

Letter Naming Intervention Strategy – “Three Ways of Remembering*”

*Adapted from Marie Clay’s “Three Ways of Remembering” (Engaging with the school system: A study of interaction in new entrant classrooms. New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies, 22 (1), 20-38) 1985.

For: Kindergarten and 1st grade students who show need for additional support with letter identification per the Primary MAP Growth assessment, or older students who have not mastered letter names

Materials:

- Upper or lower case (teacher’s choice) alphabet flashcards for each student
- Whiteboard or paper, and writing utensils
- Recording sheet

Recommended Duration and Frequency: This intervention should be conducted at least 3 times per week for 10 – 15 minutes per session. Use the MAP “Reading Letter Identification” skills checklist for initial assessment. Monitor the student’s progress once a week or twice monthly using letter naming progress monitoring probes from www.easycbm.com. When the student’s score is at the benchmark/target for 3 consecutive monitors and teacher observation confirms that the skill has been transferred to classroom work, have student retake the MAP “Reading Letter Identification” skills checklist. If student shows proficiency, the intervention may be discontinued.

Steps for Intervention:

One reason some students have difficulty learning letters is because they do not know how to look at the distinctive features that make up a letter (Ehri, 1994). Therefore, when teaching unknown letters, students need more than just seeing them printed on a card with the teacher saying, “This is ‘d.’ What is it?” Clay (1995) says that seeing letters in print is an important part of letter learning, but she prefers instruction that incorporates **Three Ways of Remembering** unknown letters (Note these three areas should also be used to help children learn unknown words): 1) Seeing letters in print, 2) Talking about what the letter looks like (As the letter is written on a board or a white board, the teacher names the letter and talks about its salient features. For example, the letter “t” is ‘straight line down, put on its hat.’), and 3) Learning the unknown letters using movement, writing the unknown letters in various ways saying the letter name, stroking pattern, or sound as it is written. Over learning and massed practice is necessary for a student to master unknown information.

1. Before beginning the intervention, administer all flashcards to the student initially, asking for letter names. The student should give the name within 3 seconds for it to be counted correct.
2. Select 3 “known name” flashcards, and 1-2 flashcards containing letters with unknown names. (Unknown letters to which the student has a connection, such as letters in the student’s name, should be selected first.) If the student knows only 1 or 2 letter names, use just those with 1 “unknown”. If the student knows no letter names, select 2 unknown letters that have either already been presented in class or are in the student’s name. Retain other known and unknown cards for later use.
3. Use the following sequence daily to implement the intervention:
 - a. **Check-Up:** Before you start the intervention practice every day, show the student the 4-5 cards you are working on and ask him/her to name the letters. On the Recording Sheet, mark whether the child gave the letter name within 3 seconds correctly or incorrectly. Do this to check the child’s memory for letters worked on previously.
 - b. **Explain:** Teacher says, “Today you’re going to practice saying the names for and writing some new letters. Show the student an unknown letter. Say, “This is (letter name). What do you

notice about this letter?” Both teacher and student should describe the letter (i.e. tall, 2 straight lines, one circle, one curved line, looks like a cross, etc.).

- c. **Model:** Teacher says, “I’ll show you how to write the letter. My turn.” Teacher models writing the letter for student, saying the appropriate stroking pattern phrase (see attached) as the letter is written.
 - d. **Practice 1:** Teacher says, “Now it’s your turn.” Teacher assists the student in writing the letter. The student should be instructed to say the name of the letter as s/he writes. Practice 3-4 times.
 - e. **Practice 2:** Teacher says, “Now write it again, saying the directions while you write.” Teacher assists the student in writing the letter and saying the stroking pattern phrase. Practice 3-4 times, with the student saying the phrase chorally with the teacher. (Teacher may drop out if the student can remember the phrase independently.)
 - f. **Practice 3:** Teacher says, “Now write it again, saying the sound the letter makes while you write it.” Teacher assists the student in writing the letter and saying the sound. Practice 3-4 times, with the student saying the sound chorally with the teacher. (Teacher may drop out if the student can remember the sound independently.)
 - g. **Repeat (optional):** If you are working on more than one unknown letter, repeat steps b – f above with the 2nd letter.
 - h. **Review:** When unknown letters have been practiced, return the unknown letter cards to the practice pack, and ask the child to name each of the letters. Do this 3-4 times, mixing up the letters each time and correcting the child using this correction procedure: Teacher: “That letter is __? What letter?” Student: __ (Gives name of letter.) Teacher: “Yes, __.” Once a week, review all the cards that have been practiced by the child and moved out of the set, so the child does not forget them. If forgotten, cards may be moved back into the “unknown” set.
 - i. **The Next Day:** Start with Step 3a the next day using the same cards worked on the day previous. See steps 4 and 5 below for procedure on adding new “unknown” cards.
4. **Recording Sheet** (attached): Every day that a child gives the name of a letter correctly in Step 3a, a tally mark is placed after the letter on the Recording Sheet. When the child has 3 tally marks for a previously unknown letter (3 days in a row of saying the name correctly), the letter card becomes a “known”. One of the initial (older and well-practiced) “known” letters can be removed, and a new “unknown” letter is put in its place. If a letter is named incorrectly, a “—” is recorded instead of a tally and that letter is worked on again tomorrow. Never should a student’s practice set contain more than 5 letters or more than 2 unknown letters.

