What is DIBELS?

DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy) is a series of short tests that assess early literacy and reading skills for students in grades kindergarten through grade six. The DIBELS comprise of a developmental sequence of one-minute measures: recognizing initial sounds (phonemic awareness), naming the letters of the alphabet (alphabetic principle), segmenting words into phonemes (phonemic awareness), reading nonsense words (alphabetic principle), and oral reading of a passage (accuracy and fluency). DIBELS can be used to identify students who are at risk for reading difficulties and help teachers identify areas to target instructional support. At the William P. Gorman Fort Banks Elementary School students in grades K-2 are given the DIBELS assessment three times a year, September, January and May. The specific tests given are determined by the grade level and time of year. Each test is timed for one minute. These tests include:

**FSF First Sound Fluency**- Students are asked to identify the beginning sound of a word

**LNF Letter Naming Fluency**- Students are asked to name upper and lower case letters

**PSF Phoneme Segmentation Fluency**- Students are asked to break a word into phonemes. For example the teacher says the word bend and the student must say /b/ /e/ /n/ /d/

**NWF Nonsense Word Fluency**- Students are asked to read two and three letter short vowel nonsense words. This test also measures the students’ ability to correctly identify each letter sound in the word.

**DORF Oral Reading Fluency**: Students read three grade level passages and are given one minute to read each passage.

The following chart shows the DIBELS assessments given for each grade and time of year.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Level | September | January | May |
| Kindergarten | First Sound  Fluency  Letter Naming  Fluency | First Sound Fluency  Letter Naming Fluency  Phoneme Segmentation Fluency  Nonsense Word Fluency | Letter Naming Fluency  Phoneme Segmentation Fluency  Nonsense Word Fluency |
| Grade One | Letter Naming Fluency  Phoneme Segmentation  Fluency  Nonsense Word Fluency | Nonsense Word Fluency  Oral Reading Fluency | Nonsense Word Fluency  Oral Reading Fluency |
| Grade Two | Nonsense Word  Fluency  Oral Reading Fluency | Oral Reading  Fluency | Oral Reading Fluency |