

# Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators Unified Scale

*Literacy learning does not begin abruptly at age five or six; rather, it is an ongoing process that begins even earlier in life as children are learning language.*

— Mary Knight-McKenna

Beginning in the 1990s, when the term "school ready" first began appearing in the research literature, and now, with an increasing number of states enacting preschool standards, policymakers are seeking information about young children's knowledge and skills as they enter kindergarten. By 2017, 31 states have funded pre-kindergarten programs with benchmarks that connect to PreK-12 standards and will be used to guide instruction in language and emergent literacy. Educators want an early picture of children's skills so that problems can be identified and addressed as soon as possible. Half the states now mandate kindergarten assessments. Renaissance® is ready to assist states and their educators with an early picture of a child's literacy readiness for kindergarten.

## What are the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators?

Through research and empirical data, Renaissance has identified a list of skills that designate a student's readiness to meet kindergarten literacy expectations. These skills are the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators. These Indicators, paired with Renaissance Star Early Literacy®, are one tool—a trusted, valid, and reliable tool—that educators can use to gather and report objective data with respect to literacy development and language at the beginning of formal schooling. That data can drive the development of relevant instructional opportunities and minimize achievement disparities as soon as possible.

## How to use the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators

After you administer a Star Early Literacy assessment, compare your student's Unified scaled score to the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness scaled score. A scaled score at or above the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness scaled score indicates your student's readiness to begin kindergarten with the initial early literacy skills expected of kindergarteners. A scaled score below the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness scale indicates the student does not yet have the initial early literacy skills expected of kindergarteners.

## Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Unified Scaled Score = 707

To help students who do not yet have the initial early literacy skills expected of kindergarteners, focus on the Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators listed in the following table. Each Indicator is associated with a Renaissance Learning Progression skill. The set of skills included in the learning progression built for your state's standards is based on analysis of the standards. Additional guidelines and resources are available in Renaissance Flow 360®.

Kindergarten Literacy Readiness Indicators	Renaissance Learning Progression Skill
*Distinguish between the shapes of upper- and lowercase letters	Distinguish between the shapes of upper- and lowercase letters (e.g., pick the letter that is different in <i>S, S, C</i> ; pick the letter that is different in <i>E, f, f</i> )
*Distinguish letters from numbers	Distinguish letters from numbers (e.g., select <i>J</i> from choices <i>J, 8, 7</i> )
*Identify the letters of the alphabet	Name all the letters of the alphabet and recognize their lower- and uppercase forms (e.g., pick another way to write the letter <i>G</i> from <i>q, g, j</i> )
Name most letters of the alphabet	Name all the letters of the alphabet and recognize their lower- and uppercase forms (e.g., pick another way to write the letter <i>G</i> from <i>q, g, j</i> )
Write one's own name	Write the letters of the alphabet including most upper- and lowercase letters (e.g., write first and last name)
Blend onsets and rimes	Identify and blend onsets and rimes in single-syllable words (e.g., identify the sounds /m/ /an/ in <i>man</i> and blend the sounds /m/ /an/ to produce <i>man</i> )
*Identify the primary sounds most frequently represented by initial consonants of written words	Identify initial consonant sounds with the letters that represent them (e.g., Pick the word that begins with the sound /g/, <i>get</i> ; pick the first letter you hear in <i>mop</i> , /m/)
Identify and produce groups of words that begin with the same initial sound (alliteration)	Recognize, identify, and produce groups of words that begin with the same initial sound (i.e., alliterative words)
*Associate words with pictorial representations	Associate words with pictorial representations
Clap the number of words in a given sentence	Clap and count the number of words in a given sentence
*Compare the lengths of different words based on how many letters they contain	Compare the lengths of different words based on how many letters they contain (e.g., explain that <i>sit</i> is longer than it because <i>sit</i> has more letters)

*Distinguish letters from words	Distinguish letters from words (e.g., identify which is a word, not a letter, from choices <i>c, t, cat</i> ; identify which is a letter, not a word, from choices <i>this, b, fox</i> )
*Hold a book upright and know that printed text is read from left to right	Hold a book upright and understand that words are read from left to right and top to bottom
Read and tell the meaning of familiar signs and symbols in or from the environment	Read and tell the meaning of familiar signs and symbols in or from the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)
Recognize own name in print	Recognize one's first name in print
*Track printed words from left to right and top to bottom on a page	Track printed words from left to right and top to bottom on a page
With modeling and support, identify, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words.	Blend, count, and segment syllables in spoken words (e.g., from an oral prompt, students identify that /spi/-/der/ makes the word <i>spider</i> )
Add numbers with a sum up to 10 (pictures)	Model addition within 10 using pictures or objects
Subtract 1 from a set	Subtract within 20 using any strategy
Add 1 to a set	Determine the number that is one larger than a given number within 20
Complete a sequence of numbers between 0 and 10 in ascending order	Count out a given number of objects from 1 to 20
Recognize numbers 0–20	Read a whole number from 0 to 20
*Recognize and produce rhyming sounds in words	Recognize and produce rhyming sounds in words (e.g., choose word with /at/ sound from <i>cat</i> )
Understand that high-frequency words and oral vocabulary have categorical relationships	Sort objects into categories (e.g., color, shape, size, use)

\* Students who do well on these skills are most likely to become successful readers.

## Sample Parent Letter

Following is a sample letter to parents to report on a student's readiness to begin kindergarten with the initial early literacy skills expected of kindergarteners. Teachers need to fill in two pieces of information: one for the student's name and another to indicate the score in the Unified Scale. This fill-in information can be entered into paragraph two of the letter. You will also want to sign the letter at the end.

The letter also contains a sample of at-home activities. Other suitable activities can be found at <http://help.renaissance.com/sel/Resources>.

Dear Parent or Guardian,

As you know, reading is a skill all students need. Our school wants to understand whether students are ready to learn to read as soon as they begin kindergarten. We want to give you the information you need about your child's reading progress.

\_\_\_\_\_’s Renaissance Star Early Literacy Unified score is \_\_\_\_\_. Students with a score of 707 or above are typically ready to learn kindergarten-level skills. Students with a score below 707 usually need additional help.

Here are some skills you can work on at home.

Skills	At-Home Activities
For all skills	Read and reread stories to your child.
Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet	Find the letters in his or her name in other print; sing the alphabet song.
Recognize rhyming words	Share a book with repeated rhyming phrases (e.g., <i>Brown Bear</i> ) aloud with your child. Stress the rhyming words and encourage your student to find words which rhyme. (e.g., "Brown bear, brown bear what do you see? I see a green frog looking at me." "Which word rhymes with see?")

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Thank you for supporting your child's reading progress.

Sincerely,