

# Dyslexia Guidance: Rapid Automated Naming

## Rapid Automated Naming (RAN) Intent and Research

"RAN provides an index of how rapidly the visual system's identification of letters (numbers, colors etc.) is connected to the language system's specific words. The retrieval system is actually quite complex and differs by semantic categories with letters and numbers becoming AUTOMATIC over time, with colors less automatic, and objects still less so."

"In Kindergarten there is very little automaticity, so each of four categories is similarly predictive (though knowledge of letters and numbers is culturally-bound). By first and second grade the two alphanumeric categories are increasingly automatic and thus the best predictors of reading fluency." (*Maryanne Wolf, Author of the Rapid Automated Naming Assessment and Director, Center for Dyslexia, Diverse Learners, and Social Justice, personal communication 2021*)

## Dyslexia Advisory Council Recommendations

The Dyslexia Advisory Council (DAC) recommends the use of a RAN assessment with all four criteria as best practice for Washington. These criteria include:

- **Letters**
- **Numbers**
- **Colors**
- **Familiar objects**

This recommendation does not mean that every student needs to be assessed with all four criteria. Local education agencies (LEAs) should use the subtests that are going to provide the most valid and accurate score for each student. To that end, we recommend that schools administer the subtests that will yield the child's best performance. If, for example, a student does not know their letters yet, the educator would use the non-letter subtests (numbers, colors, objects).

## Using the Data

"RAN ability is a continuum, not a cliff; a child who scores in the 9th percentile is not all that different from a child who scores in the 10th percentile... Thus, RAN should be considered as...a piece of the puzzle with other assessments of language, reading, and cognition... because of the overlap in processes with RAN and efficient or fluent reading, a low RAN score in a child could indicate that they may have particular weaknesses in fluency" (*Norton, 2020*).

Like literacy screening results, RAN data should be maintained with the other data schools collect for each student and contribute to decisions regarding grouping for support. Students who score low on a RAN assessment should be monitored closely for difficulties with reading



fluency. Instructional emphasis should be on building accuracy and then automaticity in all areas of language and literacy.

“We know that good readers not only use certain areas of their brains when reading, but that skilled reading depends on robust structural connections that allow fast association of orthography with phonology and other levels of language” (Norton et al., 2015).

## Continued Work of the Dyslexia Advisory Council

On behalf of the Dyslexia Advisory Council, OSPI is planning on releasing a Request for Proposal or a Request for Qualification and Quotation for Rapid Automated Naming Assessments that encompass all four criteria (see above) to recommend to Washington School Districts in School Year 2022-23.

### Learn More

- [Rapid Automated Naming Tests: What You Need to Know](#)
- [What Educators Need to Know about Rapid Automated Naming \(Norton, 2020\)](#)
- [Rapid Automated Naming \(RAN\) and Reading Fluency: Implications for Understanding and Treatment of Reading Disabilities \(Norton & Wolf, 2010\)](#)