Clearwater Psychological Services

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PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Name	SMITH, Frankie	**School**	Evergreen P. S.		
Date of Birth	October 14, 2008	**Grade Level**	01	**Age**	6
Testing Dates	July 13, 16, 2015				
Report Date	July 20, 2015				

REASON FOR REFERRAL

Concerns were raised about Frankie's productivity and achievement. It was hoped that an assessment would clarify his learning profile and assist in the development of strategies and/or accommodations.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Smith (Frankie's parents)
Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children - 5th Ed (WISC-V)
Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration - 6th Ed (VMI-VI)
Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning - 2nd Ed (WRAML2)
Conners Rating Scales - 3rd Ed (Conners-3) (Teacher**/Parent**)
Conners' Continuous Performance Test II (CPT-II)
Test of Everyday Attention for Children (TEA-Ch)
Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF) (Parent**/Teacher**)
Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement (WJ-III Ach)
Process Assessment of the Learner - 2nd Edition (PAL-II)
Human Figure Drawing/Draw A Person:IQ (DAP-IQ)
Test of Word Reading Efficiency (TOWRE-2)
Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing - 2nd Ed (CTOPP-2)
Sentence Completion
Behavior Assessment System for Children - 2nd Ed (BASC-2)
Interview with Frankie

Document Review
Grade 1 Report Card
Work Samples

Smith, Frankie (Continued)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Frankie was born in Texas and English is his native language. He lives with his parents and older brother. Their home environment is considered happy, stable and family-oriented.

According to Mrs. Smith, her pregnancy and birth history with Frankie were each normal. Likewise he has been a generally healthy youngster with good vision. While he has had his hearing tested, it is unclear as to whether or not he has a low grade hearing problem because he was congested at the time. His hearing will be re-tested and he is being monitored.

As a baby and toddler, Mr. and Mrs. Smith recalled that Frankie was very outgoing, cheerful and extremely easy to manage. Developmentally, he met his gross-motor and language milestones at the expected ranges, if not earlier than his peers. However, longstanding challenges were cited about his fine-motor skills. For example, he struggled to use scissors and his penmanship has been chronically poor.

While a bit shy and anxious as a younger child, Frankie received some counselling and now easily enters into social situations and he is well liked by others. In the same vein, he has remained happy and stable in mood and temperament, he is empathetic and responsive to the needs of his friends and family and he is well behaved. Although Frankie is generally focused, mild concerns were raised about his propensity to make careless mistakes and about his slightly “daydreamy” nature.

Academically, Mr. and Mrs. Smith sensed that Frankie is quite bright in that he understands most concepts that are taught, he has strong conversational skills and he is a good reader. At the same time, concerns were reiterated about his poor legibility. As such, he struggles to capture what he knows onto paper and he has related difficulties with copying, drawing and rudimentary note-taking. Also Frankie’s parents have noticed that his math skills seem to lag behind his other skills as he has difficulty with math computation and multiple-stepped problem-solving. Similarly, he struggles to: mentally hold details in his head; he can be somewhat forgetful; he needs help with organization; he is slow getting started on tasks; and he often needs more time to complete his work than his classmates.

School History, Review of Report Cards and Teacher Observation Form

Frankie has had a stable school experience in that he has been at the same public school for the past 3 years. A review of his most recent report Grade 1 card revealed marks that hovered between the B and C ranges. Of note, while considered a generally collaborative and well-regulated student, his teacher flagged challenges with Frankie’s independent work habits and initiative.

Frankie’s current teacher, Ms. Jones, also filled out a questionnaire that surveyed Frankie’s academic functioning in greater detail. Consistent with parent accounts, Frankie’s overall receptive and expressive language skills were considered good. Also, she noted that Frankie has acquired generally grade appropriate reading skills although he still is at a concrete level in interpreting information, which is predictable in light of his age. Notwithstanding, concerns were raised about Frankie’s written expression in that he takes short cuts, he lacks organization, he can be messy, he works slowly and he does not proof-read or edit his work properly. Although Frankie can perform some strands in math, it was noted that Frankie needs to be monitored to ensure “he is on track”.

