

# ASSESSING THE COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH ASD

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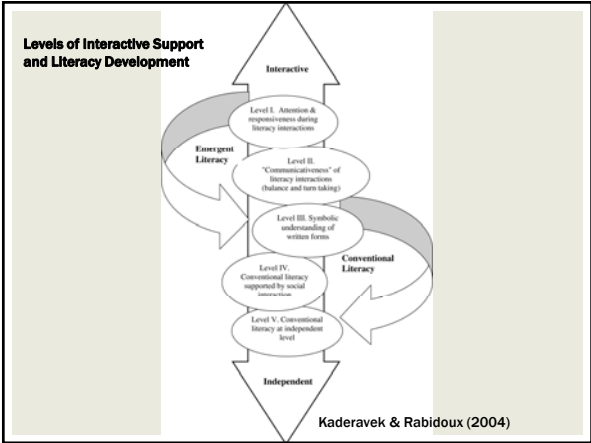
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## ASSESSMENTS

- Purpose of the assessment
  - Diagnostic: Used to inform instruction
- Formal vs. informal
  - Informal assessments allow for flexibility
  - Assessments described here can be used for progress monitoring purposes

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### ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- Establish structure compatible with student needs (i.e., EBPs to teach students how to participate in the task)
  - Visual schedule
  - Reinforcement
  - Task difficulty
- Hypothesize the student's interactive/independent literacy level as a starting point
  - Determines which assessments to use
- Select literacy assessments compatible with the student's emergent/conventional literacy level
- Assess and reflect

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### RESPONSE

- Last week you identified a student and hypothesized about their possible interactive/independent level.
  - What kinds of support for the assessment process will that student require?
  - Which EBPs for students with ASD might be used to teach students how to participate in the assessments?




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### GLOBAL ASSESSMENT: INTERACTIVE TO INDEPENDENT LITERACY

(KADERAVEK & RABIDOUX, 2004)

1	Focus on joint attention and response/engagement in literacy activities with a partner. Onus for building engagement is on the partner. Begin with individual's interests.
2	Focus on mutual interactions and turn taking between the emergent learner and the literacy partner; high levels of reinforcement while participating in a variety of literacy interactions. The partner builds on the individual's gestures, vocalizations, words, etc.. If the teacher asks the child to engage in skills "beyond the child's interest or ability, then the balance and the dynamic social support of the interaction may be lost" (p. 246).
3	The individual begins to understand the "symbolic relationship of written language forms" (p. 246). For example, they begin to see that the printed text corresponds with the words the partner reads.
4	The learner begins to use conventional literacy skills with support.
5	The learner independently uses conventional literacy.

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**MEET BRIAN**

Brian is an 18 year old student with ASD. He does not have a functional communication system. To gain attention, Brian has developed the habit of grabbing faculty and staff inappropriately.

Brian appears uninterested in his surrounding. He prefers to wander around the classroom. Occasionally, he likes to clap blocks together, or fiddle with a piece of string.

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**LEVEL 1: GUIDING QUESTIONS**

- Does the child respond to and initiate bids for joint attention?
- If the child does not engage in joint attention, consider the following:
  - Does the learner respond to social bids from others? (i.e., I do, you do)
  - Does the learner initiate back and forth (social bids) interactions?
  - Will the learner maintain an initiation started by a partner?
  - How many exchanges does the child engage in?
  - Does the learner demonstrate joint attention motivating items (e.g., objects and pictures)?
  - Once engaged, how long does the child maintain attention?

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Skill Area	+/- /NO	Evidence
Responds to Interactions		
Initiates Interactions		
Demonstrates Joint Attention		
<b>Describe the following:</b>		
With whom (communication partner) was the child observed communicating		
For what purposes (function) was the child observed communicating?		
How (form) did the child communicate?		

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Not all columns are necessary; edit based on target skills/student needs

Interval	Setting	Communication Partner(s)	Initiations	Responses	Form(s)	Function(s)	Materials Used	Demonstrated Joint Attention? (consider duration)
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								

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### LEVEL 1 SUMMARY

- **Assessment goal:** Collect data to guide engagement sessions
- **Goal at the end of level 1:** Joint attention
- **Instructional objectives might include:**
  - Increasing the number of exchanges
  - Increasing the duration of exchanges
  - Increasing exchanges in particular settings, or with particular partners
  - Increase exchanges that include objects
  - Increase the duration of exchanges that include objects

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### RESPOND: IF BRIAN WAS YOUR STUDENT...

