

# CORE Phoneme Deletion Test

## SKILL ASSESSED

### Phoneme Deletion

#### Grade Level

K-3

#### Language

English

#### Grouping

Individual

#### Approximate Testing Time

5-10 Minutes

#### Materials

Record Form (p. 46)

#### Author

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► **WHAT** This assessment includes four phoneme deletion tasks arranged in order of difficulty. The first task assesses the student's ability to delete initial phonemes. For example, the examiner may say the word *cat* and ask the student to say *cat* without the initial /k/ sound. The remaining tasks assess the student's ability to delete final phonemes, such as /t/ in the word *seat*; initial phonemes in blends, such as /s/ in the word *slip*; and phonemes embedded in blends, such as /l/ in the word *play*. The assessment contains minimal grade-level expectations for grades 1 to 3, but can also be used with older students.

► **WHY** These tasks may help to determine whether deficits in phonemic, or sound, awareness account for the student's reading or spelling delays. According to research, the lack of phonemic awareness is the most powerful determinant of the likelihood of a student's failure to learn to read.

► **HOW** Before administering each task, administer the Practice Items. For all students, begin with the tasks in Part A of the test. Assess as far as the student can go, regardless of his or her grade placement. Do not correct errors; instead encourage students by praising their willingness to participate. Remember that this is an auditory assessment—students do not see the items on the test. The Correct Response column tells how the student's answer should sound, not how it should be spelled.

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**PART A**

**Initial Sound  
(Late-K and Grade 1)**

Begin by saying to the student, "We are going to play a word game. This game will give me information to help teach you better." Then administer the following two Practice Items.

**Practice Item 1**

TEACHER: Say *cat*.

STUDENT: *cat*

TEACHER: Now say it without the /k/.

STUDENT: *at*

If the student responds incorrectly say, "Let's try that again." For example, if the student says *kit*, model the correct response by emphasizing the /k/ and artificially separating it from the *at*. Help the student to give the correct response by saying each sound slowly. Repeat the Practice Item until the student gives the correct response—even if the student does not seem to understand the task. After the student repeats the correct response, proceed to Practice Item 2.

**Practice Item 2**

TEACHER: Say *table*.

STUDENT: *table*

TEACHER: Now say it without the /t/.

STUDENT: *able*

If the student responds incorrectly say, "Let's try that again." For example, if the student says *bull*, model the correct response by emphasizing the /t/ and artificially separating it from *able*. Encourage the student to repeat the correct response.

If the student can correctly respond to these two Practice Items, proceed to the Test Items. If the student cannot correctly respond to these Practice Items, skip Part A and proceed to the Practice Items for Part B. Some students may be able to delete a final sound, but not an initial sound.

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**PART B**

**Final Sound  
(Grade 1)**

Say to the student, "We are going to play another word game. The rules of this game are a little different. Pay close attention." Then administer the following Practice Item.

**Practice Item**

TEACHER: Say *seat*.

STUDENT: *seat*

TEACHER: Now say it without the /t/.

STUDENT: *sea*

If the student responds incorrectly say, "Let's try that again." For example, if the student says *keat*, model the correct response by elongating *sea* and artificially separating it from the /t/. Then say, "Seat without the /t/ is *sea*." Encourage the student to repeat the correct response.

If the student can correctly respond to the Practice Item, proceed to the Test Items. If a student cannot correctly respond to any of the Part A or B Practice Items, discontinue the assessment.

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**PART C**

**First Sound of a  
Consonant Blend  
(Grade 2)**

Say to the student, "We are going to do something different now. Pay close attention." Then administer the following Practice Item.

**Practice Item**

TEACHER: Say *slip*.

STUDENT: *slip*

TEACHER: Now say it without the /s/.

STUDENT: *lip*

If the student responds incorrectly say, "Let's try that again." For example, if the student deletes the entire /sl/ blend and says *ip*, model a correct response by emphasizing the /s/ and separating it from *lip*. Say, "Be careful, you're taking off too much. Try to say it without the /s/." If necessary, help the student to repeat the correct response.

