Stephanie Moody

Formal Test Report

17 December 2012

Professor Muller

Formal Test Report

**Purpose**

 The purpose of administering subtests from the YCAT, or Young Children Achievement Test, is to assess the student’s general knowledge and reading capabilities. Based on classroom performance and the student’s performance on the informal assessment, it was determined that further formal assessment was needed to gain a more comprehensive outlook of the student’s strengths and weaknesses.

**Background**

Kevin is a five-year-old boy in kindergarten. Kevin is Hispanic; his father is a first generation immigrant from a Venezuela and his mother, of Dominican decent, was born in the United States. Kevin is part of a middle-class family. His father works as a train conductor for Metro North and his mother is a secretary at a dentist office in White Plains.

In preschool, Kevin struggled to keep up pace with his classmates, displayed from aggression and did not use his words to communicate effectively. During kindergarten screening, teachers noted that Kevin struggled significantly and was referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE). Kevin’s doctor diagnosed him with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). According to the doctor, this disorder accounts for some of Kevin’s impulsive behaviors and aggression. Kevin was classified as Speech and Language Impaired by the Committee on Special Education and now functions with an Individualized Education Plan. He has been placed in a self-contained special education room with a 12:1:1 ratio. Kevin receives Adaptive Physical Education, music therapy in the classroom and art in the art classroom. Kevin is pulled out for Speech Therapy five times a cycle. At times, the school’s behavioral specialist pushes into Kevin’s classroom to observe and monitor his behaviors and offer support to his teacher.

Kevin’s impulsive behaviors and communication issues sometimes mask his strengths, however he is a very happy boy and is eager to learn. Kevin loves to hear stories, work on art activities, cut and paste and complete other sensory activities. He engages well with peers in group-play both in the classroom and on the playground.

On the carpet during circle time, story time or instruction, Kevin often struggles to find a spot to sit and also calls out frequently. Kevin struggles with academic work in both math and literacy. Kevin is still learning all of his numbers and is able to count independently up to the number twelve. He has developed basic skills in phonemic awareness and has learned most of his letter names and letter sounds. He recognizes some simple sight words such as “and” and “the”. Kevin is also still developing his fine motor skills by completing classroom activities each day and has made moderate progress since September.

Kevin is in emergent literacy stages; he has developed early phonemic awareness and is able to distinguish orally between most letter sounds but still struggles to fully discriminate between certain sounds such as /f/ and /s/. He is able to recite his alphabet in order, yet sometimes has difficulty naming letters out of order. Other than “k” for Kevin, he is unable to determine the sound each letter makes or come up with any words beginning with that letter.

 In math, Kevin is able to count up to the number twelve independently and to the number nineteen with prompting. He is able to identify written numbers up to the number ten; he can also write numbers 0-9 without assistance—he often writes the number ten in reverse order, putting the zero before the one. Kevin’s math group is beginning basic addition with the use of manipulatives—usually small red chips on a work mat. Kevin still requires maximum assistance with this task.

**Assessment Results**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SUBTESTS | RAW SCORE | AGE EQUIV. | %ILE | STD. SCORE |
| General Information | 8 | 4-11 | 16 | 85 |
| Reading  | 7 | 4-9 | 13 | 83 |

 The student was assessed using two separate subtests on the YCAT (Young Children Achievement Test), testing both general information and reading.

 In the general information subtest, the student received a raw score of 8, which simply tells us the number of questions that the student answered correct out of 20. This also places Kevin at an age equivalent of 4-11, meaning that the student is supposedly performing at the age of 4 years and 11 months old. This, however, does not provide enough information to accurately assess the student’s needs and can often be very misleading. Instead, the raw score must be converted to percentile and standard score. Using the YCAT conversion chart included with the testing materials, a raw score of 8 converts to a percentile of 16, meaning that Kevin performed better than 16 percent of other students his age who completed this test. This percentile converts to a standard score of 85, which is in the low average range. The student’s answers to the questions presented in the general information subtest indicate that Kevin may struggle understanding cause and effect, basic science such as the calendar, weather and boy parts and basic math including color and shapes. Other results on the subtest indicate that Kevin does understand these items. The results were inconsistent and it would be beneficial to continue testing some of these questionable areas.