- Which objective(s) would you begin to collect data for?
- Why?



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### MEET JULES

Jules is a middle school-aged young lady with a penchant for fashion, especially shoes. She uses a voice output device that is organized semantically.

She is not interested in participating in conventional literacy activities that are not authentic, such as learning sight words or letter/sound relationships. She will engage in authentic activities when enticed (e.g., fun activity, motivated by the topic). For example, she can look at a picture of herself at the computer, and with teacher support, generate a three word sentence that could be texted to her mom.

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### LEVEL 2: GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Does the learner initiate as part of a literacy event?
- Does the learner maintain a topic during interactions around literacy events?
- Does the learner browse books?
  - Point to front and back cover?
  - Turn pages?
  - Understand function of words (i.e., differentiate between pictures and words)?
  - Know where to begin reading?
    - Right to left progression
    - Top to bottom

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### INFORMAL ASSESSMENTS

- Concept of Book
  - Attitude Towards Books
- Concept of Print
- Language Assessment
  - Word level
  - Concept level
  - Sentence level

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### CONCEPT OF BOOK

Concepts about Books	Yes/No	Comments
look at the picture of an object in a book and realize it is a symbol for the real object		
identify the front, back, top, or bottom of a book		
turn the pages of a book correctly		
point to the print when asked "what do people look at when they read?"		
show how picture and print connect		
point to where a reader begins reading		
point to a book's title		
point to a book's author		

Note. Adapted from (Christie, Enz, & Vukelich, 2007).

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### ATTITUDE TOWARD BOOKS

	Yes/ No	Comments
Participate in book-sharing routine		
Listen to story		
Voluntarily look at books		
Show excitement about books and reading		
Ask adults to read to him/her		
Use books as a resource for answers to questions		
Preference for book format (e.g., PP book, iPad, book)		

Note. Adapted from (Christie, Enz, & Vukelich, 2007).

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### CONCEPT OF PRINT

Concepts of Print	Yes/No	Comments
understands word boundaries (i.e., one-to-one correspondence with words) <small>Note: this can be assessed with a printed copy of <i>Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star</i>. Model pointing to each word for the student while reading the poem aloud. Ask the student to do the same.</small>		
show that a reader reads left to right with return sweeps		
find a requested letter		
provide a given letter's name		
ask questions or make comments about letters		
ask questions or make comments about words		
read words or phrases		
read sentences		
read along while adult reads familiar stories		

Note. Adapted from (Christie, Enz, & Vukelich, 2007).

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**LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT: WORD LEVEL**

Categories of words (e.g., animals, foods) including the category label as well as individual items within a category (e.g., animals: horse, dog, cat)	Receptive/Expressive Words
Modifiers (e.g., adjective, adverbs)	
Mental state words (e.g., love, angry, afraid)	
Morphological endings (e.g., "-s" for plural, "-ed" for past tense; "'s" for possessive)	

Note: (Pierce, Summer, & O'DeKirk, 2005).

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**LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT: SENTENCE LEVEL**

Phrase/Sentence (i.e., utterance, sign, device)

\_\_\_\_\_ MLU (mean length of utterance) – based on dictation during literacy-related activities  
and/or  
\_\_\_\_\_ Average number of signs/symbols spontaneously used during literacy-related activities

Note. Adapted from (Pierce, Summer, & O'DeKirk, 2005).

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**SUMMARY FOR LEVEL 2**

- **Assessment goal:** Collect data related to emergent reading skills and language
- **Instructional goal:** Moving toward more conventional literacy instruction
- **Instructional objectives:**
  - Increase students' knowledge about concepts of book and print
  - Continue to encourage positive attitudes towards books and reading
  - Increase students' knowledge of print concepts
  - Increase conceptual and vocabulary knowledge
  - Increase the length of responses during literacy events

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**RESPOND: IF JULES WAS YOUR STUDENT...**

- Which instructional objective(s) would you work toward, and why?




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**MEET SIERRA**

Sierra is a nonverbal student who uses a voice output device to participate in literacy activities. To do her best work, Sierra needs the support of a work system (what work, how much work, when will I know when I am done, what's next).

When directed, she can flip through a book as part of silent reading. With her teacher, she works on spelling short vowel words. She can also select the correct vocabulary word to complete a sentence frame.

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**LEVEL 3: GUIDING QUESTIONS**

- Does the child recite a story from memory while attending to words?
- What is the child's level of abstraction in representing concepts to words (objects, miniature objects, photographs, colored line drawings, black and white line drawings, printed words)?
  - Does the child engage in meaningful exchanges using symbolic representation?
- Does the child recognize some printed words including name and other meaningful words?
- Phonological/phonemic awareness knowledge?

