Letter Identification Assessment

Purpose:
What does your student know about letters? Which letters can he/she identify? Although research has shown that students do not need to know the names of all letters before they begin reading books, knowing letters helps them communicate with the teacher and each other (Samuels, 1972). Being able to discriminate and quickly recognize important letter(s) is also helpful in attaching sounds to the correct letters when reading words (Neuhaus, 2003).

Directions:
Ask students to identify all upper case and lower case letters, using the following directions:
1. Place the letter identification sheet on the table in front of the student.
2. Ask, "Can you name these letters? Can you say the sounds they make?"
3. Mask the letters with a sheet of paper showing one row of letters at a time. You may want to point to each letter for the child, or let the child point to the letters naming them.
4. Use the upper case sheet for letter and sound identification. If the student does not automatically say the letter name and sound at the same time. Let the student name the letters then ask him/her to return to the beginning of the sheet, saying the sound for each letter.
5. Use the lower case sheet for letter identification. Sound identification on this lower case sheet is optional.

Scoring:
Place a check mark in the column if the child identifies the letter or sound correctly. Record any letter or sound the child names incorrectly in the boxes. Count the checks (correct letters or sounds) and total them onto the score sheet.

Score as correct for letter identification:
1. An alphabet name.
2. You could also score as correct a response in which a child identifies the letter and a word that has the letter in it (e.g. "There's a 't' in 'cat.'")

Score as correct for sound ID:
1. A sound that is acceptable for the letter.
2. A response in which the student says, "It begins like…" giving a word that has that letter sound as its initial letter.

Record for further teaching:
*   The student's preferred mode of identifying letters (i.e. name, sound, or word that contains the letter).
*   The letters a child confuses. It is recommended that one of the confused letters is taught to mastery before introducing the other confused letter. Thus, confused letters are kept apart in the teaching program.
*   Unknown letters.

Neuhaus, G. F. (2003). What does it take to read a letter? The International Dyslexia Association quarterly newsletter—Perspectives, pages 27 – 31.

Samuels, S. J. (1972). The Effect of Letter-Name Knowledge on Learning to Read. American Educational Research Journal, Vol. 9, No. 1. pp. 65-74