

# Supporting Emergent Literacy in Preschool

**2026 Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Conference**  
**Jacksonville, FL**

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## Disclosures

### **Financial disclosure:**

Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech-paid employee

### **Non-financial disclosure**

NYS EHDI Advisory Board  
Cochlear Americas-spouse/child  
both use Cochlear devices





# Learning Outcomes

Participants will.....

1. Review research on emergent literacy development for deaf/hard of hearing children developing listening and spoken language to define components of emerging literacy and identify which areas have been identified as challenging for these children.
2. Analyze assessment results and list areas of growth and need based on the results.
3. Generate modifications and strategies to emergent literacy instruction to meet the unique linguistic and auditory needs of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.





"Research is something that everyone can do, and everyone ought to do. It is simply collecting information and thinking systematically about it."

Raewyn Connell





# Emergent Literacy



# Emergent Literacy



## Language

Vocabulary



## Phonological Awareness

Awareness of and ability to analyze and manipulate the sounds of spoken language



## Print Knowledge

Alphabet knowledge  
Conceptual print and book knowledge





**Compared to THC, DHH scored lower....**

**\* in PA, phonological memory, conceptual print knowledge.**

**(Werfel et al., 2023)**

**\*in phonological processing.**

**(Camarata et al., 2026)**

**\*in spelling, PA & phonological memory. (Werfel & Hendricks, 2023)**

**\*in phoneme acquisition, syllable segmentation, syllable blending, syllable identification, vowel identification (Majorano et al., 2025)**

**\*PA made a significant, independent contribution to children's early reading ability after controlling for other variables (Cupples et al., 2014)**

**\*Performed similarly to vocabulary-matched peers on PA. Vocabulary size correlated significantly with phonological awareness performance. (Lund, 2020)**

**\*DHH only-Phonological processing components were significant predictors of reading and spelling (Werfel & Hendricks, 2023)**





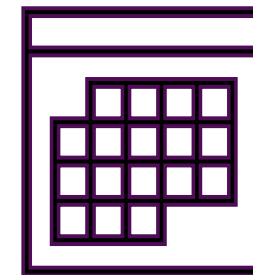
**What did we do?**



# Intervention and Assessment

**Heggerty  
Curriculum**

**Test of Preschool  
Emergent Literacy  
(TOPEL)**



**2x/year**





# Heggerty Curriculum\*



## Early PreK

- 35 weeks, 3x/week
- 6-8 minutes
- 5-7 skill components in each lesson
  - Targets PA: rhyme, initial phoneme isolation, and blending (beginning of year) and segmenting words and final phoneme isolation (later weeks)
  - Targets: alphabet knowledge and nursery rhymes and sentence



## PreK

- 35 weeks, 5x/week
- 10-12 minutes
- 10 Daily Components
  - Targets PA: rhyme, onset fluency, phoneme isolation, blending, segmenting, adding, deleting, and substituting.
  - Targets: letter names, sound recognition, and nursery rhymes



# Test of Preschool Early Literacy (TOPEL)

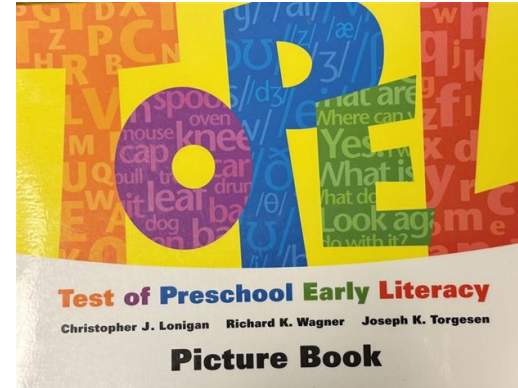
- norm-referenced
- 3-0 to 5-11 years
- 25-to-30-minute to administer