Smith, Frankie (Continued)

OBSERVATIONS

During the current assessment, Frankie was cheerful, eager to please and wanting to do well. Likewise, he was both appreciative of and responsive to praise. For these reasons, it is felt that this is a valid and reliable estimate of his functioning in an optimal learning environment.

While generally flexible and capable of being redirected to different tasks, Frankie was slow to shift to sudden changes in task expectations and he could be distracted. In the same vein, he was somewhat fidgety and he tended to talk or hum while he worked.

In keeping with his parents' perceptions, Frankie was articulate in that he spoke with well formulated sentences and good vocabulary words. However, he sometimes missed directions that were given and so he had to be monitored closely and/or he had to have instructions repeated, simplified and/or demonstrated.

With respect to the visual and hands-on aspects of testing, Frankie got confused when asked to interpret spatial angles and he used his finger to help manage his word spacing while he printed. In general, he did not appear as confident with the nonverbal types of tasks in comparison to the verbal activities and he often resorted to talking his way through the steps of the various visuospatial tests.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

The actual test scores contained within this report are attached as an appendix. Please note, all testing was completed in English. A summary of the trends that emerged is included in the sections that follow. From each pattern of scores, real world or functional implications are considered.

Cognitive/Intellectual Functioning

Cognitively, Frankie's capacity to understand and use language was very strong. In contrast, he did not fare as well in the nonverbal areas , especially with respect to the assembly of blocks into designs or the mental management of details that were involved in figuring out which objects would "balance a scale". Of note, Frankie attempted to talk his way through a number of the non-verbal tasks and he often used his fingers to help keep track of the shapes he had to mentally rotate.

Potential Functional Implications

- ***Can categorize verbal information***
- ***Understands most vocabulary words***
- ***Likely understands and can communicate in language-based/discussion types of activities***
- ***Deploys language to help mediate his way through visuospatial tasks (e.g. "this is big, this is small, so the next design should be big")***
- ***Less confident with visual and hands-on tasks, needs much more time to figure these out than in areas related to verbal reasoning***
- ***Struggles to assemble things from diagrams (e.g. Ikea); may have related difficulties with using tools***
- ***May experience challenges with spatial math (e.g. geometry, measurement, balancing equations, etc.) and physical sciences (e.g. physics)***
- ***May get overloaded when presented with busy visual information on a page and not notice small details***

Smith, Frankie (Continued)

Visual-Motor Integration/Processing Speed

At a clerical level (processing speed), Frankie could efficiently copy repeated symbols from a legend and he could scan and match symbols that changed from line to line but only *just* within average limits. While he could draw a human figure, he was unable to copy abstract designs with spatial accuracy and his fine-motor control was weak.

Potential Functional Implications

- ***Has learned how to draw people and can likely draw familiar objects he has practiced before***
- ***Can notice and match simple details that are organized on a page***
- ***Cannot as easily physically transfer what he "sees in his mind" onto paper***
- ***Mind works faster than hands; source of frustration***
- ***Contributes to weak legibility/sloppy work***
- ***Likely has difficulties drawing, generating charts, diagrams and lining up columns and numbers***
- ***Relates to historical challenges of writing, legibility and drawing***

Memory and Learning

Frankie's short term or "in/out" memory was suitable for items he heard or saw and he could, with average ability, mentally encode, manipulate and retrieve details (working memory). Nevertheless, his verbal memory improved over time and with recognition items for meaningful content (as found in stories) and for information he had learned over 4 rehearsal trials. In contrast, he did not fare as well when asked to draw designs from memory. This, in part, could be attributed to the drawing problems already cited. With this in mind, he performed better in remembering picture elements from social scenes and his retention increased, especially once the demands for drawing were removed.

