

Literature Review of the Feifer Assessment of Reading (FAR)

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INTRODUCTION

The Feifer Assessment of Reading (FAR; Feifer & Gerhardstein Nader, 2015) is a comprehensive, neurologically based assessment of reading and related processes. The FAR consists of three indexes, each containing five subtests, and an additional subtest that measures reading fluency. The FAR allows psychologists to assess students in prekindergarten through college for reading disorders and specific dyslexia subtypes. An optional screening version, the Feifer Assessment of Reading Screening Form (Feifer & Gerhardstein Nader, 2015), helps psychologists identify students who may be at risk for developmental dyslexia. The FAR Screening Form consists of three subtests whose scores compose a single index score. Administration of the comprehensive FAR should be completed in person; however, the FAR Screening Form offers online/remote (Feifer & PAR Staff, 2021) and in-person administration options ([Champ Morera et al., 2021](#)).

A review of the American Psychological Association (APA) and Google Scholar databases was conducted to determine the prevalence of FAR citations. Since being developed in 2015, the FAR has been used as a resource for 31 scholarly works. Of these, 11 are journal articles, seven are books or book chapters, six are theses or dissertations, four are memorandums or documentation, two are presentations, and one is a practicum report (see Appendix A). Of note, the Ventura County (CA) Board of Education has selected the FAR as one of its approved academic assessment tools for special education ([Ventura County Special Education Local Plan Area, 2022](#)).

The FAR provides a comprehensive assessment of a student's reading skills as well as areas where they may struggle (Giella, 2019). Using a neuropsychological approach, the FAR allows psychologists to connect strengths and weaknesses to cognitive processes, helping them determine any potential learning difficulties (Giella, 2019). The FAR assists in the diagnosis of specific subtypes of dyslexia, including dysphonetic dyslexia, surface dyslexia, and mixed dyslexia (Naglieri & Feifer, 2019). Additionally, the FAR is highly correlated with other established achievement measures, including the Process Assessment of the Learner–Second Edition (PAL-II; [Mulchay et al., 2022](#); [Powell, 2017](#)), the Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (OS; [Kaye et al., 2022](#)), Slosson Oral Reading Test–Revised (SORT-R; [Kaye et al., 2022](#)), the Gray Oral Reading Test–Fifth Edition (GORT-5; [Powell, 2017](#)), the Academic Achievement Battery (AAB; [Powell, 2017](#)), and Planning, Attention,

Simultaneous, Successive (PASS) scores (Naglieri & Feifer, 2019; 2020). Furthermore, [Lipowska and colleagues \(2019\)](#) list the FAR as a reliable tool for diagnosing specific learning disorders. However, some research has noted that questions and information within the measure may be confounded by the student's prior knowledge and that some assessment rules can be difficult for examiners to follow ([Mulchay et al., 2022](#)).

The FAR was developed with neuroscience and diagnosis at the subtype level in mind, which allows the measure to guide not only diagnosis but also instruction and interventions where appropriate; using the FAR provides psychologists with suggestions of best practice to support their students ([Diaz, 2018](#)). [Mulchay and colleagues \(2022\)](#) note that the FAR serves as an important bridge in neuropsychology by incorporating multiple achievement and neuropsychological tests in a single assessment, which saves time in both administration and scoring. The FAR also provides results in a simplified format that makes it easier to explain results to parents and teachers ([Mulchay et al., 2022](#)). Additionally, the FAR continues to receive support from the authors in the form of white papers and modified administration guidelines where necessary (e.g., skills and error analyses, COVID-19 digital administration; [Mulchay et al., 2022](#)).

Since 2015, the FAR has been used in several scholarly works as both a comparative tool to assess validity in new measures ([Favreau et al., 2017](#)) and as an assessment tool to aid in the diagnosis of reading difficulties ([Lipowska et al., 2019](#); [Ventura County Special Education Local Plan Area, 2022](#)). Additionally, it has been referenced in doctoral dissertations as part of an assessment battery offered by the Counselling Assessment Intervention and Research Services (CAIRS) office at the University of Saskatchewan ([Dimen, 2017](#)). The FAR has been accepted in universities across the United States and Canada as a trusted assessment of reading skills and related processes.