## Measures:

**Print Knowledge:** alphabet knowledge and understanding of written language conventions.

**Definitional Vocabulary:** Assesses single-word oral vocabulary and the ability to define words.

**Phonological Awareness:** Tests word elision (dropping sounds) and blending abilities.

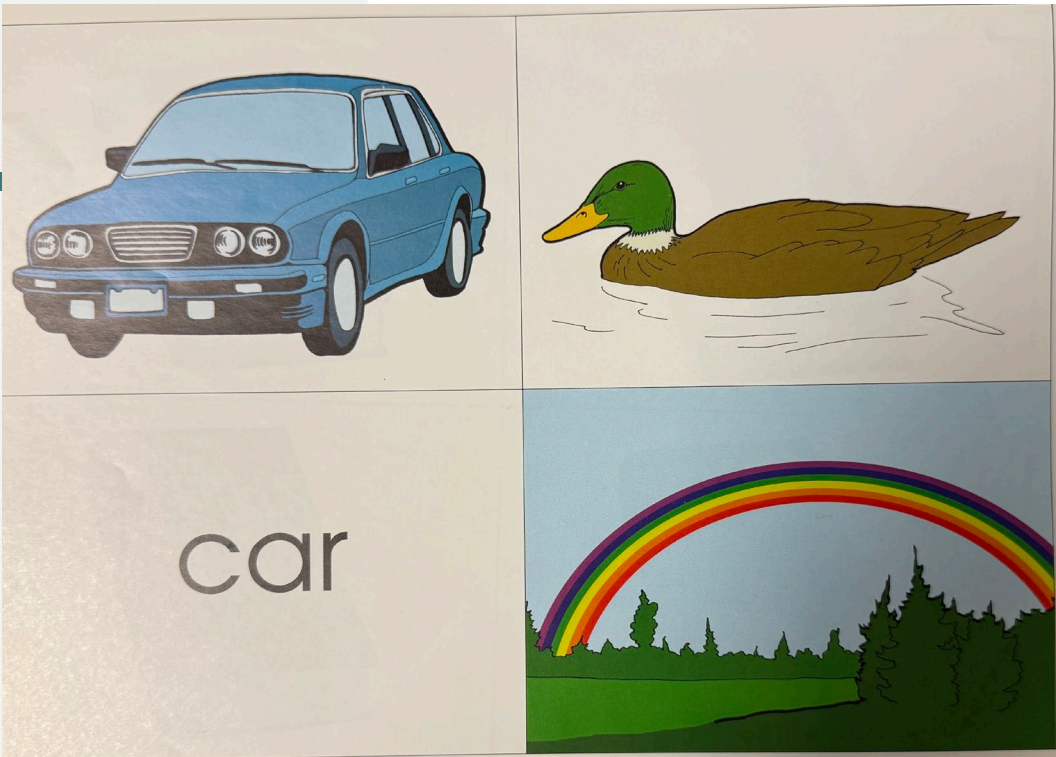


**Factorial Validity and Measurement Invariance of the Test of Preschool Early Literacy-Phonological Awareness Test Among Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children and Hearing Children.**

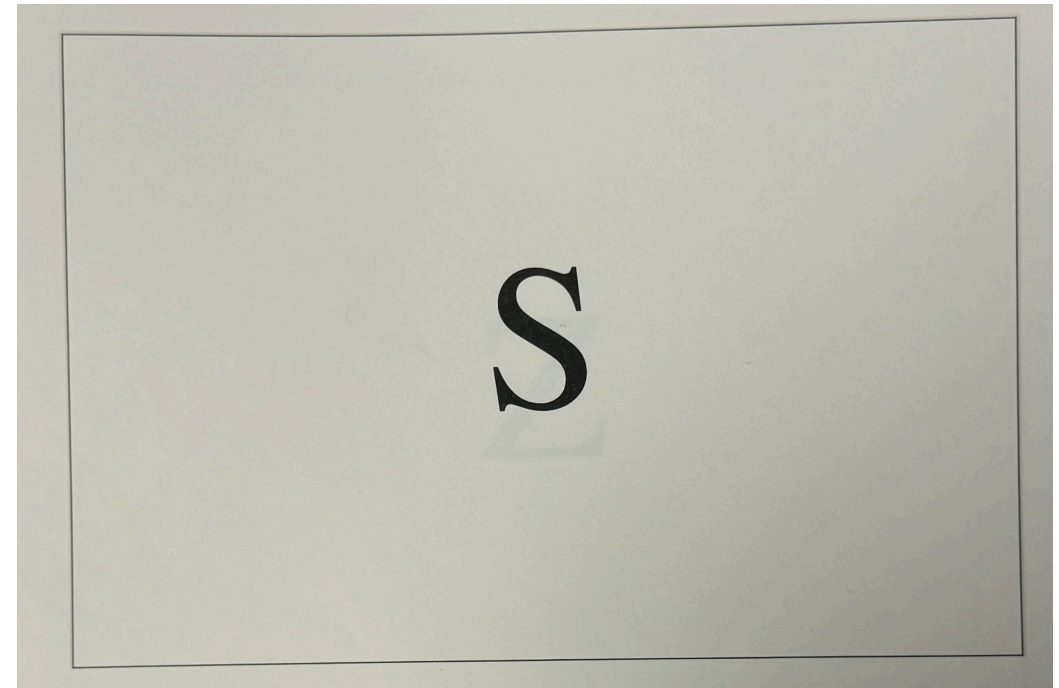
Webb, M. L., Patton-Terry, N., Bingham, G. E., Puranik, C. S., & Lederberg, A. R. (2018). *Ear & Hearing*, 39(2), 278–292.

