Scholastic Phonics Inventory

Scholastic Phonics Inventory (SPI) is a foundational reading assessment for students in Grades 3-12+, that helps educators determine which students are in need of the most intensive intervention. SPI measures fluency of non-word phonological decoding and sight-word identification of older, struggling readers. Administered in fewer than 10 minutes, this computer-based assessment provides a data-driven reading profile to support an appropriate reading intervention placement.

Assessment Design

The SPI is a validated screener and placement test for the most challenged readers. These students may appear to be fluent readers, but rarely manage to comprehend and acquire new words without explicit support. As content-area material grows more complex, these students may exhibit difficulty mastering concepts independently. Designed to assess word-reading fluency, the SPI provides computer-based intervention assessment that focuses on three foundational reading skills:

- <u>Fluency</u>—The more accurate and automatic readers become with these word-level reading processes, the more cognitive resources become available for comprehending strings of text.

- <u>Nonword Decoding</u>—When presented with a non-word, readers must break it into parts, retrieve sounds associated with the parts, and string them together to read the unfamiliar word.

- <u>Sight-Word Knowledge</u>—Skilled readers have large vocabularies of sight words that can be recognized automatically.

The items in each test form represent the scope of these skills:

- <u>Letter Recognition</u>—All 26 letters of the alphabet are represented, either as targets (correct answers) or distracters (incorrect answer choices). Only lowercase letters are used, as they are generally considered more challenging than uppercase letters and more appropriate for assessing older readers.

- <u>Sight Word Reading</u>—In some items, the targets come from the first 300 words on the Dolch and Fry word lists and the distracters are common words that look similar to the target. In other items, the targets come from the first 5,000 words in the American Heritage Word Frequency Book—a comprehensive list of words found in grade school texts—and the distracters are misspellings of the target.

- <u>Decoding</u> –All answer choices are non-words that follow the conventions of English. The items represent the breadth of spelling patterns taught in most phonics programs and align to the System 44 scope and sequence. Targets and distracters work together to assess individual sound-spellings and require students to attend to differences among spelling patterns. The items were carefully generated to avoid proper nouns, Spanish words, non-words that sound like real words, and items that may be difficult for speakers of certain dialects, including African American Vernacular English, to distinguish phonologically.

The SPI Process

Students log in to SPI with unique usernames and passwords. Students complete the assessment in about 10 minutes. If students have never used the SPI before, they proceed to the first screen. If students have previously started but not finished the SPI, they proceed to the beginning of the section where they left off. Students may temporarily halt the test and then resume it. Students may pause only once in each section of the test. Students may click "Replay" to hear the word again.

The first task in the SPI ensures that students are able to hear the instructions and use the mouse effectively. It also familiarizes students with the format of the test. The Letter Names subtest measures students' ability to recognize letters of the alphabet. Students hear a letter name and must use the mouse to select the corresponding letter from a list of four choices. The SPI also measures how quickly and accurately students respond to each item.

The Sight Words subtest measures students' ability to recognize high-frequency sight words. Students hear a word and must use the mouse to select the corresponding word from a list of four words. The SPI measures how quickly and accurately students respond to each item.

The Nonsense Words subtest measures students' ability to decode. Nonsense words are used to prevent students from recognizing words by memory. Students hear a nonsense word and must use the mouse to select the corresponding word from a list of four choices. The SPI measures how quickly and accurately students respond to each item. The Nonsense Words subtest is divided into three sections containing items of increasing difficulty.

Progress Monitoring

The *Scholastic Achievement Manager* (SAM) makes it easy for teachers and school leaders to access student test data and monitor program use. Through SAM, educators can manage test administration, review results, and customize the program to meet the needs of their students. From SAM, educators can access the following five classroom and multi-classroom reports for SPI, as well as letters for the home.

- The Screening and Placement Report details the performance of a class or group of students on the SPI placement test.
- The Student Progress Report shows detailed performance data and progress on SPI over time for an individual student.
- The Summary Progress Report shows changes in performance and progress on SPI over time for a class or group of students.
- The District/School Proficiency Report allows administrators to review student performance on SPI on a district- or school-wide basis.
- The District/School Status Report allows administrators to review student performance on SPI on district- or school-wide basis.

Scaffolded Instruction

SPI is a validated screener and placement test for the most challenged readers. Measuring fluency—both speed and accuracy—of students' response to phonological decoding and sight word reading items, SPI provides highly specific placement recommendations into the scope and sequence of a decoding intervention. SPI also identifies low proficient readers who have adequate phonological decoding and sight word recognition skills and require a different reading intervention. Based on the SPI Assessment, students are classified as one of the following levels; specific placement recommendations are made for each level:

Levels	Results	Placements Should Include
PRE-DECODER	Student shows no mastery of the alphabetic principle.	**Tier III**—Foundational reading intervention including alphabetic principle and phonemic awareness.
BEGINNING DECODER	Student shows mastery of basic letter recognition, but cannot decode.	**Tier III**—Explicit phonics instruction starting with simple consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) patterns.
DEVELOPING DECODER	Student shows emerging decoding skills with mastery of basic word structures.	**Tier III**—Explicit phonics instruction starting with consonant blends.
ADVANCING DECODER	Student shows adequate mastery of decoding skills.	**Tier II**—Text-based reading with direct support in building vocabulary, reading comprehension, and fluency with connected text.

Home-School Connection

SPI includes two Family Letters, available in English and Spanish, to foster school-to-home communication. The Introductory Family Letter informs parents that their child will be assessed on the SPI and provides a brief description of the assessment. The Follow-up Family Letter provides the results of the SPI for each student and makes recommendations for how families can support students' reading achievement at home.

Professional Development

Scholastic offers an SPI Interactive Webinar for teachers and administrators. This interactive webinar helps educators use SPI to assess word-level reading skills in older, struggling readers including: utilizing SPI as a screener, placement test, and progress monitoring tool; implementing SPI in a RTI Framework; interpreting SPI results; and generating reports.

  For additional information about *Scholastic Phonics Inventory*, visit www.scholastic.com/spi.