A review of the existing literature suggests that the FAR is a reliable and valid measure in diagnosing reading difficulties and dyslexia subtypes. It has been evaluated and vetted against well-established measures with high correlations. Although some minor issues have been noted with scoring and administration, the FAR continues to receive author and publisher support and modifications as necessary to allow psychologists to provide high-quality assessments to their patients.

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APPENDIX A

Summarized FAR References

Title	Author	Type	Summary
<u>A-190 An Examination of the Equivalence of the In-Person and Remote Administration of the Feifer Assessment of Reading Screening Form</u>	Champ Morera et al. (2021)	Journal article	This article discusses the process for conducting remote administration of the FAR Screening Form. The study evaluated the equivalence of remote administration and in-person administration. Results showed no significant effect for two of the three subtests but a significant effect for administration format for the remaining subtest, Rapid Automatic Name (RAN). Due to these results, a new remote screening index (the SRI), which includes only the Phonemic Awareness (PA) and Semantic Concepts (SC) subtests, was created. The SRI demonstrates reliability and validity consistent with the in-person FAR Screening Index.
<u>Test Review of the Memory Validity Profile</u>	Favreau et al. (2017)	Journal article	This article reviews the Memory Validity Profile (MVP), a stand-alone performance validity test, and provides an overview of the administration, scoring, technical adequacy, and recommendations of the MVP. This test is designed for individuals ages 5–21 years and uses verbal and visual subtests to help users determine if an examinee's result can be viewed as valid. It evaluates individuals who may have memory or learning problems. The article compares the MVP to the FAR in terms of criterion and concurrent validity.
<u>A Review of the Feifer Assessment of Reading (FAR)</u>	Feifer & Gerhardstein Nader (2018)	Journal article	This article gives a general overview of the FAR as well as details on scoring, administration, standardization and norming, item characteristics, validity, and reliability.
<u>Examining Factors That Predict Arabic Word Reading in First and Second Graders</u>	Hassanein et al. (2022)	Journal article	This study assesses phonological processing, orthographic knowledge, morphological awareness, and word reading using the Test of Early Arabic Literacy Skills (TEALS). One of the TEALS subtests, Orthographic Fluency, is patterned on the Orthographic Processing subtest of the FAR.
<u>Early Identification of and Intervention for Children with and without Dyslexia Characteristics: A Comparison Study</u>	Kaye et al. (2022)	Journal article	This article presents a study to show if lower achieving first-grade students who are at risk for dyslexia can be differentiated from students who have reading/writing difficulties but do not show characteristics of dyslexia. Students were screened with three tests, including the FAR, pre- and poststudy. All children in the study except one showed characteristics of dyslexia based on FAR testing.