<https://doi.org/10.1097/AU>  
D.0000000000000485





Identify letters/things to read  
Identify letters named or by sound  
Label letters by name  
Identify sound associated with a letter

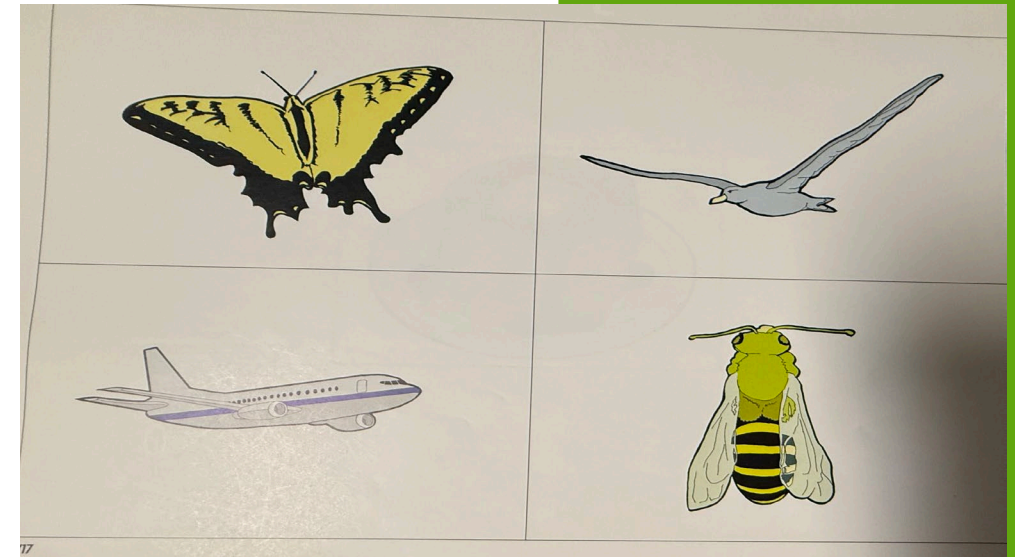
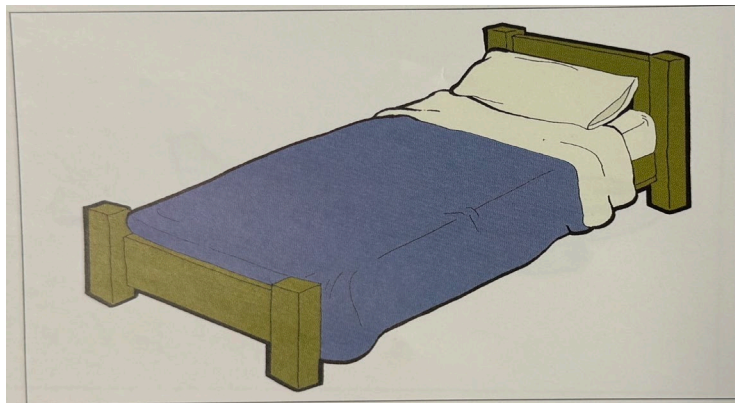
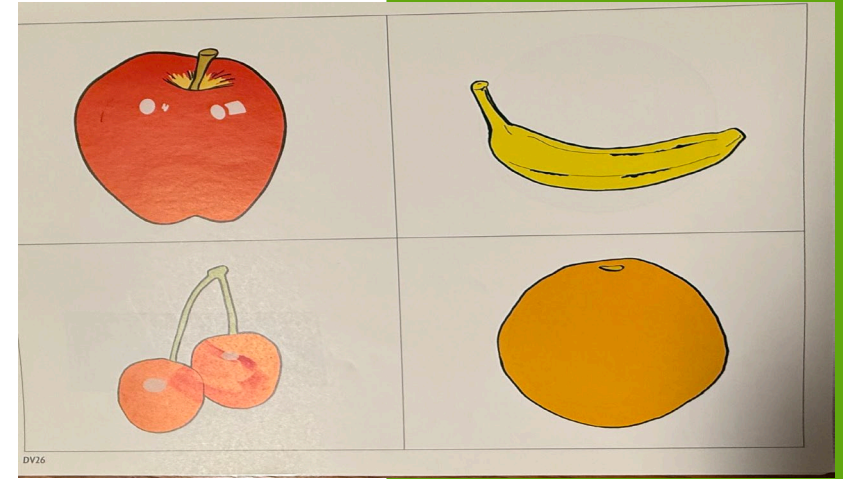


