

Diagnostic Assessment Considerations for Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired

Note: Before any Diagnostic assessments are conducted, a Functional Vision Evaluation (FVE) and Learning Media Assessment (LMA) by the Certified Teacher for the Visually Impaired must be completed. This will assure that the appropriate testing accommodations and modifications are made during the Diagnostic assessments.

Cognitive Assessment

Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-III (Verbal section)

- Scores may be underestimated in the Similarities and Comprehension ability-abstract concepts because they are very concept laden and are difficult for young students who are blind or visually impaired
- Scores may somewhat overestimate ability-if verbal skills are rote
- Necessary to probe any questionable responses
- According to Sattler, the Information, Comprehension, Arithmetic, Similarities and Vocabulary subtest questions can be shown to the student. (Assessment of Children Cognitive Applications Fourth Edition, page 260).
- Students who are blind or visually impaired tend to score high on Digit Span and Information
- Some of the supplemental tests can be substituted for Similarities and Comprehension to obtain a better indication of a student's IQ
- The score may also be prorated
- May supplement with Blind Learning Aptitude Scale (nonverbal)
- May supplement with Detroit Test of Learning Aptitude (3 subtests)

Detroit Test of Learning Aptitude, Fourth Edition

- Use only the four verbal subtests
- Scores correlate well with the verbal subtests of the Wechsler scales supplementing the verbal comprehension index by providing a wider view of the student's skills.
- Research supports the use of these items with students who are blind or visually impaired

Basic Reading Rate Scale: Braille Edition or Large Type

- Reading rate assessed
- Norm-referenced
- No adaptations required

Curriculum-Based Measurement

- Progress in reading
- Curriculum-based
- No adaptations required

Diagnostic Reading Scales

- Word analysis; comprehension; oral & silent reading levels
- Norm-referenced; criterion-referenced
- APH Braille transcription or large print edition

Informal Assessment of Developmental Skills

- Readiness for Braille; reading behaviors; Braille unit recognition; word analysis, spelling
- Informal checklist
- No adaptations required

Stanford Achievement Test

- Word study skills, Vocabulary, Comprehension, math concepts, computation, application
 - Norm-referenced
 - Braille transcription or large print
 - Available from APH; see NMSBVI IRC for ordering information

Steps for Meaningful Counting

- Meaningful counting
 - Informal measure
 - No adaptations required

Slosson Intelligence Test-Revised

- Norm-referenced
- Adapted for large print users
- Could easily be adapted for Braille users

Hillerich's High-Frequency Word List

- Spelling
 - Informal wordlist
 - No adaptations required

Basic School Skills Inventory-Diagnostic

- Spoken language
 - Norm-referenced
 - 2 items require vision

Battelle Developmental Inventory

- Communication domain
 - Norm-referenced
 - 3 items require vision

Diagnostic Achievement Battery

- Listening, speaking
- Norm-referenced
- No adaptations required

Differential Ability Scales

- Word Definitions, Similarities, Recall of Digits

Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Fourth EditionWechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence**Norm-Referenced Achievement Tests**

Keymath: The older version is available in Braille

- Use as a point of reference, as many items are omitted when transcribed into Braille or put in Large Print format

Wide Range Achievement Test transcribed into Braille and large print

- Use as a point of reference, as many items are omitted when transcribed into Braille or put in Large Print format

Battelle Developmental Inventory (up to age 8)

- May provide some limited information
- Five domains: Cognitive, Communication, Motor, Adaptive, and Personal-Social
- Some items cannot be adapted for blind children
- Motor and Personal-Social domains have largest number of items that do not require vision

Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement –III

- Available in large print through American Printing House for the Blind (APH): to order, visit the NMSBVI IRC web page
- Braille is pending
- These have been field tested on students with visual impairments and Dr. Richard Woodcock worked with APH to make accommodations and substitute items for the students who use Braille.
- Use caution when using with young students; there are a limiting number of low-level items on some of the tests

Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT)

- The WRAT has a history of scoring all students, including those who are blind or visually impaired, higher than their functionally demonstrated abilities.
- Provides only a narrow view of the math and reading abilities of students who are blind or visually impaired

Blind Learning Aptitude Test

- When using this instrument, take care, the norming on this is from 1971; the ability expectations for students who are blind or visually impaired has changed greatly since then.
- Helpful as a tool to identify strengths and weaknesses

Criterion-Referenced Tests

Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills

- Covers Kindergarten through Grade 9
- Areas assessed include readiness skills, reading, mathematics, written expression, and some listening skills
- Examiner needs to know Braille if tactile supplement is used

