

Evaluation Sample
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Speech and Language Evaluation

Name: Joseph

D.O. E.: November 2007

D.O.B.:

Examiner: XXXXXXXXXX

Background Information

Joseph is a 15 year old student who participates in the ABA Classroom at the XXXXX Middle School. His primary diagnosis is autism, which affects every aspect of language and learning. Joseph has a brain cyst along with a history of seizures. His complete medical and school history is available in past reports. Joseph's last evaluation was completed in May of 2005, through the XXXXXXXX Public Schools. At that time, his language skills were assessed using the Assessment of Basic Language and Learner Skills (ABLLS). The ABLLS is a checklist that looks at basic skills in many functional areas. At that time, Joseph was able make familiar requests using a 4 word utterance with minimal cues, vocal imitation was a relative strength, answered familiar questions and used articles/verbs/regular plurals in his speech. This evaluation is part of the 3-year reevaluation process.

Joseph currently receives speech and language services 3 times a week in a one on one setting. Usually a teaching assistant is present to assure maintenance of behavioral protocol. Current goals and objectives focus on developing receptive and expressive abilities and improving pragmatic understanding and use.

Test Behavior

Joseph was able to participate in some formalized testing which was wonderful. Testing took place during regular therapy time. We tried to pick days when Joseph was more focused. Test items were presented in short periods often in between familiar activities.

Since I see Joseph for therapy, I was able to provide some needed and appropriate accommodations to help him succeed during testing. This mainly consisted of cueing Joseph for attention, repetition and providing an initial sound cue to aid word retrieval

His performance was inconsistent and validity was always in question. However, it is felt that Joseph's correct responses on vocabulary testing reflect his abilities. It is questionable if some incorrect responses were incorrect because of attention (auditory or visual) or true lack of knowledge. When using pictures to assess more involved students it's always a question as to whether the concept/word can be truly represented in a picture (especially actions).

Tests Administered

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-4 (PPVT)

Expressive Vocabulary Test-2 EVT

Test of Auditory Comprehension-original edition 1973

Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals-4 (CELF)-pragmatic profile

Test Results

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-4 measures understanding of single spoken words. It is designed for students age 2:0 to Adult. The student is presented a page with 4 pictures and given a word cue. The student must pick the picture that represents the word given. Test items 1-72 were presented to Joseph. We did a practice session with an older version of the test a few days before. Joseph did a very good job, initially at looking at all 4 pictures. When analyzing his correct responses, he was initially very successful identifying simple nouns. His identifications of actions was less than 50%. He only identified 1 adjective out of 5. Overall, Joseph completed 28 out of 72 items correctly. A checklist of his performance was created with this test so future performance can be compared.

The Expressive Vocabulary Test measures expressive vocabulary knowledge. It is designed for students age 2:6 to Adult. The student is given a picture cue and basically asked to "What is this?" or "What is he doing?" Test items 1-62 were administered. Joseph completed 46 out of 62 trials correctly. However, on many test items Joseph was given an initial sound cue to aid word retrieval and/or general response. By providing the cue to Joseph he was able to demonstrate a greater understanding of word knowledge. A checklist of his performance was created with this test so future performance can be compared.

The Test of Language Competence (TACL) looks at the students ability to recognize words and concepts. The updated version of this test would not have been appropriate for Joseph so the original (and very old) version of the TACL was given. Joseph was able to identify simple and familiar nouns. He identified big/little correctly (worked on recently in therapy and in class). He demonstrated difficulty with concepts such as pair, fast, some, many, second and half. He had difficulty identifying simple actions. Joseph was not able to demonstrate understanding of prepositions. A checklist of his performance was created with this test so future performance can be compared.

Basic Language Skills

Joseph generates little spontaneous language. Occasionally, he will give a yes/no response to a familiar question. In general, Joseph's response to directions and questions is very inconsistent making it difficult to measure his receptive language abilities. Most of the expressive language Joseph produces is after a strong verbal/visual and often tactile model. Cueing for attention is usually required before any language interaction. Signs of word retrieval difficulties and dyspraxia are obvious when Joseph produces words and short sentences (cued). When given an initial sound cue Joseph can often be successful at naming pictures/objects. This suggests that his actual vocabulary is better than he is able to demonstrate on his own. It is noted, that on occasion, when Joseph does not know what to say or do he will look to the speaker for help or tap the picture he is trying to name. He produces random and often loud vocalizations through out the day, which appear to have little or no meaning. However, I believe that on occasion these vocalizations could be attempts at communication.

Pragmatics Skills

Joseph's overall pragmatic abilities are atypical and inconsistent. The **Pragmatics Profile** is a supplementary criterion-referenced subtest on the CELF. This checklist is used to gain additional information about the student's overall pragmatic development. Below is a list of pragmatic skills that Joseph is sometimes able to demonstrate with specific cueing or adult guidance.

