



The Benefits of Having 2nd Graders Take IREAD-3

April 8, 2022 by Educator Barnes

IREAD-3 is a test Indiana third graders take to assess students' reading abilities. In 2021, a little over 80% of 3rd graders passed the test despite educational interruptions in prior years due to the pandemic. This school year, schools were given the option to have their 2nd graders take the assessment. Although some people might think this is a bad idea, this early testing is beneficial to teachers and students.

First, the stakes are low. Students do not have to worry about being retained if they do not pass the assessment. Second, the skills on IREAD-3 are skills students should have mastered by the end of 2nd grade when the test was given. Third, the students who do pass do not have to take the assessment in 3rd grade.

Although all of the points above are great, the best benefit is having data before students enter third grade. One of the biggest criticism of standardized testing is that the teachers do not receive results at an optimal time to use it to improve student outcomes. Not only will these 2nd grade teachers have the information before the school year is over, but they can also continue to address gaps and communicate areas of weakness to the 3rd grade teacher.

I provide education consulting services at a school that opted to have 2nd graders take the test. Teachers are already working on a support plan. That is the whole point of data. It should be used to inform instruction.

Hopefully, next school year, more Indiana schools will have their 2nd graders take the assessment. There is no reason to play the guessing game of hoping students will pass the assessment in 3rd grade when they can take it in 2nd grade and a plan of support can be made for students who do not pass.