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ABSTRACT

This notebook is the 3rd volume of a three volume set containing strategies to provide an educational environment and assessment and counseling services for the learning disabled (LD) adolescent and adult. Part I focuses on a beneficial educational environment. Chapter 1, on the academic environment, addresses what is necessary for a supportive academic environment; what LDs are; descriptions of LDs; and how LDs show up in academic behavior. Chapter 2, on the emotional environment, discusses what is necessary for a safe emotional climate; common psychological issues of LD students; the successful teacher of LD adolescents and adults; and strategies to create a beneficial emotional climate. Chapter 3 looks at what is necessary for a favorable physical setting; the ideal physical environment; and modifications for less than ideal conditions. Part II, on assessment, describes design and use of the assessment and these six steps: sequence of steps in assessment; intake interview; in-depth learning difficulties interview; formal and informal testing (basic reading, reading comprehension, writing, spelling, math); using the assessment data; and ongoing assessment. Part III, on counseling services, covers initial counseling services and ongoing services. Appendixes include test copies suitable for reproduction; mini samples of transparencies; and names and addresses of publishers of 11 tests. (YLB)

Vol
3

THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT, ASSESSMENT, AND COUNSELING SERVICES FOR THE LEARNING DISABLED ADOLESCENT AND ADULT

PART I: A BENEFICIAL EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT
PART II: ASSESSMENT AND COUNSELING SERVICES

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YALD
September, 1996

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PART I

A BENEFICIAL EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

An educational environment that meets the special requirements of the learning disabled adolescent and adult is made up of a supportive ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT, an EMOTIONAL ENVIRONMENT of safety and acceptance, a PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT that aids learning, as well as appropriate ASSESSMENT, COUNSELING, and INSTRUCTION. The three environments that make up the educational environment are discussed in Part I; assessment and counseling are in Part II of this NOTEBOOK. Instruction is the topic of the TEACHING STRATEGIES NOTEBOOK.

The ultimate goal of the educational environment is not the remediating of a subject; it is rather the teaching of a person. For the LD adult, it is often as much a healing process as it is a learning process. It is a teacher helping students not to feel handicapped by their learning difficulty; helping them to acknowledge it, to understand it, to work at reducing its interference, to learn ways of compensating for it, and to learn the ways to be successful in spite (or because) of it.

I. A SUPPORTIVE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

The academic environment is the intellectual third of the three environments comprising the total educational environment. It is composed of the intellectual stimulus of the teacher and other students in a class, the curricula, and the instructional strategies and techniques used. It should demonstrate to students that their learning difficulty is understood, and that it is being remediated effectively.

1. WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR A SUPPORTIVE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT?

The critical ingredient is the skilled teacher who knows about learning disabilities and how they show up in academic behavior; who knows the materials that are effective with the LD student or can modify standard materials to enable the LD student to have success; and who has a repertoire of teaching strategies appropriate for the LD learner. This section deals with what learning disabilities are and how they are manifested in different academic areas. See TEACHING STRATEGIES NOTEBOOK for materials and strategies.

2. WHAT ARE LEARNING DISABILITIES?

Learning disabilities are a group of disorders of presumed neurological origin which interfere with the acquisition, integration and performance of verbal and/or non-verbal skills. They are not due to limited intelligence, educational, or economic disadvantage, vision or hearing deficits, mental or emotional difficulty.

They vary both in the ways they are manifested, and their severity. Although learning disabilities are chronic, they do not get worse, nor do they mean that the individual "can't learn". It only means that learning must occur in a non-standard way, almost certainly with greater effort, and that accommodations may be required.

LDs affect primary areas of cognitive function: attention, discrimination, memory, perceptual-motor abilities, conceptualization. These functions underpin performance in a range of academic and life tasks, such as development and use of language, mathematics, organizational ability, social behavior, self-awareness.

Specific Language Learning Disability, SLLD, is the broad title given to learning disability as it impacts the acquisition and use of language. Listening, speaking, reading, writing, and spelling may be affected. When SLLD is discussed in the narrower context of reading, it is usually referred to as dyslexia.

SLLD is the most prevalent of the diagnosed learning disabilities. It is the major area of difficulty in 70% of 80% of diagnosed learning disability cases. However, language development and use are also impacted by attentional and memory problems, spatial and motor difficulties. The overlap is especially apparent in young adults and is a challenge to both educators and clinicians, to say nothing of the LD individuals themselves.

The contention that there are significant numbers of adult illiterates who are learning disabled is supported by estimates that 40% to 70% of the students in literacy programs have learning disabilities, and estimates by various experts in the field that from 40% to 85% of adults who read at or below a 4th grade level are learning disabled.**Project READ p. 4

3. DESCRIPTIONS OF LEARNING DISABILITIES

Specific Language Learning Disability Impacts all areas of language to varying degrees. It includes:

Difficulties Associated With Written Language

Reading difficulties: problems in getting through the surface of the print which involves decoding, and in comprehending text

Spelling difficulties: problems in encoding the English sound/symbol system, in assimilating its rule system, and in retaining the spelling of irregular words

Writing difficulties: problems in generating and organizing ideas, and expressing them in a sequential, grammatical written form.

Difficulties Associated With Oral Language

Input difficulties: problems receiving/interpreting spoken language (Receptive language disability)

Processing difficulties: problems integrating, or connecting words, ideas, experience (Integrative language disability)

Output difficulties: problems in selecting or retrieving words, organizing words or ideas into complete sentences and expressing them (Expressive language disability)

Math Disability

Arithmetic difficulty: problems learning and using the basic arithmetical skills

Higher level computational skills difficulty: problems learning and retaining these skills

Other learning difficulties can impact math as well: problems with spatial relations, conceptualization, memory, attention, and language.

Non-Verbal Learning Disabilities

Handwriting difficulty: problems getting words legibly from the brain to the paper

Motor Incoordination: problems with fine motor, or eye-hand coordination; can produce problems with handwriting, awkwardness, accident proneness

Visual-spatial relations difficulties: can result in getting lost on paper, or in geographical space

Social cognition/social relations difficulties: problems in "reading" tone of voice, body language, social situations

Executive capacities difficulties: problems in structuring the organization of ideas or things; problems in synthesizing information: getting past the detail to the "big picture". Both problems impact planning, follow-through and evaluation.

Difficulties Which Underlie All Areas of Cognition

Memory difficulties: storage and retrieval problems

Short term memory is memory for small amounts of information which lasts only seconds: long enough for a telephone number that was looked up in a directory to be retained until it can be dialed. All information must first pass through short term memory. Difficulties with it create difficulties with working or long term memory. In those few seconds information in short term memory is transferred into working memory, into long term memory, or allowed to decay. Short term memory problems show up in difficulty with new material, multiple directions or large amounts of information, in summarizing.

Working memory is the intermediate stage of memory, neither as limited as short term memory, nor as extensive as long term. It enables the recall of relevant stored information in order to deal with the experience at hand; then integration and storage of the expanded information for further use. Problems with working memory mean losing track of what one is doing while one is doing it: "Now what did I go upstairs for?", losing the logical progression of ideas, forgetting what was read.

Long term memory may be considered the permanent filing system or memory bank. There can be difficulties either in the process of storing information or the process of retrieving it. Information that is incorrectly filed is difficult to retrieve.

Attentional difficulties: problems with screening out extraneous stimuli, whether internal or external; problems maintaining or shifting focus

Attentional problems can interfere with taking in information, processing it, and expressing it. These difficulties show up in a continuum ranging from slight distractability to a classic Attention Deficit Disorder. In recent years the disorder has been separated into

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or ADHD and Attention Deficit Disorder or ADD. In the latter, the ADD individual does not exhibit hyperactivity. The other two core symptoms are: distractability, and problems with maintaining consistent attention. While one ADD individual may be easily distracted by outside sounds or movements, another may be distracted more by his/her own thoughts.

About 15 million Americans have it; most of them don't know that they have it. It would be the rare ABE student with attentional problems who had been diagnosed as having ADD. Formerly thought to be only a childhood problem, it is now estimated that two thirds of the individuals who have it in childhood continue to have it in adulthood.

Neither ADD nor ADHD is a specific learning disability; that is, neither disables a particular learning ability. Rather, attentional problems affect cognition as a whole. They are, however, often accompanied by specific learning disabilities such as language learning disability, math disability. ** "Driven to Distraction", Hallowell and Ratey, p. 6, 163

4. HOW THE LEARNING DISABILITIES SHOW UP IN ACADEMIC BEHAVIOR See also TEACHING STRATEGIES NOTEBOOK

READING

LD shows up in reading as difficulties with phonics, syllabication, and syntax which interfere with decoding and may affect comprehension. Comprehension may also be a problem in spite of adequate decoding.

Decoding Error Patterns Commonly Seen:

Inability to differentiate one short vowel sound from another.....bet read as bit

Perseveration of sound patterns.....slat followed by god
read as slat, slod

Positions of letters changed.....was read as saw
dent read as tend

b/d/p/q, m/n confusion.....lab read as lad

Adding or substituting letters.....sting read as string
especially l, r, n tore read as tone

Changing the endings of words.....parked read as parks

Omitted word endings, syllables... tract read as trac and
entire words executive read as excutive

Substitution of functors.....the read as and
of read as to

Substitution of synonyms.....dad read as father

Guessing based on first letter
and other consonants.....partner read as panther

Comprehension Difficulties Commonly Seen in Spite of Apparently Adequate Decoding

Automaticity in decoding has not been reached. While decoding may be accurate, attention is still focused on the decoding not on the content of the passage.

Attention and memory problems....problems attending to and therefore remembering details/facts....play a large role in comprehension problems.

Difficulty knowing what is important and what is trivial
Trouble synthesizing information

Difficulty detecting the logical sequence around which a passage is organized

Difficulty in making inferences from information given

Difficulty in differentiating facts from opinions, conclusions from inferences

Difficulty breaking down syntactically complex sentences

Difficulty with visualizing

Vocabulary difficulties: word meanings are imprecise or unknown, semantic networks are poor, word associations are limited

Limited prior knowledge of the subject

WRITING

LD Error Patterns Commonly Seen in Writing:

Spelling:

Sound-symbol errors.....cottage spelled code

Overly phonetic spelling.....many spelled meny

Lack of spelling rule usage..... hoping spelled hopping

Letters that are added..... filly spelled filley
or changed in position..... calm spelled clam

Omission of syllables..... necessity spelled nessity
or word endings..... jumped spelled jump

Handwriting:

Poor spatial arrangement of letters/words

Letter formation problems

Mechanics:

Omissions of letters and words

Sentence fragments and run-on sentences

Improper verb and pronoun use

Incorrect word endings

Incorrect punctuation/capitalization

Composition:

Concreteness

Lack of ideas

Difficulty putting ideas into words

Ideas not sequenced appropriately

Problems with organization of text

Problems determining irrelevant/relevant data

Limited or incorrect vocabulary

Difficulty with summarizing, paraphrasing

Difficulty proofreading and revising

MATH

LD Error Patterns Commonly Seen in Math:

Spatial problems:

Loses place on page

Mixes up parts of problem

Copies wrong numbers or signs

Doesn't distinguish between numbers in the problem from neighboring digits

Focuses on individual digits instead of the whole number

Reverses numbers: (most commonly the teens -13,31)
Spatial problems affect number alignment, decimals, fractions

Difficulty understanding abstract concepts

Trouble associating math processes with symbols

Trouble learning repetitive patterns of counting (by 2's, 5's, 10's)

Difficulty estimating

Language problems may interfere with math vocabulary and understanding word problems

Misreads signs and numbers, especially multi-digit numbers; sequencing problems affect many areas of math

Memory problems affect many math processes. Especially affected are times tables and multi-step processes

Difficulty with time because of time-sense problems

Trouble with perseveration

For curricula and instructional strategies to assist LD students, see TEACHING STRATEGIES Notebook

A SAFE EMOTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The goal of the emotional environment is the creation of an atmosphere of emotional safety, in which understanding and acceptance by teachers and counselors is felt from the first contact. This is vital because of the intense anxiety that LD students may have about returning to a place that was often a source of pain, failure and diminished self-esteem.

1. WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR A SAFE EMOTIONAL CLIMATE?

Again, the crucial ingredient is the teacher who has the ability to help LD students not only to understand and accept their LD but to discover their strengths as well; who understands and can respond appropriately to the secondary emotional effects of LD; who relates to students in such a way that they feel accepted as persons, and empowered as learners.

This section deals with the three components that create the classroom's emotional atmosphere: the LD students and the baggage they bring; the particular attitudes and qualities necessary in the teacher of LD students; strategies that help create a supportive atmosphere.

2. COMMON PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES OF LD STUDENTS**The Acceptance of Having a Learning Difficulty**

In order to be emotionally free to use their energies to accomplish their life goals, students must come to understand and accept their learning difficulty. Although understanding their LD is a life-long process, there are five steps that people normally go through in accepting it. It is not a smooth, sequential process.

Newly enrolled students may arrive with only a dim awareness that they even have a learning difficulty; be in denial; be aware but ashamed or angry; or rarely, be aware of their LD and to be ready to come to terms with it.

LD students, especially the older and more disabled ones, may find great relief in learning that there is a reason why they have not been able to learn as others do. Others, mostly the younger students, have a greater need to be like their peers, and may be more resistant to accepting their difference. Teachers and counselors can play an important role in facilitating the process.

Five Steps Toward Acceptance

- 1) Denial "You're wrong; that's not it. I don't try hard enough...I don't pay attention...I wasn't given any help...I was sick a lot in the first grade etc."
- 2) Anger/
Depression "Why does this have to happen to me? It's not fair." " My parents should have..."
" What's the use, I'll never..."
- 3) Guilt/
Anxiety "If only I had/had not....then I wouldn't have this problem."
- 4) Acceptance "I guess I have to believe I have a learning problem. All the evidence can't be wrong."
- 5) Conversion " OK, so now what do I do about it?"

Common Secondary Psychological Effects of an Unremediated Learning Disability

Problems with Self-concept, Self-esteem Self-concept is the idea we have of ourselves, how we define ourselves; self-esteem is how we value ourselves and has more to do with feelings.

- * Undiagnosed LD individuals (and, too often, those who have been diagnosed as LD) have frequently been labeled by their world as "uncooperative", "doesn't try hard enough", "dreamer", "doesn't pay attention", "lazy", "unmotivated", "class clown", "troublemaker". The labels imply that the students are willfully trying to oppose the teacher, and avoid learning, thereby undermining the educational system, and the very fiber of our society, not to mention flouting the Judeo-Christian work ethic. In the case of the person whom teachers recognize as truly bright, but who still doesn't succeed in school, the message is sent that there must be something wrong with his or her moral character.

The individual begins to accept the labels, and eventually to define him or herself as labeled.

Students who have been diagnosed as LD, but who have never had their LD explained to them will diagnose themselves. Whatever words they use, they define themselves as not bright enough or hard working enough to succeed in school. It is important that students begin to see themselves as learning differently, not as being defective. It has to start with a new understanding of themselves and the way their brain operates. Their LD needs to be redefined as their brain "processing

information differently". Their school experience needs to be seen as their "not having gotten the right teaching for their particular needs." They need to recognize that their behavior was a response to that and not the result of a "bad" character. Teachers and counselors can only begin the process of a change of self concept. It is hoped that students will internalize it gradually, with reinforcement from experiences inside the classroom and out.

- * Self-esteem is both an outgrowth of self-concept and a concurrent development. It arises from mastery of a succession of developmental tasks and achievement of personal goals. Each success, with its feeling of accomplishment and pride also helps the individual define him or herself as a successful person. From this self-concept of being a competent person, arises further feelings of self esteem, and the self-confidence to attempt new tasks. In contrast, LD individuals are confronted with situations daily, which are impacted by their LD, and that renew their feelings of incompetence, embarrassment and diminished self-esteem.
- * In the academic realm, LD students often have not had many successes, mastering tasks, nor meeting goals. Their self-esteem plummets with each failure. It is the task of the teacher to turn this cycle of low self-esteem/failure around, ensuring that students meet with success from the very beginning. This cannot be a phoney success. It must be one which is worked for, and can have pride taken in it. See TEACHING STRATEGIES NOTEBOOK, I. 2, Characteristics of The Successful LD Adult.

Anger Turned Outward: Relationship Problems and Antisocial Behavior

- * The LD students are often angry students, angry because of past educational experiences, angry at the way teachers, and peers and family have dealt with them, but mostly angry because they are frustrated that their brains don't work as they want them to. The most available, and often safest target for their anger is the family, spouse, friend. Relationship difficulties are very common, directly or indirectly caused by the LD.
- * Study after study of juvenile delinquents and inmates points out that the prevalence of LD among these populations is much greater than in society as a whole. When anger is felt, when there is limited capacity for expressing it through language, and when it is combined with poor impulse control, antisocial acts may result.

