



The Reading House
Emergent Literacy Screening Measure
Recommended Age: 3-4 years old
Presentation Script & Scoring Form

Points

1) "I have a book to share with you.
Show me the *front cover* of the book."

Identifies front cover of book

____ Y ____ N (0-1) ____

2) "This bookshelf has lots of things on it.
Show me some *words* you can read."

Identifies shelf with words on it

____ Y ____ N (0-1) ____

3) "This garden has lots of *letters*.
Show me the ones that you know."

(*Stop* once names 8 correctly, or names 2 in a row incorrectly)

Number correctly named: _____

Number incorrectly named: _____

(Correct-incorrect; 8+: 2 points; 4-7: 1 point; 0-3: 0 points)

(0-2) ____

4) "These birds have letters on them.

This letter is an *M*. What sound does M make?

____ Y ____ N

This letter is a *B*. What sound does B make?

____ Y ____ N

This letter is a *P*. What sound does P make?"

____ Y ____ N

(3 correct: 2 points; 2 correct: 1 point; 0-1 correct: 0 points)

(0-2) ____

5) "This is a *sun*. Sun starts with /s/.

Do any of these start with /s/? *Ball, sand, pail?*"

____ Y ____ N

"This slide is *red*. Red starts with /r/.

Do any of these start with /r/? *Cat, boy, rock?*"

____ Y ____ N

(both correct: 1 point; 0-1 correct: 0 points)

(0-1) ____

6) "These are *blocks*. Which of these rhymes with *blocks*?

Drum. Cat. Green. Socks."

____ Y ____ N

"This is a *truck*. Which of these rhymes with *truck*?

Frog. Duck. Hat. Boat."

____ Y ____ N

(both correct: 1 point; 0-1 correct: 0 points)

(0-1) ____

7) "It's snack time in The Reading House.

Show me the picture of what you get when you put these sounds together:

Ap-ple."

(apple) ____ Y ____ N

Wa-ter."

(water) ____ Y ____ N

(both correct: 1 point; 0-1 correct: 0 points)

(0-1) ____

* Next Page *

"It's bedtime at The Reading House. There are lots of things in this picture.

What is this called?" (point at item) "How about this?" (point at item)

Repeat for these 10 items: flowerpot (pot), string, curtain (drape), toothbrush, owl, hippo(potamus), moon, boots, blocks, train.

Number correct:_____

(10: 3 points, 8-9: 2 pts, 5-7: 1 pt, 0-4: 0 pts)

(0-3) _____

8) "You did a great job!

Will you please write your name on the back of the book for me?"

_____ **No identifiable letters from name or refuses (0)**

_____ **Some letters in proper order (1) _____ Whole first name (2) (0-2) _____**

TOTAL: _____ of 14 possible points

- Cover and spread 1: Print concepts/knowledge, **2 points**
- Spread 3: Alphabet and letter-sound knowledge, **4 points**
- Spread 4-6: phonological awareness, **3 points**
- Spread 7: Oral language/vocabulary: **3 points**
- Back cover: emergent writing: **2 points**

Notes about screening process (e.g. enjoyment, focus):

Preliminary risk thresholds for TRH total score:

Age 3+

- Below Average: 2 or lower
- Average: 3 to 5
- Above Average: 6 or higher

Age 4+

- Below Average: 4 or lower
- Average: 5 to 10
- Above Average: 11 or higher

Suggested Citations:

- Hutton JS, Justice L, Huang G, Kerr A, DeWitt T, Ittenbach RF. The Reading House: A Children's Book for Emergent Literacy Screening During Well-Child Visits. *Pediatrics*. 2019 Jun;143(6).
- Hutton JS, Dudley J, Huang G, Horowitz-Kraus T, DeWitt T, Ittenbach RF, Holland SK. Validation of The Reading House and Association With Cortical Thickness. *Pediatrics*. 2021 Mar;147(3).
- Bode SM, Denny S, Irwin MK, Hutton J. A Primary Care-Based Approach to Improving Kindergarten Readiness. *Pediatrics*. 2025 Apr 1;155(Suppl 1).
- Bode SM, Denny S, Masonheimer A, Irwin MK, Hutton J. Comparison of Literacy and Developmental Screening of Preschool-Aged Children During Primary Care. *Pediatrics*. 2025 Nov 1;156(5).