

ASSESSMENT COMPARISON

| Assessment Type | Purpose | When to Use | Tools/Methods | Outcome | Analogy |
|------------------------------|---|--|---|---|--|
| Universal Screener | To quickly identify students who may be at risk for literacy difficulties. | Beginning of the school year or periodically (e.g., fall, winter, spring). | Standardized tests, digital screening tools (e.g., DIBELS, Acadience, and aimsweb+) | Broad overview of students' abilities; identifies who needs additional support or intervention. | Like a diagnostic check engine light to flag potential problems early. |
| Diagnostic Assessment | To pinpoint specific areas of strength and weakness in literacy skills. | After screening identifies a student at risk or struggling. | Detailed, individualized assessments (e.g., running records, phonemic awareness inventories). | Deep understanding of specific skill deficits and strengths; guides targeted instruction. | Equivalent to a mechanic running specific tests to identify exactly what needs repair. |
| Learning Profiles | To document individual student progress and learning characteristics over time. | Continuously updated throughout the year as part of ongoing monitoring. | Portfolios, anecdotal records, observational notes, and samples of student work. | Comprehensive view of a student's literacy development; informs personalized teaching strategies. | Similar to monitoring fuel efficiency and overall engine performance over time. |
| Classroom Assessment | To assess daily learning, monitor progress, and adjust instruction as needed. | Regularly during daily instruction or at the end of a unit/lesson. | Formative assessments (e.g., exit tickets, quick writes), Summative assessments (e.g., projects). | Immediate feedback to adjust teaching; evaluates mastery of specific skills or concepts taught. | Like checking oil levels and making small tune-ups to ensure the engine runs smoothly every day. |

Adapted from LD@school's [Evidence-Based Assessment in the Science of Reading](#)



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