Sample of a Recording Sheet:

1. m	R
2. t	__ __ __ R
3. x	__ __ __ __ __ __ __ R
4. o	__ R __ P __
5. a	__ __ __ __

5. **Progress Monitoring:** Progress Monitor the student once a week or twice a month with an LNF probe. Probes can be found at www.easycbm.com.

Letter Naming "Three Ways to Remember" Intervention - Recording Sheet

Student Name: _____ Inclusive Dates of Intervention: _____

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

Letter Naming “Three Ways to Remember” Intervention – Integrity Check

Interventionist: _____ **Date:** _____ **Grade Level:** _____ **Tier:** _____
Integrity Monitor: _____

Descriptor - Student	Yes	No	N/A
Student shows need for letter naming support per the Primary MAP Growth assessments.			
Student is in Grade K or 1, or is older and has been assessed using the MAP “Reading Letter Identification” skills checklist.			

Descriptor - Materials	Yes	No	N/A
Student has a practice set of 5 or fewer alphabet cards. Student readily knows the names of 3 of the letters in the practice set.			
Student has access to a marker board or paper, and writing utensils.			
Interventionist has a sheet of Zaner-Bloser stroking pattern phrases and a recording sheet.			

Descriptor - Interventionist	Yes	No	N/A
Interventionist maintains an environment conducive to task completion (quiet, manages behavior issues, engages student, etc.)			
Interventionist follows the steps for implementing the strategy, including check-up, explaining, modeling, practicing, and review.			
The practice set flashcards seem appropriate for the student’s skill level.			
Interventionist scores the student responses accurately on the recording sheet.			
Interventionist assists the student if s/he has difficulty using the designated correction procedure.			
The intervention is conducted at a brisk pace at least 3 times per week for 10-15 minutes.			
Flashcards are moved out of the set at an appropriate time (after they are named correctly for at least 3 days) and new “unknown” cards are moved into the set.			
The practice set cards are practiced every time the student meets with the teacher; review cards are practiced once weekly.			
Student’s progress is monitored using the MAP “Reading Letter Identification” skills checklist assessment.			

Letter Naming/Three Ways to Remember Integrity Check Summary: _____ of _____ applicable components are observed.

Notes:

Zaner-Bloser Handwriting Manuscript Stroke Descriptions

Lower Case

a = Circle back all the way around; push up straight. Pull down straight.

b = Pull down straight; push up. Circle forward.

c = Circle back.

d = Circle back all the way around; push up straight. Pull down straight.

e = Slide right. Circle back.

f = Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right. Lift. Slide right; stop short.

g = Circle back all the way around; push up straight. Pull down straight; curve back.

h = Pull down straight. Push up; curve forward; pull down straight.

i = Pull down straight. Lift. Dot.

j = Pull down straight; curve back. Lift. Dot.

k = Pull down straight. Lift. Slant left. Slant right.

l = Pull down straight.

m = Pull down straight. Push up; curve forward; pull down straight. Push up; curve forward; pull down straight.

n = Pull down straight. Push up; curve forward; pull down straight.

o = Circle back all the way around.

p = Pull down straight. Push up. Circle forward all the way around.

q = Circle back all the way around; push up straight. Pull down straight; curve forward.

r = Pull down straight. Push up; curve forward.

s = Curve back; curve forward.

t = Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right.

u = Pull down straight; curve forward; push up. Pull down straight.

v = Slant right. Slant up.

w = Slant right. Slant up. Slant right. Slant up.

x = Slant right. Lift. Slant left.

y = Slant right. Lift. Slant left.

z = Slide right. Slant left. Slide right.

Zaner-Bloser Handwriting Manuscript Stroke Descriptions

Upper Case

A = Slant left. Lift. Slant right. Lift. Slide right.

B = Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right; curve forward; slide left. Slide right; curve forward; slide left.

C = Circle back.

D = Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right; curve forward; slide left.

E = Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right. Lift. Slide right; stop short. Lift. Slide right.

F = Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right. Lift. Slide right; stop short.

G = Circle back. Slide left.

H = Pull down straight. Lift. Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right.

I = Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right. Lift. Slide right.

J = Pull down straight; curve back. Lift. Slide right.

K = Pull down straight. Lift. Slant left. Slant right.

L = Pull down straight. Slide right.

M = Pull down straight. Lift. Slant right. Slant up. Pull down straight.

N = Pull down straight. Lift. Slant right. Push up straight.

O = Circle back all the way around.

P = Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right; curve forward; slide left.

Q = Circle back all the way around. Lift. Slant right.

R = Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right; curve forward; slide left. Slant right.

S = Curve back; curve forward.

T = Pull down straight. Lift. Slide right.

U = Pull down straight; curve forward; push up.

V = Slant right. Slant up.

W = Slant right. Slant up. Slant right. Slant up.

X = Slant right. Lift. Slant left.

Y = Slant right. Lift. Slant left. Pull straight down.

Z = Slide right. Slant left. Slide right.