Anger Turned Inward: Physical Illness, Depression, Withdrawal and Substance Abuse

- * When the anger is repressed, it begins to leak out in indirect ways. It may manifest itself in physical symptoms, frequent accidents, or depression. Depression may range from slight to severe. If the degree of the depression is severe enough that teacher is even aware of it, she or he should consult with the student and the counselor for either counseling or referral. If the depression seems severe, referral for psychiatric evaluation is necessary; there are drugs which can alleviate the depression and no reason why an individual should suffer needlessly. The possibility of suicide during a severe depression should not be ruled out: another good reason for a psychiatric referral.
- * LD individuals may self prescribe drugs to hide from anxiety or depression, or to help them tolerate difficult external circumstances. Individuals with Attention Deficit Disorder may be helped a great deal by psychiatrist prescribed and monitored drugs which stabilize the ADD individual's focus and attention. However, those who have ADD and don't know it, may self-prescribe alcohol or drugs after finding that the effect of these drugs is to help them focus. These may be illegal drugs; they may be abused; they may produce an addiction.
- * Anger may only begin to show itself after the remediation has been underway for some time and has produced some results. When students see that it is really possible to learn, they are elated. Yet at the same time anger erupts at their old school system that failed to teach them and thus caused them so much pain. Getting angry at an appropriate object, and beginning to talk about it, indicates increased self-esteem and a healthier method of dealing with feelings.

Anxiety

- * One of the most difficult things about having a LD is the contradictory conclusions about their capabilities that individuals are confronted with at every turn. On one hand the evidence suggests that the LD student is stupid, "can't do what even young children can do...read, write, multiply". At the same time, other evidence surfaces that the person is quite bright in some things, and capable of success in them. It is this paradox that prevents students from reaching a final conclusion about themselves. This can be both good and bad. Never knowing the answer means that students can't begin adjusting to it. It means a state of anxiety. On the other hand, it holds out the hope that if only the key is found, the students will be able to unlock the intelligence that

they know is there. Teachers and counselors can support that hope; the students will recognize in the remediation itself, the key they have been looking for.

- * A second major source of anxiety for the LD individual, is the issue of disclosure. Whom to tell, when, and how; from whom to hide the LD, and how to do it, are decisions faced hourly by the LD'd. Although the laws guaranteeing non-discrimination in public education, in rehabilitation, and employment have perhaps reduced this risk, the reality of life is that sometimes it is not wise to disclose one's disability. Students need to know that the issue of disclosure "goes with the territory" and it is often helpful to talk with a counselor about it to relieve the stress.

Need To Control/Rigidity

- * Some LD individuals show a real need to maintain a tight control over various aspects of their lives. This seems to be a reaction to being unable to depend on their brains to process information as they want it to, with consistency from day to day. Also, students who have attentional problems need to structure their environment to help them maintain their focus. On the other hand, too great a rigidity may interfere with learning. The teacher needs to consider which structures and controls are necessary for the student, and which ones the student can be helped to be more flexible about.

The Influence of Learning Disabilities on Issues of Adolescence and Young Adulthood

Dependence vs. Independence:

- * For the LD adolescent or young adult, there often is a continued dependence on others because of the LD, and a consequent reaction to it....an anger at the necessity to be dependent when the goal of adolescence is independence.
- * Ambivalence about independence may arise as students actually become more independent because of their remediation. Fear of independence may manifest itself in regressive behavior, in difficulty with classwork, and in the extreme, in dropping out of school. Students who are aware of the fear and its relationship to their behavior can have some conscious control over it. The teacher or counselor can help with this.
- * As the remediation progresses and students begin to feel more and more capable, it may cause a disruption in their relationships with spouse, or other family members on whom they have been dependent. The family member may no

longer feel needed, and out of this threatened feeling, cause problems in the relationship, or sabotage the instruction. One wife was convinced that her husband would no longer want her if she wasn't needed to read to him and do family bookkeeping. When this fear, which she had kept hidden, was brought out, the husband was able to reassure her. It is usually good to include the spouse or family periodically in a class meeting, or social hour, or annual conference, giving credit for their support.

- * Another manifestation of the dependence/independence conflict arising from academic success is seen in the student who has blamed all problems and failures in life on the learning disability, or the lack of reading. When the student improves, the LD can no longer be blamed, and a crisis may arise with the realization that responsibility must be taken for his or her life. This is a good time for some conversations with the counselor.
- * A big question which adolescents must answer, involving both growth toward independence and their identity, is "What shall I be when I grow up?" Career choice is more difficult for LD students. They must not only learn what their aptitudes and interests are, and learn what careers are available, they must also know their LD and its impact on future education/training and in the workplace. They need to know their rights, and learn self-advocacy. Career counseling can do this and is a must for adolescent LD students.

Identity

- * The major identity task for adolescents is to get to know and accept themselves, warts and all. This is more involved for adolescents with LD. They have the added task of coming to understand their disability and its impact. And, in order to come to accept themselves as basically OK, they must separate that part of them that has caused them problems....their learning difference.... from who they are essentially as human beings. The more they learn about LD in general, and their LD in particular; the more they see it dealt with by other LD students with a matter-of-fact acceptance, and sometimes even humor, the easier it will be.
- * Adolescence is a time for trying on different identities to see what fits. For years, the LD student may have lived the persona of the clown, the klutz, the jock, the delinquent, the drop-out, the drug-out, the dreamer as a reaction to school and life experiences. Now there is the opportunity to explore different ways of being, as the student relates to a variety of ABE Center personnel and adult students who treat the student differently from how he or she has been treated at school in the past, or at home.

- * Some of these adults will be fellow students with LD, people that the student will identify with. Finding adult peers who are nice people, intelligent and capable in many ways, who also have LD, can be a powerful antidote to the adolescent's self-definition of "failure" and "no good" and "dumb" because of the LD.
- * One of the identity tasks of adolescence is to sort out relationships with same and opposite sex. Some students who have a LD in the non-verbal area, have had difficulty with relationships. They lack skill in relating to their peers. They may misread body language; not know what is the appropriate response; misunderstand social situations. Coaching, role play, explicit teaching, can help.
- * LD students who are starved for peer acceptance may use sex promiscuously as a means of getting acceptance. This can further damage self-esteem, as well as put them at risk for a sexually transmitted disease. A referral for counseling is recommended.
- * LD students whose disability makes them very literal, may not understand jokes. Jokes and sexual double entendres that form a significant part of adolescent conversation are difficult for them to "get" either because of literalness, or because of language processing problems. They need to come to an acceptance of this as just the way their mind operates.
- * The emotional difficulties which are secondary to having a LD, also interfere with the formation of relationships. With the remediation, support from teachers and adult peers, and possibly counseling or psychotherapy, the student will have less energy tied up in self defense, leaving more energy for investment in relationships.

3. THE SUCCESSFUL TEACHER OF LEARNING DISABLED ADOLESCENTS AND ADULTS

Not every teacher can be a teacher of adults; not every teacher of adults can be a teacher of LD adolescents and adults. To be successful and to enjoy the work, it takes particular qualities of personality, and attitudes which translate into a "way of being" with students.

Teacher Personality

- * There are three qualities that teachers of LD students should have if they are to be happy in their work: (These are in addition to the qualities which all good teachers should possess: intelligence, kindness, humor, warmth etc.)

- 1) The ability to tolerate frustration and still be patient. This means explaining a rule for the 25th time in the same tone of voice that was used the first time. The slow pace of processing of some students, the frequent memory problems of others can create impatience in teachers.
- 2) The ability to recognize as a major success and to take satisfaction in what, to most of the world, would seem like just an insignificant occurrence.
- 3) Abundant curiosity, and a delight in solving puzzles. This also includes being able to tolerate and continue working on a puzzle that is never quite solved, and never completely reveals its complexity.

An Attitude Of Deep Interest In Each Student

- * Throughout their schooling, LD students have been a source of frustration to their teachers, as well as to themselves. Teachers, like everyone else, seek to avoid frustration when possible. When nothing seems to work with the LD student, after a while the teacher begins to avoid the frustration, and in doing this also begins to avoid the student. Students report that they felt as if they were invisible, stuck in the back row, never called on, ignored. So it is crucial that, from the very first contact, all ABE center personnel...secretaries, intake interviewers, assessors, counselors, administrators, and most important, teachers...convey the message that each adult student is an important individual, worthy of deep and continued interest, worthy of time and effort.

The Attitude that Teacher and Student Are Partners

- * This attitude is an acknowledgment that two adults, two equals with different strengths and weaknesses, are coming together to solve a puzzle. This is so important, and so different from teaching children or adolescents in the lower grades or high school. It is important because it elicits an entirely new response from the student: education is no longer something that is "done to" him or her; responsibility for learning is given back where it belongs, to the student. The teacher contributes academic knowledge, structure and direction; the student contributes an inner knowledge of what is working and what isn't; what is clear, what is confusion; and the student's own areas of strength, skill, and expertise. As one teacher put it, "Students and teachers together have to own the classroom."
- * It also means that the teacher, assessor, and counselor need to keep the student informed about what the options are; why the assessor needs to do certain tests and ask

certain questions; why the teacher is presenting certain material in a particular way; what the assessor, counselor and teacher see as the student's areas of strength and difficulty; what help can be given but also its limits.

- * Because it is a partnership, the teacher should acknowledge that the student has responsibilities, too, besides just showing up regularly and on time. These responsibilities of the student include communicating:
 - when the student doesn't understand
 - when the presentation is confusing, or the teacher is speaking too fast, or too much is being presented at once
 - when the student already knows the material, or doesn't see any point in learning particular material
 - when the student is having attention problems
 - when the student feels discouraged
 - when things at home or elsewhere are interfering with school.

The teacher must have the attitude that such information is welcome and encourage students to share it.

An Attitude of Respect: Valuing the Student's Abilities

- * Beyond valuing them as human beings, beyond respecting them as adult teaching/learning partners, showing respect for LD students includes more. LD students have such low self esteem, that they usually fail to see the talents, skills, and strengths that they have, or to acknowledge their value. They take them for granted. One student who couldn't read a dress pattern's directions, was able to make clothes very well just by looking at the pictures and figuring it out. She saw nothing special in this ability, until her teachers pointed out that none of them could do it. It should be part of the teacher's and counselor's agenda to find out what the student is successful at in life, and establish its value in the student's own eyes by showing real respect for that strength and talent.

A Relaxed Attitude

- * The classroom should be a place of mutual comfort for student and teacher, not a place of tension and stress. It should not be a testing place, or a place where pressure is put on students to "try harder" or "pay attention" or work faster or longer than they are comfortable working. Trying to push students is counter-productive, and teachers of LD adults need to be relaxed and flexible. This is not to say that the classroom is unstructured; quite the opposite. But within that structure students have the freedom to work as slowly,

with as many repetitions as is necessary for them to learn, and to stop when the frustration gets too great. Teachers can model flexibility in academic tasks, too, sending the message that "if one way doesn't work, try another".

Sensitivity and Awareness

- * Teachers and counselors should be aware of their own prides, fears, and prejudices in areas likely to be touched by working with the LD. Such areas might include physical and mental health vs. disability and its secondary affects; academic talent vs. artistic creativity, or talent with people etc.; the rapid success of the "normal" student vs. slow and steady or uneven progress of some LD students; your success as a teacher measured by what can be observed by others vs. success that only you and the student recognize; a preferred teaching style that is comfortable vs. a different style that is better for a particular student.
- * Teachers and counselors need to be aware of how they present material: how much they talk, and how fast, how loud, whether they have an accent or dialect, and how clear and accurate is their pronunciation. For LD students who have auditory discrimination, or auditory processing difficulties, this is significant.
- * Of equal importance is the tone of voice. Is it the same tone of voice used with an equal, a friend or neighbor, or a lecturing tone, a preaching tone, a tone of voice that implies the teacher has all the answers?
- * Teachers and counselors must be conscious of their body language. Many LD individuals whose disability is in the language area, are experts in "reading" people, in order to survive. (When the disability is a non-verbal one, they may have the opposite trouble: difficulty "reading" body language.) By watching for the slightest nuances of teacher approval or disapproval, students can tell if the answer they are starting to give is correct or not. Body language can show that the teacher is growing frustrated; tired of repeating a rule/instruction/concept; bored with the subject being taught; feeling impatient, or discouraged. It can also show openness, friendliness, and a relaxed attitude of confidence.
- * In being sensitive to individual students, teachers and counselors must be aware of student's body language, too. Students who have a hard time expressing themselves orally, or hesitate to do so may communicate through their body language. Boredom, annoyance, wandering attention, confusion, emotional upset can be observed.

- * Teachers and counselors must be good listeners as well as good communicators. When a student has an emotional issue that is interfering with learning, it may be wise to spend a few minutes, if possible, in "active listening". (If there is no privacy, or when a problem will take more than just a few minutes of class time, an appointment should be made.)
- * Teachers need to be sensitive to the interactions in the group; how individual students are affecting other students, and the group as a whole. The class is a mini support group, and can be invaluable in helping its members grow and come to terms with their LD. On the other hand, members can interfere with each other's learning: a student who is hyperactive, an another who frequently interrupts, or one who frequently "speaks for" another student who needs practice in oral expression, etc..

4. STRATEGIES TO CREATE A BENEFICIAL EMOTIONAL CLIMATE

As the Student Arrives: The Climate of the Center As a Whole

- * Creating an emotional climate that will be beneficial for the LD student must begin before the student walks in the door. It begins with accepting, supportive attitudes on the part of ABE personnel, all of whom should have a basic knowledge of LD and an appreciation of how difficult it is for LD students to come back to school.
- * Students should not have to wonder what to do next when they walk in through the door. Someone should be there to greet them. Students have told us that they got inside the school building all right, but when they looked in the classroom door at other students working and teachers walking around, they had such a panicky feeling that they turned around and left.
- * Many entering students are not aware of intake hours before they come to a center to enroll. When potential students are walk-ins, and identify themselves as needing reading help, they should be seen immediately if it is possible. Some LD students, particularly those with low reading levels, work for months to screw up their courage to enroll. They may not be able to summon up the courage again if they are not engaged at least partially in the enrollment process. If they cannot be interviewed when they arrive, at least they should be met with a welcome and enough information that assures them that they have come to the right place, and are given the earliest possible appointment.
- * LD adult students often bring someone with them to the ABE center the first time they come. Because of the

confidential nature of the intake interview, after introductions, the friend/relative should be invited to wait in the waiting area during the interview. Individuals may be more forthcoming about their difficulties and areas of weakness if family or friends are not present.

Creating an Emotionally Safe, Accepting Classroom

The Role of the Administration

- * It is the teacher who has the major role in creating an emotionally safe classroom environment. The first strategy then must be to have the right teacher in the classroom. This means that administrators must have a thorough knowledge of staff, and of the particular needs of the LD adult.
- * There must be a commitment on the part of the administration to provide the physical space which meets the LD student's minimum needs for privacy. Privacy is a must when being assessed or when reading orally. It is bad enough to struggle with reading when only the teacher is listening; if there are others listening, testing or reading becomes increasingly affected by anxiety and embarrassment. See also PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT p.

The Role of the Teacher

- * The astute teacher gains as much information as possible before the student enters the classroom: from the Intake Interview, the In-depth LD Interview, and the assessment, knowing that a much fuller picture will emerge through classroom instruction, conversation, and group interaction.
- * For all students, the teacher-student relationship is important to successful learning; for LD students it is crucial. A relationship of trust in the teacher enables LD students to relax their defenses, begin to take risks, and put forth their best effort.

There are things which good teachers do in order to create trust, which are effective for all students. The LD student is especially sensitive to teacher responses, so let us remind ourselves to:

- Show that we respect the student as another adult with something to offer. Undoubtedly they know more than we do about any number of things.

- Make sure that students meet with success from the very beginning. It must be a genuine achievement, something that they must work at and take pride in accomplishing. And we should let them know that we value their effort as much as their success.
- Affirm the value of those talents, and abilities that the student has. Too often, the message sent by schools is that academic ability is the only kind of worthwhile ability. It isn't.
- Teach students to regard mistakes as opportunities for learning, not something to be embarrassed about. Mistakes can provide the opportunity for a deeper understanding of a concept, and often a surer memory about it. This way of looking at mistakes enhances self-esteem; it does not lower it. Lifting the onus from making a mistake also reduces anxiety about risk taking.
- When correcting a student, it is important to find a face-saving way to do it. "That's very good, almost perfect. You just need to get this last sound." "You got the first part right and that last part, now can you find the part in the middle that needs to be changed?"
- What LD students are doing is very hard work. It really tires them out mentally and emotionally. It is important to let them know that we realize this and appreciate the effort they have put forth.
- Listen. Listen to what students say, and how they say it. Observe their body language. Listen for feelings. Listen for what is not stated but should be, or is implied.
- Help students become aware of LD in general, and of their particular LD, as opportunities present themselves and as the students seem ready.

see TEACHING STRATEGIES NOTEBOOK for instructional strategies to help create a classroom that promotes security and self-esteem.

