LETTER NAMING

Construct Progression

DOMAIN: LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATION

CLAIM: Students can acquire the foundational skills for reading and integrate these skills for comprehending increasingly complex texts in home, school, and community.

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Background Information

It is important for kindergarten teachers to assess letter naming because it is a foundational pre-literacy skill that research has shown to be related to children's success in reading (National Early Literacy Panel, 2009). In addition, letter naming or alphabet knowledge is reflected in the early learning and development standards in many states. Placing children on this progression will thus inform the instruction that early elementary teachers in these states are engaged in.

The purpose of the letter naming progression is to determine a child's learning status on a set of foundational skills in alphabet awareness that contribute to the complex process of learning to read. The progression is designed to assess children's knowledge of letters. Letter knowledge is the child's ability to connect the letter name with its written symbol. A child can demonstrate letter knowledge by <u>selecting</u> letters named by someone else, or by <u>naming</u> letters selected by someone else. Letter knowledge can also be demonstrated through children's writing if they are able to <u>name</u> or <u>select</u> the letters they have written. This progression does <u>not</u> assess letter naming fluency, letter sounds, or the correct formation of letters through writing.

Rationale

Learning to read is a complex process that requires young children to acquire and continue to develop automaticity with foundational skills, including alphabet knowledge (National Early Literacy Panel, 2009; National Reading Panel, 2000). Alphabet knowledge includes the ability to identify and name letters and hear sounds in words (phonological awareness). These are an integral part of foundational skills and closely correlated to later reading and spelling achievement (Strickland & Shanahan, 2004).

In addition to acquiring alphabet knowledge as a part of foundational skill development, successful readers can integrate the sound, visual, and meaning systems of language to monitor comprehension and repair misunderstandings and apply their understandings to a range of increasingly complex texts in a variety of settings. The National Research Council estimated that if children received exposure and systematic opportunities to develop foundational language, reading, and related skills during early schooling, only about five percent might experience serious reading difficulty later in school (Snow et al., 1998).

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Understanding	**Skills**	**Performance Descriptors**	**Examples**
Children understand that spoken language can be represented by letters.	A. Distinguishes letters from pictures, shapes, or numerals	When observed interacting with letters, pictures, shapes, and numerals, child sorts letters from pictures, shapes and numerals.	*When playing a game where the objective is to sort letters from pictures, shapes, and numerals, Amy sorts letters into the specified area.* *When given a basket containing letters, pictures, shapes, and numerals, Adrian sorts the letters from the pictures, shapes and numerals.* *Tran was able to sort letters of the alphabet of his home language from pictures and shapes.*
	B. Distinguishes own first name from other names or other words (e.g., on folders, name charts, among other words or names)	When presented with a variety of names, child selects own first name from a random display of names.	*Upon entering the classroom, Ben selects a name card with his name printed on the card to indicate attendance.* *During a shared reading of "Who Stole the Cookie from the Cookie Jar," the teacher presents Coe with a random array of at least 3 name cards, and asks him to select his name and place it in the poem on a pocket chart. Coe selects his name and places it in the poem.*
	C. Locates, talks about, or asks questions about letters in one's environment	When observed in a print-rich environment, child points to the letters, talks about letters, or asks questions about letters.	*When in the cafeteria, Carla points to the letter 'C' and says in her home language, "I know that letter; it's in my name."* *When in the library, Chien talks about a letter in his name, "That letter is in my name."* *When in the classroom, Catherine asks questions about letters, e.g., "What is that little part on that 'O'?" when looking at a Q.*

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			When asked to find a letter in the classroom, Charlie points to a letter.
Children know features of letters.	D. Identifies (names or selects) one or more letters in own first name	When producing own name or presented with letters, child names or selects one or more letters from own first name.	*When writing name, typing name on a computer, using a digital device to select letters in name, or using letter manipulatives to produce name, Daniel names or selects one or more letters in his first name.* *When Deana sees her first name above her cubby, she names one or more letters in her name.* *The teacher writes Daphne's name on the back of a finished drawing, points to the first letter in her name, and asks Daphne, "What is the name of this letter?" Daphne names the letter, and teacher moves to the next letter in name.* *When teacher gives Día a group of 10 letter tiles which includes the letters D, I, and A, and says, "Find a letter that is in your name." Día sorts through the letters and picks up the D.*
	E. Identifies (names or selects) some uppercase or lowercase letters (in addition to letters found in own first name)	When presented with multiple letters in a variety of situations (e.g., in print, on a digital device, or with letter manipulatives), child names or selects one or more letters in addition to those in child's first name.	*When looking at the day's job chart, Evan says, "I think Brian is the meteorologist today because this name starts with a 'B'."* *When playing a letter game on an interactive whiteboard, Eric selects one or more letters (in addition to those in child's name) when prompted by the teacher or the device.* *When teacher gives Tom a group of 10 letter tiles and*

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			says, "Find the R.", Tom sorts through the letters and picks up or points to the R. *When reading a book with Tom, the teacher points to a letter (that is not in Tom's name), and asks, "What is this letter?" Tom names the letter.*
	F. Identifies (names or selects) each of the 26 letters in some form (may be a combination of uppercase and lowercase)	When interacting with letters (combination of uppercase and lowercase letters), child names or selects each of the 26 letters (in either uppercase or lowercase).	*When playing with a set of letter tiles, Franco picks up and names all 26 letters in either uppercase or lowercase (or both for some of the letters). * *When playing a letter game on an interactive whiteboard, Fran selects each of the 26 letters when prompted. * *When playing a letter matching game with the teacher, the teacher asks Fin to name each letter as the card is flipped over. Fin names all 26 letters in either uppercase, lowercase, or both for some of the letters. * *When playing a letter card game with the teacher, Francis selects the card that corresponds to the letter named by the teacher [in either the uppercase or lowercase form]. * **Teacher keeps a record of the letters named or selected by the child, noting whether each letter named was uppercase or lowercase on the form provided.*
	G. Identifies (names or selects) all 52 letters in uppercase and lowercase form	When interacting with letters, child names or selects each of the 52 letters (in both uppercase and lowercase	*While playing with letter beads, Gabriela strings all 52 uppercase and lowercase letters while saying the name of the letter that appears on each bead. *

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		form).	*When playing a letter game on an interactive whiteboard, Greg selects each of the 52 letters when prompted.* *When playing a letter card game, teacher asks Ginger to name or select each letter (in both uppercase and lowercase form) as the randomly ordered cards are flipped. Ginger names or selects all 52 letters. ** **Teacher keeps a record of the letters named or selected by the child, noting whether each letter was uppercase and lowercase on the form provided.*

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RESOURCES

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