# How Do I Select an Academic Progress Monitoring Measure: A Note-Taking Guide

## Module Overview

This module describes two types of academic progress monitoring measures and considerations for selecting an academic progress monitoring tool. It builds on an earlier module titled *What Is Progress Monitoring?* and provides a deeper focus on academic progress monitoring.

### Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, you will be able to do the following:

* Differentiate between different kinds of academic progress monitoring measures.
* Identify the target behavior for academic skills.
* Select appropriate tools for academic progress monitoring.

## Using the Note-Taking Guide

As you engage in the module, **take notes on the key themes and answer the summary questions** at the end of each section. After you complete the module, check your reflections against the provided responses at the end of this document.

## Section 1: Overview of Academic Progress Monitoring

This section focuses on defining progress monitoring and reviewing information from the module titled *What Is Progress Monitoring?* It describes key characteristics of progress monitoring measures, the ways in which progress monitoring differs from other types of assessment, and how progress monitoring fits within the data-based individualization (DBI) process. This section also explores the two approaches to academic progress monitoring. Use this space to define key terms, jot down notes, and reflect in ways that best support your learning.

### Notes

| Key themes | Notes |
| --- | --- |
| Review of progress monitoring, its importance, and the role it plays within the DBI process |  |
| Two approaches to academic progress monitoring |  |
| Considerations for getting started with progress monitoring |  |

### Summary Questions

| Question | Response |
| --- | --- |
| What are the differences between mastery measures and general outcome measures? |  |
| What are the benefits and limitations of mastery measures? |  |
| What are the benefits and limitations of general outcome measures? |  |
| Why are progress monitoring data important for instructional decision making? |  |
| What are the necessary steps for getting started with progress monitoring? |  |

## Section 2: Identifying the Target Behavior

This section describes considerations for identifying the target behavior of interest for the student—that is, what the progress monitoring tool will need to measure.

### Notes

| Key themes | Notes |
| --- | --- |
| Target behavior definition |  |
| Sample target behaviors in reading, mathematics, and writing | Reading:  Mathematics:  Written expression: |
| Common academic progress monitoring measures | Reading:  Letter sound fluency  Word identification fluency  Passage reading fluency  Maze  Mathematics:  Number identification  Quantity discrimination  Missing number  Computation |
| Examples of progress monitoring in action |  |
| Instructional-level assessments |  |

### Summary Question

| Question | Response |
| --- | --- |
| How do you identify the target behavior for academic progress monitoring? |  |
| Why is it important to select the target behavior before choosing a progress monitoring tool? |  |
| Why is it important to ensure the progress monitoring measure is at the student’s instructional level? |  |

## Section 3: Considerations for Selecting an Academic Progress Monitoring Measure

This section reviews important considerations when selecting an academic progress monitoring measure. It describes the critical features of tools and how to use the National Center on Intensive Intervention’s (NCII) Academic Progress Monitoring Tools Chart.

### Notes

| Key themes | Notes |
| --- | --- |
| Critical features of academic progress monitoring tools |  |
| Considerations for selecting progress monitoring measures for DBI |  |
| NCII’s Academic Progress Monitoring Tools Chart |  |
| Considerations when evaluating a tool |  |

### Summary Questions

| Questions | Responses |
| --- | --- |
| What critical features should you consider when selecting an academic progress monitoring tool for use within the DBI process? |  |
| What factors should teams consider when selecting a progress monitoring tool? |  |
| What resource can teams use to review the technical adequacy and usability of academic progress monitoring measures? |  |

## Section 4: Supplementing Academic Progress Monitoring Measures

This section focuses on how and when to supplement academic progress monitoring measures. It describes ways to augment student data by collecting more data and interviewing the student to learn more about their strategies.