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**ASSESSMENTS FOR LEVEL 3**

- Book Reading Assessment
- Word Level of Abstraction Assessment
- Lists of known important words
- Emergent Writing Assessment
- Phonological assessment tasks

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**BOOK READING ASSESSMENT**

- Select the student's favorite book, and ask them to "read it to you."
- Note their behaviors.

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**WORD LEVEL ABSTRACTION ASSESSMENT**

- Assess the student's receptive understanding of words
  - Object
  - Miniature object
  - Color picture
  - Color line drawing
  - Black line drawing
  - Word with picture
- Considerations: Attention, placement of materials, interest, understanding the task, response system

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## IDENTIFICATION OF IMPORTANT WORDS

- Flash important printed words
- Ask students to write down all the words they know

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



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## WRITING ASSESSMENT

Random Marks	Representational Drawing	Drawing Evolved from Writing
	 "This is my sister."	 "A flower for my Mom."
Mark Letter or Letter Like	Symbol Based	Partial Phonics
 "A note for Daddy"	 "Mamma"	 "I love you"

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## PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS, PHONEMIC AWARENESS, AND PHONICS CHECKLIST

Skills	Sample Performance Tasks	Comments
Rhyming words: recognition	Ask: "Do these two words rhyme?" (house, mouse; cat, tree)	
Rhyming words: production	Select a song or poem with rhyming words. Teacher says the words, pausing before the rhyme. The child fills in the missing rhyming word. Ask: "What rhymes with boat? See? Fish?" Note: Nonsense words count as correct.	
Sentence segmenting	Say: "Clap the number of words you hear in this sentence." (I like dogs) Note: Only use one-syllable words in the sentences.	
Syllable segmenting	Say: "Clap the number of syllables you hear in bat, wagon, elephant, hippopotamus."	
Syllable blending	Say: "I'll say a word slowly, then you tell me what word I said." (teacher: rain-bow; child: rainbow; teacher: ab-so-lute-ly; child: absolutely)	
Beginning sound: recognition	Collect pictures of things or objects that begin with the same sound. Review names of objects with the child. Say: "Put all of the pictures (or objects) that begin like (sample object) in this pile."	
Beginning sound: production	Say: "What words can you say that begin like b-aby? c-at?"	
Onset rime (sometimes known as word families)	Ask: "What words can you make that end in -at? I'll start: f-at"	
Phoneme isolation	Ask: "What sounds do you hear at the beginning of foot, hop, run, yes?"	
Phoneme blending	Ask: "What word am I saying, b-a-t?" Child: "Bat." "What word am I saying, f-e-e-t?" Child: "feet"	
Phoneme segmenting	Ask: "Say each word slowly so that you can hear all of its sounds. What sounds do you hear in bat?" Child: "b-a-t" "What sounds do you hear in love?" Child: "l-o-v-e"	
Phoneme substitution	Ask: "If we take the /k/ off of cat and put on a /h/ sound, what new word have I made?"	
Connects beginning sounds with letter (phonics)	Say: "Help me write the word daddy." Record as the child says the letter names.	

Note: Adapted from Curran, Fox, & Veldman, 2001.

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**SUMMARY OF LEVEL 3**

- **Assessment goal:** Develop an understand of students emergent literacy skills
- **Instructional goals:** Continue moving toward conventional literacy targets
- **Instructional objectives:**
  - Develop more sophisticated understandings about the function of printed words and reading
  - Develop knowledge of the relationship between sounds and letters
  - Develop appreciation of book reading
  - Develop writing skills

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**RESPOND: IF YOU WERE SIERRA'S TEACHER...**

- Which assessments would you give, and why?



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**MEET GEORGE**

George is a verbal student in the fifth grade. He is an early reader. He can read short, decodable texts with structure and support. He can also read a few high-frequency words by sight, such as the words *the* and *what*.

George's listening comprehension and his reading comprehension are at about the same level. When it comes to writing, George represents whole word with consonants only. For example, he spelled the word *cat* as *ct*.

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**LEVEL 4: GUIDING QUESTIONS**

- Guiding Questions
  - What is the student's knowledge of the alphabet?
  - What sight words does the student recognize?
  - To what extent can the student tell and retell familiar stories?
  - What is the student's listening comprehension level? Do I need to assess their reading comprehension level?

