

EXAMPLE PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Student Identification Information

Student Name: Judy Smith
Birthdate: DATE, 1997
Current Age: 18 years, 0 months
Grade: 11
School: Gotham School
Assessment Dates: May 27, 2015
Date of Report: June 30, 2015
Assessment Completed By: XXXX Psychologist

Reason For Referral

Judy was referred for a psycho-educational assessment by the Gotham School Learning Support team due to concerns related to Judy's low performance in school, despite direct support and accommodated programming. Specifically, school staff noted difficulties in math, as well as reduced effort to complete tasks across subject areas. A formal assessment was requested in order to help determine Judy's strengths and needs in order to provide the most appropriate support.

Relevant Background Information:

The information in the background section was gathered through a comprehensive file review, and interviews with Judy, teachers, and other relevant school staff.

Judy is an 18 year 2 month old female in grade 11 at Gotham School. Presently, Judy is living independently with her twin sibling in a rented suite for the duration of the school year. Until the onset of her grade 11 year, Judy experienced extreme inconsistency in where and with whom she resided, moving between friends and family members numerous times from elementary school onwards. Judy reported that she was born between 6-8 weeks premature, at a very low birth weight, via cesarean section and that she and her twin sister nearly asphyxiated, resulting in a 3-month hospital stay. She indicated that they were then released with no concerns, and that she met developmental milestones within an acceptable range. No major illnesses were reported, and Judy stated that she underwent eye surgery at 5 years of age, to resolve amblyopia (commonly called lazy eye) in her left eye. She indicated that her vision is strong in her left eye but that she is farsighted in her right eye and should wear classes to correct this issue; however, she does not currently have a prescription and does not wear glasses. A record of mental health and behavioural concerns involving maternal and paternal family members was noted, as was a history of mental health support for Judy. NAME, a Registered Psychologist with SCHOOL BOARD, completed a psychoeducational assessment in May 2009. That report indicated that Judy required a modified curriculum to support her cognitive challenges and stated that Judy demonstrated attention difficulties, fine motor delays, and poor achievement in math. School staff described Judy as creative, sensitive, and extremely resilient. Judy reported that she enjoys going on the computer to play games and view websites like Tumblr, watching television, listening to music or playing videogames. Judy stated that she enjoys some aspects of school, such as art class and language arts, and being able to talk to her friends.

Assessment Data

- File review
- Adolescent and Teacher interview
- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scales – Fourth Edition: Canadian (WAIS–IV)
- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Third Edition (KTEA-3)
- Behaviour Assessment System for Children – Second Edition (BASC-2)
 - Teacher and Self-Report Rating Scales - Adolescent; Ages 12-21
- Conners Rating Scales – Third edition (Conners-3)
 - Self-Report Rating Scales; Ages 8-18

Judy presented as friendly, expressive and cooperative during the assessment. Rapport was easy to establish, and Judy appeared comfortable with the assessment process. All rating scale validity indexes were within acceptable limits. As such, the writer believes this assessment to be an accurate indication of Judy's current functioning.

Assessment Results:

Information Processing/Attention

Past report cards indicate that Judy consistently struggled with organization, focus, and school engagement across grade levels. However, teacher comments noted that Judy was "keen to learn" and made significant progress across subject areas when she "applied herself." In high school, individualized program plans recommended that specialized seating and access to technology be put in place to support Judy in her learning.

Judy reported that she is able to follow what her teachers say in the classroom, but that she is aware of her tendency to become easily distracted by her peers. She noted that she feels she can be quite impulsive, and that she is quite forgetful. Judy suggested that she needs lots of repetition in order to remember information and she reported experiencing great difficulty on tests that require her to retain material that was covered throughout the entire year.

