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## Section VIII

# *Letter/Sound Identification*

### **Rationale**

Having the ability to match letters and sounds helps children develop an understanding of words and spelling patterns. In establishing instructional priorities in the use of words and conventional spelling knowledge for each child in the early stages of literacy development, the teacher will use the letter/sound identification assessment. This assessment identifies what individual children know specifically about letter/sound identification. **Teachers' observations are crucial and critical factors informing their decisions about whom and when to assess.**

### **Definition**

Letter/sound identification is recognizing upper and lower case letters and identifying appropriate sounds for each letter symbol.

### **Assessment Guidelines**

### **Materials**

Use the upper case and lower case alphabet sheets. You may want to laminate the sheets. Letter sheets are in the Appendix.

## Procedure

1. Administer the assessment to individual children. The assessment area should be quiet and free from major distractions. Sit beside the child. Seat the child comfortably in front of an appropriate height flat surface, such as a child's table. Turn the alphabet sheets face down until you are ready to use them.
2. At pre-emergent level, stop if the child struggles and begins to show frustration. Mark the "stop point" on the answer sheet.
3. Say to the child, **I'm going to show you some letters. Let's see how many you know.** Then, beginning with the upper case letters, ask the child to **name each letter** as you point to it. Use a *masking card* to cover rows below the row the child is looking at. Move across the lines from left to right as you or the child points to the letters so that the child is asked to identify the letters in random order. If the child gives you a sound or word, say, **You are right. That letter has that sound, but can you tell me the name of that letter?** Repeat with the lower case letter card, **name each letter**.

If the child is unsuccessful, remove the masking card, and ask the child to look over the letters and tell you any s/he may know. Highlight the letters used in her/his name.

4. Use the lower case letter card a second time and ask **Make the sound the letter makes.** Use a *masking card* to cover rows below the row the child is looking at. Move across the lines from left to right. Letters on the task have been randomized.
5. If the child experiences difficulty focusing on one letter at a time, use a window card that has a square shape just big enough to show the letter. Cut out the square in the center of the card to highlight individual letters.
6. Reassess periodically until the child demonstrates knowledge of both letter names and sounds. Then observe beginning use of letter names in classroom activities.
7. Mark the answer sheet by putting a check in the "N" column for a correct letter name response. Check the "S" column for a correct sound response. Record incorrect responses in the "I.R." column.

If the child tells you a word that begins with the letter, you may record that in the "Word" column for your own information, but it does not affect the score.

8. One point for each correct letter name. Total possible 54
9. Score one point for any one *letter sound* that is acceptable for that letter. Total possible 26

## Analysis

Analyze correct and incorrect responses along with observations of the child's behavior in order to inform instructional priorities for that child.

## LETTER/SOUND IDENTIFICATION SCORE SHEET

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

§ in "N" column for letter name response

§ in "S" column for letter sound response

Record word in "Word" column for word response.

Record the child's response in "I.R." column for incorrect response.

	N	I.R.		N	S	WORD	I.R.
A			a				
F			f				
K			k				
P			p				
W			w				
Z			z				
B			b				
H			h				
O			o				
J			j				
U			u				
			a				
C			c				
Y			y				
L			l				
Q			q				
M			m				
D			d				
N			n				
S			s				
X			x				
I			i				
E			e				
G			g				
R			r				
V			v				
T			t				
			g				
26			28		26		

### Observations

Note such things as:

- Speed of response
- Confusions; e.g.; b/d
- Patterns of response

Letter Name  
Total Score /54

Letter Sound  
Total Score /26

Adapted from *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*, Marie M. Clay.

Letter/Sound Identification

A F K P W Z

B H O J U

C Y L Q M

D N S X I

E G R V T

Letter/Sound Identification

a f k p w z

b h o j u a

c y l q m

d n s x i

e g r v t g



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