- The student makes/responds to greetings to/from others
- The student makes/responds to farewells to/from others
- The student observes turn-taking rules in the classroom or in social interactions
- The student maintains eye contact, appropriate body position during conversations•
The student asks for/responds to requests for clarification during conversations
- The student participates/interacts appropriately in structured group activities
- The student uses appropriate strategies for getting attention-eye contact or tapping**
- The student asks for help from others appropriately-eye contact**
- The student responds appropriately when asked to change his/her actions (by accepting/rejecting)-during structured tasks and when maintaining appropriate mood**
- The student reads and interprets tone of voice accurately
- The student demonstrates appropriate use of voice intonation-when cued with a model**
- The student adjusts body distance (sit/stand) appropriate to the situation-cued**
- The student understands posted and implied group/school rules-within his realm**

Oral Motor

Joseph's has low tone in the oral motor area and frequently demonstrates an open mouth posture. He is able to perform simple oral motor tasks, such as smiling, puckering, licking lips with verbal cueing or demonstration. He was able imitate the sequence of /pa/ /ta/ /ka/ twice in a row but needed to slow down significantly to maintain accuracy. We did not do any other work with sounds or movements because Joseph is working on a new behavior protocol to decrease extraneous noise.

Therapy

Last year much of therapy involved following new behavioral protocol to aid attention and task completion. This year Joseph has been able to complete most tasks presented and sustain attention for a half hour. Three to four tasks are attempted within that half hour session. There is a little more variety in the tasks presented, however his performance is still inconsistent depending on his behavior.

We continue to use a much modified version of Melodic Intonation Therapy to expand language. Melodic Intonation Therapy (MIT) uses melodic/rhythmic components and tapping to assist in speech production. He is minimally successful with MIT. When using tapping and exaggerated intonation, Joseph is often able to repeat up to 6 syllable phrases. However, his behavior protocol often involves good hands or quiet voice cues. Some of the MIT strategies may be sending him mixed messages. This is something I have worked on resolving through modifications.

Sequencing of simple picture stories (3 cards) has been introduced in therapy with good success given aid and cueing. However, this has become a somewhat rote activity and he often mixes up the words and pictures. Sequencing is another activity designed to expand

language. This is something he would not have been able to do when I first started working with him in September 2006.

Only recently I have added matching pictures and playing memory to our repertoire of activities. Joseph has had a difficult time with the concept of same and different. However, with cueing he is able to follow the rules of the game and take turns.

Joseph also participates in a variety of activities that involve following directions and introduction of simple concepts.

SUMMARY

When comparing current performance to his last evaluation, May 2005, it appears that Joseph has lost some spontaneous language skills. However, improvements with overall behavior and cooperation in therapy since I began working with him in September 2006 have effected some minimal success within the speech and language areas. Joseph's ability to participate in testing is a significant gain in itself. Test results should be considered a guideline to help develop appropriate goals/objectives and to help measure future progress.

Based on his performance it appears that Joseph may have a stronger vocabulary than he is able to demonstrate on his own. His success naming pictures improves significantly when given an initial sound cue. Joseph was not able to demonstrate a strong understanding of action in pictures and that could be based on difficulty seeing action in pictures or lack of experience. While he was able to consistently demonstrate the understanding of big/little during testing and in therapy, he is not able to identify other attributes consistently. Joseph does not know basic prepositions. He has been working on same/different in therapy with some initial success.

Joseph's expressive language is usually adult generated, cued or modeled. He is not able to follow directions or answer questions consistently. He is able to imitate sentences up to 6 syllables in length during familiar structured tasks using familiar cues. His expressive language is characteristic of word retrieval difficulties and/or dyspraxia. Joseph often produces random vocalizations, which are often disruptive. These vocalizations may or may not be conveying meaning.

Joseph's pragmatic abilities are atypical and he usually needs specific instruction to interact with others. However, his eye contact can be good with minimal cueing. Joseph has demonstrated some good turn taking skills. He generally appears to be a happy person.

Recommendations

Joseph presents with a complex and severely impaired language disability. It is recommended that he continue to receive direct speech and language services. Goals should focus on improving interactions with others, answering yes/no questions, improving understanding of simple concepts (yes/no, same/different, prepositions, colors). It was a pleasure and a challenge to assess Joseph. If you have any questions or concerns do not hesitate to contact me.

Goals and Objectives for Joseph

Continue to expand language to 10 syllable sentences

Spontaneous requests

Answering yes/no questions

Concepts from TLC

Pragmatic goal-

Spontaneous greetings