

Book Study
Prepared by the
Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) Project

The ABCs of CBM: A Practical Guide to Curriculum-Based Measurement

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(Guilford Press, 2007)

Book Description:

This book answers the what, how, and why of CBM and provides a practical guide for conducting curriculum-based measurement in grades K-8. Information is provided to enable teams to assess student learning in reading, spelling, writing, and math, and to graph the resulting data. The focus is on using the information to make instructional decisions, plan interventions and monitor progress. The book includes reproducible forms for administration guides, scoring guides, and planning checklists.

Target Audience:

- Structuring teams
- Implementing teams
- Reading
- Math
- Building Leadership Teams
- Computation
- Fluency
- Tier 1 teachers
- Tier 2 teachers
- Tier 3 teachers
- Assessment

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-1-**What Is CBM and Why Should I Do It?****Brief Overview:**

CBM is an alternative, not an add-on, to other types of assessment. It is time efficient, and provides information that will guide instruction. CBM is a set of standard procedures, including directions, materials, timing, scoring rules, and record forms or charts of results.

Discussion Questions:

1. List the 9 attributes of CBM. Which of these do you think is most important? Why?
2. What do we mean when we say a measure is curriculum-based?
3. Why is it important for an assessment to include low-inference measures?
4. One type of CBM is criterion-referenced, in other words, it measures when a student has mastered a task. When might you want to have CBM measures that provide norms?
5. What are the main advantages of CBM?
6. What are the defining elements of CBM?
7. There are three different types of CBM procedures: general outcomes measures, skills-based measures and mastery measures. How are they alike? How are they different?
8. If the members of the book study group have used DIBELS or AIMSweb, discuss which CBM type seems to best match one of these assessment systems.

-2-**CBM for Assessment and Problem Solving****Brief Overview:**

Educators need good data to make good decisions, but just having the data is insufficient. Educators need to utilize good problem solving practices to ensure that the correct data is being used accurately for a specific purpose.

Discussion Questions:

1. Describe the four types of educational decisions. Are they alike in any way? How are they different?
2. This chapter lists 9 attributes that instructionally useful measures should have. Do you agree that these 9 attributes are important? Do you disagree with any on the list?
3. Discuss the information about norm-referenced tests (NRTs) and criterion-referenced tests (CRTs). What do you think are the most important differences? Why are both types of tests needed in education?
4. Is CBM reliable and valid? How do you know?
5. How are performance standards for CBM set?
6. How is CBM used for screening?
7. How is CBM used for progress monitoring?
8. Check out the web resources listed on page 30. Share your opinion of the websites with a colleague.

-3-**How to Conduct Reading CBM****Brief Overview:**

This chapter provides sample directions, materials, and scoring procedures for conducting reading CBM for oral reading fluency (ORF) and maze. It is recommended that participants in the book study practice giving the sample ORF and maze assessments to each other, or to student volunteers, and that they score the results using the scoring rules provided. The chapter also provides information about using these measures when writing IEP goals and objectives.

Note: Different CBM assessment systems vary in the directions and scoring procedures used. It is important that all staff members follow exactly the directions, materials, and scoring procedures provided by any assessment being used in a building.

Discussion Questions:

1. The scores on the reading tasks described in this chapter (and all CBM tasks) reflect the student's accuracy and fluency on the task. Why is measuring a student's accuracy and fluency important?
2. Why is ORF a good predictor of future reading performance?
3. At what grade level does maze become a better predictor of future reading performance than ORF?
4. How many ORF passages are administered to the student?
5. Why should the directions always be given exactly as written?
6. What does it mean when a student's actual growth rate doesn't meet the expected growth rate?
7. What is the purpose for conducting survey-level assessment?
8. Review and discuss the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Reading CBM.

-4-**How to Conduct Early Reading CBM****Brief Overview:**

This chapter reviews four DIBELS subtests (Initial Sound Fluency, Phoneme Segmentation Fluency, Nonsense Word Fluency, and Letter Naming Fluency). The authors then provide sample directions, materials, and scoring procedures for conducting two other early reading CBM measures: Letter Sound Fluency (LSF) and Word Identification Fluency (WIF). It is recommended that participants in the book study practice giving the sample assessments to each other, or to student volunteers, and that they score the results using the scoring rules provided. The chapter also provides information about using these measures when writing IEP goals and objectives.

Note: Different CBM assessment systems vary in the directions and scoring procedures used. It is important that all staff members follow exactly the directions, materials, and scoring procedures provided by any assessment being used in a building.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the purpose of conducting Early Reading CBM?
2. What do the DIBELS measures ISF and PSF measure? What does NWF measure?
3. Why do the authors recommend using LSF rather than LNF as a risk indicator?
4. Why do you think that short vowel sounds are counted as correct, but not long vowel sounds, on the LSF measure?
5. What is the source material for the WIF word list in the sample materials?
6. How often should screening assessment be conducted?
7. How often should progress monitoring be conducted?
8. Since there currently are no norms for WIF CBM, how do you think a building could establish what might be an appropriate expectation for a first grader?
9. Review and discuss the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Early Reading CBM.

-5-**How to Conduct Spelling CBM****Brief Overview:**

This chapter provides sample directions, materials, and scoring procedures for conducting CBM for spelling. It is recommended that participants in the book study practice giving the sample spelling assessment to each other, or to student volunteers, and that they score the results using the scoring rules provided. The chapter also provides information about using these measures when writing IEP goals and objectives.

Note: Different CBM assessment systems vary in the directions and scoring procedures used. It is important that all staff members follow exactly the directions, materials, and scoring procedures provided by any assessment being used in a building.