Judy was observed to frequently move as she sat in a chair during testing. She would often fidget with items placed on the table, such as a pencil, and repetitively moved her foot back and forth under the table. However, she appeared to maintain her concentration across the various assessment tasks, to the best of her abilities. Further, she willingly took breaks between activities. On tasks that involved detailed instructions, Judy consistently asked for directions to be repeated and she was observed to work slowly and draw visuals on tasks that included multiple steps.

Working memory is an important component of higher-order reasoning, and impacts both learning and achievement. Judy's ability to learn, retain, and manipulate verbally presented information in short term memory fell at the 9th percentile. This indicates that Judy will experience difficulty when she is expected to consciously hold information in her short-term memory long enough to complete an activity. Judy's ability to quickly and efficiently complete visual cognitive tasks under time constraints fell at the 8th percentile, suggesting that she requires additional time in order to encode and/or retrieve knowledge. Both Judy and her teachers indicated that she struggles with tasks that require her to maintain her attention while attending to multiple instructions, and that it is difficult for her to shift her attention between alternating task demands. While criteria for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder was not met, Judy was observed to utilize a number of positive strategies in order to support her ability to sustain her attention and complete tasks. It is likely that Judy has developed efficient strategies as she has aged,

and that she readily employs these within the classroom in order to keep to the pace of instruction and better maintain her focus across various tasks.

Reading, Writing, Math

Judy's file indicates that she received early intervention support for literacy and numeracy, as well as speech and language, occupational therapy and physical therapy support. Recommendations from a psycho-educational assessment include the implementation of a modified curriculum that utilizes repetition and multi-sensory approaches. Over the last two years, Judy has participated in various school programs including distance learning, and outreach placements, where she was able to work at her own pace. Teacher reports suggest that Judy has struggled academically since grade 1, with noticeable improvement in her literacy skills throughout elementary. Additionally, report card comments suggest that incomplete or absent assignments consistently reduced Judy's achievement across subject areas.

Judy indicated that she is happy with her performance in school and that art and language arts appealed to her. Math was specified as an area of difficulty, with Judy reporting that she cannot understand certain concepts, like algebra. However, Judy expressed that she has achieved higher grades this year than any other school year and she attributed this to her willingness to "try to do better." Judy explained that she does find school to be boring at times, and that she feels more motivated when work is "hands on" and relevant to her interests. Teachers indicated that Judy has demonstrated strong effort over this past school year, and that she has experienced a lot of progress as a result. However, Judy's teachers reported concerns with a lack of handing in complete assignments and the impact that this has had on her performance across subject areas.

Judy was observed to complete tasks that involved reading and writing efficiently, and appeared to be confident in her abilities during these activities. While Judy willingly completed written tasks, she was able to express herself more effectively and creatively when allowed to verbally respond to questions. On math tasks, Judy utilized a number of strategies, such as drawing visuals or breaking questions down into steps. However, she indicated numerous times that math was an area of weakness for her and that she was less self-assured in her math skills than other academic skills.

Cognitively, Judy's ability to understand, process, and use verbal language to communicate and engage in verbal reasoning fell at the 50th percentile. Judy's reading achievement at the 42nd percentile is consistent with her verbal comprehension, indicating that she is capable of recognizing sight words and comprehending text. Additionally, Judy is capable of integrating past learning and experience into her cognitive schema, suggesting a relative strength in her ability to retain facts and general knowledge. Judy's overall writing ability at the 21st percentile suggests that she has typically developed written expression and spelling skills, though she has some difficulty developing sentences with appropriate structure and punctuation. Her ability to process and reason with visual information fell at the 8th percentile, with her performance on math tasks falling at the 1st percentile. Judy struggled on tasks that involved computation, as well as on tasks that involved the understanding of various math concepts and applications. Specifically, Judy experienced difficulty on math equations that required borrowing and multiple steps. Judy demonstrated more success on math tasks that involved applied skills such as budgeting and money. Her performance across cognitive and academic tasks indicates that Judy is capable of accessing curriculum that involves reading and writing tasks, with minor support. However, she will struggle in tasks that require her to process information spatially and through imagery, such as in math.

