

Instructions for Administration of Fall Screeners

These are interview-based screening assessments that happen one-on-one with students.

- Read the assessment through and discuss with a colleague to ensure that any questions that might arise can get cleared up.
- Prepare your space. Where will you do these assessments?
- Prepare all the materials that you need (materials lists are below).
- Do not provide students with paper and pencil or materials (counters, etc.)
- Practice it once with a student or colleague so that you are fully ready.
- Consider whether you will video tape or not. Some teachers video tape most of all the assessments for personal use, sharing with parents, or for PLC or other collaborative work.
- Schedule your time. Will you do one per day? Two per day? Or perhaps there is a better plan that fits well with your situation. No matter what you choose, consider how and when you will complete the assessments.
- As you give the assessments take notes. We all think we are going to remember, and yet after doing a few assessments it is often difficult to remember. These assessments are designed to collect qualitative evidence as much as quantitative evidence. In fact, that qualitative evidence is more useful as formative information for instruction.
- Be curious, but keep a good pace. These interview assessments can lead to a lot of questions about how students solve problems. This is in fact the intention, and when teachers express a genuine curiosity about how students think that communicates to the student that you care. However, it is easy to let the questioning go on so long that you can get bogged down, and behind schedule. Sometimes it is best to make a note and ask more questions some other time.

Before administering the assessments read the assessments through carefully. The new detailed descriptions are designed to answer many of the questions that have come up over the years. It is best to do a dry run with the materials and either a “sample” student or a teaching partner.

Preparation

In addition to reading through the whole of the assessments, make the appropriate copies and gather the necessary materials before you get started. See the list of materials for each of the grade levels below.

Plan for Data Collection and Data Usage

Consider how and where data will be collected, shared, and utilized. Collecting data for the sake of data is not purposeful or useful. Forefront provides an excellent solution to this process and helps districts to see their USNS results alongside results from other assessments. For those who do not plan to use Forefront, creating formatted spreadsheets for data collection can be helpful. If the decision is made to administer the assessments school-wide or district-wide, plan at the beginning for when the results will be discussed, and how they will be used. It is important from the outset that everyone involved understands the purposes for making this commitment.



Forefront is particularly well designed for schools that are using the USNS as a *universal* screener. The ability to aggregate and disaggregate results, view results over time, compare groups and cohorts of students, and understand the results through a variety of lenses helps districts to maximize the information and the impact of the assessments quickly and easily.

Note Taking

Note catchers have been created for all the assessments. This allows for a little more room for note-taking question by question. As the students respond to the prompts it is important to observe the student closely. Although the numeric data that is collected from these assessments is useful for a few things, the rich information that comes from noticing and noting the students' responses is where much of the formative assessment information will come from. Quick Scripts have been created for each of the assessments as well to facilitate their administration.

Who should administer the assessments?

Whenever possible, we suggest that the teacher who works most directly with the student administer the assessments. Although the numeric data can be helpful, observing and listening to each student is where the most valuable information comes from. If it is impossible for a teacher to administer all the assessments, consider the following: For students whom the teacher believes will need a more thorough diagnostic assessment anyway, have someone else collect the Screener data and then the teacher can follow up with the diagnostic assessments. For students who you anticipate will have no trouble with the assessment, consider handing off these Screeners to others. However, please take into consideration that even these students are worth assessing because their thinking often reveals surprises.

Pacing/Time for Interviews

The USNS have been designed to be as efficient as possible, however history has shown that teachers need to focus their efforts keep a manageable pace. Teachers should attempt to questions students as much as is necessary to score the assessment accurately. It is sometimes tempting for teachers to turn the assessment into an instructional opportunity. This can cause the assessment times to get drawn out significantly. Teachers are advised to take note of the instructional opportunities that present themselves during the assessment and to address them later.

Many students will move through interviews more quickly, while others will need more time. The kindergarten screeners can often be done in 3 – 5 minutes. The 1st – 3rd grade screeners tend to take 5 – 7 minutes each. Revisions have been made to focus the questions better and improve efficiency. However, due to the increased complexity of the content, the 4th and 5th grade Screeners still take about 8 – 10 minutes each.

If a student is taking an inordinate amount of time and does not appear to be able to engage productively in the problem, the teacher may ask the student if they need more time or if they need to hear the question again. When a student is not working productively on a problem, it is appropriate to record the student answer as unsuccessful and move on. Teachers should seek to strike a balance between getting as much



information as is useful for informing instruction and maintaining a manageable assessment schedule. Something to consider is to attempt to assess only one or two students per day. This makes the task more manageable.