Potential Functional Implications

- ***Benefits from repetition and time to learn new information he hears and then recollection is fairly stable***
- ***Retains socially relevant information (stories, events, pictures) and where he can deploy his upper level abilities to "link" information or to "connect" to the material***
- ***Being bright is a mixed blessing in that he has more that he thinks about than he can suitably mentally organize/manage***
- ***Needs time to acclimatize to mental demands placed on attention span and/or the effort required to memorize or manage details***

Attention Span

According to Mrs. Smith and Frankie's teacher, Ms. Jones, Frankie seems generally focused in class in that he does not display traditional hyperactivity or impulsivity, he is compliant and he is collaborative with his peers. Moreover, both felt that Frankie is capable of learning and that he can be organized if given specific instructions to follow.

Over the course of testing Frankie, subtle but persistent attentional challenges were observed in that, despite his best intentions, Frankie seemed inwardly distracted, he sometimes "spaced out", he needed more time to acculturate to rapid changes in task demands and he was quietly fidgety. Direct evaluation of his attentional skills confirmed challenges with his noticing all of the details he was shown or told, he worked very slowly and his responses became more erratic over time (i.e. he got tired). Likewise, Frankie struggled to balance speed with accuracy and was either too fast and careless or too slow but accurate. He was challenged to change his strategy midway through an activity (shifting attention) and he was unable to selectively tune in/tune out competing verbal and visual details (divided attention). In addition, Frankie was apt to be impulsive and did not necessarily wait for the right signal before making his move. Similarly, he faded in tasks that

required sustained listening. As such, his results are more in keeping with an individual with an attention-related deficit disorder than not.

Potential Functional Implications

- ***Seems to fare better with focusing in a quieter environment or one-to-one situation***
- ***Displays strong desire to pay attention and tries to regulate himself***
- ***Can focus with material of interest to him and/or that he feels stimulated by***
- ***Difficulties with paying attention make it hard for him to "feel in control" and this, in turn, could fuel anxiety***
- ***May find it hard to balance speed with accuracy***
- ***May struggle to keep track of details as he reads or writes and then integrate these to make sense of information to see the big picture***
- ***May not necessarily consider all his answers/choices; may jump in and say or do something before he forgets it***
- ***Finds it hard to transition from one activity to another; needs extra preparation and reminders***
- ***May require a lot of effort to concentrate and so may fatigue when is put into situations that require sustained attention, particularly, when there are multiple demands placed on him***
- ***May not seem to be listening***
- ***May struggle to maintain concentration and persist with tasks when left to his own devices and not regularly monitored and supported***
- ***Spins his wheels; could be hard to get him started on tasks***

Executive Functioning

Since Frankie is a bit young to be tested for his executive functioning, his mother and teacher completed the BRIEF questionnaire. In terms of "real world" executive skills, both raters agreed that Frankie typically exhibits suitable emotional and behavioral regulatory control, he is mentally flexible and able to initiate tasks of interest. However, at school, Ms. Jones wondered about Frankie's detail management skills (referred to as working memory on the BRIEF) and she commented that he struggles with independent planning and organization.

Potential Functional Implications

- ***Benefits from some monitoring to ensure he remains on track, maintains his pace and complies with expectations***
- ***Can conceptualize problems and generate appropriate problem-solving strategies when he can figure out a logical set of "rules" and use language to mediate his way through the tasks (e.g. asks questions)***
- ***Utilizes guidelines and benefits when work is segmented into manageable chunks***
- ***Attentional issues may mar efficiency as he loses track of his place/what he has worked on in longer learning situations that require multi-tasking***
- ***May get confused, overwhelmed and/or anxious if expectations are spontaneous and not well anticipated***
- ***Needs preparation to acculturate to different expectations***
- ***Partnered with fine-motor challenges/sluggish native speed, may find it hard to work quickly and could need help with time management***

Academic Testing – Reading, Writing and Math

Academic skills are tested in a highly structured and one-to-one testing environment that is not typical of the regular classroom. Moreover, academic skills are tested in isolation of other demands. This means that how students' co-ordinate their individual skills for complex tasks is not determined by academic testing alone but is better accounted for by psychological examination in the areas that precede this section.

