What are the Virginia Language and Literacy Screeners?

The Virginia Literacy Partnership collects data using two measures; the Pre-K Language & Literacy Screener (VALLS: Pre-K) and the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screener (PALS-K). The VALLS: Pre-K screener measures early language and literacy skills for three and four-year-old pre-kindergarten children. The PALS-K assesses kindergarten students' literacy skills. Both measures are given in the fall and spring with the option of a Mid-Year time point.

VALLS: Pre-K At A Glance:
The Pre-K Language and Literacy Screener (VALLS: Pre-K) includes the following subtests:
- Alphabet knowledge
- Phonological Awareness
- Language: Passage Comprehension
- Name Writing
- Print Concepts

Information on the VALLS: Pre-K can be found here.

PALS-K At A Glance:

The PALS-K screener includes the following subtests:
- Rhyme Awareness
- Beginning Sound Awareness
- Alphabet Knowledge
- Letter Sounds
- Spelling
- Word Recognition in Isolation

More information regarding these assessments can be located on the Virginia Literacy Partnership's website.

What is the EMAS?

The Early Mathematics Assessment System (EMAS) is a reliable and valid research-based assessment of early mathematical thinking that draws on modern cognitive science as well as developmental and educational research. Created by Dr. Herb Ginsburg and colleagues at Teachers College, Columbia University, [1] and expanded and adapted by researchers at CASTL, the EMAS is designed to measure a broad range of mathematical content in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.

EMAS At A Glance:
- Teachers have the option of administering the In-person or the Remote EMAS to students.
- Teachers administer the assessment to students individually, using a flip book (in-person) and manipulatives.
- The assessment takes approximately 20-25 minutes per student to administer.
- Items are designed to capture a wide range and variety of early math skills.
- It uses hands-on materials to engage students and to help teachers observe students' thinking.

[1] Ginsburg, H. P., Pappas, S., & Lee, Y. (2010). Early Mathematics Assessment System. An unpublished assessment measure created as part of the NIH supported project Computer Guided Comprehensive Mathematics Assessment for Young Children (Project number 1 RO1 HD051538-01).

- It is aligned with Virginia's Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS; 2021), Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL; 2016), and Clements and Sarama's Mathematics Learning Trajectories (2009)[2].
- It is given in the fall and spring of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.

What skills are assessed with the EMAS?

The EMAS is designed to focus on key foundational skills in each mathematics sub-domain that set students on a successful early math trajectory. The EMAS is comprised of the four modules indicated above. The number of items in each module varies from fall to spring and in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, but there is a larger number of numeracy items as compared with other sub-domains because of the strong focus on this area in early childhood.

Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4
Geometry	Patterning	Numeracy	Computation
• Shape Recognition • Shape Matching • Shape Properties • Composing Shapes	• Imitating patterns • Recognizing patterns • Reproducing Patterns • Extending Patterns • Creating Patterns	• Recognizing quantities • Counting and Cardinality • Subitizing • Comparing and Ordering Numbers • Composing and Decomposing Numbers • Numerals	• Addition • Subtraction

What is the CBRS?

The Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS; Bronson, Goodson, Layzer, & Love, 1990) is a teacher report measure of students' self-regulation and social skills.

- Self-regulation skills: skills that support students to manage their attention, emotions, and behaviors to adapt to the demands of the school environment (e.g., listen to others, follow expectations and multi-step directions, and stay focused on tasks).
- Social skills: skills that support students to successfully navigate interactions and build relationships with peers and adults (e.g., cooperate in a group, express thoughts, and emotions, and resolve conflicts in a positive way).

The Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP) uses the CBRS to measure these two skills because it has been proven to be reliable and valid across culturally diverse contexts.

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[2] Clements, D. H., & Sarama, J. (2009). Learning and teaching early math: The learning trajectories approach. New York: Routledge.

CBRS At A Glance:
- The CBRS is a short rating scale that teachers complete outside of instructional time.
- It assesses a teacher's perception of student's behavior with other children, adults, and materials and tasks in the classroom.
- It includes a set of 17 items that are completed using a rating scale from 1 to 5 to determine the frequency of certain behaviors.
- It takes approximately 1 to 3 minutes to complete per student using the online system.
- It is completed both in the fall and spring for each student.

CBRS – Mental Health Well-Being Items

Understanding children's social-emotional skills and mental health well-being can help teachers, schools, programs, and divisions better individualize support for students' developmental needs. Teachers report on five items that focus on students' mental health well-being. There is also an item that allows teachers to indicate whether they have concerns about a student's mental health. These items are designed to provide standardized information about teacher perceptions of students' mental health well-being. This information can help facilitate conversations between teachers, instructional leaders, and families on how to best support students.