The Role of The Students and The Group

- * As they enroll, students must be made aware of what responsibilities they will have, and what behavior is expected of them. They should agree to the requirements as a condition of enrollment. It can be as formal as a contract, or simply an oral commitment.
- * To feel safe in the classroom, students must have no fear of the reactions of other students. The primary rule of

any classroom is that students are not allowed to interfere with the learning of any other student. Above all they are never to put down or laugh at, or embarrass their classmates. Students should be informed of this rule as they enroll, and it should be enforced.

- * Interfering behavior can include constant interruptions, distracting behavior, and inappropriate social behavior. These are frequently aspects of the LD. Nevertheless, students must be made aware of the effect of their behavior on others, and be helped to bring it under control.
- * With an accepting atmosphere in class, and encouragement/facilitating from the teacher, students can be a positive influence on each other. Each student's success can be interpreted as a victory for all: proof that it is possible for LD students to succeed.
- * Using group techniques, teachers may create a cohesive unit out of a class of disparate individuals. It can become a group from which its members derive support, and self-esteem. Acting like a coach creating a team, the teacher: motivates; instills in team members a belief in themselves; creates group loyalty by having the class do something successfully as a group, such as group visualization exercises, group brainstorming of ideas, creation of a drama or short story or soap opera by the group. If there is a group to be loyal to, students will be drawn back to class during times of personal stress or discouragement.
- * Older LD students who have had success in non-academic areas, often have greater self-esteem based on their experiences. They can be role models for the young adult LD students. Teachers can facilitate this by: matching the mature and the younger students for projects; initiating a discussion between them; initiating the discussion of an interest that the two students share.
- * If there are no suitable older LD students for role models within the class, they may be imported from the community to meet with the class and talk about their experiences.
- * If an informal support group results from the class's experiences and discussions and there is interest, the teacher and counselor can help the students to form a regular support group that meets at a time other than class time.

III. A PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT THAT AIDS LEARNING

The physical environment is the place where learning occurs. It is more than that though. It is all the circumstances which surround the learning. It can support learning, or hinder it. If it is to aid the LD adult's learning, consideration must be given to the particular needs of this population, and how the unique circumstances of a particular center can be molded and developed to respond to those needs in a sensitive, educationally sound, creative way.

1. WHAT IS ESSENTIAL FOR A PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT THAT AIDS LEARNING?

Although there are very few characteristics of a physical environment that are absolutely essential for the LD learner, there are many that are desirable. The most important supports of learning are adequate private space, a low student-teacher ratio, and appropriate teaching materials.

To be assured of these requirements, it is essential that there be an administration which understands the needs of LD adults and is committed to providing suitable space, personnel, equipment and materials.

2. THE IDEAL PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT FOR THE LEARNING DISABLED

Space

- * There's no one standard for the amount of space desirable for teaching the LD adult. An adequate amount of space is that which is comfortable for the number in a particular mix of students which a particular teacher can teach at a designated time. The square footage of classroom space per student is of less concern than the requirements of the particular group, and the following characteristics of the space.
- * Of greatest importance is privacy. LD students are often deeply ashamed that they are non-readers, poor spellers, or can't master math concepts. At least in the beginning, LD students want to be away from any "outsider" who might overhear their struggles and laugh at them. A space which says that the ABE center understands this helps to forge the first link in a chain of increasing trust. This need for privacy is as true for the intake interviewing, testing, and counseling, as it is for classroom instruction.
- * Of nearly equal importance is the need for space which is separated from extraneous sounds and movements. Many LD students have a difficult time concentrating, and space

which is separated from other learning center sounds and activities is of real benefit in minimizing distractions.

- * Cluttered space can also be a distraction. While ordinary students benefit from the stimulation of pictures and information on walls, LD students with attention problems can find them too much of a stimulus.
- * Flexibility of space is a plus. Seating arrangements may be changed as student and teacher needs change. With flexible space, students can be separated to work alone, or with the teacher one-on-one, but can be brought together for a group lesson. Movable partitions, carrels, small tables for one or two people add to flexibility.
- * The area for spelling/sentence dictation, and the area for discussion should be as much apart from the area for individual writing, workbook work and silent reading as possible. Both areas should be apart from the area for oral reading, which should be as private as possible.

Lighting

- * A surprising number of LD students report that they are bothered by fluorescent lights, or that they either need strong or, more commonly, a fairly dim light when they work. A number of these students are helped by using colored plastic overlays. Therefore the ideal classroom would have daylight that could be reduced with shades or blinds. Incandescent lighting, if not the sole lighting, would at least be available as a supplement to fluorescent lighting for anyone needing it. (See BASIC READING TESTING, p. for testing for sensitivity to light.)

Equipment

Electronic Equipment

- * Every classroom should have at least one tape recorder with earphones, and ready access to a copier.
- * It is desirable to have a computer and printer for teacher and student use.
- * It is also desirable for each classroom to have an electronic spell checker for the teacher to use for demonstration and the students to use for practice.

Software

- * It is difficult to find adequate computer software for the adult who reads at a beginning level, but there is at

least one that meets the needs of LD beginning readers very well. See TEACHING STRATEGIES NOTEBOOK, Basic Reading.

- * Whenever purchase of software is being considered, make sure you can preview it before purchase. Software that is appropriate for children learning to read/write, may not be for LD adults. Even software supposed to be for adult basic learners, may have one or more fatal flaws. One such program, had a ticking clock which was both visually and auditorily distracting, and made the teachers previewing it feel an anxious pressure to hurry.
- * Whatever word processing program is chosen, there should be a spelling checker in it.
- * Teachers should have blank audio tape recorder tapes to tape dictations: sounds, spelling words, sentences, spelling rules etc.

Time

Class Length

- * Desirable length of instruction varies. Twenty minutes of intense one-on-one time with a teacher, aide or volunteer may be as much as a non-reading student can tolerate initially. At the other end of the scale, the student who is working at the GED level may be able to study as long as any non-LD student. The ideal for the 0-4 is probably around an hour, in a one-on-one situation. Additional time would be spent in doing individual work such as writing, workbook work, or in oral discussion in class. Here, as elsewhere, flexibility is the key.

Number of Classes a Week

- * The fewer the classes, the slower the remediation. With that premise, the ideal would be five classes per week. Students who have difficulty remembering, benefit especially from frequent classes.

Time of Day

- * The best time of day to teach is in the morning, usually, when students are rested. Coming to school after work means that they are tired; it will probably be harder to hold their attention; they will probably find it harder to take in and remember information; and they will not be able to perform at their best.

Breaks

- * It is important for LD students who have been working very intensely to have a 10 or 15 minute break, if classes run over an hour in length. Also, students struggling with attentional problems, especially when combined with hyperactivity, need to know that they may move about when they need to.
- * Vacation breaks of a week or more, while welcome to both students and teachers, mean an interruption in the routine. Teachers need to prepare students for the date of the resumption of classes. A calendar, a hand-out, and several reminders will help. Even so, it usually takes a few days to get the whole class together after a vacation is over.

Numbers

Number of students in a class

Of course, the bottom line is cost effectiveness and the state mandated optimal number of students in particular ABE levels. However, the following considerations should be entered into the calculation:

- * The ideal number of students in a class is dependent on the students and their difficulties, the teacher's experience and skills, the amount of assistance available from aides or volunteers, and teaching space.
- * Of particular consideration is the number of students requiring individual attention: severely disabled students reading at 0-2, students with attention deficits, students with emotional problems or with problematic personalities.
- * The larger the number of students, the greater the amount of sound and movement generated, and hence the greater the possibility of distraction for the student with attentional problems.
- * Another consideration is the mixture of levels within the class, and whether the difficulty is primarily decoding or comprehension. Students who have comprehension problems have very different remediation needs from students whose reading remediation is at the sound/symbol level. Group instruction will usually exclude one group or the other.

Student/Teacher Ratio

- * Although one might anticipate that the ideal student-teacher ratio would be one-to-one (and often that is

true), there are some benefits in different ratios. When there are two students and one teacher, the students can begin to act as a mini support group, yet get almost as much individual attention as in one-to-one instruction. With four or five students, group lessons and, especially, group discussions are possible, and support group benefits are likely.

- * Some one-to-one work is essential for the LD student. The amount of it will differ depending on the reading level of the student. This individual tutoring may be done by the teacher, or by trained and talented aides and volunteers.

3. MODIFICATIONS FOR LESS THAN IDEAL CONDITIONS

Space

- * If the amount of space is less than what is needed, sometimes space found in areas not usually associated with instruction. One-on-one tutoring space may be found in low traffic hallways, and offices that aren't in use. A conference room may be scheduled during hours when it is unlikely to be used.
- * For some students, privacy is more important than anything else. Students may be so fearful that they need to be initially interviewed at home. If they arrive at the ABE center at a busy time when there is no interviewing room available, private space may be found in a far corner of a room, or an empty hallway. Testing and initial phonics instruction should be scheduled only when appropriate private space is available.
- * If the space is less than ideally private, the illusion of privacy may be obtained by using movable partitions, folding screens, filing cabinets, and bookcases to create a visual barrier between the student and the rest of the center. Even a corner of a room with a desk and chair facing the wall and at as much distance as possible from the center of activity, offers a semblance of privacy. These strategies also serve students who are distracted by movement.
- * Some students who are easily distracted by sound may be helped by listening to taped music (no lyrics) over earphones. It should be music that the students can ignore, whatever kind that is for particular students.

Lighting

- * Most classrooms are lighted by fluorescent lights. If students say that they are bothered by fluorescent

lights, see if they are helped by having an incandescent light. An old lamp from home will do. They should also try using colored plastic overlays when they read.

Equipment

- * Equipment means money, and if the center's budget doesn't allow its purchase, see what might be brought from students' or teachers' homes. Folding screens, lamps, card tables, ear phones, a coat tree: all have been donated by students or teachers as a response to need.
- * Used tape recorders and computers: those which are technologically outdated, or are not the most high fidelity but still work, can be found quite inexpensively.
- * Businesses which must update their electronic equipment every few years might be quite happy to donate the old equipment to the school as a tax write-off.

Time

- * It is impossible to have every student taught when he or she is the most alert, and it may be difficult to change the class's length. However, what is done in that time can energize a student even if it is at the end of the day, and the class is long. A variety of activities, some involving movement, lively oral discussions, individual writing, and ample time for one-on-one instruction will help keep students awake.

Numbers and Student/Teacher Ratio

- * There must be a firm policy that no more students be enrolled in a class than can be given good remediation. Given that, teachers can request aides and volunteer help to provide the individual attention that the LD student needs. If necessary, teachers themselves can initiate contact with volunteer organizations such as the Commonwealth Literacy Corps and Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts, Laubach Literacy Program, and Library Literacy programs to obtain volunteers.

PART II

ASSESSMENT AND COUNSELING SERVICES

I. ASSESSMENT SERVICES FOR THE LEARNING DISABLED STUDENT

Design of This Assessment

It is important to identify problem learners as early as possible. This begins with an intake process of interview and assessment structured to pick up learning difficulties. If interviews suggest learning disability, assessment follows which is designed to further evaluate academic performance in problem areas that are consistent with learning disability. The Instructional Strategies Notebook includes responses to specific academic weaknesses that have been identified through the YALD evaluation. It offers suggestions for teachers.

Procedure For Using This Assessment page

Step 1. Review the Assessment Sequence Chart for Overview.....31
Then follow the sequence of steps below

Step 2. Administer the Intake Interview32
This initial interview, given to potential students gathers usual new-student information, but also includes 10 questions designed to "RED FLAG" possible learning problems. Intake Interview Form.....33

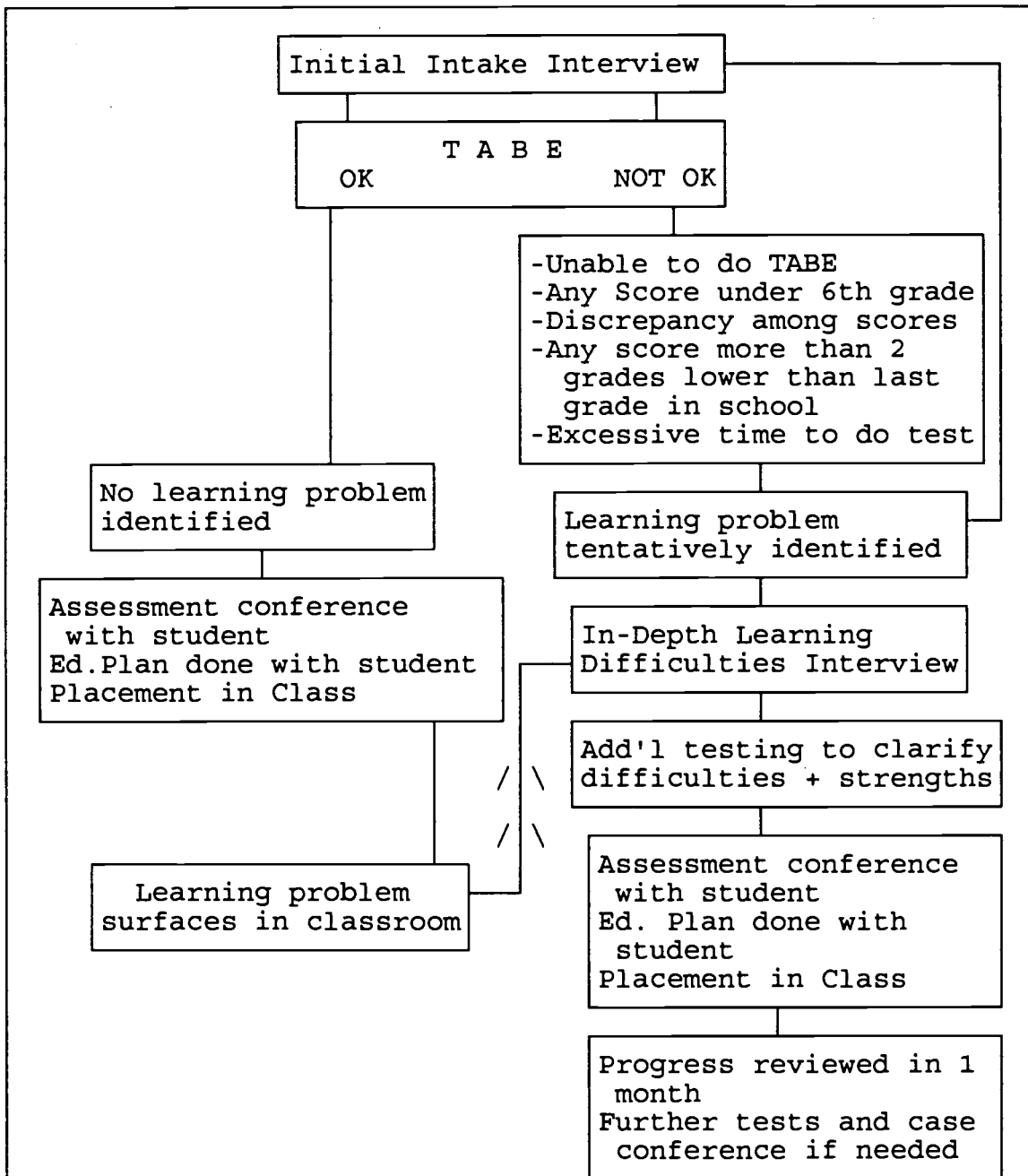
Step 3. Administer the In-Depth LD Interview36
This interview probes areas of academic difficulty that have been "red flagged". These include: Basic Reading, Reading Comprehension, Math, Writing, Spelling. It also explores memory and attention. Observations which may result in gaining additional information are listed. Referral for the In-Depth Interview may come as the result of:
- Intake Interview responses
- intake placement test (TABE or other) scores
- classroom performance suggesting learning problems not caught in intake.
In-Depth Learning Difficulties Interview Form.....37

Step 4. Administer Assessment Tests Within Academic Areas.....43
(See Appendix: copies of two tests and publisher information)
Two types of assessments:
(a) formal evaluations: standardized tests, and
(b) informal evaluations: activity, observation, and question format, are included. Assessors or teachers may select those that will help to clarify the student's learning problem(s).
Basic Reading.....44
Reading Comprehension.....48
Writing.....57
Math.....66
Spelling.....62

Step 5. Use Evaluation Data from All Activities.....71
Gathering, interpreting, sharing information, and using it as the basis of an Education Plan and instructional strategies.

