Clay Observation Survey
Dictation

Select one of the two alternative sentences to use in this observation task. The child is given credit for every sound (phoneme) that he writes correctly, even though the whole word may not be correctly spelled. The scores give some indication of the child’s ability to analyze the word he hears or says and to find a way of recording in letters the sounds that he can hear.

Say to the child:

*I am going to read you a story. When I have read it through once, I will read it again very slowly so that you can write down the words in the story.*

Read the test sentence to the child at normal speed. Then say: Some of the words are hard. Say them slowly and think how you can write them. Start writing the words now.

Dictate slowly, word by word. When the child comes to a problem word say:
*You say it slowly. How would you start to write it? What can you hear?*

Then add: *What else can you hear?*

If the child cannot complete the word say: *We’ll leave that word. The next one is . . .*

When retesting use an alternative form to avoid practice effects.

**Recording**
Use the correct form for recording.

**Scoring**
Score one point for each sound (phoneme) the child has analyzed and recorded that is numbered 1 to 37 on the examples. Record the total out of 37 (Kindergarten) or 50 (Grade 1)

**Additions and omissions**
If a letter does not have a number underneath it in the scoring standards, then it receives no score (even if a preceding letter has been omitted). Additions do not affect scoring as long as numbered letters are included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>o</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

tody: Score 3
todae: Score 4

**Capital letters**
Capital letters are acceptable substitutions for lower case letters and vice versa.
**Substitutions**
Given what is being observed in this task it makes sense to accept a response when the sound analysis has been a useful one, even though the child has used graphemes which can record the sound but the spelling is incorrect.

Substitute letters are acceptable if the sound is sometimes recorded in that way. For example, *skool* for *school*, *tace* for *take*, *cum* for *come*, *bak* for *bake*, *toda* for *today*. However, in *vare* for *very*, the substitution *e* for *y* is acceptable, but the *a* for *e* is unacceptable.

**Changes in letter order**
Where the child has made a change in letter order take one point off for that word. For example: *ma* for *am*, mark 1 correct; *gonig* for *going*, mark 4 correct.

Reversed letters are not correct if they could represent a different letter. If the letter used never makes the sound(s) being recorded, the substitutions used count as errors, as in *dig/big* or *bog/dog*.

**Making notes on other observations**
It is important the observers also make notes on the following:
- Any sequencing errors
- The omission of sounds
- Unusual use of space on the page
- Unusual placement of letters within words
- Partially correct attempts
- And good confusions.

**Kindergarten**
**Form E**
The boy is riding his bike. He can go very fast on it.

**Kindergarten**
**Form F**
The boy is riding his bike. He can go very fast on it. He raced it around the track by school.

**Grade 1**
**Form G**
The farmer saw the black and white toy boat out on the water. It floated under the shiny steel bridge to a small beach.
Dictation Score Sheet Form E

Name: ___________________________ Date: ________________ Test Score /37

The boy is riding his bike. He can govern everything.

Fasten it.
The boy is riding his bike. He can go over every fast on it. He raced it around the track by school.
Dictation Score Sheet Form G

Name: _______________________________ Date: ________ Test Score ________ /50

The farmer saw the black

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
the farmer saw the black

13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22
and white toy boat out

23 24 25 26

on the water. It

o w a l

floated under the

27 28 29 30 31 32
fell ed u d

shiny steel bridge to a

33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44
shiny steel bridge to a

35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44

dge o a

g oo

dj

er

small beach.

45 46 47 48 49 50
small beach.
Dictation Score Sheet

Name: ___________________________ Date: ________________ Test Score □

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