DIBELS 8: the subtests and the composite cut scores

University of Oregon's Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, 8th Edition: short timed reading measures given three times a year, kindergarten to grade 8. Bands: blue and green = core support (green's bold minimum is the line), yellow = strategic support (some risk), red = intensive support (at risk).

The subtests

Subtest	What the child does	Grades
Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)	Names as many letters as possible in one minute	K, grade 1
Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)	Breaks spoken words into their sounds	K, grade 1
Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)	Reads made-up words: correct letter sounds (CLS) and words recoded correctly (WRC)	K to grade 3
Word Reading Fluency (WRF)	Reads a list of real words in one minute	K to grade 3
Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)	Reads a passage aloud for one minute: words correct and accuracy	Grades 1 to 8
Maze	Silent reading of a passage, choosing the right word at intervals, three minutes	Grades 2 to 8

In the composite: K = LNF, PSF, NWF, WRF; grade 1 adds ORF; grades 2-3 = NWF, WRF, ORF (words and accuracy), Maze; grades 4-8 = ORF and Maze. Composites are scaled to the grade and are not comparable across grades.

Composite: minimum for core support (green from) / blue from, by season

Grade	Beginning	Middle	End
K	306 / 332	371 / 393	420 / 450
1	330 / 354	389 / 424	441 / 480
2	329 / 361	389 / 423	439 / 474
3	332 / 365	393 / 427	442 / 467
4	331 / 368	399 / 431	442 / 461
5	335 / 370	394 / 421	449 / 469
6	336 / 364	386 / 411	435 / 454
7	336 / 358	385 / 407	430 / 450
8	361 / 378	404 / 434	452 / 478

Kindergarten beginning: yellow 280-305, red 243-279. Grade 3 end: yellow 424-441, red 348-423. Goals updated July 2020; reformatted October 2025.

From sciencewithshobha.com/blog/dibels-explained-what-the-dibels-8-test-is-the-subtests-by-grade-k-to-8-the-benchmark-goals-and-composite-cut-scores-for-every-grade-and-season-what-core-strategic-and-intensive-support-mean-and-what-parents-can-do/ · 1-on-1 online tutoring for US families, Grade 1 to AP, free 30-minute first class.

Oral reading fluency goals, the other goals, and the home plan

Oral Reading Fluency: words correct per minute, minimum for core support

Grade	Beginning	Middle	End
1	10	21	39
2	49	78	94
3	73	105	114
4	87	121	125
5	103	122	137
6	123	133	141
7	126	136	141
8	125	131	135

Accuracy: 96% or better for core support from the middle of grade 2 (91-95% strategic, 90% or below intensive); grade 1 rises from 67% at the start to 91% at the end.

Other goals (minimum for core support)

[ ] Letter Naming Fluency: 25 at the start of K; 42 at the start of grade 1.
[ ] Phoneme Segmentation Fluency: 5 at the start of K, 44 at the end; 45 at the end of grade 1.
[ ] Nonsense Word Fluency (correct letter sounds): 9 at the start of K, 31 at the end; 55 at the end of grade 1; 105 at the end of grade 3.
[ ] Word Reading Fluency: 10 at the end of K; 25 at the end of grade 1; 55 at the end of grade 3.
[ ] Maze: 5.0 at the start of grade 2; 15.5 at the end of grade 3; 28.0 at the end of grade 8.

Reading the report

[ ] Composite band first (the decision); then the lowest subtest (the skill); then the trend toward the next season's line.
[ ] A green composite with red accuracy is a child who needs decoding before rate.
[ ] Ask what support the colour triggered, which measure will track it, and when.

Home plan (15 minutes a day)

Child's grade, season, composite and band: _____

Lowest subtest and its score against the green line: _____

K-1: letter sounds, blending, segmenting games, decodable books. From grade 1: read aloud daily; reread one passage three times a week, time the third:

From grade 2: silent reading with questions after. Next screening date and target: _____