STEP 1.

Assessment Sequence Chart



STEP 2. THE INTAKE INTERVIEW AND THE LEARNING DISABLED STUDENT

Goals for Intake Interviewer Regarding the LD Student:

- to spot students who may have learning difficulties
- to support the students' hopes that this time their educational experience will bring success.

*** Additional goals with possible LD students may be:**

- to enable students to talk about problems that learning difficulties may have caused, acknowledging their reality
- to prepare the student for further assessment.

When The Intake Indicates Possible Learning Problems

Upon completion of the Intake Interview, the interviewer tests with the regular intake assessment instrument (TABE), or concludes the student's reading level is too low to be tested by that measure.

If the response to the TABE and/or the responses to the Intake Interview, particularly the Red Flagged * questions hint at a learning problem, the In-Depth LD Interview is now in order. (Review Sequence chart on previous page)

If the intake interviewer will also be doing the In-Depth Interview to assess for learning disabilities, the Intake Interview may be extended to obtain the additional information requested by the In-Depth. If the LD assessor is another person, then that person is the logical one to complete the evaluation sequence: In-Depth Learning Difficulties Interview, Formal Testing and Informal Testing.

INTAKE INTERVIEW

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Date of Birth: _____

GOALS:

1. What brings you to school at this time? (Short term goals)
2. Where do you see yourself 3 or 4 years from now? (Long term goals)
3. What do you think you need to get there?

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

4. Where did you go to school?
- *5. What was the last grade completed? Why did you leave?
- *6. Tell me what school was like for you. (Or similar open ended question.)
- *7. Did you have any difficulty with reading, writing, or math? (Underline all that apply.) What do you think the problem was?

- *8. Did you get any extra help with any subject?
What kind of help?

How helpful was it?

In what grades was the help given?

9. What did you enjoy about school? (Activities, teacher, friends, lunch?)
10. What subjects did you do well in?
11. Everyone has their own best way of learning. If you had to learn something new, like learning how to wallpaper a room, would you find it easiest to learn by:
- A. Listening to someone give instructions
 - B. Reading the instructions yourself
 - C. Watching a demonstration, then doing it
 - D. Not sure/Doesn't matter/Depends on subject
12. Do you usually learn more easily by:
- A. Working on your own
 - B. Working with one-to-one instruction
 - C. Working in a group
 - D. Not sure/Doesn't matter
13. Have you found any of the following to seriously interfere with your learning:
- *A. Easily distracted by noise or movement
 - *B. Difficulty maintaining concentration (daydreams, attention wanders)
 - C. An education gap in your past schooling (From illness, changing schools, poor instruction, family crisis etc.)
 - D. Poor student/teacher relationships
 - *E. Pace of instruction too fast; teaching unclear
 - *F. Not enough time to finish tasks such as copying from board, reading the required amount, writing assignments in class, completing math, tests (Underline all that apply.)
 - G. Other

Comments on 10-13:

14. What language was spoken in your home?
15. A lot of learning takes place outside the classroom. What skills, training, or licensing have you gotten since school?
16. What kind of work have you done?
- *16. Has anything kept you from finding a job or hindered your performance on the job?

CURRENT SITUATION

17. Are you working now? What hours?
What do you do?

Name of organization: _____
18. What kinds of reading, writing, or math do you want to be able to do for work?
19. What are your interests, hobbies, or activities?
- *20. Do you frequently read newspapers____, magazines____, books____? (If not, how come?)
21. Can you think of anything that might make it difficult for you to be in school, such as transportation, work situation, child care, health, violation of institution rules?
22. What hours are you able to come to school?
23. Is there anything else about yourself that you think we should know?

STEP 3. ADMINISTERING THE IN-DEPTH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES INTERVIEW (The In-depth Learning Difficulties Interview Form follows)

The In-Depth LD Interview builds on the information from the Intake Interview and sometimes from teacher referral. The intake interview and referral notes should be reviewed to avoid asking for information already known.

The format for obtaining the information is up to the LD interviewer. It could be an informal free-flowing conversation, or direct questions closely following the form, with follow-up questions as necessary, or some combination. Do allow enough time to obtain the necessary information, however you choose to get it.

There is one important area of investigation that is best pursued through observation: evidence of normal intelligence.

Since ABE Centers do not ordinarily administer IQ tests and LD individuals are, by definition, of at least normal intelligence, an estimation of the student's intelligence is needed. The LD assessor can rely on observation to satisfy a general impression of normal intellectual strengths that are inconsistent with the student's low level of academic output.

1. The availability and logical/reasonable presentation of thoughts through conversation with the interviewer.
2. Evidence of life accomplishment as shown through employment and/or skills, and/or interests.
3. Evidence of problem solving capacity, "street smarts".

If the student's difficulties include expressive language weakness, slow processing of information, or memory problems, it may be more difficult to get a reliable impression of the student's intelligence. Then classroom observation may be able to provide the answer.

Before proceeding with the In-Depth Interview, note pertinent information from Intake Interview under appropriate question.

IN-DEPTH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES INTERVIEW

Student _____ Date _____

HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM

We understand that you (are having/have had) some difficulty with: (Fill in with student's problem in general)

Have you noticed that you have difficulties in that area or is this something that we are bringing to your attention for the first time? Aware___ Not___

What do you think the difficulty is? (Note clarity in describing the problem.)

What academic areas do you think have been affected?

Do you have some ways that help you deal with or "get around" the learning difficulty?

at school

on the job

at home/other

How successful are the strategies?

Do you have any suggestions of ways you think we can help?

(If an EDUCATIONAL HISTORY was not obtained before, ask about it now: Where schooling took place; student's experiences with school; why student left school and in what grade)

How long have you been aware of difficulties in___?

When/how was it discovered?

What were you told about the problem? Or if not told, what did you believe?

How was it dealt with by the school?

If you were given help in school, what was it like? What helped you the most about it?

How did your parents react? (Supportive, punitive, ignored?)

If testing was done, what did you understand about the testing, and learn about the learning problem?

Are the test results available?

VISION OR HEARING PROBLEM

Are you supposed to wear glasses for reading/writing?_____

When was your most recent eye examination?_____

Have you ever had any vision problems?_____ Explain

Have you ever had any hearing problems?_____ Explain

HISTORY OF POSSIBLE BRAIN INJURY

Have you ever had:

very high fevers_____ seizures_____ stroke_____

injury to the head_____ concussion_____

serious drug reaction_____

If yes, how has this affected learning?

LEARNING PROBLEMS IN THE FAMILY:

Has any of your family had difficulties with learning?
Anyone who had a hard time learning to read, or has a tough
time with spelling? Who has them and what kind? Did they
complete high school?

Extended family: grandparents, uncles/aunts, cousins etc.

Family of origin: parents, siblings

Children

OBSERVATIONS, COMMENTS

OBSERVATIONS FROM CLASSROOM TEACHER

Usually, sometimes, rarely

Participates in class discussion _____
Responds to questions posed in class _____
Completes work in a timely manner _____
Excessive questioning yes___ no___
Student is likely to appear:
 Attentive_____ Frustrated_____ Impulsive_____
 Engaged in work___ Angry_____ Disruptive_____
 Withdrawn_____ Other_____

STUDENT SELF REPORT ABOUT POSSIBLE LEARNING PROBLEMS

The following is a guide to obtain specific information about
a student's learning difficulty as it affects particular
academic areas. You may wish to focus on only those areas
giving the student difficulty. Additional details will be
obtained through the testing and subsequent classroom
observation.

If the student is already in a class, the Student Self Report
questions may also be asked of the student's ABE teacher.
Other student information to be obtained from the classroom
teacher includes:

WHEN THERE IS A READING PROBLEM

- 1) Do you have difficulty recognizing some words? _____
What do you do when you come upon a word you don't recognize? (Wait for student's response. If not forthcoming, ask: Do you try to sound out the word? Figure it out from surrounding words? Guess from its beginning letters? Skip over it?)

- 2) Do you have trouble keeping your place while reading? ____
Do you lose your place from word to word? ____ from the end of one line to the beginning of the next? ____
Do you need to use your finger to help keep your place? ____

- 3) Is it difficult to understand or remember what was read? ____
Is the problem that you don't understand the meaning of the words? _____
Do you have to skip too many words you can't read? _____
Do you visualize what the words describe? _____
Is the problem understanding what you read as you read it? ____ or remembering what you've read after you've finished? ____ or both? ____
Any idea why this is the case?

If you don't understand, what do you do?
Before beginning to read do you: think about your purpose in reading? ____, look the piece over: look for pictures? ____ headings, summaries? ____

As you read, do you think about what is coming next? ____
ask yourself questions? ____, connect what you are reading to things you already know? ____

Do you sometimes think you have understood a passage and then find out you have not understood it as well as you thought? ____ Why do you think this is?

What are your strengths when it comes to reading?

COMMENTS

WHEN THERE IS A WRITING/SPELLING PROBLEM

- 1) Do you seem to lack ideas when it comes to writing?_____
- 2) Do you have trouble putting ideas onto paper? _____
Is it difficult putting ideas into words?_____, words and ideas into sentences?_____
Do you frequently leave words out of sentences?_____
- 3) Do you have trouble writing because spelling is so difficult? _____
Is it hard for you to sound out words in order to spell them? _____
Do you try to spell a word by trying to remember how the whole word looks?___ or by trying to remember the sequence of its letters?_____
Do you have trouble telling when even easy words are misspelled?_____

COMMENTS

WHEN THERE IS A MATH PROBLEM

- 1) Do you have difficulty remembering math facts? _____
Have you been able to memorize all the times tables?_____
Do you automatically know what $9+9$ is, what 100 divided by 4 is, what 7 subtracted from 13 is, or do you have to stop and figure it out?_____
- 2) Do you have trouble remembering the steps in long procedures, such as long division, or multiplication of fractions?_____
- 3) Do you frequently reverse numbers when you write them?____
- 4) Do word problems confuse you?_____

COMMENTS

WHEN THERE ARE ATTENTION OR MEMORY PROBLEMS

- 1) Do you have difficulty sitting still for long? _____
Are you a high energy person, restless, needing to get up and walk around frequently, drumming your fingers? _____
- 2) Do you have trouble keeping your attention focused, even when really wanting to? _____
Are you frequently distracted by sounds? _____ movements _____?
Do you tend to space out or tune others out? _____
Do you often have to reread material because of daydreaming? _____
- 3) Are you frequently urged by others to be more organized? _____
In spite of your efforts at getting things under control, do you still feel disorganized? _____
- 4) Do you have difficulty with being impulsive? _____
Are you impatient? _____
Are you quite easily frustrated? _____
(What do you usually do when frustrated?)

Do you find that you quickly become enthusiastic about something, but the enthusiasm dies quickly too? _____

- 5) Do you think you have a memory problem? _____
How do you experience the problem?

Is the problem retaining new information? _____ or recalling old information? _____ or both? _____
Do you have a problem recalling events? _____, places? _____ faces? _____ or just things involving words/facts? _____

COMMENTS

STEP 4. TESTING: Formal and Informal

At this point, students who have a suspected learning problem have (a) had an Initial Intake Interview, (b) completed the TABE or other placement achievement test (if able to), and (c) participated in an In-depth Learning Difficulties Interview. If well prepared, students are now looking forward to the testing in order to try and unlock the mystery of why they have always had trouble learning.

Objectives of Assessment/Testing

A well done assessment informs students and teachers about students' strengths as well as weaknesses.

- It forms the basis of an Education Plan that will provide the maximum opportunity for success from the beginning.
- When the testing is formal, and standardized tests are used, pre and post instruction data will be available to measure program success; report back to a funding source; have a base line to measure student progress.

Selecting Tests for Formal Assessment: To be considered:

- Whether or not there are testing requirements by your funding source. Must standardized tests be used?
- The academic areas that need further clarification
- The experience of the tester and the training required
- The cost of the tests and the time available to do testing
- Their appropriateness for the LD adolescent and adult population.

Whatever tests are selected, when looking for a possible learning disability, it is wise to use a battery or a variety of instruments. The validity of any single measure, norms and validity notwithstanding, for adults whose experiences are many and unique and spread over many years as compared to its validity for a school child is a continuing question.

Designing the Informal Assessment

Less formal evaluations may be devised by experienced staff or may be replicated from materials available within the field to shed light on particular areas of learning difficulty. This YALD Informal Assessment does exactly that. The following charts provide both formal and informal testing suggestions in five academic areas: Basic Reading, Reading Comprehension, Writing, Math, Spelling. Teachers or assessors may select from among these, those that are appropriate to a particular student.

INTRODUCTION TO TESTING OF BASIC READING

Essential Question: Is the student fundamentally a non-reader or is he a marginal reader? (The marginal reader is able to obtain some meaning from print, as demonstrated by Intake Interview and testing with the TABE or other adult test.)

What both levels of basic readers with learning disability share absolutely are core phonetic deficits and inadequate sight vocabulary. They may share other weaknesses, as well.

Testing for basic reading is designed to build a profile of the reader's performance on sub-skills reflective of strengths and weaknesses in the reading process.

Components To Be Assessed:

Phonetic knowledge

Sight word recognition

Oral reading: accuracy and comprehension

Silent reading comprehension: conceptualization and background knowledge

Spelling: dictation and free writing

Visual perception

Auditory segmentation

Typical Test Response Patterns of LD Basic Readers:

Profiles will vary among individuals, but there are some features typical for these basic LD readers. The non-reader presents a fairly flat profile for academic tasks with phonics likely being the lowest of these low scores. The non-reader will not be able to take a silent reading test; the decision not to present one to this reader will be based upon the Intake Interview and/or low performance on phonics, word recognition, and oral reading. Information about the level of background knowledge and ability to conceptualize will come to light as the student develops in the classroom.

Marginal Reader's Profile:

This often shows considerable variety. Phonics is usually the lowest, with word recognition somewhat above it and oral reading comprehension often (but not always) above both. Testing for this reader seeks to discover how much of a factor basic decoding difficulties (phonics/word recognition) are in the disfluency that plagues the marginal reader. Silent reading assessment will provide the corollary information about the background knowledge and conceptualization ability also necessary for comprehension.

The auditory segmentation evaluation really is a good marker for intrinsic language learning difficulty. The visual perception evaluation is a guide to a simple instructional aid of real value to those identified by the test.

TESTING OF BASIC READING

SUBTOPIC: PHONICS / WORD ATTACK: Assessment of knowledge of the phonetic base of English, through the reading of nonsense syllables.

<u>Formal Testing</u>	<u>Test Score</u>
TLC Phonics _____	
Behaviors to look for in performance - typical of LD	Check Those Observed
Discriminating among short vowels:(fes=fis, mof=muf)_____	_____
Confusing short/long vowels: (det=deet), (swibe-swib)_____	_____
Mispronouncing vowel digraphs: (ue, ay, oe)_____	_____
Mispronouncing vowel diphthongs (oi, oo, aw)_____	_____
Adding or dropping syllables:(plof=po lof)_____	_____
Mispronunciation of soft (c) and (g): (tirge=tirg)_____	_____
Letter reversals: (bab-dab, lunner=lubmer)_____	_____
Adding or dropping letters: (huld-hunld, retpic=repic)_____	_____
Making words from the non-words: (huld=hold, mof=muff)_____	_____

SUBTOPIC: WORD RECOGNITION: Automatic sight recognition

<u>Formal Testing</u>	<u>Test Scores</u>
Diagnostic Assessment of Reading - DAR	
Word recognition _____	
Slosson Word Lists _____	
Wide Range Achievement Test - WRAT Revised _____	
Behaviors to look for in performance -typical of LD	
Guessing leading to error: (notice=note)_____	_____
Partial mispronunciations: (particular=particle)_____	_____
Labored sounding-out rather than automatic recall _____	_____
Confusing vowels: short/long/ diphthongs (at/ai/au)_____	_____
Adding, altering, omitting word endings _____	_____
Word reversals: (no=on, stop=pots)_____	_____
Adding or omitting syllables:(translate=transullate)_____	_____

SUBTOPIC: ORAL PARAGRAPH READING: Ability to read aloud with accuracy. Comprehension questioned by tester.