Language Considerations

Because these assessments include interviews and the students primarily respond verbally, teachers find that they gain a wealth of information regarding the students' receptive and productive language abilities. Teachers are encouraged to make notes about the students' language usage.

Whenever possible the assessment should be made available in the dominant language of the student, and it is suggested to give the assessment in the language of the student's choosing. Be careful, however, for although a student might speak another language at home, it could be that much of their experiences with numbers and mathematics has come from school. So, although a student might be more confident with normal conversational language in their home language, they are often more competent in talking about mathematics in the language used primarily for math instruction. It is often highly informative to offer the assessment in two languages for bilingual students, sometimes moving back and forth between languages. Understanding each student's number sense and skills is critical. Understanding their language and ability to access instruction and participate in mathematical discourse is also important.

When administering the assessment in more than one language and recording the data into a data collection system like Forefront, enter the higher of the two scores for the student.

The assessments are currently available in English and Spanish. If you or your district makes other translations, we encourage you to share those back with us so that we can share them with the broader community.

Occasionally the assessment will directly encourage the teacher to check to ensure that the student understands the prompt. When, during the interview assessment, students are presented with a written problem to solve mentally, the teacher is asked to ensure that the student has read the problem correctly.

Frequently Asked Questions

Should I assess everyone?

These assessments are designed to be *universal*/screening assessments, so yes. If you have a student who cannot access the test due to a disability enter 1s for the test. This allows districts who are building norms for the assessment to ensure that they are getting accurate percentile bands.

Why not provide counters and paper and pencil?

- The Fall Screeners are all written to be solved mentally. When children solve problems like this without paper and pencil it helps to reveal how they are making sense of the problems and the numbers involved.
- Providing paper and pencil and/or manipulatives will slow down the assessments significantly.
- The rubrics are written assuming that students are solving the problems without these things and providing them will cause inconsistencies in scoring.
- If, after completing the assessments, you wish to have some or all the children try the problems with paper and pencil and/or manipulatives to see how they would solve them, that might be helpful.

I have a student who scored very poorly, should I go down a grade level?

One way to find out what a student knows is to drop back a grade level in your assessment. Generally, these results are only kept for formative purposes and not entered into Forefront or your data system so that the local norms are solid, but check with your district leader. This is also true for students who score very well and moving up.

Does this identify students for accelerated course work?

No. This series of assessments is intended to inform instruction for grade level content. For students who are being considered for acceleration, a grade level Screener can be added to a body of evidence, but should be only an additional piece, not core to the process.

Our teachers are not Add+Vantage Math trained, is this still useful?

These assessments are useful to all, however with the appropriate training the impact is amplified. The associations with the AVMR assessments also to point teachers to the appropriate diagnostic assessment to help guide instructional decision making.

Materials Preparation Checklist for Fall Screeners

Kindergarten:

- Copies of the note catchers: One per student
- Copies of the Quick Script: One for the teacher
- Copies of the detailed script: As necessary for the teacher
- Number and dot cards
- 7 counters of one color, 3 counters of another color
- A piece of paper or a plate for the counter tasks

First Grade:

- Copies of the note catchers: One per student
- Copies of the Quick Script: One for the teacher
- Copies of the detailed script: As necessary for the teacher
- Number cards
- Counters: At least 15 including at least 8 of a single color and 3 of another color
- An opaque cover for the counters (a thin foam sheet, or card stock work well)

Second Grade:

- Copies of the note catchers: One per student
- Copies of the Quick Script: One for the teacher
- Copies of the detailed script: As necessary for the teacher
- Number and dot cards
- Counters: 14 of one color 6 of a second color
- Two opaque covers for the counters (thin foam sheets, or card stock work well)

Third Grade:

- Copies of the note catchers: One per student
- Copies of the Quick Script: One for the teacher
- Copies of the detailed script: As necessary for the teacher
- Cards for question prompts
- Counters: 12 of one color

Fourth Grade:

- Copies of the note catchers: One per student
- Copies of the Quick Script: One for the teacher
- Copies of the detailed script: As necessary for the teacher
- Number and dot cards
- Pencil and paper for student
- Number lines: One for each student

Fifth Grade:

- Copies of the note catchers: One per student
- Copies of the Quick Script: One for the teacher
- Copies of the detailed script: As necessary for the teacher
- Number and other cards
- Number lines: One for each student