Print Knowledge

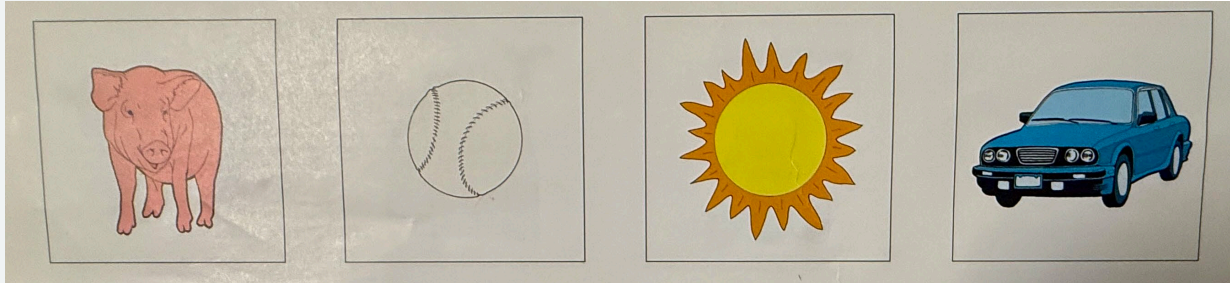


# Definitional Vocabulary

1. What is this? What is a name for these?
2. What is it for? How do people use it? What can you do with them? Why do people have them?



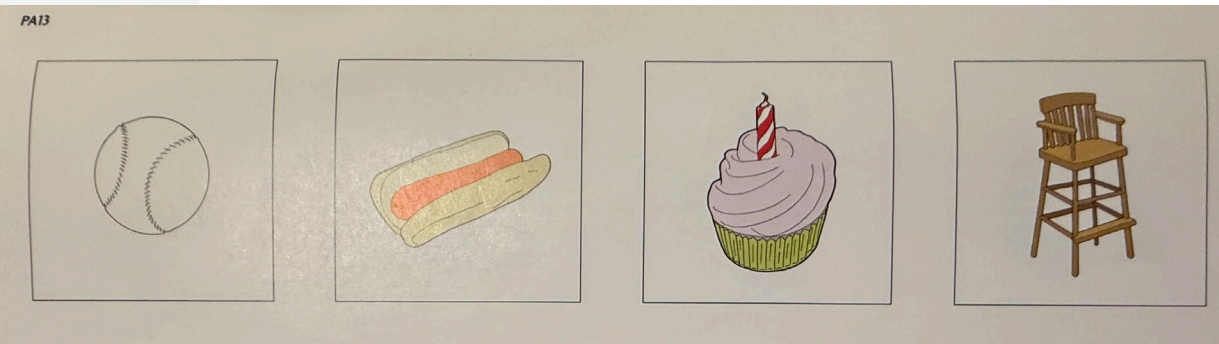
# Phonological Awareness



1. Sunflower without the flower
2. Lamp without /p/

(no pictures)