Reading

At a foundational level, Frankie successfully deployed phonological strategies to sound out nonsense words and his orthographic and other phonological skills were intact and within average limits. In areas pertaining to reading fluency, Frankie quickly recognized common sight words and

Smith, Frankie (Continued)

he could be efficient in his word decoding. Likewise, he understood information that he read on his own and he was particularly adept at understanding material read aloud to him.

Potential Functional Implications

- ***Has the foundational skills to read***
- ***Attentional issues may undermine tenacity and ability to keep track of and integrate details that involve the management of longer and drier content (especially if he isn't interested in what is assigned to read)***

Writing

In the writing areas, Frankie could spell high frequency words in isolation of other writing demands. While he could generate thematically mature answers to specific questions, his printing was messy and it took him a long time to complete this task. Predictably, he worked slowly on a task that involved writing fluency. A review of his work samples confirmed challenges with legibility.

Potential Functional Implications

- ***Displays creativity and good ideas for simple writing***
- ***Structure and guidelines help organize his thoughts***
- ***Doesn't seem to notice mistakes, poor at proof-reading and editing***
- ***Sense that mind races ahead of hands and so writing is very frustrating***
- ***Messy handwriting; hard to read***
- ***May struggle to take good notes***
- ***Inherently slow to capture thoughts onto paper***

Math

Mathematically, Frankie was able to resolve simple and practical problems when the demands for computation were reduced. Once these were measured, it was evident that he struggled to work out various addition and subtraction questions and his speed in retrieving simple math facts was slow.

Potential Functional Implications

- ***Understands a number of math concepts and principles***
- ***Attentional issues would make it hard for him to "shift mental set" and to adjust to changes in expectations on the page (e.g. may miss red herrings in word problems, misses noticing changes in operational signs, etc.)***
- ***Given stronger math conceptual abilities than numeracy skills, may be able to understand more than he can mentally keep track of and "work out"***
- ***Poor fluency in basic math facts would make number crunching particularly challenging and would contribute to difficulties in managing multiple stepped procedures, solving math problems and deploying simultaneous decision making and numeracy skills without accommodations (e.g. needs more time, calculator)***
- ***Fine-motor issues would make copying errors and/or find it hard to explain his answers or to generate charts/diagrams, line up numbers/columns and/or copy work from board or textbook into workbook***

Social/Emotional/Behavioural Functioning

Information gathered from Frankie's parents and teacher suggested that he is a happy and stable child with good social skills and a solid capacity to communicate. Typically, he participates well at school and he exhibits some quiet leadership qualities. However, all sensed that Frankie is somewhat anxious. To elaborate, on the BASC-2 questionnaire, Mrs. Smith noted that Frankie worries about his performance in school, about making mistakes and about what others think. Ms. Jones agreed but suggested that this is not a major problem. When queried further about Frankie's anxiety, his parents sensed that this is situational and academic based rather than general and dispositional in nature. In part, they felt that undiagnosed learning problems related to issues with

productivity might have some bearing on this. Also, they noted that Frankie had a rough start at school where he was exposed to a challenging faculty member.

On a sentence completion task and during informal conversations with Frankie, he noted that he is a "nice person... who is good at sharing." In general, he stated that he has a number of good friends at school although some children are bullies. Still, he mentioned that he has a close relationship with his family even though he can fight with his siblings. While he felt like he has a lot of good ideas, he noted that he struggles with getting his thoughts down on paper and so he can be frustrated. Notwithstanding, he maintained that he would like to do well and, as such, he seemed receptive to acquiring the strategies that will enhance his productivity.

Potential Functional Implications

- ***Good natured, kind and well-intended***
- ***Happy, stable in mood and temperament***
- ***Open to receiving support to improve himself***
- ***May get stressed and anxious with school related work, multiple deadlines, detail management, tests***
- ***May be hard on himself self-conscious when his productivity is not in keeping with his understanding of the material; frustrated***
- ***Experiences significant challenges with anxiety in situations where has to perform in public or when he is being evaluated (e.g. tests, oral presentations, etc.)***

SUMMARY AND FORMULATION

Frankie is a sweet natured and bright boy who has had a longstanding history related to weak fine-motor skills. The results of this assessment confirm the presence of challenges with **fine-motor control* and **visual-motor integration* that would hamper Frankie's printing, copying, note-taking and written expression. In addition, significantly weaker scores were evident in two areas of his nonverbal abilities related to **physical assembly* and to the **interpretation of some visuospatial relationships*, which may account for some of the math difficulties. As such, he meets the clinical threshold of possessing a ****learning disability***.

