

Dyslexia is part of the overall reading conversation!

For many education professionals, dyslexia awareness, in the context of overall reading performance, is steadily growing across school districts.



Our reading tools are organized around key functions of your work: screening, assessment, intervention/instruction, and progress monitoring. These distinct functions, crafted into an efficient process and delivered expertly, provide teachers and students with the best possible outcomes. See some examples of our tools below:

Screen. aimsweb®Plus features skill-based measures and a robust underlying data set that contribute to reading success, along with Shaywitz DyslexiaScreen®, an evidence-based screener for students at risk for dyslexia.

Intervene. SPELL-Links Class Links for Classrooms delivers high-quality, hands-on instruction to structured literacy goals.

Assess. Developmental Reading Assessment™, Third Edition (DRA™3) analyzes oral reading and reading comprehension providing a deeper understanding of students areas of strength as well as their instructional needs.

Monitor. aimswebPlus and DRA3 provide a complete, ongoing view of a student's reading skills and developing reading behaviours.

How might these tools work together? Here's one example:

- Step 1** Use aimswebPlus to screen for overall reading skills and skill development.
- Step 2** Use Shaywitz DyslexiaScreen to screen for dyslexia risk.
- Step 3** Use DRA3 to observe and guide students through personalized reading skill development.
- Step 4** Use SPELL-Links Class Links for Classrooms to empower students to independently apply structured literacy strategies to reading, writing, and spelling every day.
- Step 5** Come full circle back to aimswebPlus or DRA3 for progress monitoring.

Used by both Shaywitz DyslexiaScreen and DRA3, teacher observations have been shown to contribute valid information about student performance, especially when combined with clinical and classroom assessments (Gallant, 2017; Snowling et al., 2011; Wood-Groves & Choi, 2017). By contrast, aimswebPlus uses direct assessment of student performance as a complementary means of understanding and planning for reading instruction.

Screen



Assess



Intervene



Monitor



How might this look in your district?

Here's how aimswebPlus, DRA3, and the Shaywitz DyslexiaScreen can be used universally and/or in targeted ways by education professionals working in school districts across the country.

Story 2: Follow the (universal) data for all students learning to read

In this scenario, K-3 teachers administer aimswebPlus to all of their students in the Fall to establish a baseline of student performance. The administrators and teachers use those data points across classrooms in the beginning of the year to identify students at risk of not meeting their spring targets. After six to eight weeks of instruction, all K-3 students are administered the Shaywitz DyslexiaScreen, integrated within aimswebPlus. Why not right in the beginning of the year? The teacher needs time to get to know the student academically. This extra time gives them more examples of each student's typical behaviour and makes their ratings far less subjective as they see multiple examples of performance every day! This fulfills the new state mandate for universal dyslexia screening and offers access to the Aggregate Risk Report—setting aimswebPlus and Shaywitz data side-by-side for the same students.

With these universal data points in-hand, the “What’s next?” conversation can begin. For students at risk on both aimswebPlus and Shaywitz, teachers and administrators know to “drop everything” and immediately begin more intensive interventions. For students at risk on one or the other, teachers can investigate further about each group of students with RTI/MTSS team members to explore quickly how to address these students’ needs, which may be the same or slightly different from those students at risk on both measures.

In this case, if they decide that for every student with any risk indicator on either measure, the teacher will complete a DRA3 profile. For those students at risk, this will give a deeper view of each student’s reading behaviours and helps to plan targeted instruction needs in a Tier 2 context. A DRA3 Focus for Instruction—an individual plan to address each readers’ needs—can be completed.

This scenario highlights a powerful “1-2 punch” for setting up classrooms early in the year. Throughout the year, data can be collected frequently and analyzed on an ongoing basis. Key reports, based on the audience, can be provided during parent-teacher conferences and administrative meetings. This scenario will provide a systematic approach for data-based decision making so that every student is receiving the appropriate level of support.

References

- Gallant, D. J. (2017). Using first-grade teacher ratings to predict third-grade english language arts and mathematics achievement on a high-stakes statewide assessment. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 5(2), 125-142.
- Snowling, M. J., Duff, F., Petrou, A., Schiffeldrin, J., & Bailey, A. M. (2011). Identification of children at risk of dyslexia: the validity of teacher judgements using ‘Phonic Phases’. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 34(2), 157-170.
- Woods-Groves, S., & Choi, T. (2017). Relationship of teachers’ ratings of kindergarteners’ 21st century skills and student performance. *Psychology in the Schools*, 54(9), 1034-1048.