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Title	Author	Type	Summary
<u><i>The Use of the Warnke Method in Dyslexia Therapy for Children</i></u>	Lipowska et al. (2019)	Journal article	Non-evidence-based methods are being used more often within dyslexia therapy. A study was conducted to verify if the Warnke Method can be used in dyslexia therapy in Polish students. The Warnke Method is aimed at training central auditory and visual processing emphasizing auditory motor timing, automatic balance retainment, and auditory choice reaction time. This novel method differs from established methods by using procedural learning systems instead of typical linguistic exercises. The FAR was cited as one of several reliable diagnostic tools for diagnosing specific learning disorders and developmental dyslexia.
<u><i>Moving Toward Social Justice for Hispanic Children using a Neurocognitive Method for the Assessment of SLD</i></u>	Miranda et al. (2011)	Journal article	This article explores legal aspects of the evaluation processes of Hispanic students with specific learning disability (SLD) while proposing a neurocognitive approach to diagnosing SLD within this population. There is a need for these tests to be inclusive of diverse populations, and laws have been put in place to encourage this. Reliably testing for SLD while considering diversity requires a multimethod approach that considers both ability and achievement scores. One such method is the Discrepancy/Consistency Method (DCM). Along with considering the DCM as a reliable method for diagnosing SLD, this article notes several reliable achievement tests, including the FAR, which include appropriate values to use for the comparison between ability and achievement.
<u><i>Test Review of the Feifer Assessment of Reading (FAR)</i></u>	Mulchay et al. (2022)	Journal article	This article explores how the FAR contributes to the neuropsychological evaluation of reading. The FAR's administration, scoring, technical adequacy, and recommendations are all explored and investigated on a deeper level.
<u><i>Defining SLD and Dyslexia Using a Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses in Basic Psychological Processes and Achievement</i></u>	Naglieri & Feifer (2020)	Journal article	The DCM helps practitioners detect a pattern of strengths and weakness for cognitive processing and achievement. This article shows how PASS scales from the Cognitive Assessment System–Second Edition (CAS2) intertwine with the learning disabilities measured by the FAR, the Feifer Assessment of Mathematics (FAM), and the Feifer Assessment of Writing (FAW).
<u><i>Test Review of the Child and Adolescent Memory Profile (ChAMP)</i></u>	Piehl et al. (2017)	Journal article	Designed for children and young adults, the Child and Adolescent Memory Profile (ChAMP) is a memory test measuring verbal and visual memory tasks that focus on episodic, semantic, and other forms of memory. This article overviews all aspects of the ChAMP. There was strong construct validity for this test in comparison with several assessments, including the FAR.

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Title	Author	Type	Summary
<u><i>The Impact of a Specialized Font on the Reading Performance of Elementary Children with Reading Disability</i></u>	Powell & Trice (2020)	Journal article	This article explores the Dyslexie font in comparison to two other commonly used fonts using a study in which students were asked to read three stories aloud while their speed, accuracy, and comprehension were measured. There were no significant effects or support for Dyslexie font in comparison to other fonts. The FAR Orthographical Processing subtest was used to test the number of words being read correctly in Arial font.
<u><i>The Effect of Font Type on Sight Word Reading Performance of 4th and 5th Grade Students with Reading Disabilities</i></u>	Warburton (2017)	Journal article	Fifty percent of students who receive special education services have an SLD. Therefore, effective interventions are crucial to education. This article presents a test on the Dyslexie font to see if its use creates a positive difference in comparison to regular font. FAR subtests were used to classify the students as having orthographic or central reading disability.
<u><i>Academic Acquisition and Academic Application: A Latent Profile Analysis</i></u>	Desadier (2022)	Thesis	Complex problem solving (CPS) is one way to methodically explore non-routine issues. CPS requires analyzing, applying, synthesizing, and evaluating added information. A study was conducted to provide insight into the characteristics that impact CPS ability in children using a latent profile analysis (LPA) approach. An LPA approach determines similarities and differences among individuals instead of differences among variables. Acquisition and application scores were measured by the Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement. Results found that students with high IQ scores may be able to apply skills learned without instruction to CPS and that this is not the case for students with average IQ scores. The FAR was used for students who demonstrated weaknesses on previous subtests and required further evaluation as an additional diagnostic measure for dyslexia because it assessed skills that were not addressed in similar tests.
<u><i>Professional Development Addressing Assessment and Intervention for Students with Dyslexia in Response to California's Legislation A.B. 1369</i></u>	Diaz (2018)	Thesis	This thesis is about the need to understand dyslexia as it receives more attention across the world. It is important to be aware of the historical and current research on the disorder, the assessment of dyslexia, and interventions following a dyslexia diagnosis. One suggestion is to screen with the FAR. However, this is limited by the training and ability of teachers and administrators, who need to commit to performing assessment and implementing interventions more frequently in school districts. This study shows that many of these professionals do not know how or are unable, due to lack of training, to provide these assessments and interventions.

