



CHANGING A PARADIGM

Finding positive aspects to all children.



COGNITIVE ASSESSMENTS CAN HELP US FIND CHILDREN'S STRENGTHS •

And learning to look for the positive aspects of others can help us find positive aspects of ourselves.

Learning Objectives:

- 1) be able to interpret cognitive testing from a neuropsychological perspective- strengths and weaknesses
- 2) be able to identify possible negative perspective in self and others; gather tools to help change the climates of schools to more positive environments



QUICK BACKGROUND

I did an extra practicum and extra internship hours to get a “cognate” in neuropsychology. At least in the year 2000, one couldn’t actually get a PhD in neuropsychology. I had to go through clinical, counseling, or school psychology. Since I’d been a teacher for years, the decision was easy.

Education and experience high points



WHAT IS NEUROPSYCHOLOGY?

a branch of psychology that is concerned with how the brain and the rest of the nervous system influence a person's cognition and behaviors. More importantly, professionals in this branch of psychology often focus on how injuries or illnesses of the brain affect cognitive functions and behaviors.

My neuropsychology prof used to say that a neuro surgeon is successful when the patient lives. A neurologist is successful when a patient walks, but the neuropsychologist is successful when patients improve their quality of life.



HANDOUTS

Getting to Know Your Child's Brain



TRAIL-MAKING AND CATEGORY TESTS

For decades, neuropsychological testing included a huge battery of sensory-motor tests.

Over the years, it was found that the category tests and train-making tests were the strongest statistical predictors of malfunction. Those can be purchased separately now.

Currently we do cognitive testing and social/emotional rating scales, but we concentrate on different aspects of memory and processing speed.



DISSERTATION

WJ scores from over 2000 patients from my neuropsych professor
No matter what the disability....TBI, cancer, DCD, ADHD, SLD.... In over 90% of the cases,
the lowest cluster score was
.....processing speed.



PROCESSING SPEED AND SLD

Difference in developmental trajectory

Processing Speed and Music

Metronome study



THE UNIFIED BRAIN

Injury, illness, or a developmental glitch can cause one area of the brain to lose function.

Have you ever wondered why the WJ-IV Cog has so many tests beyond those that generate an overall summary score? Those are the tests I use in private practice.



FIRST VERIFY THAT THE INDEX OR CLUSTER SCORES ARE RELIABLE. IF THEY AREN'T, WE CAN'T EXTRAPOLATE INFORMATION.

THEN COMPARE THE CLUSTER SCORES



KINSEY: CHAT WITH HER...SEEMS VERY INTELLIGENT. BUT SHE HAD DIFFICULTY DOING HER HOMEWORK IN CLASS, AND WHEN SHE TOOK IT HOME, SHE COULDN'T REMEMBER WHAT SHE WAS SUPPOSED TO DO.

Verbal ability	117
Nonverbal ability (termed Thinking ability back then)	96
Short-term Memory (weak score)	(110)
Long-term Retrieval	102
Processing Speed	78



MISSING INFORMATION

Just as you're leaving the house...

Consciously processing what was said to fill gaps

Too often for those with slow processing speed

Mom says, "Be home at 3 because I have a doctor's appointment at 4."



SETTING 4 EBD STUDENTS

80% had significant cognitive splits

50% had significant cognitive splits in processing speed



DEREK WAS IN AN EBD PROGRAM

The educational team determined that Derek wanted attention from his peers and was trying to avoid school work. They put programs in place to try to get him attention for positive behaviors as well as rewards for completing his homework. The team concluded he was capable of doing the work, but was not a motivated student. His behaviors were not improving. I worked on the re-eval.

THIS MAY NOT SEEM POSSIBLE TO YOU ALL HERE, BUT WHEN I MOVED TO MINNESOTA IN 2003, I WORKED IN A SETTING FOUR PROGRAM, AND MY COGNITIVE TESTING WAS TYPICALLY THE FIRST ONE TO GO INTO THE FILE.

DEREKs	Standard Score	Classification
Short-term memory	68	Very low
Visual processing	75	Low
Long-term Retrieval	63	Very Low
Nonverbal Fluid Reasoning	65	Very Low
Crystallized verbal knowledge	71	Low
Fluid/Crystallized Intelligence (FCI)	64	Very low



TWO MINUTE STRETCH



KAYLAH

Verbal Ability	110	High Average
Visual-Auditory Learning	88	
Spatial Relations	108	
Picture Recognition	106	
Visual-Spatial Thinking	(109) (weak score)	Average



Visual Matching	81	
Decision Speed	102	
Processing Speed	(90) (weak score)	Average
Short-term Memory	103	Average
Rapid Picture Naming	85	
Retrieval Fluency	112	
Long-term Retrieval	(94) (weak score)	Average
Cognitive Efficiency	(98) (weak score)	Average

JOSHUA	Standard Score	Description
Number Series	71-W	
Concept Formation	105	
Fluid Reasoning (Gf)	(85) (weak score)	(Low Average)
Verbal Attention	95	
Numbers Reversed	75-W	
Short-term Working Memory (Gwm)	(81) (weak score)	(Low Average)
Letter-Pattern Matching	72-W	
Pair Cancellation	106-S	
Cognitive Processing Speed (Gs)	(88) (weak score)	(Low Average)



For more information about ADHD, the DSM-IV (diagnostic manual) states on p. 87-88: [see p. 109]

“Associated features vary depending on age and developmental stage and may include low frustration tolerance, temper outbursts, bossiness, stubbornness, excessive and frequent insistence that requests be met, mood lability, demoralization, dysphoria, rejection by peers, and poor self-esteem.



THE VAST MAJORITY OF STUDENTS WILL BE GOOD IF THEY CAN

I trust that most of you have this belief, but many of our colleagues do not. So how can we get them to approach children in a more positive way?

Activity: write down your three best qualities.



WHAT IF I HAD ASKED YOU TO WRITE THREE OF YOUR
WEAKNESSES?

Story about teaching ed psych

Story about traffic



TWO MINUTE STRETCH



GIVE ME A REASON TO BE HERE

School from a child's perspective:

Lots of reading and math

Music, art, or PE only every other or every third day

Everything's timed...in a schedule

I'm with people all the time



IF READING AND MATH ARE DIFFICULT FOR YOU, YOU HAVE MORE OF THEM

If music is your favorite thing (the only thing that makes you feel good about yourself) you only get it for half an hour every other day at best

If you do best with a freer time schedule, you're out of luck

If you're an introvert, too bad

Brain waves



SO WHAT CAN WE DO FOR THESE CHILDREN??

Let them know they are important!

Jigsaw puzzle