Despite this, Frankie exhibited very strong language abilities and a generally suitable to good short-term, working, verbal and visual memory. Related strengths were apparent in his reading. On the flipside, chronic difficulties with attention span were observed formally and informally. While these were not identified as functionally problematic in a traditional hyperactive/impulsive sense, his profile is in keeping with an individual who has an ***attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder of a predominantly inattentive type***. Regardless, problems with speed or a **sluggish cognitive tempo* were featured and also contribute to why he works slowly. This, too, could impact the mental management and integration of details in math and in longer and drier academic situations. Moreover, having difficulty with written output as well as with keeping pace with the expectations could trigger the ***anxiety*** Frankie has experienced when he is "put on the spot" to multi-task, organize himself, balance speed with accuracy and/or when he has to be as "equally productive as he is smart".

Smith, Frankie (Continued)

RECOMMENDATIONS

General Considerations

1. Given his young age, Frankie needs to be regarded as a "work in progress" and as an individual with changing needs. As such, this evaluation should be considered a snapshot in time and, likely, suitable to help him, his family and his teachers navigate for about the next three to five years. Of course, if his needs change, another assessment may be warranted before the end of that time frame.

2. Frankie should be identified as an exceptional student and he should receive an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that reflects accommodations to his learning. Many of the strategies listed below would be relevant to incorporate; however, to keep him invested in school, he also will require some opportunities for stimulation and/or enrichment as well as support for his weaker areas.

3. Given Frankie's difficulties with fine-motor output and general productivity, it is essential that he use adaptive equipment such as an iPad and/or computer to fully access the curriculum. Various software options are discussed in the sections that follow.

4. Frankie should consult with an adaptive technologist to help determine what will be useful for him and he should receive specific training to understand how to apply these tools properly.

5. Consultation with an occupational/physiotherapist would be beneficial.

Personal Development

Personal Strategies

1. Frankie would benefit from some private counselling. In particular, cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) and/or mindfulness training may assist him in coping with his anxiety better.

Attention/Retention

Personal Strategies

1. This report should be shared with Frankie's physician.

2. Wherever possible, schedule undesired before desired activities so that Frankie can complete his work "while he has the momentum". However, all activities should have "measurable outcomes" (e.g. "when you complete 5 questions properly in math, then you can watch TV").

3. To assist with retention, Frankie is encouraged to continue to take an active role in memorizing new material. While mnemonic strategies can be used (e.g. HOMES for Great Lakes), he can also use various flashcard apps such as www.quizlet.com.

Smith, Frankie (Continued)

School-based Strategies/Accommodations

4. Engage Frankie in some regular purposeful activity in the classroom to help him “clear his head” and use up some energy (e.g. he could be asked to wipe the chalkboard or to run errands).

5. Permit Frankie to work in a quieter space or consider using a study/office carrel.

Executive Skills

Personal Strategies

1. Being on top of his work would help Frankie cope better with stress and with anxiety.

School-based Strategies/Accommodations

2. Frankie needs help managing his own agenda book and he needs to be monitored to ensure that he is suitably coping with deadlines. Eventually (e.g. early middle school or so), Frankie may wish to begin exploring the possibility of using technology to assist with scheduling (e.g. iPod, Smartphone, myHomework, iStudiezPro, Wunderlist etc.).

3. Provide structured planning/organization sessions and ongoing meetings with respect to project deadlines and time management in order to help keep Frankie organized and up-to-date.