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Title	Author	Type	Summary
<u><i>The School Psychologist's Role in the Problem-Solving Process: How Assessment Can Inform Intervention</i></u>	Larkin (2018)	Thesis	The study presented in this thesis focuses on the practices of school psychologists in assessment and intervention through prereferral meetings. School psychologists completed surveys according to role, intervention selection, and the role of assessment in the process. Assessment plays a huge role in helping psychologists understand a student's needs as well as determining the appropriate interventions. The FAR was noted as an auditory processing test frequently used by school psychologists; however, it was not available for use in this thesis project.
<u><i>The Effect of a Font Intervention for 4th and 5th Graders with Dyslexia</i></u>	Powell (2017)	Thesis	The Dyslexie font was created to enhance reading for students who have dyslexia. Two FAR subtests, Rapid Automatic Naming and Orthographical Processing, were used to obtain standard reading ability scores before font types were compared. The study presented in this thesis shows no differences for Dyslexia in comparison to other fonts and no effect on the ability to read better.
<i>Assistive Technology to Enhance Written Expression of Struggling Writers in Elementary School: A Tablet-Based Literacy Intervention Project</i>	Stace-Smith (2017)	Thesis	Assistive technology can be used to help students improve learning skills. This article explores research into the effectiveness of the iPad app Clicker Docs alongside a tablet tool to help improve writing for struggling students. Results showed large significant effects on writing quality within the iPad intervention group. Writing output was also found to have a moderately significant effect. The FAR was used as one of the screening instruments to evaluate reading and related processes. The FAR tests resulted in overall below-average standard scores for each participant.

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Title	Author	Type	Summary
<i>Case Study of the Process and Product of Teacher Engagement in a Professional Learning Community</i>	Vogt (2016)	Thesis	This thesis explored the potential to improve professional development for teachers by using a professional learning community (PLC) model instead of an all-day professional development classroom model. Research shows professional learning communities could be extremely helpful for the adult process model of learning and for specific in-depth study. The FAR was chosen by one of the three study participants because it provides teachers with information about appropriate interventions and how to talk with parents who have concerns.
<i>Incorporating Recent Advances in Understanding Word-Reading Skills Into Specific Learning Disability Diagnoses: The Case of Orthographic Mapping (in Contemporary Intellectual Assessment: Theories, Tests, and Issues, Fourth Edition)</i>	Kilpatrick (2022)	Book chapter	This chapter explores word-level reading difficulties that professionals should consider when evaluating and diagnosing learning disabilities. It argues that proposed phonological and surface subtypes of dyslexia do not have empirical foundations and that practices should not have to establish dyslexia subtypes in word-level reading. The FAR is mentioned as a tool used to distinguish dyslexia subtypes.
<i>The Cognitive Assessment System—Second Edition: From Theory to Practice (in Contemporary Intellectual Assessment: Theories, Tests, and Issues, Fourth Edition)</i>	Naglieri & Otero (2022)	Book chapter	This chapter discusses a set of assessments (CAS2, CAS2: Brief, CAS2: Rating Scale, and CAS2: Español) to measure PASS neurocognitive processes. It details the new measures of the CAS2, which expand the range of professionals able to use the test. This approach changes the concept of intelligence and allows detection in neurocognitive variability to help improve SLDs. The FAR is listed as a valuable assessment for cognitive assessment and defining SLD.
<i>Twelve Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses Made Easy: The Discrepancy/Consistency Method (in Essentials of Specific Learning Disability Identification)</i>	Naglieri & Feifer (2019)	Book chapter	Patterns of strengths and weaknesses (PSW) are assessed using scores obtained from reliable, well-validated, and multidimensional assessments of basic psychological processes. When PSWs correspond to achievement scores, they provide evidence of a student's disorder and support eligibility recommendations for special education. The DCM is presented by the authors as relating students' processes with their academic achievement. Examples of the DCM being used are provided using three instruments: the CAS2, the FAR, and the FAM. The FAR and FAM provide insight into task completion. Several case studies are provided to contextualize the use of these assessment tools within the DCM.