### Notes

| Key themes | Notes |
| --- | --- |
| Considerations for supplementing academic progress monitoring measures |  |

### Summary Questions

| Questions | Responses |
| --- | --- |
| In what ways can progress monitoring data be confirmed or augmented? |  |
| What kinds of interview questions can provide additional insights into a student’s progress monitoring performance? |  |

## Sample Responses

This section presents sample responses to the questions provided after each section. You may use these responses and compare them with your responses.

| Section | Summary questions | Sample responses |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Section 1: Overview of Academic Progress Monitoring | What are the differences between mastery measures and general outcome measures? | * Mastery measures index a student’s successive and cumulative mastery of a hierarchy of objectives or discrete skills. * General outcome measures measure performance on an indicator of overall competence or on content systematically sampled from the annual curriculum. |
|  | What are the benefits and limitations of mastery measures? | * Benefits: Mastery measures signal to the teacher when to move to the next skill in the instructional hierarchy. * Limitations: The data generated by mastery measures do not reflect skill maintenance or generalization, scores cannot be compared longitudinally, and the measures may have less evidence of validity and reliability than general outcome measures. |
|  | What are the benefits and limitations of general outcome measures? | * Benefits: General outcome measures reflect overall competence on curriculum-based skills over time and show whether students are maintaining previously learned skills. * Limitation: General outcome measures may be less targeted for specific skills than mastery measures. |
|  | Why are progress monitoring data important for instructional decision making? | * Progress monitoring data are important for instructional decision making because they allow teachers to estimate a student’s rate of improvement over time, compare the efficacy of different interventions, identify students who are not demonstrating adequate progress, and determine when an instructional change is needed. |
|  | What are the necessary steps for getting started with progress monitoring? | * To get started with progress monitoring, teachers or teams should identify the target behavior; select an appropriate assessment tool; and establish a progress monitoring plan that specifies a baseline, a goal, and the frequency of data collection. |
| Section 2: Identifying the Target Behavior | How do you identify the target behavior for academic progress monitoring? | For students with disabilities, consider examining the student’s evaluation report, their instructional level, and their present levels of academic achievement and functional performance statement within the Individualized Education Program (IEP).   * For students with intensive needs who are not identified with a disability, consider the student’s age, grade level, and instructional level. |
|  | Why is it important to select the target behavior before choosing a progress monitoring tool? | * Selecting the target behavior before choosing a progress monitoring tool ensures that the tool will measure student progress on the actual skills and behaviors of interest. |
|  | Why is it important to ensure that the progress monitoring measure is at the student’s instructional level? | * While screening should always occur at grade level, progress monitoring measures that are too difficult for the student’s skill level may not be sensitive enough to show growth in learning over time, which could lead to inappropriate instructional decisions. Therefore, it is important to ensure that progress monitoring occurs at the student’s instructional level. |
| Section 3: Considerations for Selecting an Academic Progress Monitoring Measure | What critical features should you consider when selecting an academic progress monitoring tool for use within the DBI process? | * Academic progress monitoring tools should have sufficient alternate forms to allow monitoring at recommended intervals, specified growth standards, benchmarks for performance, and evidence of reliability and validity. |
|  | What factors should teams consider when selecting a progress monitoring tool? | * Teams should consider whether the tool addresses the target behavior or skills; is age-, grade-, and instructionally appropriate for the student; meets technical adequacy requirements; and is feasible to implement (considering cost, training needs, administration time, and available data management supports). |
|  | What resources can teams use to review the technical adequacy and usability of academic progress monitoring measures? | * One resource that could help you find a progress monitoring tool is NCII’s Academic Progress Monitoring Tools Chart. |
| Section 4: Supplementing Academic Progress Monitoring Measures | In what ways can progress monitoring data be confirmed or augmented? | * Progress monitoring data can be augmented by using a different assessment tool and comparing results, investigating the specific errors a student makes and examining the strategies a student uses, and interviewing students to confirm that their abilities or thought processes align with their scores. |
|  | What kinds of interview questions can provide additional insights into a student’s progress monitoring performance? | * What was this passage mostly about? * What strategy did you use to answer this question? * Can you explain why your strategy worked? |

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