

ACADEMIC EVALUATION

STUDENT: Joseph Smith

DATE OF BIRTH: 7/13/2012 **AGE AT EVALUATION:** 8 years, 3 months

EVALUATION DATE: 10/8/20 **REPORT DATE:** 10/13/20

REFERRED BY: Ms Poppins, General Education Teacher

RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Joseph was originally diagnosed with a speech and language impairment when he was 4 years old. At that time, he began receiving special education services for his language difficulties and articulation deficits. Receptive language was an area of weakness for him, because he often misunderstood words that were said to him. Additionally, his articulation deficits made his language somewhat difficult to understand. As he progressed into the school-age years, his teachers and parents became concerned that he wasn't learning to read as easily as the other children. Other aspects of school came easily to him, but reading and spelling were proving to be very difficult. By the end of his kindergarten year, he was starting to read common sight words such as "the" and "of". He was very good at reading logos on restaurant and store signs, and he could easily recognize his own name. As he moved into first grade, it was starting to become evident that he was having difficulties learning to sound out words; however, benchmark testing indicated that he was performing at grade level. Joseph's benchmark testing and classroom performance in reading and writing have gotten considerably worse when compared to past years' scores and in relation to other students in the class. He started voicing his concerns about how hard it was for him to read.

OBSERVATION IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:

1. Summary of educational performance observed in the student's learning environment including the regular education setting.

Student was observed in a language arts class in the regular ed setting. Students were sitting at tables 2-4 per table. Class began with having a group reading session followed by a discussion of characters and plot. Teacher then passed out a worksheet which had questions about the story for students to write about their opinions. Time was then allowed for the students to fill out the worksheet. Teacher then posed questions regarding the worksheet and asked students to share some of the stories they created.

2. Describe the relevant behavior(s) observed in the learning environment and its relationship to academic functioning.

Joseph was seated at a table with another boy and two girls. During the group reading session, he appeared to be attentively listening to the teacher. When called upon in the discussion, however, his response was difficult to understand and follow. Most of the time when working on the worksheet, Joseph was doodling on the side. As I circulated the classroom, I asked Joseph what he was working on. He told me that he didn't really follow the story while they were reading out loud, so he wanted to wait to do the worksheet. He did not present when the teacher asked to share stories.

RESULTS OF EVALUATION:

* Standard Scores between 85-115 are average

Subtest	Standard Score
Reading Comprehension	103
Word Reading	85

Non-word Reading	70
Reading Fluency	87
Receptive Oral Language	109
Expressive Oral Language	106
Phonological Awareness	60
Auditory Perception - Discrimination	65
Auditory Perception - Blending	58
Auditory Perception - Closure	62
Spelling	69
Writing Fluency	89
Written Expression	107
Math Problem Solving	116
Numerical Operations	120
Math Fluency	93

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION RESULTS AND DIAGNOSTIC IMPRESSIONS:

Joseph's performance on measures of processing and related mental activities yielded the following findings:

- Joseph demonstrated well-below-average performance on measures of phonological awareness and auditory perception (auditory discrimination, auditory blending, and auditory closure)
- Joseph's performance was in the lower end of the average range across all measures of fluency, which measures a combination of speed and accuracy. His pattern of performance on both the reading and writing fluency measures showed errors in accuracy as well as slower speed. Within the area of math, his performance showed that his accuracy was very high, but his rate was slower. While neither his teacher nor his parents noted any difficulties with his processing speed during the diagnostic process, the fact that his math fluency was lower than other math scores suggested that processing speed might be a factor.
- Joseph demonstrated above-average performance in measures of attention, memory, and all other areas of processing. Visual perception was found to be a relative strength for him.

As part of the diagnostic process, all exclusionary criteria were ruled out as causal factors for Joseph's difficulties associated with reading and written language. Additionally, it was shown that he had received a good education in the areas of reading and math and that it was delivered by qualified teachers who were certified in elementary education.

EDUCATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS NECESSARY TO MEET THE STUDENT'S EDUCATIONAL NEEDS:

Following his diagnosis, the IEP team determined that Joseph would be included in the general education classroom for most of the school day, with the exception of two hours per week, when he would receive one-on-one remediation from a special education teacher in the areas of reading and written language. Additionally, it was determined that he would receive special education services in the areas of reading and written language in the general education classroom for an additional five hours per week. Joseph began receiving services soon after his diagnosis, and the focus of instruction for his learning disability included the following:

- As a result of Joseph's difficulties with auditory processing, a multisensory phonics-based reading program was implemented, with the hopes that it would help him connect his strong visual perceptual skills and kinesthetic movement to the improvement of his auditory perception and phonological awareness skills. The goal was to use his areas of strength to help train his ear to better discriminate between the different phonemes.
- Additionally, emphasis was placed on learning patterns within words, to help Joseph improve his word recognition without relying as heavily on decoding. His visual processing skills were so strong that learning visual patterns was a method that could be very beneficial for him. In order to do this, he learned to apply different types of morphological patterns, along with their meanings, to word reading (-tion, -ed, -ing, -ness, -sion, etc.). Further he was taught to recognize and use the following six syllable types: Closed, open, vowel team, vowel-consonant-e (often called "magic e" or "silent e"), consonant -le, and r-controlled syllables (Reading Rockets, n.d.)
- Although Joseph's speed of processing was in the average range, it was a relative weakness in comparison to other skills. An emphasis was placed on improving his fluency skills within reading, writing, and math. For example, in the area of reading, the following strategies were used to help him improve fluency (Jennings, Caldwell, & Lerner, 2010; Polloway, Patton, Serna, & Bailey-Joseph, 2018):
 - Wide Reading of easy text
 - Use of patterned books with repeated phrases
 - Repeated readings
 - Echo reading (Joseph reads a sentence after it has been read to him by a fluent reader)
 - Unison reading (Joseph reads at the same time as a fluent reader)