<u>Formal Testing</u>	<u>Test Scores</u>
Diagnostic Assessment of Reading - DAR	
Oral Paragraphs _____	
Gilmore Oral Reading Test	
Accuracy _____	
Comprehension _____	
Behaviors to look for in performance - typical of LD	
Please see Word Attack and Word Recognition above	
Guessing with good use of context; Inaccurate guessing	
Adding or omitting words: Altering of word order _____	_____
Ignoring punctuation: commas, periods, quotations _____	_____
Misreading a word; adjusting following words, often verbs (He called and we came = He calls and we come.) _____	_____
Ignoring or altering function words: (of, this, an) _____	_____
Difficulty tracking line of print _____	_____
Frequent hesitations and repetitions _____	_____

TESTING OF BASIC READING - continued

SUBTOPIC: SILENT READING

Formal Testing

DAR - Silent Reading Test _____

(Requires a reading mastery level of 3 or above on DAR Word Recognition)

Test Score

Behaviors to look for in performance: typical of LD

Taking excessive amount of time _____

Noticeable rereading _____

Eyes shifting back and forth _____

Difficulty with questions written in negative form _____

Sparse and/or inaccurate oral summaries _____

Check Those Observed

SUBTOPIC: WRITING/SPELLING

Informal Testing

Dictated Sentences: If after first sentence, it is clear reader has severe writing difficulties, stop. Frustration is to be avoided. "The clam sat on the bottom of the ocean." "They rushed into the cottage in the nick of time." "They all sat around the camp fire and told ghost stories." "A conference was held to determine the future course of action." (Designed by Dorthy van den Honert, Pittsfield)

Writing Sample: Reader or assessor may choose a topic. If reader is comfortable, proceed, but no pressure should be applied.

Behaviors to look for in performance: typical of LD

Altering endings, Omitting endings an/or syllables _____

Vowel confusion _____

Mis-sequenced (L and (R)) _____

Phonetic spelling _____

Omitted punctuation _____

Indiscriminate use of capital letters _____

Illegible handwriting _____

Sparse output _____

Inadequate sentence recognition _____

(Based on the above evaluation)

Writing/Spelling

Strength

Weakness

SUBTOPIC: WORD MEANING/VOCABULARY

Formal Testing

DAR - Word Meaning _____

Test Score

Behaviors to look for in performance: typical of LD

Definition vague but still demonstrates understanding _____

Instead of definition, use of word or word synonym in a sentence _____

SUBTOPIC: AUDITORY PERCEPTION

Formal Testing

ROSNER - Auditory Segmentation of Words _____

This test evaluates the ability to segment language sounds and is considered to be quite accurate in identifying language disabled adults. (See appendix for copy of this test)

Test Score

TESTING OF BASIC READING - continued

SUBTOPIC: VISUAL PERCEPTION - LIGHT SENSITIVITY

Informal Testing

Approximately 25% of the basic readers taught by the writers of this manual have some degree of sensitivity to certain bands of the light spectrum. Such sensitivity may cause visual problems with print; this is worth evaluating because a simple technique for its alleviation is quite effective for many of this group. A colored, transparent, plastic overlay placed upon the page usually provides relief. One need not be a basic reader to have some degree of light sensitivity. Explain this to the student before you do the following evaluation. (Light spectrum sensitivity has been noticed and responded to since the 1960's among students in some Catholic schools in the Chicago area.)

1. Ask the reader:

- When reading do you get sleepy? _____ How soon? _____
- Do you get headaches? _____ How quickly? _____
- Do your eyes tear up? _____
- Do words sometimes appear fuzzy or blurry? _____
- Do words sometimes move, vibrate, or run off the page? _____
- Do you have difficulty tracking the line of print? _____
- Do the words sometimes seem to sink into the pages so that the white background is too bright? _____
- Are you more comfortable with dim light when reading? _____

If the learner answers yes to even one or two of the questions, experiment with plastic overlays which come in a spectrum of colors. Sample overlays are included in the appendix. The Assessor and learner determine which color is effective. Overlays are distributed by the Irlen Institute (see bibliography); however, Irlen may require training in evaluating light-sensitivity, which they have labeled "scotopic sensitivity", before they sell their product. Overlays can also be purchased at any art store; it is desirable to have one side shiny and one dull. Dull side faces the reader. They are 8 1/2 by 11.

Place first one color then another over a page of text, testing all the colored overlays you have available; compare and contrast colors.

2. Ask the reader:

- Does this color make the page more comfortable for you? _____
- Restate the difficulty the reader responded to in the above questions: i.e. "Does it make the words less blurry...?" _____

3. Ask the reader:

- Is there a decided preference for a particular color? _____
- Once reader selects an overlay, advise him to use it whenever he reads for three weeks and then report on its usefulness.

Overlays make a difference for some readers all the time; for others, they help most when the reader is under fluorescent light or is tired. Some students taught by these writers were already aware that colored glasses made reading more comfortable for them. 8 by 11 sheets may be halved for easier manipulation on a book page.

(Based upon the above evaluation)

	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
Light sensitivity	_____	_____
Color Overlay Selected	_____	_____

INTRODUCTION TO TESTING OF READING COMPREHENSION

Essential Question: Is comprehension being derailed by struggle at the level of word recognition/decoding? Can a distinction between this kind of difficulty and the more commonly perceived difficulties of weak vocabulary, general knowledge, and organized thinking be clarified?

The comprehension assessment is designed for readers who have some degree of independence in reading as described by:

- A. Grade-score on a formal test of comprehension: 4 or above
- B. Evaluation by a teacher on an Informal Reading Inventory

* Some L.D. readers experience comprehension difficulties as the level and complexity of written text escalates, moving away from the oral and descriptive speech patterns, and common topics with which native speakers are so familiar. These increasing difficulties may result from several factors which can be evaluated. Some of the evaluation is easily quantified, some not. Quantifying; however, is less useful than analyzing the difficulties and then employing appropriate teaching/learning strategies to aid learners in monitoring and; thus, improving their reading comprehension.

Common Sources of Difficulty:

1. Visual Perception Problems
2. Weak Word Recognition due to minimal or imperfect storage of language information: phonics, morphemes (word parts and forms), function words (this, that, those...)
3. Syntactically Varied and Complex Sentences
4. Limited Vocabulary and General Knowledge, both general and content-specific
5. At the Discourse Level of Comprehension: Recognition of Text Organization Structures
6. Figurative Language
7. Pace of Performance

This evaluation can contribute to an educational plan that integrates the comprehension components relevant for any individual reader. It is however, not a complete formal test; teachers may want to add their own tools to it.

(For publishing information on standardized tests, see Appendix.)

TESTING OF READING COMPREHENSION

Step I. Assess the basic components of reading that must operate efficiently in order for the higher level thinking necessary for comprehension to take place. Turn to "Testing of Basic Reading" and follow the procedure.

Informal Testing

VISUAL PERCEPTION: please see In-Depth Interview, page 38 and Testing of Basic Reading, page 47

Formal Tests

WORD ATTACK: please see Testing of Basic Reading, page 45

WORD RECOGNITION: please see Testing of Basic Reading, page 45

An informal evaluation of word recognition is presented below.

Step II. Assess additional components of comprehension as below. Informal testing culled from teachers and reading-literature.

Informal Testing - WORD RECOGNITION

* Note at what level of class-reading word recognition becomes a problem. _____

	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
* Listen to student read aloud. When words are difficult for him: Is he able to sound them out? _____ Is he able to recognize word parts? _____ Can he use context for problem words? _____ Does he guess without basis? _____ Does he skip over the word? _____		
* Present reader with words he is able to read. Can he break these into syllables? _____ If successful with known words, present unknown words. Can he break these into syllables? _____		
* Have student read aloud from a graded passage, or a passage from class text. Does reader make word substitutions? _____ Does reader pause to correct substitutions if the sentence does not make sense? _____ (If most word substitutions make sense, or are corrected to make sense, then context helps this reader; if not, context is being overused as a word recognition strategy.)		
* Create two word lists from the passage(s) 1.) mis-read words, 2.) correctly read words Compare reading results from the two lists. Are the words that were read in context more difficult to read without context? _____		
* Point out common prefixes/suffixes within difficult words (ing) assuaging, (er) disinter, (less) clueless Can reader recognize them? _____ Can reader recognize them - feigning, spinelessness - if not pointed out? _____		

TESTING OF READING COMPREHENSION - continued

SUBTOPIC: VOCABULARY - SEMANTICS

Formal Tests

Record the time it takes to do these tests

Test of Adult Basic Education - TABE _____
 (full test gives grade score and profile)
 Diagnostic Assessment of Reading - DAR _____
 (Tester reads words/records responses)
 Test of Reading Comprehension - TORC
 Vocabulary Scores:
 Science _____
 Social Studies _____
 General Vocabulary _____

Time

Test

Informal Testing

We are evaluating both knowledge of word meaning and ability to employ vocabulary

* To separate word meaning from word recognition

Administer a standardized vocabulary test (such as TABE) in which student reads words and matches definitions. Then read to the student those words that were incorrectly matched with meanings.

Is the vocabulary score on this test raised when words are read to student? _____

Compare scores. A higher score when words are read may indicate some vocabulary strength, but identify word recognition problems.

* To see if student has greater depth of vocabulary in specific subject areas: (This is also a check on background knowledge.)

Ask student to list some areas of interest. Give her, or obtain from her several relevant words. Have her make a list of related-meaning words that she associates with these key words.

Is her list: Ample _____
 (this would be a strength) Adequate _____
 Sparse _____
 Are responses: Concrete _____
 Abstract _____

Select two abstract words and two concrete words relevant to class work and repeat the exercise.

Are responses: Ample _____
 (this would be a strength) Adequate _____
 Sparse _____

Strength

Weakness

TESTING OF READING COMPREHENSION

SUBTOPIC: VOCABULARY - SEMANTICS continued

	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
<p>* <u>To evaluate ability to categorize semantic information:</u> Select three common topics and a list of concrete and abstract words related to the topics. Have student sort words into three lists. Words correctly sorted by topic: number(____) Abstract words correctly categorized:(____) Concrete words correctly categorized:(____)</p>		
<p>At what pace did reader respond to this task? Quickly/efficiently_____ Slowly, but effectively_____ Hesitantly_____</p>		
<p>* <u>To see if student is able to grasp sentence and/or paragraph meanings if words are pre-defined:</u> Present sentences and a short paragraph . Can student understand meaning of sentences? Can student understand paragraph?_____</p>		
<p>Give several subject-related words relevant to class work in both oral and written form. Define the words, then ask student to put them into sentences of his own. Good_____ Adequate_____ Not Adequate_____</p>		

SUBTOPIC: SYNTAX - Arrangement of words in sentences

Formal Testing

	<u>Time</u>	<u>Test Score</u>
<p>*Record the time it takes to do these tests*</p>		
<p>Test of Adult Basic Education - TABE Language Expression_____ (Note especially sentence fragments and sentence combining.)</p>		
<p>Test of Reading Comprehension - TORC Syntactic Similarities_____ Sentence Sequencing_____</p>		

Informal Testing

	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
<p>* Present several sets of short sentences asking reader to combine them into one: Present two sentences_____ three sentences_____ four sentences_____</p> <p>(Note both logic and sophistication of combinations and use of connectives.)</p>		

TESTING OF READING COMPREHENSION

SUBTOPIC: SYNTAX - continued

- * Present several sets of sentences in which the subject is constant but meaning is altered.

Example:

Beautiful music was played by the girl.
Beautiful music was played for the girl.

Can reader explain meaning changes caused by

Function Words _____

Verb Tenses _____

Pronouns _____

Singular/Plural _____

(Note which categories cause problems.)

- * Present several sets of 3 or 4 sentences:

Examples:

The girl drove the car.
Girls like to drive cars.
The car was driven by the girl.
The girl is going to drive the car. _____

Matt sang on Sunday.
On Sunday, Matt sings.
Last Sunday Matt sang.
Matt sings Sundays. _____

Can reader select the two sentences that have almost the same meaning? _____

- * Present a list of function words and verbs in various tenses: this, these, an, of, for, by

Can reader make sentences using two? _____

Using three? _____

- * Select sentences of vocabulary and grammatical construction that are within reader's grasp that contain connecting words.

Examples:

therefore _____

nevertheless _____

subsequently _____

(select additional connectors) _____

Can reader explain role and meaning of the specific connector in the sentence? _____

If the role is not understood, demonstrate with a sentence in which easy content carries the logic: "It was cold that day, nevertheless, John went swimming in the lake." Then present several simple sentences.

Is role now understood? _____

Try a more sophisticated sentence:

Understood? _____

- * Present exercises from Reading From Scratch - Workbook II, pages 4-7, 44-45, 32-33: These evaluate understanding of time sequences, pronoun references, and knowledge of noun/verb designation in sentences. (See Bibliography)

Strength

Weakness

TESTING OF READING COMPREHENSION

SUBTOPIC: DISCOURSE - Meaning beyond the boundary of a sentence

Formal Testing

Record the time it takes to do these tests

	<u>Time</u>	<u>Test Score</u>
Test of Adult Basic Education - TABE: Comprehension _____ (Tests comprehension of facts, main ideas, inferences, author viewpoint, etc.)		
Diagnostic Assessment of Reading - DAR: Silent Reading Paragraphs _____ (Includes oral summaries)		
Test of Reading Comprehension - TORC Silent Reading Paragraphs _____ (No profile, but questions on main idea, prediction, facts, logical thought)		

Informal Testing

* Determine whether a student may understand what is read, but not able to respond adequately. Might there be expressive language difficulties? Which response format is most effective for this student? Try different formats to assess the student's understanding of the text:

To evaluate free-recall: ask reader to re-tell or explain what has been read. This may be done with a paragraph or an entire passage. _____

To evaluate depth/quality of understanding: Probe for recall: use questions that include information from the text _____

Can reader explain **meaning of questions** that go with a text or reading passage _____

Try short answer format: reader creates answer, or selects answer _____

Try multiple choice format _____

Try essay format _____

Try true/false format _____

<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>

TESTING OF READING COMPREHENSION

SUBTOPIC: DISCOURSE - continued

Informal Testing

Understanding Organizational Structures:
Cause/Effect, Like/Unlike, Problem/Solutions etc.

* Give the reader a short passage that is within his reading level. Explain that it is about the causes and effects of "X". Select a subject rich for cause/effect discussion: auto accidents, job loss, etc.

Ask him to list the causes of the job loss or accident, as told in the passage, on one side of a paper and the effects on the other.

Can reader create lists that show understanding? _____

* If reader has difficulty with the above task, explain the concept of C/E giving examples from the passage and ask her to find more.

Is the reader now able to add to the lists? _____

* Repeat the activity with a passage at the same level but on a new subject.

Can the reader create lists that show understanding? _____

* Ask reader to explain the concept of C/E in terms of a subject he knows well: music, carpentry, etc. "Tell me what causes (makes) a good carpenter. Tell me the result (effect) of good carpentry.

Does reader demonstrate understanding of C/E? _____

* Present a more complex passage.

Can reader make this generalization? _____

A reader's recognition of any organizational structures may be evaluated in this manner.

If a reader seems strong in some concepts and not others, explore strategies the reader uses to understand the concepts he does grasp.

* For instance, what steps and information does he use to isolate Before from After, Problems from Solutions?

* Ask reader if diagrams or drawings make concepts/information easier to grasp, easier to hold. _____

* Does this reader visualize, create mental images to aid understanding and memory? _____

<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>

TESTING OF READING COMPREHENSION

SUBTOPIC: DISCOURSE - continued

Informal Testing

Understanding Main Ideas and Inferences:

Strength Weakness

* Select exercises from either Pre-GED texts or Specific Skill Series at about the level suggested by the formal tests (TABE or other). How does the student score on Main Ideas? Conclusions? Inferences?

* Have student read silently a passage within her expected reading level. Ask her to explain it in her own words. Can the student do this adequately? Ask for the main (most important) idea. Is the student's response complete? Adequate? Inadequate? Ask for supporting details. Is the student's response complete? Adequate? Inadequate?

* Explain and demonstrate difference between conclusion and inference. Ask student to find an example of each in a passage below his tested reading level. Can he make this distinction? If yes, offer a grade-level passage. Can he make this distinction?

Informal Testing

Understanding Fact versus Opinion

Strength Weakness

* Present several passages at expected reading level that contain both facts and opinions. Ask for a list of just facts: Can reader identify more than one fact: Orally In writing? Ask whether opinions are present in passages. If yes, ask student to read some aloud. Ask student how he knows these are opinions. Can student identify some opinions? Can he tell how he identified opinion?

TESTING OF READING COMPREHENSION

SUBTOPIC: DISCOURSE - continued

Informal Testing

Understanding Figurative Language

- * Explain the concept and purpose of figurative language, giving some examples. Then present several sentences that exhibit it.

Example:

The music was hot and heavy.

Encourage visualization, "picturing" the sentence.

- Can student pick out the figurative language?
Can he explain its meaning in this use? _____

- * Can the reader recognize the use of figurative language in passages on topics in which he is interested? Have passages available on a range of general interest topics such as popular music, cars, movies, shopping, etc. Ask reader to identify and explain examples of figurative language .