Resiliency

Attendance records across Judy's schooling indicate a severe pattern of absenteeism, in addition to substantial instructional and curricular inconsistency as a result of Judy moving across different schools and school districts. Elementary report cards consistently note that Judy demonstrated unpredictable effort, but that she appeared to be interested in her learning when topics were relevant and/or personally interesting to her. A number of risk factors for reduced academic motivation have been present throughout Judy's schooling experience, including personal, peer, family, and school climate dynamics.

Judy highlighted that she has been committed to school this year, and that she has observed the rewards of her increased effort. Additionally, Judy is aware that she has established positive relationships with school staff, and gets along with her teachers. Further, Judy noted that since moving to the community of Gotham she has met a number of people that she has established strong friendships with. Judy noted that although she can be a "troublemaker," she feels that she is direct and able to say what is on her mind and that her sister is also a strong voice for her. Judy highlighted willpower as a personal strength, along with feeling secure and content in regards to who she is as a person. Judy reported that she gets along with people, and is able to "find the good" across different situations and past experiences. Judy shared a number of personal goals, including finishing school and getting a diploma. Judy further noted that she has future goals to attend post-secondary school and that she is currently interested in pursuing a career in early childhood education or forensic sciences.

Judy displayed a strong sense of self-reflection and self-awareness in regards to her effort in school. Judy appeared to be truthful and realistic when discussing her strengths, weaknesses and motivation towards her academic achievement. As tasks became increasingly challenging, Judy was willing to attempt a response and did not give up easily.

The Learning Support Teacher indicated that Judy portrays a number of symptoms characteristic of internalizing problems, such as anxiety and depression. However, she also noted that Judy has a strong ability to adapt to new situations, positive social interactions, and displays leadership qualities. Judy indicated that she is aware of her inner feelings and the impact these have on her external behaviours. Additionally, Judy indicated that she has strong interpersonal skills, is able to adapt to new situations and generally feels good about her abilities across home and school settings.

Summary

Judy is a very articulate and mature adolescent, who is very self-aware and appears motivated to succeed in school in order to graduate. Judy's ability to reason using verbal information over visual information may suggest that her knowledge acquired through accumulated experience and her retrieval of verbal information is more developed than her ability to utilize non-verbal reasoning skills. Reduced processing speed and working memory indicate that Judy may have difficulty when she is required to encode and efficiently retrieve newly learned material, and that she may benefit from the opportunity to explain her understanding of various concepts verbally. Academically, Judy experienced difficulty across math tasks and in expressing her ideas through writing; however, she demonstrated relatively strong reading skills and spelling ability. Given these difficulties, Judy is currently meeting DSM-5 coding criteria for a **Written Expression (315.2; due to current weaknesses in accuracy, clarity and organization of written output)**. Based on this current assessment, Judy's difficulties should be considered

moderate to severe. It will be important to utilize Judy's strengths working with verbal information, as well as her motivation to succeed, in order to support her academic performance in the classroom.

Recommendations:

Judy continues to require support to function at her potential. Based on the results of the present assessment, strategies and recommendations are made below. These recommendations are some suggestions that may assist Judy and are not intended to be an exhaustive list. Accommodations to support difficulties in the context of Judy's learning are recommended/should be continued. These may include:

- A reader for tests and exams.
- Quiet environment during tests and exams.
- Additional time to complete tests and exams.
- Allow Judy to take brief breaks during tests and exams, if needed.
- Testing in an alternative format to writing (scribe, audio recording etc.)
- Access to assistive technology supports

1. Use verbal Strategies

- a. Given Judy' relatively stronger verbal comprehension abilities, presenting information and concepts verbally will likely facilitate her understanding and consolidation of the information.
 - i. Encourage Judy to engage in self talk when walking through a problem or to use verbally based strategies (such as mnemonics) along with visuals to assist her comprehension of topics.
 - ii. Use clear and brief instructions that are sequential.

