaknesses

- **Not solid with short vowel spelling patterns or short vowel letter sounds**
 - Missed the short vowel in 4 of the 8 words in isolation that she attempted, but misread. (This includes the one nonsense word she attempted.)

Administering the Letter Sound Survey will show whether Felicia knows her short vowel letter sounds.

- **Confused by digraphs and the letters qu**
 - Read only one digraph accurately (**ck** in the word **tack**, which she read as **take**.)
 - Did not attempt to read the word **quit**.

Administering the Letter Sound Survey will show whether Felicia knows the sounds for digraphs and qu.

- **Confused by blends**
 - Attempted to read only 2 of 5 words with blends, and misread the blends in both words.

After Felicia learns to read CVC words accurately, she needs to be explicitly taught to read blends and explicitly taught the difference between blends and digraphs.

- **Lacks confidence to attempt many words**
 - Did not attempt to read 18 of the 50 words on the Beginning DS, even though she demonstrates strong knowledge of consonant letter sounds in the words she did attempt to read.
 - Attempted to read only 1 of 8 nonsense words.

The Pre-Reading Skills Survey will show whether Felicia has well-developed phonological skills and whether she knows all the letter sounds. When Felicia demonstrates phonemic awareness and knowledge of the letter sounds, she will need to be explicitly taught how to blend letter sounds into words, whether the words are familiar or not.

- **Does not blend sounds into words easily and effortlessly**
 - Felicia named the letter sounds before reading 6 words, as indicated by “sbs/b” (sound by sound, then blend).
 - This could mean that she is slow at blending sounds into words, which is a phonemic processing issue, or that she is slow to recognize the letters sounds, which is an orthographic weakness.

Administer the Phonological and Phonemic Awareness Survey to assess Felicia’s ability to blend, segment, and match sounds without looking at letters. Administer a Rapid Automatic Naming test to determine if Felicia is prone to fluency issues.

- **Misreads simple, high-frequency words**
 - Felicia did not attempt to read the word **they** and she misread the word **are** as **and**.
 - When a student in the middle of first grade cannot read these very common words quickly and accurately, it suggests an orthographic processing or memory difficulty.

This suggests that Felicia may need more practice developing automaticity with reading than other students without orthographic weaknesses would need.

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- **Guesses words based on the incomplete phonetic cues she processes, rather than relying on all the letter sounds to read words accurately**
 - Misread 7 decodable words as real words that are similar in spelling.
 - Felicia’s numerous “no tries” indicate that she does not guess at every word, only those for which she has some confidence in knowing the letter sounds, or that look like words that are familiar to her.
 - Teach Felicia to read every word accurately by having her read decodable text and having her reread any words she misses, then reread the entire text accurately. (Decodable text must have only sight words and words with spelling patterns she has been taught to read.)

Administering the Letter Sound Survey will assess her letter sound knowledge. Administering the Phonological and Phonemic Awareness Survey will assess her ability to blend, segment and match sounds.

- **Misreads smaller function words in connected text**
 - Felicia read the sight word **a** as **the** in the first sentence.
 - She misread the high frequency decodable word **in** as **on** in the second sentence.
 - This is another indication that Felicia is guessing at some words and not processing every letter and every word. Accuracy needs to be stressed whenever she reads.

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Exhibit 13.1

1. Felicia

Beginning Decoding Survey

Student Felicia
 Grade 1 Date January 29, 2003
 Examiner Linda F.

BEGINNING RECORDING FORM **A**
 DECODING SURVEY

| | | Error Grid | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------|------------|--|-----------|---------|---------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|----|---|
| Real Words | | No Try | Sight Word | Observations | | | | | | | |
| | | | | Check the appropriate boxes: | | | | | | | |
| | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Reads sound by sound, then blends word <input type="checkbox"/> Possible b/d or b/p reversal <input type="checkbox"/> Quick to guess <input type="checkbox"/> Slow | | | | | | | |
| | | | | Sound Added or Omitted | Consonant | | Short Vowel | | | | |
| | | | | | Initial | Final | | | | | |
| Sight Words | 1 see ✓ | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2 one ✓ | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 3 they NT | X | X | | | | | | | | |
| | 4 you ✓ | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 5 are and | | X | | | | | | | | |
| CVC Words | 6 rag rug sbs/b (sound by sound & blend) | | NA | | | | X | | | | |
| | 7 lid ✓ sbs/b | | NA | | | | | | | | |
| | 8 dot don't | | NA | X | | | X | | Consonant Digraph: ch, sh, ck, wh, th | | |
| | 9 hum ✓ sbs/b | | NA | | | | | | Letters qu | | |
| Digraphs & Short Vowels | 10 bet ✓ sbs/b | | NA | | | | | | | | |
| | 11 rich rick sbs/b | | NA | | | NA | | X | | | |
| | 12 shop hop sbs/b | | NA | | | NA | | | X | | |
| | 13 tack take | | NA | | | NA | X | | | | |
| | 14 quit NT | X | NA | | NA | X | X | X | X | | |
| Blends & Short Vowels | 15 moth NT | X | NA | | X | NA | X | X | Blend | | |
| | 16 dust duck | | NA | X | | X | | NA | X | | |
| | 17 step NT | X | NA | | X | X | X | NA | X | | |
| | 18 trip NT | X | NA | | X | X | X | NA | X | | |
| | 19 pond NT | X | NA | | X | X | X | NA | X | | |
| | 20 brag bag | | NA | X | | | | NA | X | | |
| Sentences (irregularly spelled sight words are in italics) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 21-26 | <i>The</i> ✓ <i>cat</i> ✓ <i>hid</i> ✓ <i>in</i> ✓ <i>a</i> ✓ <i>box.</i> | | X | | | | X | NA | NA | | |
| 27-35 | <i>The</i> ✓ <i>fresh</i> ✓ <i>fish</i> ✓ <i>is</i> ✓ <i>still</i> ✓ <i>in</i> ✓ <i>on</i> ✓ <i>the</i> ✓ <i>wet</i> ✓ <i>grass.</i> | XX XX | | | XX XX | XX X | XX XX X | X | XX X | | |
| 36-42 | <i>Six</i> ✓ <i>flat</i> ✓ <i>shells</i> ✓ <i>were</i> ✓ <i>in</i> ✓ <i>my</i> ✓ <i>bath.</i> | X | | X | | X | X | XX | X | | |
| Nonsense Words | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CVC | 43 vop vope | | NA | | | | X | NA | NA | | |
| | 44 yud NT | X | NA | | X | X | X | NA | NA | | |
| | 45 zin NT | X | NA | | X | X | X | NA | NA | | |
| | 46 keb NT | X | NA | | X | X | X | NA | NA | | |
| Digraphs | 47 shap NT | X | NA | | NA | X | X | X | NA | | |
| | 48 thid NT | X | NA | | NA | X | X | X | NA | | |
| | 49 chut NT | X | NA | | NA | X | X | X | NA | | |
| | 50 weck NT | X | NA | | X | NA | X | X | NA | | |
| 18 | Words Read Correctly (out of 50 total) | Error Column Totals | | 18 | 3 | 4 | 12 | 15 | 23 | 11 | 9 |
| | | No Try | Sight Word | Sound Added or Omitted | Consonant | | Short Vowel | Digraph & Letters qu | Blend | | |