- Can reader locate figurative language? _____
Can he explain its meaning? _____
Can he suggest why author used it? _____

- * Can he understand it in proverbs or sayings if their meanings are explained? Take the proverb "Don't cry over spilled milk"; discuss or explain its meaning. Then ask how this talk of milk can be related to the meaning given.
Can the reader make this concrete-to-abstract connection? _____

<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>

INTRODUCTION TO THE TESTING OF WRITING

* This is designed for the Pre-GED and GED writer.

Essential Question: Is the student able to put into writing, grammatically and with correct spelling and punctuation, a sufficient number of ideas in a logical progression which leads to a conclusion?

Areas of difficulty in writing for the LD student range from the production of ideas to the production of marks on a paper. In between are problems of the organization of the thoughts into words and sentences, and of their sequence in a logical order, with correct syntax, grammar and punctuation. Problems of memory and of auditory perception and processing affect spelling. Spelling problems, in turn, greatly reduce the amount of writing output.

Because of the complex nature of serious spelling difficulties, it's assessment has been dealt with separately. See TESTING OF SPELLING.

While some aspects of writing, such as mechanics may be assessed through formal testing, there are many areas of writing where informal assessment, through analysis of writing samples, observation, and discussion with the student, may provide the most accurate picture of an individual student's strengths and weaknesses. The quality, and quantity of ideas, and their logical progression from initial statement to conclusion is one such area.

* Writers at the basic reading level may provide an initial writing sample if they are able and comfortable attempting it. During the basic reading assessment several sentences are dictated; sentences that highlight possible language difficulties.

TESTING OF WRITING

This assessment assumes sufficient written production from which to make an evaluation.

SUBTOPIC: IDEAS: Ability to access, organize and express ideas in writing, logically, sequentially, and coherently

<u>Formal Testing</u>	<u>Test Score</u>
Test of Written Language - TOWL	
Subtest 4 _____	_____
Subtest 6 _____	_____
Other: _____	_____

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: writing samples

1. "How To" paragraph, i.e. "How To Do Laundry" or
2. "Why I Am Coming Back To School" or other provided topic or
3. Student writes about a picture you've provided

<u>Results:</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
Number of ideas _____	_____	_____
Can translate ideas discussed orally into writing _____	_____	_____
Amount of output is sufficient _____	_____	_____
Ideas are developed _____	_____	_____
Logical progression of ideas to conclusion _____	_____	_____
Does not include extraneous mat'l _____	_____	_____
Speed of production is normal _____	_____	_____

Comments:

TESTING OF WRITING

SUBTOPIC: LANGUAGE EXPRESSION: Syntax, Semantics

Formal Testing

Test of Written Language - TOWL

Subtest 1 _____

Subtest 5 _____

Subtest 7 _____

Subtest 8 _____

Woodcock-Johnson - W-J

Subtest 18 _____

subtest 19 _____

Test of Adult Basic Education - TABE

Expression _____

Other _____

Test Score

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: writing samples, see above

Results:

Does not omit words _____

Correct sequence of words _____

Correct use of possessives _____

Correct use of pronouns _____

Correct verb tense _____

Agreement of subject and verb _____

No run on sentences _____

No sentence fragments _____

Uses varied sentence structures _____

Sentences follow logical sequence _____

Topic/concluding sentences OK _____

Vocabulary OK _____

Other _____

Strength

Weakness

Comments:

TESTING OF WRITING

SUBTOPIC: MECHANICS: Punctuation, Capitalization, Spelling

<u>Formal Testing</u> (see also TESTING OF SPELLING)	<u>Test Score</u>
Test of Written Language - TOWL	
Subtest 3	
Subtest 10	
Subtest 2	
Subtest 9	
Woodcock-Johnson - W-J	
Subtest 18	
Subtest 19	
Test of Adult Basic Education - TABE	
Mechanics	
Expression	
Wide Range Achievement Test - WRAT-R	
Spelling	
Diagnostic Assessm't of Reading - DAR	
Spelling	
Other	

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: writing samples, see above

<u>Results:</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
Does not omit punctuation		
Does not add unneeded punctuation		
Does not substitute punctuation		
Indents paragraphs		
Correct use of capitals		
Spelling in general		
Correct word endings		
Writing not inhibited by spelling		
Other		

Comments:

TESTING OF WRITING

SUBTOPIC: EDITING, PROOFREADING

Formal Testing

Test of Written Language - TOWL

Subtest 4 _____

Woodcock-Johnson - W-J

Subtest 19 _____

Other _____

Test Score

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: writing samples. Select a student writing; have student (1) edit it for content (2) proof it (3) hand in the best copy.

Results:

Mechanics errors found/corrected _____

Other errors found/corrected _____

Edits work so that ideas are clearly stated and developed _____

Other _____

Strength

Weakness

Comments: Which errors were not found/corrected?

SUBTOPIC: GRAPHO-MOTOR PRODUCTION: Handwriting

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: writing samples, observation

Results:

Writes in script with ease _____

Handwriting easy to read _____

Pace of handwriting production normal _____

Other _____

Strength

Weakness

Comments:

INTRODUCTION TO THE TESTING OF SPELLING

The Essential Questions: Is the degree of spelling inaccuracy so great that it interferes with the student's ability to communicate through writing? What types of errors does the student make?

Spelling is a complex linguistic task in which the speller must:

- process a sequence of sounds and/or remember the correct sequence of letters
- identify, remember and apply the appropriate spelling rule
- adjust the spelling according to a knowledge of the language, particularly syntax
- remember the visual appearance of the correctly spelled word.

A weakness in any of the areas will mean a weakness in spelling.

Spelling difficulties may be part of a reading disability or may exist without any other obvious learning difficulties. Memory problems, auditory perception/auditory processing problems, and sequencing difficulties all affect spelling.

In assessing spelling it is important, whether the assessment is formal or informal, to analyze the type of errors made in order to discover where the underlying difficulty lies. Is the spelling phonetically correct (even though the word is misspelled)? Are letters/syllables left out? Are they added? Are they transposed? Are spelling rules violated? Do the misspelled words look similar in appearance to the correct words, though not similar in sound?

For this reason, multiple choice spelling tests have limited value because they assess only recognition of correctly spelled words.

(See appendix for YALD-designed spelling evaluation, a modest first attempt to assist in the analysis of error types.

"Spelling Assessment 8/96)

TESTING OF SPELLING

SUBTOPIC: OVERALL ACCURACY

<u>Formal Testing</u>	<u>Test Score</u>
Dictated spelling from: Diagnostic Assessment of Reading - DAR Spelling test _____	_____
Wide Range Achievement Test - WRAT-R Spelling test _____	_____
Woodcock-Johnson Subtest 18 _____	_____
Other _____	_____

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: YALD Spelling Test, teacher-made test, writing samples, class work

<u>Results:</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
Able to spell from dictation _____	_____	_____
Able to correct the spelling on own written work _____	_____	_____
Initial spelling of spontaneously written work is correct _____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____

Comments:

SUBTEST: ABILITY TO MATCH SOUND AND SYMBOL

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: analysis of error patterns from YALD Spelling Test or any dictated spelling test or sentences, writing sample; oral testing of knowledge of letter sounds.

<u>Results:</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
<u>Whether or not spelling is correct:</u>		
Matches consonant sounds/symbols _____	_____	_____
Matches long vowel sounds/symbols _____	_____	_____
Matches short vowel sounds/symbols _____	_____	_____
Matches r-controlled sounds/symbols _____	_____	_____
Matches consonant digraph sounds/symbols (sh, th, ch, wh) _____	_____	_____
Matches consonant blend sound/symbols (bl, cr, st, sp....etc.) _____	_____	_____
Matches vowel pair sounds/symbols (ai, au, ee, oi....etc.) _____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____

Comment: Are mis-matches frequent? I there a pattern?

TESTING OF SPELLING

SUBTOPIC: MEMORY FOR THE CORRECTLY SPELLED WORD

Formal Testing

Test of Adult Basic Education - TABE
 Spelling subtest _____
 Other multiple choice test _____

Test Score

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: any multiple choice spelling test; analysis of errors from dictated spelling test, dictated sentences, writing sample

Results:

Selects correct word on multiple choice spelling test _____
 Rarely misspells words _____
 Able to spell irregular (sight) words _____
 Does not write words that are similar in appearance but phonologically dissimilar to the correct word _____
 Other _____

Strength

Weakness

Strength	Weakness
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Comments:

SUBTOPIC: KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF SPELLING RULES

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: error analysis of dictated spelling test: Test Of Written Language (TOWL)-Subtest 2, YALD Spelling Test, WRAT-R Spelling, DAR-Spelling; dictated sentences; class work; writing sample; questioning

Results:

Knows basic spelling rules (see appendix for list) _____
 Correctly spells rule-based words _____
 Other _____

Strength

Weakness

Strength	Weakness
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Comments: Which spelling rules are not known/applied?

TESTING OF SPELLING

SUBTOPIC: AUTOMATICITY OF SPELLING

<u>Formal Testing</u>	<u>Test Score</u>
Test of Written Language - TOWL	
Subtest 9 _____	
Other _____	

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: writing samples

<u>Results:</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
Accuracy in spontaneous writing is equal to that of dictated spelling _____		
Consistency of spelling: the same word spelled the same, throughout _____		
Other _____		

Comments:

SUBTOPIC: KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF SPELLING STRATEGIES AND AIDS

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: class observation, questioning

<u>Results:</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
Uses variety of spelling strategies:		
phonics _____		
rules _____		
memory tricks (mnemonics) _____		
visualization _____		
other _____		
Knows how to use:		
dictionary _____		
electronic spelling aid _____		
computer spell checker _____		
Actually uses:		
dictionary _____		
electronic spelling aids _____		
computer spell checkers _____		
Other _____		

Comments:

INTRODUCTION TO THE TESTING OF MATH

Essential Questions: Is the student able to do the math necessary for home, job, personal finances, and future goals? If there are areas of math weakness, are there underlying learning difficulties?

Learning difficulties that affect math include memory problems, spatial problems, problems understanding math concepts, sequencing problems, difficulty understanding math vocabulary, problems in decoding which affect word problems.

While formal testing has the advantage of giving a grade level score and quickly identifying the math weakness, further analysis is necessary to identify what underlies the weakness. For this reason it is important that the student's work is on paper; the student should not just circle a letter or fill in a box for the correct answer.

Informal assessment may be especially successful at pinpointing problems. For example, a math test might show that a student couldn't do long division. Is the problem an inability to remember steps in long processes? Or incomplete memorization of the multiplication tables? Or a spatial problem where number misalignment causes the error? Or sequencing problems where numbers or steps are reversed? Or lack of understanding of the concept of borrowing and carrying? Analysis of the individual student's work, and discussion with the student would be necessary to discover the cause.

The testing, whether formal or informal, seeks to learn where on the spectrum of simple-to-complex, and concrete-to-abstract does the student's comprehension of math lie and where does it break down.

TESTING OF MATH

SUBTOPIC: MEASUREMENT: distance, time, weight, volume,
quantity

Informal Evaluation

Means of measurement: teacher-made tests, class work,
questioning

Results:

Basic Level Measurement:

Able to read measurement tools:

ruler_____

map_____

calendar_____

clock_____

thermometer_____

measuring cup/spoon_____

Knows equivalent measures:

inches in a foot, seconds in a

minute, days/months in a year, ounces

in a pound, quarts in a gallon etc._____

Higher Level Measurement:

Able to convert one measure to
another (inches to feet etc.)_____

Can use concepts, formulas, and/or
references (charts, tables, graphs)
to solve measurement problems_____

Uses measurements in own life_____

Strength

Weakness

Comments: Which measures give difficulty?

SUBTOPIC: MONEY: vocabulary, equivalent value

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: teacher-made tests, class work,
observation, questioning

Results:

Names currency correctly_____

Knows equivalent value (a quarter =
25 cents or one fourth dollar)_____

Can count change_____

Can make change_____

Other_____

Strength

Weakness

Comments: Which gives trouble?

TESTING OF MATH

SUBTOPIC: COMPUTATION: Knowledge and use of number facts

<u>Formal Testing</u>	<u>Test Score</u>
Wide Range Achievement Test - WRAT-R Math	_____
Test of Adult Basic Education - TABE Math Computation	_____
Math concepts	_____
Other	_____

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: class observation, questioning

<u>Results:</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
Recalls number facts, day to day	_____	_____
Recall is quick	_____	_____
Recall of computation processes (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division) is automatic	_____	_____
Correctly states the process, i.e. 10-6 isn't "6 take away 10"	_____	_____
Can compute without manipulatives	_____	_____
Can compute without pictures/pencil marks/number line	_____	_____
Can do simple math in head; doesn't need to write numbers	_____	_____
Understands concept of odd/even	_____	_____
Can count by 10's, 2's, 5's	_____	_____
Has memorized multiplication tables	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____

Comments:

SUBTOPIC: OPERATION SYMBOLS: Understanding and correct use of math symbols +, -, x, ÷, =, <, >

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: teacher-made tests, observation, questioning

<u>Results:</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
Writes correct symbol for operation	_____	_____
Names correct symbol for operation	_____	_____
Does not omit symbols	_____	_____
Performs process indicated by symbol	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____

Comments:

TESTING OF MATH

SUBTOPIC: COMPUTATION OF MULTI-DIGIT NUMBERS, FRACTIONS, DECIMALS, PER CENTS

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: error analysis of any math test:
WRAT, TABE, teacher-made, class work, observation

Results:	Strength	Weakness
Sequences numbers correctly _____		
Remembers sequence of steps in long processes such as long division _____		
Aligns digits within operation _____		
Spatially separates one problem from another _____		
Multi-digit numbers:		
Able to use place value _____		
Able to regroup (borrow/carry) _____		
addition _____		
subtraction _____		
multiplication _____		
division _____		
Fractions:		
Understands concept of part/whole _____		
Addition _____		
subtraction _____		
multiplication _____		
division _____		
Decimals:		
Can multiply/divide by 10's, 100's 1000's _____		
addition _____		
subtraction _____		
multiplication _____		
division _____		
Per cents:		
addition _____		
subtraction _____		
multiplication _____		
division _____		
Other _____		

Comments:

TESTING OF MATH

SUBTOPIC: CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

<u>Formal Testing</u>	<u>Test Score</u>
Test of Adult Basic Education - TABE Concepts and Applications _____	_____
Woodcock-Johnson - W-J Subtest 17 _____	_____
Other _____	_____

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: class work, teacher-made tests, observation, questioning

<u>Results:</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
Responds correctly to math vocabulary words _____	_____	_____
Can correctly verbalize concepts _____	_____	_____
Can use math concepts to solve word problems requiring one process _____	_____	_____
Can solve word problems requiring at least two processes (add+subtract, add+multiply etc.) _____	_____	_____
Goes through process of estimating reasonableness of answers _____	_____	_____
Answers are reasonable _____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____

Comments: Which concepts or vocabulary words give difficulty?

SUBTOPIC: GRAPHS

Informal Testing

Means of measurement: analysis of tests which include graphs i.e. TABE:Concepts and Applications; other math tests, including teacher-made tests; class observations

<u>Results:</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
Able to read bar and line graphs _____	_____	_____
Correctly interprets information from bar or line graphs _____	_____	_____
Able to create bar or line graphs from information given _____	_____	_____
Able to read and interpret circle graphs _____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____

Comments:

STEP 5. USING THE ASSESSMENT DATA

Understanding the meaning of the information obtained from the interviews, and from formal or informal testing is the next step.

First: TRANSFER THE RESULTS from the testing pages to the **Profile Graph** (Profile Graph Forms are on the next page.) The upper graph is for formal test scores; the lower graph is for strengths and weaknesses revealed by informal testing. Incorporate any additional information and/or insights from the tests and interviews in the space provided at the bottom of the form.

Second: ANALYZE THE PROFILE Note high and low scores, and any patterns of strength and weakness. The typical LD person will have a varied profile showing strengths in understanding but weaknesses in processing language or math. The typical reading disabled basic reader will show more strength in comprehension than in decoding. If the formal test profile is low and flat, it is difficult to interpret. It could mean several things: total inability to read; limited educational/cultural exposure; lower intellect. The value of this testing is its use as a base from which to begin building an instructional plan.

Third: REFER TO TEACHING STRATEGIES NOTEBOOK This notebook is keyed to the learning difficulties that will be identified through this assessment. The Strategies Notebook has two types of information:

- It provides background information about specific learning difficulties and the personal and academic behaviors associated with these difficulties.
- It is an extensive collection of instructional strategies effective in teaching Basic Reading, Reading Comprehension, Writing, Spelling, Math to LD adolescents and adults.

Both types of information will assist as you consider your recommendations and an Education Plan.

Fourth: CONFER Confer with student and colleagues separately about the assessment results. Obtain student's and colleagues' input about the potential Education Plan; give your recommendations. Sample Case Conference format follows on Pg.

