

## Reading Screening—Tacoma Screening Instrument (TSI)

### TSI: Overview

The TSI is a sight word recognition test developed by Tacoma. It is administered to 1st grade students as one of the early literacy tests to measure beginning reading skills. Students are also administered the DIBELS, another set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy development. Early literacy tests are important to measure student progress, group students for instruction, inform instructional decisions and identify students needing intervention. The TSI is administered to all first grade students in September, January and May.

### TSI: Test Details

The process of administering the TSI involves presenting students with a common word list (modified from Fry's Instant Word List) and requesting the words to be read, out loud, instantaneously or near instantaneously. These are words that good readers may instantly recognize without having to "figure them out." There are two

reasons why sight words are an essential component of good reading: First of all, many of these words do not sound like their spellings might suggest, so "sounding them out" would be unproductive. Also, a good reader really can't afford the time to dwell on too many words, or he may lose the speed and fluency necessary for determining the author's message.

Studies suggest that the most common words in our language, known as "high-frequency words" would be the best place to start. Believe it or not, simple sight words presented in the TSI list are found in a large portion of all written material contained in newspaper articles, magazines, textbooks, children's stories and novels. The goal is to have the students know at least 100 words by January and 200 words by May.

National Institute for Literacy, provides facts about literacy, programs and publications:  
<http://www.nifl.gov/>

2010-11 TSI Trend for September, January & May - Percent of Students in Each Word Range



