

# THE WHAT AND WHY OF *CIRCLE Progress Monitoring*

## A tool to help your children learn!

Throughout the school year, students in your child's prekindergarten classroom are being given special activities to help their teacher track their progress. The teacher looks at the results of this "progress monitoring" to determine if the children are developing the skills they will need for kindergarten and their later school years.

The CIRCLE Progress Monitoring tool helps your child's teacher identify learning areas in which your child is developing a level of understanding that is expected for his or her age. The tool also identifies areas in which your child might need more targeted support and practice.

If your child is meeting or exceeding the expectation for his or her age, this is called "meeting the benchmark." The teacher will offer additional supports to help your child progress further. If your child needs targeted support for a particular skill, then the teacher might use a variety of different teaching strategies to support that area of development.

**Your teacher will provide a summary of your child's scores. Descriptions of the assessments your child may have been given can be found on the following page.**

## *What do the scores and symbols mean?*

#

If you just see a number in the table cell, your child scored within the expected range for this activity and is meeting the benchmark. Continue to support her/him at home with our recommended activities in this skill area listed under "what I can do at home".

# OR #

If you see a solid or dashed square surrounding the number, your child scored below the expected range for this activity. This could be for many reasons. Help support your child's growth in this area by using our recommended activities listed under "what I can do at home".

#\*

If you see an asterisk by the number, there are either no benchmarks for this activity or for your child's age. The information gathered on your child's understanding of the skill however, can still be useful to track your child's progress over time. Help support your child's growth in this area by using our recommended activities listed under "what I can do at home".

Note: The tool efficiently and reliably provides a snapshot of how your child's learning is progressing over time. The results are NOT comprehensive, developmental assessments. The results are also NOT intended to diagnose children that may have difficulty learning or experiencing other delays. Please talk to your child's teacher or an administrator at your child's school if you are concerned about your child's progress or development.

## *What can I do at home?*

We provide resources to help you support your child's development. Visit the [CLI Engage Parent Page](http://cliengage.org/parents) ([cliengage.org/parents](http://cliengage.org/parents)) to find easy, fun activities that target important school readiness skills.

## *Questions or concerns?*

Your child's teacher should be able to help answer questions about your child's progress monitoring scores and how you can work together to build your child's skills. Questions about the CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System or CIRCLE Activity Collection can be directed to [cliengage@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:cliengage@uth.tmc.edu).

# Which of my child's skills are captured with CIRCLE PM?



The below information describes each of the domains in the CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System. Please note that your child's school may not use all of these domains; even using just a few of the domains can give the teacher helpful information about your child's readiness for kindergarten. The domains with an asterisk (\*) are measured with observational assessment, meaning your child's teacher observed and recorded information about your child, rather than directly giving your child activities.

## Letter Naming / Letter - Sound

Recognizing and naming letters is an essential component of learning to read and write. Knowing how letters function in writing and how these letters connect to the sounds children hear in words is crucial to children's success in reading. Children will use this sound/letter connection to begin to identify printed words, such as their names and other familiar words.

## Vocabulary

Prekindergarten children experience rapid growth in their understanding of words and word meanings. Vocabulary knowledge reflects children's previous experiences and growing knowledge of the world around them and is one of the most important predictors of later reading achievement. As children learn through experiences, including play, they develop concepts, acquire new words, and increasingly refine their understanding of words they already know.

## Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is a skill that involves an understanding of the sounds of spoken words. It includes being able to recognize individual words in a spoken sentence, blending and dividing words into syllables, recognizing and producing rhyming words, identifying words that sound the same at the beginning, and for some children, blending words at the phoneme or single sound level. Phonological awareness represents a crucial step toward understanding that letters or groups of letters can represent sounds. This understanding is highly predictive of success in beginning reading.

## Book and Print Concepts

The literacy experiences provided before and during prekindergarten form the basis for learning to read. Young children must learn several concepts about how printed words and books function to be prepared for reading. Early experiences with books helps foster motivation to work toward learning to read and write.

## Story Retell and Comprehension

Oral narratives and storytelling are an important practice across cultures and languages. Young children are showing that they understand how language works when they can retell a fictional or real story.

## Mathematics

Children's mathematical understandings are built on informal knowledge about numbers and quantity that they develop even before being taught these concepts (young children know immediately if someone gets more cookies than they do). We can use this early interest in communicating math-related ideas to foster greater math skills. The CIRCLE Progress Monitoring for Mathematics is divided into these skill areas: counting; naming shapes; operations (e.g., addition and subtraction); identifying numbers; and shape discrimination.

## Science & Engineering

Exposing young children to science and engineering topics can make the most out of their natural curiosity about the surrounding world. CIRCLE Progress Monitoring for Science is divided according to the four disciplinary core ideas in the National Research Council's (2012) framework for science education, including: physical sciences; life sciences; earth and space sciences; and engineering and technology applications of science.

## Social Studies

Social studies concentrates on the nature of people and their world, the heritage of the past, and contemporary living and culture. Through social studies, children begin to develop the self-understanding that will serve as a foundation for learning about others and the world. CIRCLE Progress Monitoring for Social Studies takes a look at the child's understanding of self, family and community; people and the environment; and history and events.

## Social and Emotional Skills\*

Most of social and emotional development occurs with little or no formal teaching but with good guidance surrounding social and emotional situations, such as separating from families, sharing space and materials with peers, resolving conflicts, and developing caring for others. The development of these personal and social skills enables children to build a sense of who they are and how they can treat others.

## Physical Health and Development\*

Movement is at the center of young children's lives. Learning is very much tied to movement and action – simply moving your body actually alters brain function. Physical activity not only promotes learning but also can enhance children's social skills and self-esteem through group participation.

## Early Writing Skills\*

Prekindergarten-age children are curious about how written language works and begin to explore the uses of writing for themselves. Children love to imitate adult writing by scribbling a letter or writing notes on the refrigerator. Through these early writing experiences, young children develop initial understandings about the forms, features, and purposes of written language.

## Creative Expression\*

Creative expression is a form of exploring, learning, and communicating with others. Through art, music, and dramatic play, they learn new concepts such as shapes, textures, sounds, and the language of stories. These experiences contribute to children's ability to communicate more effectively and engage in cooperative activity with others.