

Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students

I Screen, You Screen, We All Screen For... What?

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When a teacher or parent has concerns about a student's speech or language abilities, he/she can refer the student to a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) who will first screen the child. A speech and/or language screening is a quick check to see if a student's skills might be delayed and require further in-depth evaluation. Screenings performed by an SLP often include:



- **Speech** (articulation and phonology) – A speech screening might reveal if a student has difficulty producing specific sounds (articulation) or uses inappropriate sound patterns (phonology).



- **Language** (receptive and expressive) – A language screening can uncover delays in what a student is able to hear and understand (receptive language) and how well a student is able to communicate his/her wants and needs (expressive language).



- **Voice** – A voice screening allows an SLP to judge whether or not the student's vocal quality (pitch, hoarseness, loudness, etc.) is age and gender appropriate.



- **Fluency** – A fluency screening might show that a student has disruptions in speech (disfluencies/stuttering) that are not typical of his/her same-age peers.



- **Hearing** – a hearing screening can determine if a student has a hearing loss which can impact his/her speech and/or language abilities.

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(cont.)

Screening vs. Evaluation

SCREENING	EVALUATION
Screenings take less time than evaluations. (A typical screening lasts approximately 15-20 minutes.)	Evaluations take more time than screenings. (Evaluations usually take over an hour.)
Often, students' skills are assessed informally through conversation or play-based tasks.	Students' skills are formally assessed using structured tests and assessments.
Standard Scores are NOT obtained. The result of a screening is typically reported as "Pass" or "Fail."	Standard Scores ARE obtained. (Standard Scores are used to compare a student's performance to his/her same-age peers.)
Results are used to determine whether or not an evaluation is needed and the areas that need to be addressed in an evaluation.	Results are used to determine if intervention is needed and the goals that should be addressed during the intervention.

After the Screening

After the screening is complete, the SLP makes recommendations. If a student "fails" a screening, the SLP will recommend that the student receive a full evaluation. The results of the screening help an SLP determine which areas of speech/language to formally assess. Even if a student "passes" the speech/language screening, the SLP may make additional referrals to other disciplines (such as an occupational therapist, reading specialist, etc.). Additionally, if a student "passes" a screening, the SLP may recommend no further action, or may request a follow-up screening in a few months.



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- [413 – Understanding Evaluation Terminology](#)
- [99 – Your Child's Speech/Language Evaluation at School](#)
- [371 – Are My Child's Language Skills Developing Normally](#)

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