An examination of phonemic processing abilities in children during their first-grade year.

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The present study examined the development of reading and phonological processing abilities of 209 first graders (118 males, 91 females; mean age = 86.7 months) assessed during the first and last quarters of their first-grade year. The children were arranged into three different groups based on their Time 2 reading and intelligence data (children with and without reading disabilities, and "garden-variety" poor readers). Analyses indicated that the children with reading disabilities and the garden-variety poor readers did not differ significantly on many of the tasks, but both performed differently than the children without reading disabilities. Developmental analyses indicated that all three groups increased their reading and phonological skills; however, the gap between the performance of the children without reading disabilities and the other two groups widened from Time 1 to Time 2. The most important finding of the present study concerned the classification results of the discriminant analysis, which correctly identified the group membership of 207 of the 209 children (99.04% correct).

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