

MA Handout Two – Questions to Accompany Typical Assessment Q & A

Let's take a look at this chart which summarizes the information on the previous slides.

Since the purpose of assessment is to help make effective instructional decisions for students, let's look at some of the questions that assessment data can answer.

- The questions in the first block on this chart are typically asked at the beginning of the school year. By administering screenings of age appropriate literacy skills, you can identify those students who are at risk for difficulties. Screenings provide a quick look at key indicators.
- The questions in the second block focus on growth in critical literacy skills. The physician closely monitors the growth rates of infants and compares this data to growth charts. We have growth charts for the acquisition and development of literacy skills; data from progress monitoring tests will be used to check the progress of students in your classroom.
- The questions in the third block focus on gaining a more in-depth understanding of a student's literacy skills. The physician often asks for x-rays, lab tests, etc. if a child is not growing consistently with the growth chart for his/her age. Diagnostic measures are given when interventions do not produce the expected gains, and more information is needed to know how to change that course.
- Finally, the last questions are focused on outcomes. This information from outcome measures is important in order to know how the class as a whole has progressed; that is, how the instruction has lead to success in skills that should be mastered by a specific time. At the end of the year, it is also a time for reflection on activities you might want to do differently next year, or to continue with your next class because of the gains that have been made.

Examples of the types of questions you might ask yourself with regards to assessment are:

- Screening:
Which students are more likely to struggle?
- Progress Monitoring:
Are all my students learning the critical literacy skills at the expected times? If not, how should I group my students to provide supplemental or intervention instruction?
- Diagnostics:
Are some students missing prerequisite skills, so that my instruction needs to focus on the building the foundational blocks necessary?
- Outcome Measures:
Did I meet all the goals I had for each individual student and for my entire class? What might I do differently if given a similar class of students next year?