Informal Assessment of Development Skills

- Designed for VI children
- Skills cover K-12
- Areas assessed include Visual Functioning, Unique Academic Needs, Orientation and Mobility, Vocational Skills, and Behavior
- Checklists (informal measure)
- Some checklists require Braille reading

Brigance Diagnostic Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills

- Detailed word analysis, word recognition, speaking, and listening
 - Criterion-referenced
 - No adaptations required
- Number concepts, fact, operations, measurement, vocabulary
 - APH tactile supplement

Revised Brigance Inventory of Early Development

- Readiness; phonics; word recognition, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, writing letters and envelopes,
- self-help skills
 - Criterion-referenced
 - APH Tactile supplement
- Math concepts, reading Braille numbers, numeral comprehension
 - APH Tactile supplement

Revised Brigance Inventory of Basic Skills

- Speech and Language Skills
 - Criterion-referenced
 - APH tactile supplement

Dolch/Sight Words

Sight words can be obtained in Braille and large print

(American Printing House for the Blind-visit the NMSBVI IRC page for ordering information)

Assessment of Adaptive Behavior

When conducting assessments of adaptive behavior for students who are blind or visually impaired, consider the following:

- Orderliness is critical for VI students (keeping specific places for things and returning materials to their place)
- Use both parent(s) and teacher as informants (will probably be discrepant)
- Social Interaction
 - Lack of facial orientation toward speaker
 - Lack of facial expressions or gestures
 - Self-stimulation when bored, excited, or stressed such as eye pressing, rocking, finger flicking, spinning themselves or objects, head rolling, and light gazing.

Scales of Independent Behavior-Short Form-VI.

- This scale lends itself very well for students who are more cognitively capable.

Adaptive Behavior Scale-School/Parent, Second Edition

- Use with teacher and parents as information source
- Covers K-12
- Use with care when testing students confined to wheelchairs; this may restrict their ability to demonstrate success on this scale

Adaptive Behavior Inventory

- Minimal adjustments required
- Norm-referenced

Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale

- Use when parent is an informant
- Likely to underestimate skills
- Covers K-12
- Used to include a supplemental section for scoring students who are blind and visually impaired, but has since been removed

Basic School Skills Inventory-Diagnostic

- Daily Living Skills
- Norm-referenced
- 3 items require adaptation

Battelle Developmental Inventory

- Adaptive domain
- Norm-referenced
- Minimal adjustments for school-age students

Informal Assessment of Developmental Skills

- Self-help skills
- Informal checklist
- No adaptations required

Infants, Toddlers & Preschoolers:Bailey Scales of Infant Development

- Infant behavior record section
- Informal rating scale
- Only 1 item requires vision

Revised Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development

- General Social and Emotional development sections
 - Criterion-referenced
 - 8 of the 36 items requires some vision
- Play Skills; Work-Related Behavior
 - 7 of the 35 items require vision
- Speech and Language
 - APH Tactile Supplement
- General Knowledge & Comprehension
 - APH Tactile Supplement

Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers with Special Needs

- Self-Direction; Social Skills sections
 - Curriculum-based
 - Adaptations suggested in manual
- Functional Use of Objects
 - Adaptations suggested in manual
- Language
 - None required
- Cognitive
 - Adaptations suggested in manual

Informal Assessment of Developmental Skills

- Social-Emotional sections
 - Informal checklist
 - No adaptations
- Language
 - No adaptations required
- Cognitive
 - No adaptations required

Ordinal Scales of Psychological Development

- Schemes for Objects
 - 1 item requires vision
- Construction of Objects in Space
 - 11 items require vision
 - 8 could be adapted
- Vocal Imitation
 - Domain-referenced
 - No adaptations required
- All scales
 - 5 of the 7 scales require vision
 - Adaptations not given in manual

Revised Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development

- Gross Motor Skills; Fine Motor Skills
 - APH Tactile Supplement
- Self-Help Skills
 - No adaptations required

Informal Assessment of Developmental Skills

- Psychomotor
 - No adaptations required
- Self-Help Skills
 - No adaptations required

Basic School Skills Inventory-Diagnostic

- Scored by observation
- Problematic items
 - Folding paper
 - Cut with scissors
 - Telling time by looking at a clock
 - Each of these can be adapted
- Only three areas to use
 - Daily Living Skills
 - Spoken Language
 - Classroom Behavior