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September 20, 2007

ED 412

Observation Survey Case Study

The *Observation Survey* was administered to Joe. Joe is in the first grade for the second time at Magruder Elementary School. The survey was given on September 20, 2007 at 8:45 AM. The following information was gathered.

The Letter Identification task proved to be rather simple for Joe. Joe knew the difference between capital and lowercase letters. He also was able to correctly identify 52 of the 54 letters by their alphabet name. This would put Joe at Stamina level five for the letter identification portion of the survey. Joe had trouble with the lowercase l and q. He thought that the l was the number one and that the letter q was a b.

For the Word Test Joe read the words from List A. Joe hesitated when he saw the list of words, but I reassured him that I just wanted to see how many he knew and that he may not know some of them at all. I also encouraged him to try the words but to skip them if he could not figure them out, since some of the words would be new to him. Joe performed really well on this task and correctly read 14 of the 20 words. This would place him at Stamina level 7 for the Word Test. Joe attempted to solve words by sounding them out by letter sounds and repeating the word once he figured out the sounds. Words that Joe had trouble with were pretty, down, after, little, what, and could. He completely skipped little and after, but made guesses for the rest. For pretty he said "prit", down he said "dawn", what he said "that", and could he said "called". Joe seemed to be using visual clues to help him figure out the words but did not focus on each section of the words he missed.

The Concepts about Print activity was an eye-opener for me. Joe breezed through the beginning activities in *No Shoes* but encountered seven different problems with print concepts. Joe

scored 17 out of 24 on the activity and a Stamina classification of 6. Joe did not notice when orders were changed. He did not see line order, word order, or letter order changes. He also did not know the meaning of a comma or quotation mark. For word identification on pages 18 and 19, Joe was able to point to *was*, but pointed to the word *on* when I asked him to point to *no*.

Written Vocabulary was not an easy activity for Joe. He wrote a couple words, hat and mat, without any prompting. Then he stopped and starred of into space. I prompted him to think about words he had seen in *No Shoes*, in the list of words, and even read the prompts from the prompt sheet. In all Joe was only able to write fifteen words correctly in ten minutes. He had a total of twenty one words on the sheet, but many were not correct. For example *and* was spelled b-a-n, *dog* was b-o-g, *cow* was caow, and *ocean* was osnin. I should not have made him continue beyond the first five minutes or so, but I honestly thought he would be able to do more words. His list places him at Stamina level 3 for Writing Vocabulary.

Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words was not a very hard task for Joe. He used the sounds of the words to really guide his writing. I repeated the phrase back to him slowly so that he had time to write each word, and he even sounded out the word quietly as he spelled it. This helped him check to make sure he was writing the correct letters. The sample he gave read “the bus is cuning it wilu stop hin too let ime get on”. I found that he had 33 of the 37 sounds for the phrases. This put him at Stamina level 7 for his ability to hear and record sounds in words.

Based on the results of the *Observation Survey* Joe has a range of Stamina scores from 3 to 7. Joe scored a 5 on the letter identification, 7 on the word test, 6 on the concepts about print, 3 on the writing vocabulary, and a 7 on the dictation task. One can easily see that Joe does not have a large writing vocabulary in his memory. He is able to use letter sounds and word sounds to read words and write phrases, but he does not recall the words from rote memory. He knows the alphabet for the most part and understands how to read a text, but he fails to pay close visual attention to the text at times.

Despite his mistakes, I think that Joe is at an average level for first graders at the beginning of the school year.

One major thing that should be done with Joe is make sure that he really looks at all the letters in a word and all of the words in a sentence. One way to ensure that he does is to have him use his finger to point to words and to have him sound out words that he is reading. Prompting him to give each of the sounds and then combine them. I would have Joe box words during small group reading. I would also have Joe practice writing words that he knows, journals during center time will allow him to develop his vocabulary and share some of the vocabulary he may forget he knows.

Additionally, I would have Joe practice using new words in the context of verbal discussions. By modeling the usage of the terms, he will begin to make associations about the meaning of the word and will be able to connect the word in his writing. In order to correct the problems Joe had with recognizing letters, I would have him practice with the alphabet. He could do handwriting activities and word sorts to help him with identifying letters, their sounds, and words they are in. He could also use dry erase boards to practice writing phrases that contain the problem letters during one of the centers. Modeling the letters during guided reading discussions would also help him see what the letter should look like and what words it is associated with. Joe scored relatively well on most of his tests, so the main topic to focus on would be to develop his vocabulary.