Discussion Questions:

1. When practicing, how difficult was it to say a word exactly every 10 seconds? Every 7 seconds?
2. What do you do when a student asks you to repeat a word? Why?
3. In the example AIMSweb spelling list, why are some but not all of the words used in a sentence?
4. Why is spelling scored using CLS rather than scoring the whole word as correct/incorrect?
5. Why would it be helpful to count and include in the scoring materials: (a) the number of CLS for each word and (b) the word-by-word cumulative CLS for the word list?
6. Notice that for this measure (and all the other measures), the authors recommend the very first time spelling CBM is given to a student that 3 separate lists are given in the assessment. Normally, only a single spelling list is administered. Why do you think the authors recommend administering 3 lists the first time a student is given a spelling CBM?
7. Discuss Table 5.1 Weekly Growth Rates on Spelling CBM. Why do you think the growth rate gets slower as students get older?
8. Review and discuss the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Spelling CBM.

-6-**How to Conduct Writing CBM****Brief Overview:**

This chapter provides sample directions, materials, and scoring procedures for conducting CBM for writing. It is recommended that participants in the book study practice giving the sample assessment to each other, or to student volunteers, and that they score the results using the scoring rules provided. The chapter also provides information about using these measures when writing IEP goals and objectives.

Note: Different CBM assessment systems vary in the directions and scoring procedures used. It is important that all staff members follow exactly the directions, materials, and scoring procedures provided by any assessment being used in a building.

Discussion Questions:

1. Sometimes students keep writing even though you told them to put their pencils down. Discuss some strategies to encourage students to stop writing when the time is up.
2. Why do you think the CWS (correct writing sequences) score is most useful in monitoring the progress of students with difficulty in writing?
3. Discuss whether your students are familiar with writing a story when given a story starter. How do you think prior experience with story starters might influence a student's writing?
4. Discuss whether you think the story starter itself will influence how many words a student will produce during a 3 minute writing assessment. Do some story starters produce better writing than others?
5. Compare writing CBM with Six Trait Writing (or some other type of writing assessment). What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Could you use another type of writing assessment for progress monitoring a student on a weekly basis?
6. Most disagreement regarding writing CBM relates to whether or not fluency is important for writing skills. Discuss this issue as a group. When is writing fluency important? When is writing fluency not important?
7. Review and discuss the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Writing CBM.

-7-**How to Conduct Math CBM****Brief Overview:**

This chapter provides sample directions, materials, and scoring procedures for conducting CBM for math. It is recommended that participants in the book study practice giving the sample assessment to each other, or to student volunteers, and that they score the results using the scoring rules provided. The chapter also provides information about using these measures when writing IEP goals and objectives.

Note: Different CBM assessment systems vary in the directions and scoring procedures used. It is important that all staff members follow exactly the directions, materials, and scoring procedures provided by any assessment being used in a building.

Discussion Questions:

1. This chapter focuses on Math CBM for Computation. What are other CBM measures for math?
2. What is the length of the Math CBM assessment of computation described in this chapter? Why do you think assessments of Concepts and Application typically take much longer than this?
3. If using pre-made math CBM sheets, the authors recommend making sure that they fit your curriculum. Why is assuring alignment with your curriculum important for math?
4. The tests used for math CBM sometimes are in the form of SBMs. However, the current AIMSweb math measures take the form of GOMs. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of using SBMs compared to GOMs for CBM assessment of math?
5. What is the difference between a mixed-math CBM sheet and a single-skill sheet? When would each type be preferable for use?
6. Why do the authors recommend scoring number of correct digits (CD) for Math CBM instead of number of correct problems?
7. Have each person in the book study group visit a different website in Box 7.1 and Box 7.2. If needed, update the website URLs and the information provided. Have group members share the information about the websites they visited.
8. Review and discuss the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Math CBM.

-8-**Charting and Graphing Data to Help Make Decisions****Brief Overview:**

This chapter illustrates some of the graphs used to display CBM data, and provides examples of decision rules for using the data in graphic form.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think it is important to graph the progress monitoring data for a student receiving an intervention?
2. Describe the three options for setting a goal for a student.
3. Do you think it would be appropriate to set a goal at the 50th percentile on end-of-year fifth grade norms for a 5th grader who is reading at the 2nd grade level? Would one year's progress in a year's time be an ambitious goal for a student like this? Would such a goal help the student close the gap with peers?
4. How often should you conduct progress monitoring assessments?
5. Why are having decision rules important? What might happen if you don't have decision rules?
6. The importance of having a data-management system cannot be over-emphasized. Review and update the information provided in this chapter about data management programs. Compare the advantages and disadvantages of a purchased web-based program compared to using a program like Excel.
7. Review and discuss the FAQs about charting and graphing CBM data.

-9-**Planning to Use CBM—And Keeping It Going****Brief Overview:**

This chapter describes ten steps for planning how to use CBM before, during, and after initial implementation:

- Step 1: Who will be using CBM?
- Step 2: Which CBM skills will be implemented?
- Step 3: What materials will we use?
- Step 4: When will implementation start?
- Step 5: Who will train the staff?
- Step 6: Who will manage the materials?
- Step 7: Who will collect the data?
- Step 8: Where will the data be collected?
- Step 9: Who will manage the data once they are collected?
- Step 10: How will the data be shared?

Discussion Questions:

1. Develop a plan for implementing CBM by discussing each of the ten steps listed above.
2. How might you communicate the reasons to use CBM to others on your staff?
3. Discuss the hints on how to keep CBM going. Can you think of other ideas to add to this list of hints?
4. Review and discuss the FAQs about planning and using CBM.