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**KNOWLEDGE OF THE ALPHABETIC PRINCIPAL AND SOUND/SYMBOL CORRESPONDENCES**

A	S	Word	I.R.	A	S	Word	I.R.
A				a			
B				b			
C				c			
D				d			
E				e			
F				f			
G				g			
H				h			
I				i			
J				j			
K				k			
L				l			
M				m			
N				n			
O				o			
P				p			
Q				q			
R				r			
S				s			
T				t			
U				u			
V				v			
W				w			
X				x			
Y				y			
Z				z			
Total Each							
Column							

Confusions:

Letters Sounds Unknown:

Comments:

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**OTHER WORD READING SKILLS**

- Sight words
- High frequency words
- Blending and decoding phonics assessments
- Spelling inventories

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## LISTENING AND READING COMPREHENSION

- Informal reading inventory
  - Narrative
  - Expository
  
- Assess by reading aloud informal reading passages and questions
  - Narrative
  - Expository

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LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	FEATURES	SAMPLE WRITING
6	EXCEPTIONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Big Idea is clear and original; the topic is important</li> <li>Supporting details are relevant, accurate and specific</li> <li>Features: graphics, charts, or pictures enhance the text</li> <li>Focus: The writing stays on topic</li> <li>Development is complete</li> </ul>	
5	EXPERIENCED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Big Idea is clear; the topic is important</li> <li>Supporting details are relevant, logical and mostly accurate</li> <li>Features: graphics, charts or pictures clarify the text</li> <li>Focus: Usually stays on topic</li> <li>Development is complete</li> </ul>	
4	CAPABLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Big Idea is clear, but general — a simple story or explanation</li> <li>Support is present in the text</li> <li>Features: Graphics support the text</li> <li>Focus: Generally on topic, with a few tangents</li> <li>Development is adequate</li> </ul>	
3	DEVELOPING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Big Idea is vague or unclear</li> <li>Support is present</li> <li>Features: Limited or no features (or repeats the same idea)</li> <li>Development is incomplete</li> </ul>	
2	EMERGING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ideas are conveyed in a general way through text, tables, graphics</li> <li>Support: Not present in the text</li> <li>Features: Limited or no features (or repeats the same idea)</li> <li>Development: Not present</li> </ul>	
1	BEGINNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ideas are unclear and often in just beginning</li> <li>Support: Not present</li> <li>Features: Not clear</li> <li>Development: Not present</li> </ul>	

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## LEVEL 4 SUMMARY

- Assess word reading skills
  - Alphabetic principles
  - Word reading
  
- Comprehension
  - Listening
  - Reading
  
- Writing

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**RESPOND: IF YOU WERE GEORGE'S TEACHER...**

- Which assessments would you give, and why?



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**MEET ALAN**

Alan is a verbal third grader who enjoys reading informational books about animals. He can accurately pronounce all the words he sees. When it is time to read stories, is appears uninterested.

Alan is very good at spelling words, but when it comes to writing sentences and paragraphs, he gets very anxious, often retracing the same letter over and over.

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**LEVEL 5: GUIDING QUESTIONS**

- What are the student's independent and instructional reading levels?
- In what areas are the student's opportunities for becoming a stronger reader (e.g., genre, skills, question answering, word recognition, fluency)?

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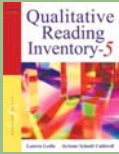
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**QUALITATIVE READING INVENTORY-5**



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**WRITING ASSESSMENTS**

- Planning
- Writing stories
- Writing exposition

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**SUMMARIZING LEVEL 5**

- Less adult support is needed
- Assessment data is needed in the areas of word reading, reading comprehension, and writing
- Instructional goals are aimed at extending the development of literacy skills

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**RESPOND: IF ALAN WAS YOUR STUDENT....**

Which assessments would you use and why?



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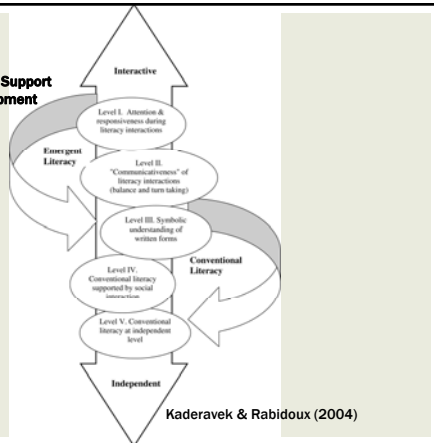
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**Summary**

**Levels of Interactive Support and Literacy Development**



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**QUESTIONS???**

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