2. Math

- a. Provide Judy with prompts while she works through math problems. These can serve as visual reminders to help Judy keep track of different steps.
- b. Encourage Judy to use pictures or other visual cues when solving a problem.
- c. Provide a calculator to help Judy work out basic math facts.
- d. Encourage Judy to practice her math calculation skills through applied and real life situations that involve money, budgeting, etc.

3. Writing

- a. Offer a number of strategies to assist Judy with her writing and discuss/work with her to decide which supports are most useful. Consider the following supports:
 - i. Visualization: Judy could close her eyes and imagine the topic she is going to write about, including details about who, what, when, where, why and how, can help her get started.
 - ii. Rehearsal: Judy should be encouraged to discuss what she is going to write about before writing.
 - iii. Graphic Organizers/Digital Tools: Using story webs, conceptual maps, or charts may help Judy organize her thoughts and she can use these to refer to while writing.
 - iv. Reading Aloud: once Judy is done writing, it may be helpful if she reads what she has written aloud to see the flow, logic, and clarity of what has been written and where mistakes may have been made.

- b. Teach and reinforce the use of editing strategies in writing, checklists may be beneficial in this process

4. Cognitive Efficiency

- a. Provide direct instruction so Judy knows exactly what she needs to do
- b. Repeat instructions often, even if she does not ask
- c. Provide short, simple instructions and allow Judy to complete one step before proceeding to the next one
- d. Provide Judy with time to process and rehearse instructions and information
- e. Provide a quiet environment during learning tasks that put significant demands on Judy's working memory (e.g., reading comprehension, math problem solving)
- f. Teach Judy how to use memory and visual aids so that she can focus on the task at hand; encourage her to use these aids during various learning tasks
- g. Provide scaffolding: model the task or skill, provide guided practice, offer feedback

Homework/Assignment Considerations:

1. Help Judy make the link between previous lessons and new information by reviewing previous lessons and making learning expectations explicit and concrete.
2. To ensure that Judy can properly process and follow instructions when completing schoolwork in the classroom and at home, it will be helpful for the assignments to be broken down step by step to promote Judy's success with completing tasks. Include short, simple instructions that allow Judy to complete one step before proceeding to the next one.
3. Provide Judy with a timetable/schedule for tasks. Teach Judy to monitor and organize the time spent on tasks. It may be beneficial to set specific times for homework with breaks built into this schedule. Also, the use of checklists and organizers will help Judy plan for her homework and support the completion of tasks.
4. Use planners and homework books. Check these on a regular basis to ensure completion.

It was a pleasure to have had the opportunity to work with Judy. Please contact me if I can be of further assistance.

The contents of this report were shared with Judy and the school on June 17, 2015.

XXX

Year/Month/Day

Appendix A: Assessment Outcome Scores

In the following appendices, assessment outcome scores are provided in both composite scale and subtest score form. **The following scores must always be interpreted in collaboration, preferably with the authors of the present report, or with a licensed psychological professional.**

In addition to composite scale and subtest scores, Percentile Rank (PR) is used in comparing an individual's score to the scores of others similar to his or her (i.e. similar in age and school grade). Each particular assessment instrument has its own PRs that can be used to compare one's performance with similar individuals. PRs provide a score denoting the percentage of children/adults achieving a score that is less than or equal to an individual's score. Thus, a PR of 96 means that the score is in the top 4 percent of the many individuals who took the particular assessment instrument when it was developed (these individuals are referred to as the norm group). The PR should not be interpreted to mean the percentage of questions the individual answered correctly. A PR between the 25th and 75th percentile signifies ability in the average range. A PR above 85 is considered to be a personal strength whereas a PR below 11 is considered to be an area in need of support.

