National Center on
INTENSIVE INTERVENTION
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Education Programs

Letter Sound Identification 3: Beat the Clock

College- and Career-Ready Standard Addressed: K3a.

Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter sound correspondences by producing the most common sound for each vowel and consonant.

Objective: Students will build fluency in identifying known letter sounds.

Materials
- Cards with letter sounds that the student has learned in previous instructional sessions and can identify accurately (see attached sample).   - One-minute timer.   - Beat-the-Clock activity sheet (one per pair if using partners).   - Use common, frequently used sounds, such as /m/, /t/, /s/, /i/, /d/, /r/, /o/, /g/, /f/, /l/.   - Letter sound cards from previous lessons, but remove /a/ (or earliest-learned sound) and add /l/ (or other recently learned sound).

Suggested Schedule and Group Size
Schedule: Daily, approximately 5 minutes to 10 minutes per session.   **Recommended group size:** Small group (up to five students).   **Note:** The following script is intended as a model.

Activity

Intervention Principle	Sample Script and Procedures
Preview the lesson using precise, simple language.	**Today, we're going to play a game called "Beat the Clock" to see how quickly and correctly you can say the sounds you've been learning.** **Saying sounds quickly and correctly will help you read words. What will saying sounds quickly and correctly help you do?** *(Students respond: Read words.)* **First, let's review the sounds you've learned so far.** *(Show cards with sounds students already know.)* *Introduce the new sound by saying:* **Today, I have added the new sound /lll/.** *(Show card with the /l/ on it.)* **What sound?** *(Student should say the sound.)*

Adapted with permission from The University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2004). *Reading strategies and activities resource book for students at risk for reading difficulties, including dyslexia* (pp. 160–166). Austin, TX: Author.

Provide repeated opportunities for practice with feedback.	*Review all sounds again, including the new sound, by showing each card and asking: What sound? The students should identify each sound correctly.*
Provide concrete learning opportunities (including use of manipulatives).	**Now we'll play our Beat the Clock game! You will play with a partner to practice saying sounds as quickly as you can.** *Assign partners and have students sit side-by-side. Each student should have one Beat the Clock activity sheet in front of him or her.*
	When I say, "Begin," one partner should practice saying all the sounds in the first column without the timer. Your partner can help you if you need it. Ready? Begin. *Have the partner who is the weaker reader practice first.*
Use precise, simple language to teach procedures, and model as needed. Provide opportunities for practice.	*When students have had a chance to practice, say:* **Now, I'm going to set the timer for one minute. The same partner who just practiced will say the sounds on the page as quickly and correctly as he or she can. If you finish the page before time is up, go back to the top and start again. Your partner can help you if you need it. Demonstrate, if needed.**
	Are you ready? Begin. *Wait for the timer to go off.* **Nice job practicing your sounds. Count how many you were able to read, and write that number next to "Timing #1" on your paper.** *Pause while students count and record.*
	Now, you will try to beat your score by reading even more sounds in one minute. Write your goal number of sounds here. *(Point to the paper and pause while they write their goals.)*
	Are you ready for Timing #2? *Pause.* **Begin.**
	After the timer goes off, say, **Count your sounds and write your score on your paper. Did you beat your goal?**
	Now, it's your partner's turn to try to beat the clock! *Repeat instructions as needed.*

Error Correction	
Intervention Principle	**Sample Script and Procedures**
Provide immediate and explicit error correction. Have the student practice the correct response.	• *During initial practice, correct errors by saying,* **That's not quite right. This sound is /lll/. What sound?**
	• *During timings, listen for errors with specific sounds and review those sound cards between timings.*

Instructional Considerations	
Intervention Principle	**Sample Script and Procedures**
	- Start with a small number of sounds and increase the number as students develop accuracy with new sounds.
	- Take turns playing the game with individual students so that you can listen for errors and provide immediate feedback.
	- Have students graph their scores so they can track their improvement over time.

Letter Cards (Cut out and use for review as needed.)

a	b	c	d	e
f	g	h	i	j
k	l	m	n	o
p	q	r	s	t
u	v	w	x	y
z				

Name:

_____

Beat-the-Clock

Letter sounds /m/, /t/, /s/, /i/, /d/, /r/, /o/, /g/, /f/, /l/

m	t	s	i
d	r	o	g
f	l	r	s
m	g	d	i
t	f	i	d
s	l	s	r
i	l	t	o
d	f	m	g
r	g	m	f
o	o	t	l

Timing #1: Total letter sounds in one minute: _____

Goal for Timing #2: _____ letter sounds in one minute

Timing #2: Total letter sounds in one minute: _____