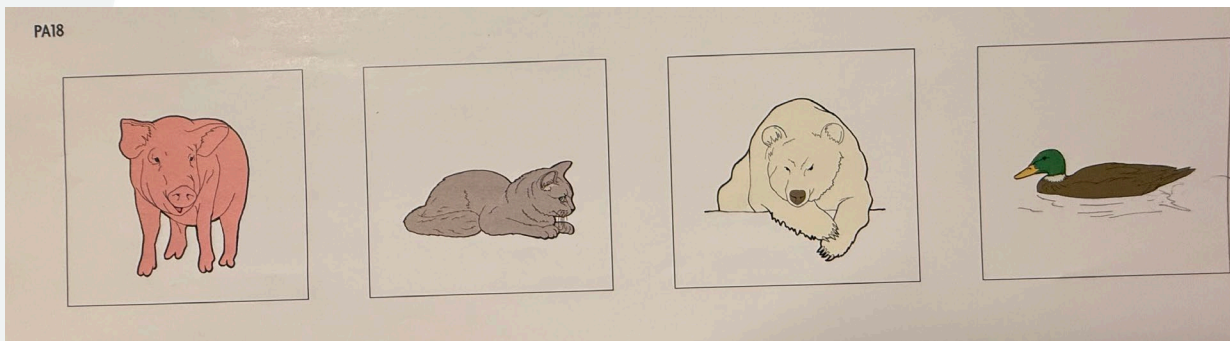
1. Shoelace without lace
2. Heat without /t/



1. Hot \_ Dog
2. B \_ air

(no pictures)