Furthermore, confidence intervals (CIs) are used to assist in understanding an individual's composite scale and subtest scores, as well as his or her PRs. A confidence interval (CI) is an interval between two numbers with an associated probability; confidence intervals are the most prevalent form of interval estimation. In this context, the 95% confidence intervals are reported for each of the scores presented. Put simply, approximately 95% of the time, we expect that the individual's score will fall between the two numbers given in the CI. As we cannot predict a score with 100% accuracy (as many factors influence how they will perform in an assessment session), there is always some variability in their scores and this potential variability is reflected in the CIs.

Appendix B: Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, Fourth Edition (WAIS-IV)

The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – 4th edition (WAIS-IV) is a standardized intelligence test consisting of a series of ten core subtests designed to measure the intellectual functioning of an individual as compared to others of the same age. A Full Scale Intelligence Quotient (FSIQ) is derived from the combined results of the core subtests. The WAIS-IV also provides four factor-based scores, including Verbal Comprehension, Perceptual Reasoning, Working Memory and Processing Speed. Canadian norms were used to score this measure.

Composite Scale Scores Summary

Composite Scale	Std Score	95% CI	Percentile	Classification
Verbal Comprehension Index	100	94-106	50	Average
Perceptual Reasoning Index	79	74-86	8	Borderline
Working Memory Index	80	74-88	9	Low Average
Processing Speed Index	79	73-89	8	Borderline
Full Scale IQ	82	78-86	12	Low Average

Subtest Scores (S.S.) Summary

	<u>Verbal Comprehension Scale</u>	<u>Scaled Score</u>
<u>Subtest</u>	<u>Ability & Background Factors Measured</u>	
Similarities	Abstract verbal reasoning, associative thinking, and categorization skills	8
Vocabulary	Word knowledge, verbal reasoning, and expressive language skills	11
Information	Ability to acquire, retain, and retrieve general factual knowledge	11
	<u>Perceptual Reasoning Scale</u>	
<u>Subtest</u>	<u>Ability & Background Factors Measured</u>	
Block Design	Abstract non-verbal reasoning, deductive reasoning - working from the whole to the parts	6
Matrix Reasoning	Visual information processing and abstract reasoning skills	6
Visual Puzzles	Nonverbal reasoning, ability to analyze and synthesize abstract visual stimuli	7
	<u>Working Memory Scale</u>	
<u>Subtest</u>	<u>Ability & Background Factors Measured</u>	
Digit Span	Short term auditory memory, sequencing skills, attention and concentration	8
Arithmetic	Mental manipulation, concentration, attention, and numerical reasoning	5
	<u>Processing Speed Scale</u>	
<u>Subtest</u>	<u>Ability & Background Factors Measured</u>	
Coding	Ability to learn new visual relationships quickly, psychomotor speed, visual short-term memory, learning ability, visual-motor coordination, attention	7
Symbol Search	Ability to discriminate between visual details, perceptual speed, visual short-term memory	5

Appendix C: Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Third Edition (KTEA-3)

The Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement – Third Edition (KTEA-3) is a standardized test of achievement and functioning. The KTEA-3 is an individually administered measure that examines performance in the areas of Reading, Mathematics, and Written Language. Scores in each of these domains are then combined to provide an overall academic skills achievement score.

Composite Standard Scores Summary

Subtest or Composite	Standard Score	90% CI	Percentile	Classification
READING				
Reading Composite	97	92-102	42	Average
Letter and Word Recognition	91	87-95	14	Average
Reading Comprehension	104	96-112	61	Average
WRITTEN LANGUAGE				
Written Expression	88	81-95	21	Low Average
Written Expression	84	74-94	14	Low Average
Spelling	94	87-101	34	Average
MATHEMATICS				
Mathematics Composite	65	62-68	1	Extremely Low
Math Concepts and Application	69	65-73	2	Extremely Low
Math Computation	65	61-69	1	Extremely Low
ACADEMIC SKILLS BATTERY				
	80	77-83	9	Low Average

Please note: for ease of comparison, qualitative descriptors used for classification are consistent with those on the WAIS-IV.