 In the reading subtest, the student received a raw score of 7, meaning that the student answered 7 out of 21 questions on the subtest correctly. This converts to an age equivalent of 4-9, meaning that the child is supposedly performing at the age of 4 years and 9 months. Again, these scores are often misleading and do not provide a clear understanding of a child’s performance. For this reason, the scores have been converted to both percentile and standard score. The percentile score for Kevin’s reading subtest is the 13th percentile. This means that Kevin performed better than 13 percent of students his age who also completed this subtest. The percentile score was converted to find a standard score of 83, which also falls in the low average range. The test results indicate the Kevin has a relative strength in the area of letter recognition and basic retelling. Kevin displayed clear weakness in the area of retelling, finding details in the test, and decoding/sight words.

**Testing Behaviors**

 Both subtests were administered in one session taking a total time of 25 minutes. There were no interfering conditions including noise level, interruptions, and distractions, lighting and temperate. One condition that may have compromised the results of the test is the student-teacher rapport. I had been working with Kevin just a few times a week and had not yet established a genuine relationship with the student. This may have made Kevin feel less comfortable, therefore affecting his performance.

 Kevin demonstrated some impulsive behaviors during testing including getting up from his chair, grabbing my testing book from my hands and shouting—all on separate occasions. Kevin was also very fidgety in his chair and got up and down from his chair several times throughout testing. It is possible that these testing behaviors affected his attention to the test, therefore his performance and results.

**Results in Comparison with Informal Assessment**

 Generally speaking, the informal assessment tested different items than the formal assessment. The informal assessment tested a much narrower scope of skills including letter name recognition and letter sound recognition. This formal assessment tests the student on much more complex and higher-level skills such as sight words, decoding and reading comprehension. For this reason, it is difficult to compare the results; there is no correlation.

 The data taken from the formal assessment, YCAT, is more reliable and valid as it is reviewed by professionals to ensure its validity. There are strict rules and guidelines for administering such a test while the informal is up to the teacher’s discretion. This being said, I believe that the YCAT tested material well above Kevin’s capabilities, which caused both anxiety and frustration for him, which hindered his performance. It is difficult to hold much stake in the results at the test contained materials that Kevin had not yet learned such as reading/decoding. As a teacher, I would count the informal assessment as the more appropriate and informative results.

**Summary of Assessment Results**

 In summary, Kevin demonstrates strengths in the areas of letter recognition and basic retelling. In contract, his weaknesses including retelling, finding details in text, decoding/sight words, cause and effect, and basic science and math skills including body parts, weather, calendar, color and shapes.

**Recommendations**

 Though classroom instruction is already very well-executed by Kevin’s special education teacher, there are three instructional recommendations that I could make. First, I recommend the use of multi-sensory instruction techniques for Kevin in the classroom. Due to his sensory needs and impulsive behaviors, activities involving both fine and gross motor skills as well as multiple senses will stimulate Kevin’s thinking and retention. Second, it is recommended that some classroom time be spent learning basic life skills and knowledge. As indicated by his results on the general information subtest, Kevin lacks a great deal of basic information including cause and effect and the concept of time, weather and the calendar. It would benefit him greatly to learn items like this in a natural setting. Lastly, as Kevin is immerging in his literacy skills, it is important that both the classroom and instruction are print-rich. Kevin should be given ample time to explore books on his own and tell stories using the pictures as a guide. The teacher should also perform several read-alouds a day/week to model reading skills to students. Classroom instruction and lessons should be accompanied by a book or some other form of print, when possible.

 There are also some testing/program accommodations that may assist Kevin. First, he may require extended time to complete formal testing. For this reason, it may be best for the teacher to break up the tests into several subsections and administer each one at a different time or date. By breaking up testing, the results may be more reliable as Kevin will not become tired of the testing. While formal testing is sometimes necessary, it is also in Kevin’s best interest to be assessed through regular classroom activities and his performance on instructional projects.

 A possible IEP goal for Kevin, based on his results from the YCAT, would be to be able to retell a story with one detail from the beginning, one detail from the middle and one detail from the end with minimal teacher support.