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Title	Author	Type	Summary
<i>Essentials of School Neuropsychological Assessment</i>	Miller & Maricle (2019)	Book	This book offers an overview of neuropsychological practice, shows how to identify the need for testing, and tells how to evaluate students and interpret results using different intelligence tests for children. It also discusses how to integrate assessment into education. The FAR is mentioned as an available assessment for school psychologists alongside other available assessments.
<i>Best Practices in School Neuropsychology: Guidelines for Effective Practice, Assessment, and Evidence-Based Intervention</i>	Miller et al. (2022)	Book	This book provides information about current, evidence-informed assessment tools and intervention guidelines for current and prospective neuropsychology professionals. The FAR is referenced as one of the assessment tools, and details about administration and use of the FAR are provided.
<i>Essentials of CAS2 Assessment</i>	Naglieri & Otero (2017)	Book	This book provides extensive information about the CAS2, which illustrates diverse ways to evaluate the four neurocognitive processes (i.e., PASS). The CAS2 is an update to the original CAS and can be used to identify disorders in basic psychological processing for SLDs. The FAR is recognized as an available test to identify SLDs alongside the CAS2.
<i>Dyslexia Advocate! Second Edition: How to Advocate for a Child with Dyslexia within the Public Education System</i>	Sandman-Hurley (2023)	Book	This book digs deeper into the individualized education programs (IEPs) created for students with dyslexia and the inappropriate goals and services included in them. It is important to understand what is appropriate according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and how people can advocate for students struggling with dyslexia. The book covers how to ask questions at IEP meetings and add focus on older and younger students. It does not diminish how far the laws have come, but it discusses how change is still needed. The FAR is mentioned as a recognizable test in helping to define SLDs like dyslexia and to develop IEPs.
<u><i>Specific Learning Disability Eligibility Determination using a Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses in Basic Psychological Processes and Achievement</i></u>	Naglieri & Feifer (2018)	Newsletter article	Identifying students with SLD has evolved to include using a PSW approach when evaluating basic psychological processing and academic abilities. One of the first methods to use this approach was the DCM, which incorporates PASS neurocognitive theory. The author suggests that PASS scores should be supplemented with academic processing scores obtained from the FAR because the FAR follows California state guidelines for SLD assessment and diagnosis.

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Title	Author	Type	Summary
<u>Connections in Theory, Experience, and Practice of Educational Psychology</u>	Dimen (2017)	Report	This report explains the goals and outcomes of the practicum completed by the author. Specifically, the author completed their practicum at the Counselling Assessment Intervention and Research Services (CAIRS) office in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan in the spring of 2017. The CAIRS office provides assessment services to the local community ranging from learning disabilities to social, emotional, and behavioral disorders. The FAR is included in the broad range of assessment tools offered to clients.
<u>The Ventura County SELPA Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses Model for Specific Learning Disability Eligibility Procedural Manual</u>	Ventura County Special Education Local Plan Area (2022)	Report	This procedural manual outlines the Ventura County, California, special education plan, which uses the PSW model for SLD identification. This process is indicated in the revised California education code, as the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA prohibits states from requiring local education agencies (LEAs) to use the ability–achievement discrepancy model and allows alternative approaches to identify SLDs. The FAR is listed as an important academic assessment tool.
<u>Font Fails to Improve Reading on Assessment Tasks</u>	Powell et al. (2017)	Presentation	This presentation is based on a thesis by the same author. The subject of the thesis and presentation is the Dyslexie font, which was created with the intent of mitigating reading issues for people with dyslexia. In the study, the FAR was administered to these students along with other assessments to determine differences between using Dyslexie and traditional fonts. The outcome of the study, which was conducted with 4th and 5th graders with dyslexia, was that there is no significant difference between the Dyslexie font and traditional fonts.
<u>Utilizing Skills, Error, and Behavior Analyses with Feifer Assessment of Reading (FAR) and the Feifer Assessment of Math (FAM): Hidden Gems that Bring Detailed Strengths and Weaknesses to Light</u>	Giella (2019)	White paper	The FAR and FAM are tests that show a student's problem areas and highlight their skills in reading and math, respectively. These assessment tools use a neuropsychological approach to connect strengths and weaknesses with underlying cognitive difficulties. They identify learning difficulties more specifically and help professionals tailor more individualized educational plans for students.

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