If the student can correctly respond to, or repeat, the Practice Item, proceed to the Test Items. If a student can respond correctly to at least two of the Test Items, proceed to Part D; otherwise, discontinue the assessment.

PART D

**Embedded Sound  
of a Consonant Blend  
(Grade 3)**

Say to the student, "We are going to play another word game. The rules of this game are a little different." Then administer the following Practice Item.

**Practice Item**

TEACHER: Say *play*.

STUDENT: *play*

TEACHER: Now say it without the /l/.

STUDENT: *pay*

If the student responds incorrectly say, "Let's try that again." For example, if the student deletes the entire blend and says *ay*, say: "You are taking off too much. I just wanted you to say it without /l/." Model a correct response by separating all three sounds of the word: /p/ /l/ /ay/, and say: "Without the /l/ it is just /p/ /ay/—*pay*." So, what is *play* without the /l/? Yes, it is *pay*." If necessary, help the student to repeat the correct response.

If the student can correctly respond to, or repeat, the Practice Item, proceed to the Test Items.

► **WHAT IT MEANS** Use the guidelines below to determine the student's performance level.

Minimal Grade Level Expectations	
1-6 correct	late K / early Grade 1
7-10 correct	end of Grade 1
11-13 correct	early Grade 2
14-15 correct	end of Grade 2
16-18 correct	early Grade 3
19-20 correct	end of Grade 3



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Reading Sourcebook,  
Section III: Sound/Print  
Connection

► **WHAT'S NEXT** Students who are able to do Part A: Initial Sound are especially ready for formal reading instruction. Students who do not meet grade expectations will benefit from more intense phonemic awareness instruction.

# CORE Phoneme Deletion Test

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Follow the format used in the Practice Items to administer the items for each level. Mark "+" to indicate a correct response or "-" to indicate an incorrect response. Write down incorrect responses, but do not correct the student. If the student cannot complete any of the items in Parts A or B, discontinue testing. If the student cannot do at least two items in Part C, discontinue testing. Remember that this is an auditory assessment. Students do not see the items.

## Part A: Initial Sound

Practice Items

Say *cat* ... now say it without the /k/ \_\_\_\_ (at)

Say *table* ... now say it without the /t/ \_\_\_\_ (able)

TEST ITEM	CORRECT RESPONSE
1. (t)ower	our (+) (-) _____
2. (c)old	old (+) (-) _____
3. (b)ake	ache (+) (-) _____
4. (s)ize	eyes (+) (-) _____
5. (l)ow	owe (+) (-) _____

## Part B: Final Sound

Practice Items

Say *seat* ... now say it without the /t/ \_\_\_\_ (sea)

Say *rake* ... now say it without the /k/ \_\_\_\_ (ray)

TEST ITEM	CORRECT RESPONSE
6. to(n)e	toe (+) (-) _____
7. droo(p)	drew (+) (-) _____
8. ti(m)e	tie (+) (-) _____
9. ro(d)e	row (+) (-) _____
10. pla(c)e	play (+) (-) _____

## Part C: First Sound of a Consonant Blend

Practice Items

Say *slip* ... now say it without the /s/ \_\_\_\_ (lip)

Say *cloud* ... now say it without the /k/ \_\_\_\_ (loud)

TEST ITEM	CORRECT RESPONSE
11. (f)reight	rate (+) (-) _____
12. (p)layed	laid (+) (-) _____
13. (s)weet	wheat (+) (-) _____
14. (b)reak	rake (+) (-) _____
15. (s)pill	pill (+) (-) _____

## Part D: Embedded Sound of a Consonant Blend

Practice Items

Say *slip* ... now say it without the /l/ \_\_\_\_ (sip)

Say *play* ... now say it without the /l/ \_\_\_\_ (pay)

TEST ITEM	CORRECT RESPONSE
16. b(l)end	bend (+) (-) _____
17. t(w)in	tin (+) (-) _____
18. g(r)ow	go (+) (-) _____
19. be(s)t	bet (+) (-) _____
20. li(f)t	lit (+) (-) _____

Items Correct \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_