Fifth: FORMALIZE THE EDUCATION PLAN Obtain agreement of the Education Plan from student. Sample Form for Education Plan on Pg.

PROFILE GRAPH: Grade Scores

Name: _____

12									
11									
10									
9									
8									
7									
6									
5									
4									
3									
2									
1									
	Phonics	Word Recog	Oral Paragr	Silent Compreh.	Writ. Express	Writ. Mechan.	Spell.	Math Comput	Math Concepts

PROFILE GRAPH: Strength/Weakness

Strength									
Weakness									
	Read. Comp: Decode	Read. Comp: Vocab	Read. Comp: Syntx	Read. Comp: Dis- course	Writ. Express	Writ. Mechan	Spell	Math Comput	Math Concepts

Rosner: OK ___ NOT OK ___

Light sensitivity: yes ___ To try _____ colored plastic overlay

Comments:

PROFILE GRAPH: Grade Scores
 (For other tests you may wish to record)

Name: _____

12									
11									
10									
9									
8									
7									
6									
5									
4									
3									
2									
1									

PROFILE GRAPH: Strength/Weakness

Strength									
Weakness									

Rosner: OK ___ NOT OK ___

Light sensitivity: yes ___ To try _____ colored plastic overlay

Comments:

Assessor/Student Conference: Strengths and Weaknesses

The assessor explains the results of the assessments. Opportunity is given to the student to ask questions and discuss worries, hopes. While weaknesses should be frankly discussed, it should be stressed that the interview and assessment have revealed strengths as well as weaknesses and that they are equally important. More strengths will be discovered and celebrated as the teachers get to know the student. In the long run, talents and strengths are what produce enjoyment in living and usually play the major role in determining the directions an individual chooses in life.

The assessor again discusses the time and commitment required and ascertains the student's readiness to make a commitment. The student's involvement in the creation of an educational plan is elicited.

Assessor/Staff Discussions: Creating the Education Plan and Selecting Instructional Strategies (Form follows)

The assessor decides whether to meet with the prospective student's teacher(s) and the counselor to discuss the student's learning problems, assessments and together draw up the educational plan, or to request a staff case conference to assist in the development of an education plan. The usual procedure would be the former, with a case conference being scheduled later if learning remains a puzzle, and if suitable progress isn't being made.

Case Conference

Those present may include the initial intake interviewer, LD interviewer-assessor, teachers, LD resource person, counselor, and administration.

The usual case conference would include:

- The presenting problem
- Background information from intake
- Assessment results
- Input from each teacher about the student's learning
- Open discussion/brainstorming of effective strategies
- A summarization of the suggestions
- Decisions about which strategies are to be tried
- The Education Plan is formalized including an evaluation meeting set for a designated future date.

The assessor schedules either the meeting with the teacher(s) to draw up an educational plan, or the staff case conference. This should happen before the student enters the classroom. The assessor informs teachers/staff of the student's educational background, learning problems and strengths, assessments and their meanings, goals, and student input

regarding the educational plan. The assessor and teachers/staff then draw up the Education Plan.

The Education Plan may be kept in the student's work folder for easy and constant access by the teacher. Confidential information isn't kept in the Education Plan. However, there should be enough direction in it to remind teachers what should be emphasized, eliminated etc.

Pittsfield Adult Learning Center

ADULT EDUCATION PLAN for:

Area of Concentration: _____ Date: _____

Long Term Goals: _____

Additional Assessments: _____

READING:

Focus for this student:

MATH:

Focus for this student:

LANGUAGE:

Focus for this student:

STEP 6.

ONGOING ASSESSMENT

Assessment by Teachers in the Classroom:

Ongoing assessment is done routinely by ABE teachers as they note areas where students need reinforcement, areas of strength and weakness, preferred learning styles etc.

- * Ongoing observation of LD students' learning behavior is essential in order to continue to unravel the puzzle of their learning problems.
- * It is wise to jot down these observations as they are made, or too often they are forgotten. It need not be elaborate: just a word or phrase in a log in their work file. These observations will be helpful if a case conference is called. And they certainly can be used to show students how progress is being made.

Evaluation of LD Student Progress After One Month:

After LD students are assessed and placed in a class, a period of time is necessary for teachers to observe classroom performance. Usually by the end of a month the teacher is able to tell whether or not the LD student is making satisfactory progress.

- * There should be formal consideration of students' progress in relation to their assessment, Education Plan, and goals. The teacher should ask for students' opinions about whether the instruction seems to be on target. Any teachers who are instructing the student should be consulted. If everyone is happy with progress, then instruction just continues as planned.
- * If one or more teacher or the student is not pleased with the student's progress, then a call for a case conference may be in order. (Most students will not require a case conference as part of their original assessment.) This may result in reworking the Education Plan. Another review should be scheduled in a stated time.

Ongoing Teacher Consultation

As instruction progresses, teachers still need to consult informally with each other, and with the student periodically to check progress, to share insights, and to adjust the Education Plan if necessary. The assessor may be consulted, and additional testing may be requested if indicated.

PART III.

COUNSELING SERVICES FOR THE LEARNING DISABLED STUDENT

INITIAL COUNSELING SERVICES: Counseling During The Assessment Period

* The first occasion when counseling may be needed is as LD students reveal the emotional distress that has come from their inability to learn like other people. This may come fairly early in intake particularly with those reading at a very low level, or it may come considerably later with ABE II readers who are more able to hide a learning problem from themselves (denial) and from others. It is painful for students to admit that they don't learn like other people. They have faced teasing, humiliation, and maybe even discrimination because of it. Students may have been told, or half believe even if not told, that they are retarded, or slow learners, unmotivated, lazy, bad, or crazy.

The intake interviewer or counselor must allow students time to tell their story and vent their feelings. At the same time, the interviewer must convey that he or she understands how difficult it is to have a learning problem. Often this is the first time students with learning difficulties have found someone with whom to discuss these feelings, someone who understands the pain and frustration.

The interviewer's response can pave the way for an In-Depth Learning Difficulties Interview, further assessment and for increased self understanding and acceptance. In a sympathetic but matter of fact way, the interviewer can indicate that learning differences have nothing to do with intelligence, are not uncommon, and many perfectly bright and successful people have problems with learning. (Some examples, such as Albert Einstein, Nelson Rockefeller, President Woodrow Wilson, Cher etc. might be given. And just because students may have a problem learning in the standard way, doesn't mean that they can't learn if they are taught in the right way, a way matched their learning needs. Students may be told that 10 to 15% of the normally intelligent population process information differently, and need to be taught in a way that is compatible with the way their brains process. The need for assessment can then be discussed as the way to figure out THEIR way of processing information so that the best way of teaching THEM can be determined.

* As LD students understand for the first time, through their assessment that they have a learning disability or learning problem; as they understand that their lack of academic success was not their fault and was not due to a lack of intelligence, to laziness, or to bad character, it can affect them emotionally and they may welcome a chance to talk about it.

Most people are relieved to be able to find something that explains the puzzle that has been their learning experience.

Still, it is a shock that their view of themselves since childhood must be altered. They may need to discuss it in order to have this reinterpretation of themselves become real. Many students still think of themselves as "dumb" long after they "understand" that their LD has nothing to do with intelligence.

Rarely, a student doesn't want to hear that he or she has a processing problem that isn't going to go away. Having defined her or himself as "cute but dumb", or "someone who never really tried" etc., it will take time for the reality of the difficulty's permanence to be assimilated. It is especially important for the self-esteem of this type of student that they not see a disability as a deformity, but just a different way of processing information.

Most importantly, whatever their response is, students need to hear that while weaknesses should be understood and accommodated, one's life on the whole is focused around one's strengths, talents, and affinities, not one's weaknesses.

* A referral for counseling may come as the ABE II student who has managed to deny the existence of the LD, finds the denial breaking down. Usually, frustration with classroom performance combines with bits of information about LD to produce a beginning questioning/awareness of why certain learning tasks are so extraordinarily difficult. An In-Depth LD Interview and further assessment are needed.

The breakdown of denial produces anxiety and the teacher and counselor need to give support. At the same time, the counselor or teacher can suggest that everyone has learning peculiarities, strengths and weaknesses, and that further assessment can help student and teacher figure out what is going on. It is being able to look at a fear and see that it isn't so fearsome that will free the student.

* Through assessment, and especially through success in the classroom, LD students come to realize that all their years of pain were because a school system did not teach them in a way that was right for them. At this point, anger that had been repressed, or turned against self, family, or society is likely to become focused on the school system that taught them, and the educational establishment. It may affect attitudes toward "our" school. Counseling may be requested for help in dealing with this anger.

The counselor should not try to stifle students' right to feel very angry, indeed, at the system that failed them, or at parents or others who didn't understand. Students may need to pour out resentment or possible bitterness to someone who can accept the legitimacy of their feelings. In a discussion of anger, the counselor may help students see that this anger which may have been diverted elsewhere before, is now directed appropriately. The anger can be used in a positive way to motivate students to prove themselves, or at least to

prove their old schools/teachers wrong. Eventually, the counselor may need to help the student to get past the anger and recrimination, and move on. This may not happen for some time. As the student meets with continued success at the learning center, it will be easier for him or her to let go of the bitterness. Teachers can help channel the anger in a positive way, such as by having students write letters to government to support change.

* As LD students come to accept the fact of their learning difficulty they may request counseling as they feel the need to understand more about it and about its secondary impact on their lives.

The counselor's role is both to impart information about learning problems, and to discuss how they can typically impact life outside the classroom. Then the student and counselor may relate this to the student's particular situation. Students may need several appointments to absorb the information, to ask questions, and to look at the impact on different areas of their lives and personal relationships.

* At some point some LD students realize that they have LD related issues needing to be resolved that go beyond educational counseling.

The counselor should be alert to the need/desire of the student to take advantage of specialized counseling or therapy which is beyond the focus of the ABE Center counseling services. This should be discussed and referrals may be made for marital counseling, family counseling, parent/child relationship counseling, psychotherapy, alcohol/drug rehabilitation, legal or financial counseling.

ONGOING COUNSELING SERVICES

Counseling of Learning Disabled Students

A variety of counseling services are normally provided by the counselor in many learning centers. When requested by the LD student, these typical services may need to become somewhat atypical. The counselor may also need to take a more active role than is customary.

While it is critical for all students that the counselor be able to listen, and really hear what students are saying, some of the LD students may have problems in the language area that make communication even more of a challenge. Students with expressive language problems have trouble expressing themselves; students with receptive language problems have trouble taking in what the counselor says. Add to this students with problems with attention, or memory;

social cognition; or problems organizing ideas, getting the "big picture", making decisions and the challenge becomes even more interesting.

Life Management Counseling: Assistance with life problems, such as health, housing, legal needs, child care issues

- * If the student has limited reading, s/he will probably have limited general knowledge, may not know correct procedures, and be ignorant of services available. The counselor will need to make sure that the student is aware of the services and procedures needed.
- * LD students who have trouble with memory, attention, organization in time and/or space, may need to have written or taped instructions they can refer to about where to go, who to see, and what to do. They may need to be taken to the agency's office the first time.
- * If oral expression is a problem, s/he may have difficulty with self advocacy. Rehearsal time with the counselor will help. In some cases, the counselor may need to step in and advocate for the student.

Crisis Counseling: Help when the student's life situation has erupted.

- * A crisis may be utilized by the counselor to enable the student to get the help s/he needs....for example psychotherapy, drug rehabilitation, a physical examination, or marriage counseling
- * Having a LD is very stressful. The stress can seriously affect a student's emotional and physical health with a crisis as the result. Other professionals seeing the student need to be aware of the hidden stresses of the LD.
- * A crisis puts an added burden on the LD student whose abilities in particular areas are weak, for example: organization, oral expression, focus, the ability to think sequentially (going from causes to effects). Whatever the student's area of weakness, the counselor should be aware of it, and be prepared to assist.

Emotional/Personal Problems: Assistance with intrapersonal or interpersonal problems affecting the student's behavior, and emotional well being.

- * Psychotherapy or extended counseling for serious emotional/personal problems is beyond the purview of an education counselor; referral to the appropriate outside

professionals is the goal. However, clarification of the issues, and of the student's needs, and information about the services available are very appropriate. And there are many less serious personal or emotional problems which the counselor may deal with comfortably in short term counseling.

- * All of the issues listed under Emotional/Personal Problems affect students' family and peer relationships. In addition, issues of dependence/independence are often present. The illiterate or marginally literate student is dependent by necessity and is apt to have conflicting feelings about it. The repetition itself can rock the marital boat when the student who has been dependent on a spouse for reading/writing help becomes increasingly independent. The spouse can find this threatening and begin to create problems in the relationship and/or unconsciously to sabotage the learning.
- * LD students often may experience periods of anxiety, anger, or depression. Academic remediation will be the best help, but it cannot undo the years of emotional turmoil. Probably many LD students could benefit from therapy, and that may be the counseling goal for some. On the other hand, many students will not seek, or may not need therapy, and having a counselor who understands the effects of LD, and who can clarify feelings, and behavioral causes/effects, and help set goals regarding relationships may make a great deal of difference in improving the quality of the student's life. A support group is a form of therapy that many will accept and one which can be most helpful. See pg.
- * Issues of self-esteem are common with LD students. Self esteem is made up of how we define ourselves (self-concept), and how we feel about ourselves. LD students' self-concept is often that of someone who is:
 - a) inadequate: handicapped, incapable, stupid, slow
 - b) lacking in character: lazy, bad, willfully inattentive, obstinate, failure.

The counselor can help students contrast how they learned to see themselves in the past through others' estimations (however faulty and ignorant), with the picture that emerges from the student's recent LD testing, from our current knowledge of brain function and our expanding understanding of effective ways of teaching the LD learner. With this fresh information, the student should begin to experience the beginnings of a change in self-concept.

Students begin to see themselves as "processing language in a different way", or "having an especially strong right hemisphere which is battling with the left hemisphere over which one will be in charge of the reading", or "having a learning difference that required a

different kind of teaching that I didn't get when I was in school". These students begin to get the picture that the learning problems really aren't their fault, and that there's a logical reason why they are "so smart" in some things and "so dumb" in others. And the students begin to feel that learning isn't hopeless either.

How students feel about themselves will improve:

- as the learning difference is accepted by intake person, assessor, counselor, teachers
- as students understand more about themselves and their learning differences
- as students are given a real role and responsibility for their own learning
- as students meet other LD students and share experiences
- and most importantly, as students have success in the classroom and their reading/writing/math really begins to improve.

- * A LD, especially when it has limited a student's literacy level, often results in underemployment and frequent periods of unemployment. This alone creates strains. The economic hardship it produces, creates yet another strain on the family.
- * Parent-child relationships are affected when the child also has learning difficulties. The counselor may be working with a young adult LD parent who has a LD child, or with a young LD adult who is the child of a LD parent. Remembering the pain that was experienced and wanting their child to be spared, LD parents may begin to exert the same parental pressures, and punishments that were experienced in their own childhood. LD parents may reject their LD child as a reminder of that defective part of themselves that is rejected. The problem may be denied as simply too painful to be dealt with. At best the most supportive LD parents, wanting to advocate for their LD child at school, are faced with returning to a battleground where they experienced failure, anxiety, anger, embarrassment. These are things an education counselor can work with: helping LD parents to understand their child's needs for parental support; making sure that they understand their rights within the Special Education laws; working with the parents on what to say, and how to say it in order to be heard.
- * To deaden the pain that LD and its secondary stresses may have caused in those situations where there wasn't family or school understanding and support, it is not uncommon for the LD student to have turned to alcohol or drugs. This may have resulted in job loss, addiction, breaking the law and incarceration, alienation from friends and family, divorce and separation from children. If the student is still struggling with addiction, referral is in order.

Career, and Educational Guidance: One of the most important areas that a counselor can help LD young adults is in assisting them with selecting a career and the appropriate education or training to support their career choice.

Career selection is difficult at best, and it is more so for LD students. They must not only explore their interests, abilities, values, and the job market, they must know the impact of their difficulties on their likelihood of success in particular jobs.

This process may be divided into two phases: the information gathering phase, and the decision making phase.

1. Information Gathering Phase:

Self-exploration

Students need to gather information about themselves: their interests, aptitudes, values and their LD or learning difficulty.

- * The counselor's role is to assist by administering and interpreting aptitude and interest assessments, by helping students identify their values, and by assisting students as they evaluate data and make some preliminary decisions.
- * Additionally, LD students need to know not only their areas of strength in order to focus on using them, but also on their weaknesses in order to avoid job and education requirements that would call for performance beyond their capacity. It means that they must understand in detail how their difficulties may affect and be affected by everyday situations found in school or on the job. Only when this reciprocal impact is recognized, will students be able to appraise realistically their chances for success in a particular career field. The counselor can help with this.
- * If a student is considering vocational training, referral for a vocational assessment may be desirable. Vocational evaluations may include work samples, and work try-outs, and are administered by trained vocational education assessors.

