

WIST Information for Parents

The WIST can be used to identify students with difficulty with fundamental literacy skills and isolate specific areas of weakness for struggling readers. It assesses word identification, spelling, and sound-symbol knowledge in grades 2-5 and a secondary version (grades 6-12). It includes norm-referenced and informal assessments and can help design student intervention plans. The WIST is also helpful for assessing progress on Foundations and other phonics programs.

There are two core subtests (Word Identification and Spelling) and a supplemental subtest (Sound-Symbol Knowledge), which can be used in either the norm-referenced or informal assessment:

- Word Identification measures accuracy of sight recognition and ability to apply word attack skills, and sight recognition of irregular high-frequency words
- Spelling assesses ability to spell words from dictation through recall of correct letter sequences for familiar words or ability to apply sound/symbol relationships and rules of English orthography, and recall of letter order in irregular high-frequency words.
- Sound-Symbol Knowledge assesses ability to associate sound(s) (i.e., phonemes) with specific letter(s) (i.e., graphemes). Three informal procedures provide additional diagnostic information about the student's performance on the test items, sound-symbol skills, and errors peculiar to written words.

The *WIST* was normed on a representative sample of 1,520 children and adolescents.

Administration and Scoring

The *WIST* takes about 40 minutes to administer. Results can be reported as standard scores, percentiles, and age and grade equivalents; a composite score, the Fundamental Literacy Index, is also calculated. The informal assessment scores are used for clinical and instructional purposes.