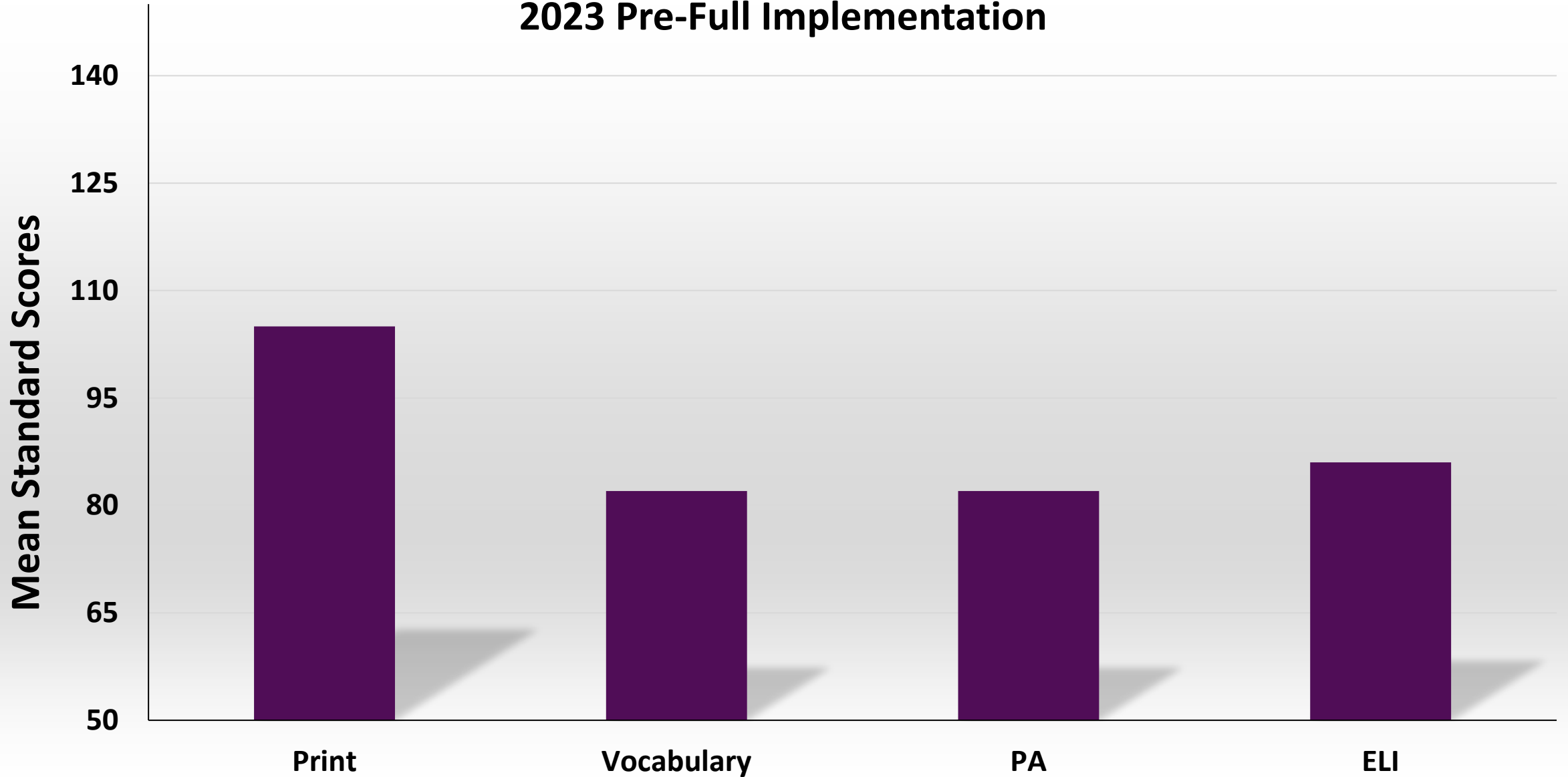
1. Air \_ plane
2. Ca \_ p



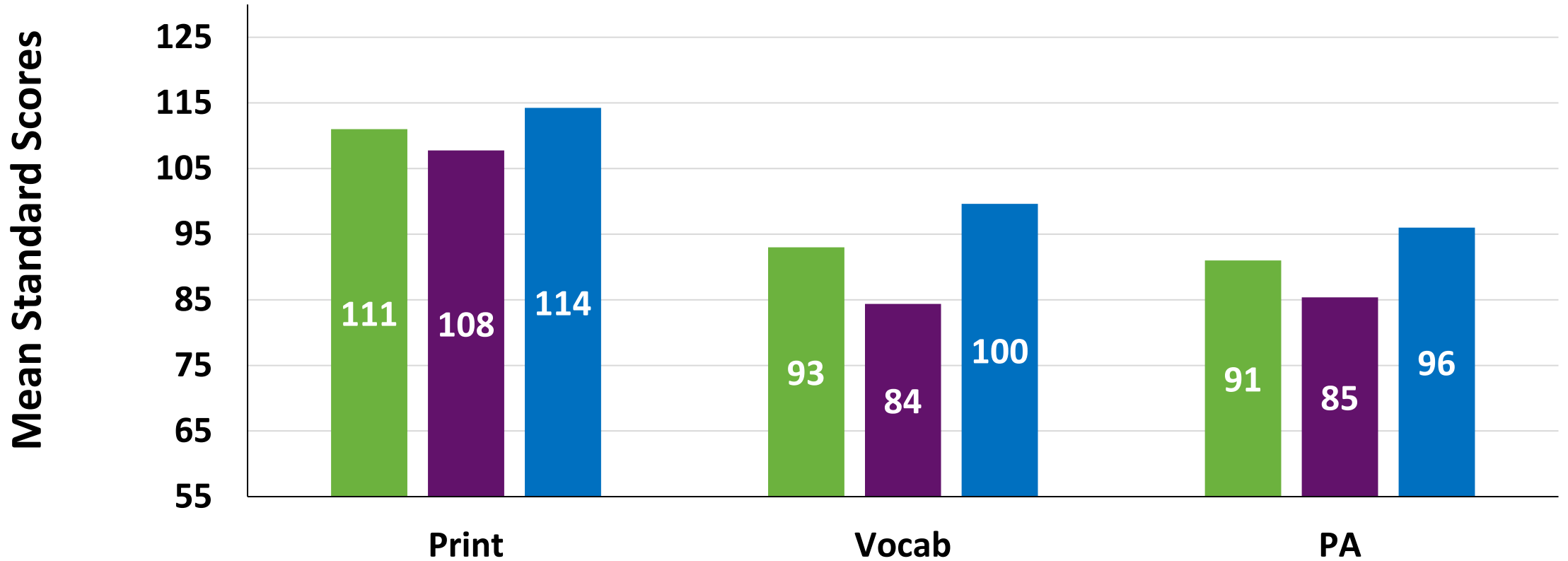


# Assessment Results

## 2023 Pre-Full Implementation

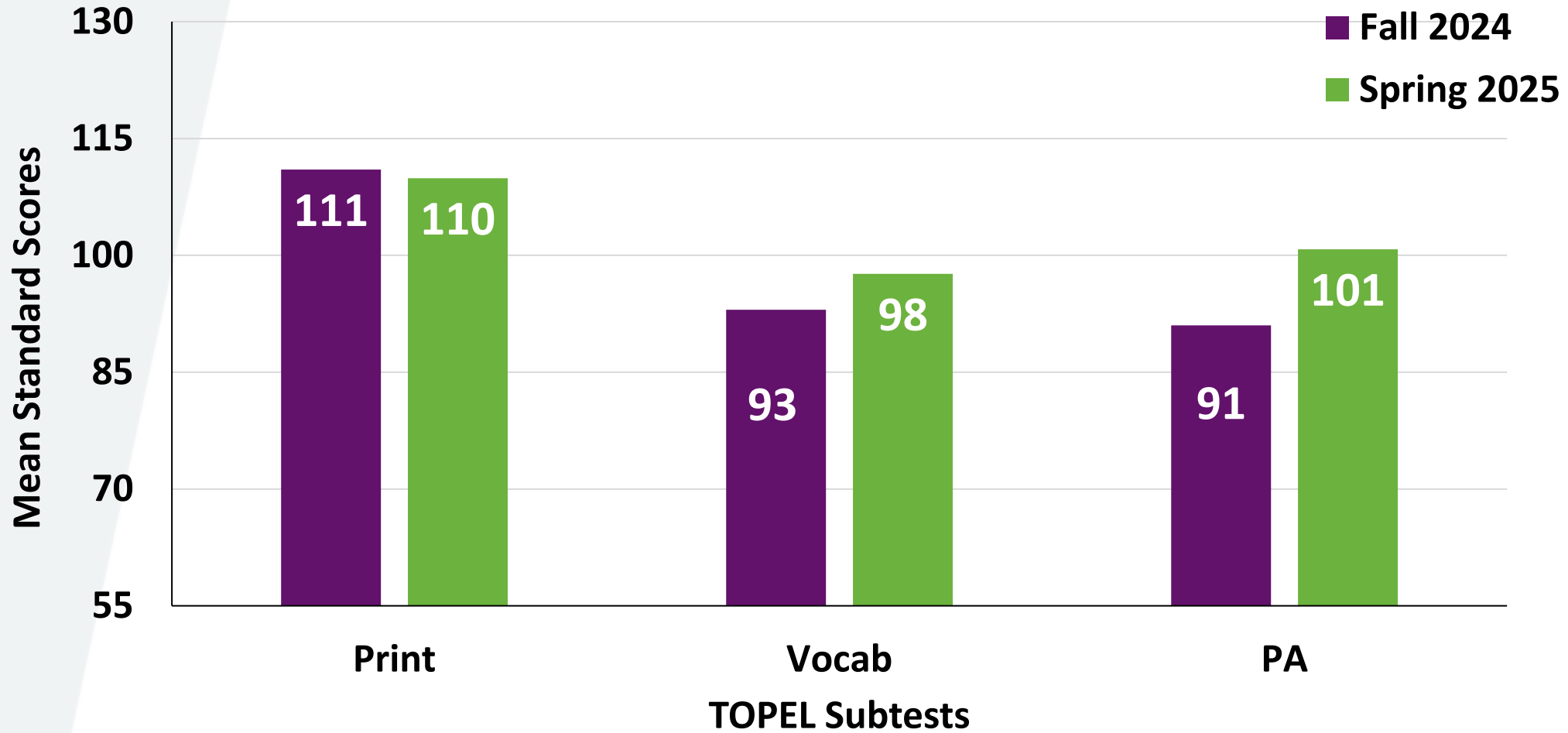