Job Exploration

They need to gather information about job/career fields, and the job market.

- * As the information from the self exploration begins to direct students toward particular career areas, the counselor assists with their exploration by making available job information material for students to read.,
- * Student and counselor discuss what the student has learned about the jobs being considered. The counselor assists

students to analyze individual jobs for their demands which may have an impact on the LD problem.

- * The counselor can help students compare the suitability of various jobs with the following procedure:
 1. Students first list their strengths and weaknesses; then they separate those weaknesses which can be improved with some effort, with those which are fixed.
 2. The next step is to list in detail the job requirements of a particular job: the abilities/talents and education needed; the skills required-social, academic, vocational, physical, organizational etc.; personality factors, and daily activities which are required by the job being considered.
 3. Then the two lists are compared. This step allows students to project their chances of success in a job; and the barriers which must be overcome.
- * The counselor can arrange for visits to job sites, and for meetings with individuals in the occupation being considered. Students can "shadow" an employee for a day as that individual does his or her job.
- * The counselor can arrange for students to meet with state apprenticeship personnel to learn about what apprenticeships are available.

Education Exploration

Having determined a career direction, students will need to explore schools which can provide the training for that career. Basically they fall into two categories: vocational schools and colleges.

- * The counselor can supply college directories and vocational directories to answer some initial questions: the kind and size of the school, the location, living arrangements, and cost.
- * Although there are directories of colleges and schools with services specifically for LD students, these directories should only be a starting point. The reality of what a school actually offers may be different from how it is written up in a directory. And many schools not in the directories have good programs to assist the LD student.
- * Personal explorations, campus interviews, are especially important for the LD student. Interviews with coordinators of disabled student services, directors of skills or remediation centers, or vocational support teams will help students find out what is really available for them at a particular school.

- * For LD students questions concerning how the school will be able to meet their specific needs should be raised. Among these are:
Is the school properly accredited? Is the length and quality of training appropriate? Is financial aid available? Is there help with job placement after graduation? Is there a Disabled Student Services coordinator (or the equivalent), a counselor for personal or academic problems, or a vocational support team to assist with learning problems that may arise? What are the academic, experiential, or practical requirements for admission and how flexible are they for the LD student? What are the requirements for completion? Can the pace of learning be individualized in any way? How flexible are course or graduation requirements? Must a full course load be carried and how will financial aid be affected? What is the reading and math level of the program? What assistance is there for the student who needs it? Is one-on-one remediation or tutoring available with teachers trained to work with the LD student? Are study skills courses available? Can the school accommodate the living arrangements that the LD student may need?

While the counselor does not visit campuses with students, he or she may arrange for the interviews, rehearse the interviews with the student, and discuss all the questions which the student needs to ask.

2. Decision Making or Action Phase

If students have done their homework and gathered information about themselves, matching their strengths and weaknesses with job requirements; if they have visited schools and interviewed the appropriate personnel, then they have amassed a fund of information upon which to base their career decision.

- * It might be helpful if the counselor assisted the student in reviewing the information. Then either the decision is obvious, or the student will need to analyze careers further in order to eliminate all but one. This process should not be hurried.
- * When the decision is made, the counselor can help with the next step: the defining of long term, intermediate and short term goals.
- * When the goals have been set, then the counselor can assist in setting activities to meet the goals, and timetables for their completion.
- * The counselor helps with those activities requiring his/her expertise: school applications, financial aid applications, resumes, interviews and advocacy.

- * The counselor can have an important role in teaching LD students to become self advocates. LD students must know the rights guaranteed to them by law. But more than this, LD students need to learn how to articulate their needs in such a way that they will be heard. This is a skill which is necessary in personal relationships, and is helpful in many situations, such as when seeking accommodations in education or in employment.

Facilitating a Support Group:

- * Support groups can play a valuable adjunct role at ABE centers. Short-term groups of new students allow both the sharing of common problems connected with returning to school such as finding the time, transportation, child care, spouse resentment of time away from family, and the sharing of solutions that students have found.
- * An ongoing LD support group is especially valuable because it gives students the opportunity to share experiences, solutions, frustrations, job information, get information about their learning difficulty, and have important opportunities at speaking in a group. It can give students feedback on how they are relating to others in a social group; it can give support when things aren't going well; it can increase involvement in an ABE center.
- * It need not be a large group. In fact, it is better small. That way each student has more opportunity to speak. Five or six at any one meeting is probably ideal, if at least some of them are comfortable expressing themselves.

Counseling About Current Educational Issues: Help with educational problems associated with progress toward students' goals at the ABE center.

- * Understanding the puzzle that is LD is a lifetime endeavor. There may be times when students need more time to talk about it than is afforded in the classroom.
- * Students may need help in communicating with teachers, other students, administration.
- * Students may need a safety valve allowing them to blow off steam at their frustration with learning, and with their own brain's functioning.

"Touch Bases" Counseling: We have called it that for lack of a better term. By it we mean brief, but regular contact between student and counselor. It can mean a "How's it going?" "Fine." contact in the hall. Or it Can be "How's it going?" "Not so good." response that results in an

invitation to stop in the counselor's office and talk. These contacts may last no more than two or three minutes, or they may result in a half hour interview, but if students know that someone is available and cares about them, it is stabilizing.

Outreach: The counselor is generally a good choice for doing the outreach with students who have stopped coming to the center. Usually the student has some personal reason, and possibly the counselor could assist with information and referral. If it is because of a personality conflict with a teacher or a student, or he or she feels that academic needs are not being met, then the counselor as a neutral party can help negotiate a solution. At the very least, it shows the student who is no longer attending that he or she is considered important, and is missed. And it can provide information to the center about where services need to be improved.

Reference Materials: The counselor can provide reference materials on various subjects of concern to students: pamphlets of on drugs and alcohol; AIDs and other sexually transmitted diseases; reproduction; emotions; marital and family problems; community resources, HELP lines etc. Ready access to these materials is empowering. Students who hesitate to talk with a counselor, pick up pamphlets. They may even feel comfortable enough after looking at the pamphlet to come and talk with the counselor. Even if students' reading levels are too low to read the pamphlet, the titles alone and cover pictures say that it is OK to discuss these subjects with the counselor. The counselor may also have reference materials on learning disabilities for student consumption.

Counseling Services to ABE Staff:

Individual Conferences With Teachers: Conferences regarding a student's personal or learning problems can provide insight for both teachers and counselor. Each sees the student from a different perspective and can fill in gaps for the other.

Workshops for In-service Training: The counselor may be able to provide training for the staff in such areas as learning disabilities, listening techniques, counseling techniques, developmental tasks of adolescence, emotional and mental problems, community resources.

APPENDIX

I. Test Copies that may be reproduced

- * TLC PHONICS: The Learning Connection
- * Rosner Test of Auditory Segmentation
(This may also be found in a text written by Rosner. Check your public library)
- * van den Honert's dictated sentences:
Dorothy van den Honert - Dyslexia researcher,
author of Reading From Scratch
- * Spelling Assessment 8/96: Margaret Smith - TLC

II. Mini Samples of Plastic Transparent Overlays

III. Names and Addresses of Test Publishers

PHONICS ASSESSMENT

The Learning Connection - Pittsfield, MA

TLC Phonics was developed by ABE Reading teachers in 1990. By 1995 it had been used with many readers to identify and classify specific word attack strengths and weaknesses. The developers are pleased to share it with ABE programs and practitioners.

*Place each word list on a separate sheet of paper and enlarge.


Testing Procedure

- *Explain clearly that these letter combinations are not words, but word parts [syllables] that follow the rules of English pronunciation. The purpose of reading these syllables is to help the teacher determine exactly what language information students have and what they lack.
- *Slide a card down enlarged word list. Tester or student guides the card.
- *Ask student to read each exposed syllable or combination of syllables.
- *Stop after five consecutive errors to obtain a raw score.
- *For a broader analysis of performance, student may read additional syllables selected by tester from the three lists. Please keep student's comfort in mind.

Recording Errors

*Tester writes next to syllable(s) exactly what was read: i.e. toin

um	swib	toin
fes	bab	bramped
pip	fels	disflond
mof (top)	shile	chumb (thumb)
teck	foan	lunking
lig	tirge	sloosh (fool-foot)
tay	leent	fodnitely
nup	retpic	troe
det	wode	litsuntide
thaf	knoss	snarmotly
el	launcy	optimiggle
cad	rinnest	stinforlam
plof	lubner	vimbue
huld	exbale	neefplat
intet	cetvap	trimple
caiz	spligh	flausiners

P^r  see reverse side for scoring details.

SCORING THE TLC PHONICS

Grade levels on the teacher-made phonics evaluation are approximate and have not been standardized. The error patterns are as significant as the grade level score.

Error Patterns to Note:

- * One short vowel sound being read for another:
fes-"fis", thaf-"thef"
- * Confusion between long vowels and short vowels:
det- "deet", leent- "lent", snarmot- "snormote"
- * Mispronunciation of vowel digraphs: ue, ay, oa,
and vowel diphthongs: au, oi, oo
- * Mis-sequencing or adding letters - (L), (N), (R):
plof- "polof", huld- "hulnd", swib-"swirb"
fes- "fles", caiz-"craiz"
- * Mispronunciation of (c) - (g): tirge- "tirg", vapcet- "vapket"
- * Adding syllables or dropping syllables:
leent- "lee int", flausiners- "flausners"
- * Real words being formed from these nonsense syllables:
huld-"hold", pip- "pipe", tay- "tie"

Summary of Errors Noted:

Raw Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
Approximate Grade Level			1	1.5				2						2.5							3						3.5		

Raw Score	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
Approximate Grade Level			4			4.5		5		5.5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12		

- A Say cowboy Now say it again, but don't say boy cow
- B Say steamboat Now say it again, but don't say steam boat
- 1 Say sunshine Now say it again, but don't say shine sun
- 2 Say picnic Now say it again, but don't say pic nic
- 3 Say cucumber Now say it again, but don't say cu (q) cumber
- 4 Say coat Now say it again, but don't say /k/ oat
(the k sound)
- 5 Say meat Now say it again, but don't say /m/ eat
(the m sound)
- 6 Say take Now say it again, but don't say /t/ ache
(the t sound)
- 7 Say game Now say it again, but don't say /m/ gay
- 8 Say wrote Now say it again, but don't say /t/ row
- 9 Say please Now say it again, but don't say /z/ plea
- 10 Say clap Now say it again, but don't say /k/ lap
- 11 Say play Now say it again, but don't say /p/ lay
- 12 Say stale Now say it again, but don't say /t/ sale
- 13 Say smack Now say it again, but don't say /m/ sack

Total correct _____

Grade score _____

TAAS SCORE	EXPECTED FOR CHILDREN IN:
1	Kindergarten
2	Kindergarten
3	Kindergarten
4	Grade 1
5	Grade 1
6	Grade 1
7	Grade 1
8	Grade 1
9	Grade 1
10	Grade 2
11	Grade 2
12	Grade 3
13	Grade 3

A score of grade three indicates competence at auditory segmentation for an individual of any age.

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This dictation may be copied. It was written by Dorothy van den Honert and is designed to pick-up errors typical of the LD speller. van den Honert is the author of the READING FROM SCRATCH (RFS) Curriculum. RFS is suited to learners with reading disability and is highly recommended by the Western Mass. YALD Center of Development.

Procedures for Use of this Dictation

1. Read sentences aloud to student. Read slowly and clearly. Repeat sentence or phrases, no more than two more times. Do not sound out words as you read.
2. Encourage student to continue as best she/he can, saying "You are doing fine. This will help us in planning our instruction for you." Stop when student is frustrated or unable to continue.
3. Use this dictation in combination with a free writing sample if learner is able to produce one.

DICTATION

1. The clam sat on the bottom of the ocean.
2. They rushed into the cottage in the nick of time.
3. We all sat around the campfire and told ghost stories.
4. Pittsfield has a population of about fifty thousand.
5. A conference was held to determine the future course of action.

OBSERVATIONS OF TYPES OF ERRORS

- * Omits and missequences letters; misspells short vowels (clam/calm)
- * Phonetic spelling producing incorrect words (meny for many)
- * Misspells irregular words, which must be memorized (bottom, ocean, cottage)
- * Mixes small letters and capitals
- * Omits periods
- * Alters, add, omits word endings
- * Alters, omits small words and syllables (if, and, the; population: poplation)

This assessment pinpoints the types of errors made by students, thus indicating where instructional effort should be focused. It is designed for use with the structured-Language approach to reading and writing.

Spelling Assessment 8/96 Margaret Smith TLC

#1: phonetic
#2: rule based

#3: memorized
#4: suffix rules based

1 hut
2 lark
3 many

1 hubcap
2 fate
3 special

1 win
2 spill
3 was

1 hotel
2 believe
3 people

1 yet
2 hinge
3 they

4 batted
flies
darned
shopping
basement
happily
jumped

1 sort
2 fetch
3 your

1 chips
2 tack
3 should

1 glum
2 fudge
3 ocean

1 march
2 skin
3 know

1 stomp
2 fuss
3 women

1 she
2 blink
3 cottage

1 fist
2 crock
3 money

1 lung
2 scabs
3 their

Rules that apply to assessing
these words are on the
following page.

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lark....the /k/ sound at the end of 1 syllable words is spelled with -k

spill....one syllable, closed syllable words ending in f, l, s, double their final letter

hinge....the /j/ sound is spelled -ge when it ends a word

fetch....the /ch/ sound is spelled -tch when it immediately follows a short vowel

tack.....the /k/ sound is spelled -ck when it immediately follows a short vowel

fudge....the /j/ sound is spelled -dge when it immediately follows a short vowel

skin.....the /k/ sound is spelled with a -k when the sound is immediately followed by e, i, y

fuss.....one syllable, closed syllable words ending in f, l, s, double their final letter

blink....the /k/ sound at the end of 1 syllable words is spelled with -k

crock....the /k/ sound is spelled with -c, unless there's a reason not to
the /k/ sound is spelled -ck when it immediately follows a short vowel in a one syllable word

scab.....the /k/ sound is spelled with -c, unless there's a reason not to

fate.....an -e is needed on the end to make the preceding vowel long

believe.."i before e, except after c, or when it sounds like a as in neighbor and weigh"

batted...2 consonants must separate the short vowel in a closed syllable from a vowel suffix. If the word ends in only one consonant, it is doubled.

flies....the -y changes to -i when any suffix is added

darned...the past tense of most verbs is spelled -ed, whether the -ed is pronounced /ed/, /d/ or /t/

shopping..2 consonants must separate a short vowel from a vowel suffix

basement..consonant suffixes require no changing of the base word

happily...the -y changes to -i before any suffix

jumped....the past tense of most verbs is spelled -ed whether it is pronounced /ed/, /d/, or /t/

TEST**PUBLISHER**

DARTTS - Diagnostic Assessment of
Reading w/ Trial
Teaching Strategies

- Riverside Publishing
425 Spring Lake Drive
Itasca, IL 60143-2079

800-323-9540 - phone
630-467-7192 - fax

Gilmore Oral Reading Test

- Harcourt Brace Educational Measurement
555 Academic Court
San Antonio, TX 78204-2498

800-211-8378 - phone
800-232-1223 - fax 800-723-1318 - TDD

Rosner Test of Auditory Analysis - TAAS

- This test is published in the book Helping
Children Overcome Learning Difficulties by
Jerome Rosner (1975), 2nd revised edition
1993. ISBN # 0-8027-7396-6
Walker Publications
435 Hudson Street
New York, NY 10014

Scotopic Sensitivity

- Irlen Diagnostic Clinic
24 Thorndike Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

617-491-2088

Slosson Oral Reading Test

- Slosson Educational Publications
P.O. Box 280
East Aurora, NY 14502

TABE - Test of Adult Basic Education

- CTB McGraw Hill
20 Ryan Ranch Road
Monterey, CA 93940

800-538-9547 - phone

TLC Phonics

- The Learning Connection
269 First Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201

413-499-9531

TEST**PUBLISHER**

TORC 3- Test of Reading Comprehension

- Pro Ed
8700 Shoal Creek Boulevard
Austin, TX 78757-6897

800-897-3202 - phone

TOWL 3- Test of Written Language

- Pro Ed

WJ-R - Woodcock-Johnson Revised

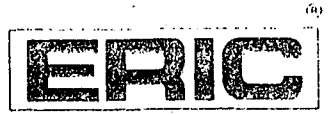
- Riverside Publishing

WRAT 3 - Wide Range Achievement Test

- Pro Ed



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