# Test of Preschool Early Literacy

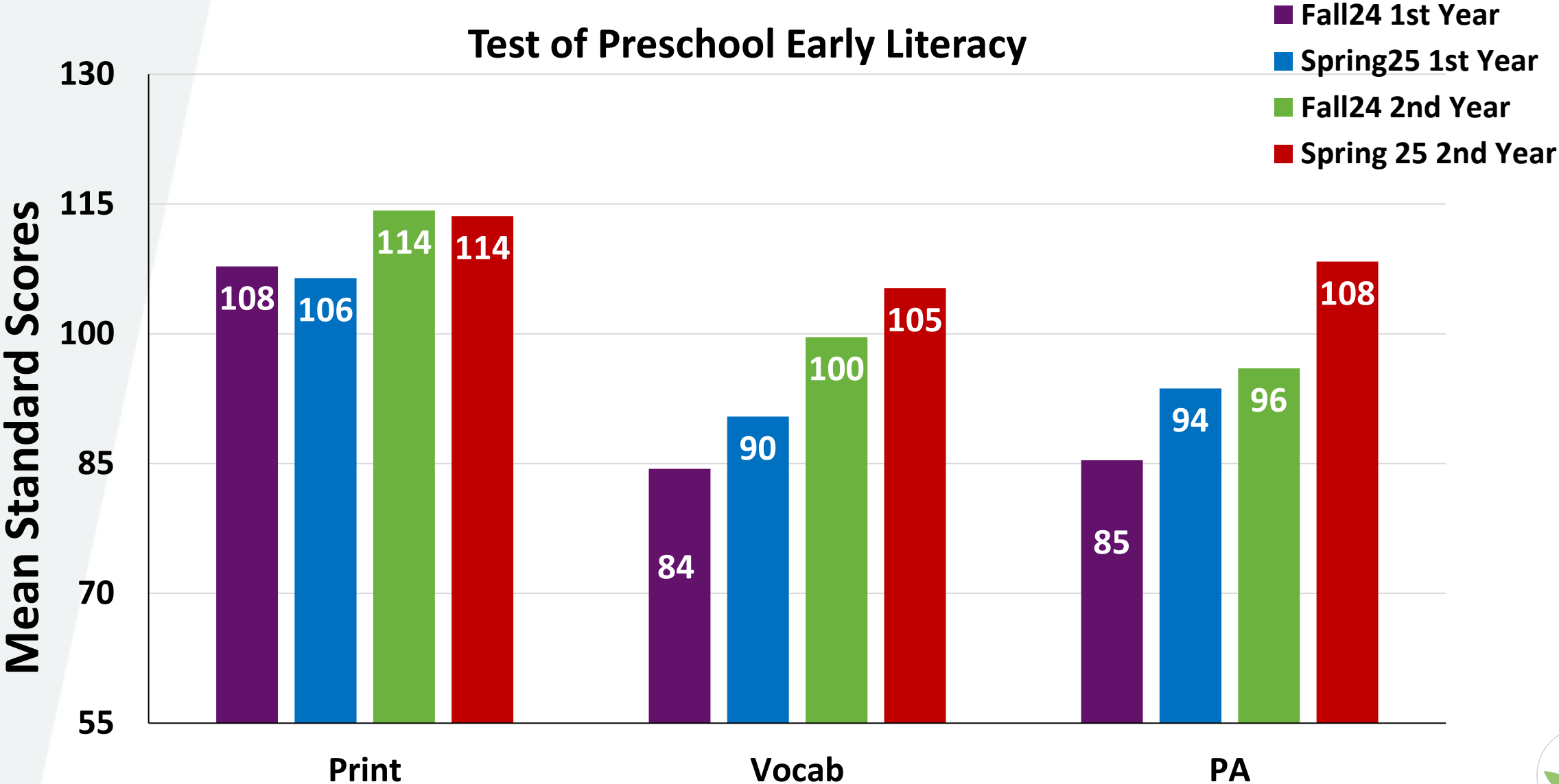


Fall 2024	111	93	91
Fall24 1st Year	108	84	85
Fall24 2nd Year	114	100	96

## Test of Preschool Early Literacy



# Test of Preschool Early Literacy





# Modifications and Strategies

- SLP support
- Early Prek and Prek levels
  - First year
  - Second year
- Parents





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**CLARKE**

SCHOOLS FOR HEARING & SPEECH



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