4. Provide models of what is required for finished products.

5. Keep a workbook/glossary of problem solving strategies and provide checklists for what is expected in tasks.

6. Frankie likely would respond well to smaller chunks of information where the expectations are made clear to him and are presented in a “step by step” or “cookbook” and sequential manner.

Reading

School-based Strategies/Accommodations

1. Audio books are very useful for reading. These can be downloaded from the internet on to a tablet, smart phone and/or computer. Several sites offer this such as iBooks; www.audible.com; www.amazon.com; www.kobo.com; www.bookshare.com; www.tales2go.com and www.overdrive.com. Moreover, audio books are read dramatically which may improve Frankie’s comprehension.

2. Videos on related topics may help prepare “frame” the material better (e.g. youtube) and "warm up" Frankie’s brain to learning new units/concepts.

Writing/Fine-Motor

Personal Strategies

1. Use materials to assist with fine-motor control (e.g. pipe cleaners, baking, tracing books, mazes). Also, consider the program "Handwriting without Tears".

Smith, Frankie (Continued)

School-based Strategies/Accommodations

2. Limit Frankie to printing or writing responses on forms or with short-answer responses only.

3. Wherever possible, all first drafts (essays, projects) should be generated on the computer where they can be edited via a Track Changes tool (Mac or PC Word) so that he doesn't have to rewrite the revised copy.

4. Until he can suitably use adaptive technology, accommodate Frankie's written language (including stories, essays tests/exams) by interviewing him to say aloud what he wants to write on paper; then, record, scribe or take turns taking notes so that "more" of what he wants to say can be more readily committed to paper.

5. Frankie will need access to a note-taker or others' notes and/or he should be permitted to take pictures of flipcharts/the blackboard or of others' notes and record specific lessons for later review (e.g. Notability, etc.).

6. Frankie will need to rely on others for editing support.

7. Assignments that require Frankie to reproduce questions before he answers them would be time consuming and difficult. This is because he is prone to making copying errors and because the effort that is required to copy the question may prematurely tire him out before he is able to follow through with the actual "thinking" portion of the task. Instead, allow him to work directly in his textbook or have him complete what is assigned from photocopied or scanned sheets (e.g., PDF Expert or Notability).

Math

Personal Strategies

1. There are various apps for fluency/numeracy. Frankie and his family are encouraged to look up the reviews on the Internet and to ask his teacher for topic areas that should be covered.

2. An excellent website with over 3600 lessons on math and science is www.khanacademy.com .

3. To assist with numeracy and fluency, consider a private course such as Kumon Math.

4. Use math in everyday life such as cooking, money management and shopping (e.g. fractions, doubling, percentage on sales, counting change, budgeting etc.) to reinforce concepts and make math more meaningful.

School-based Strategies/Accommodations

5. Due to challenges with numeracy, permit Frankie to use a calculator and/or number grid when involved with multiple-stepped procedures.

Smith, Frankie (Continued)

6. Use graph paper to assist with lining up columns and numbers.

7. Create a math reference or "how to" booklet on different units. An extra and very helpful tool is to record explanations (e.g. with a program like Notability on an iPad) so that the lesson can be heard and seen again.

8. Since it is very hard and time-consuming for Frankie to copy and transcribe work, permit him to work directly in a math book or on a copied/scanned sheet (e.g., PDF Expert/Notability).

9. Since Frankie relates better to verbal than to visual material, use language-based explanations and metaphors.

10. Reduce the amount of work Frankie has to do to "show his work" or to provide written explanations of his solutions. Alternately, permit him to explain his answers orally.

Test Taking

School-based Strategies/Accommodations

1. To get used to test-taking, Frankie is encouraged to acquire and be permitted to use previous tests that he can practice with. In this way, he can become acclimatized to the amount of information, pace and “test style” he needs to prepare for.

2. Teaching staff should monitor Frankie during testing to ensure that he understood what the questions asked him.

3. Grant the use of a calculator or number grid to alleviate the stress of multi-tasking when Frankie is involved with multiple-step math procedures.

4. Frankie needs extended time limits (50 – 100% more time) for all tests/exams.

5. While the computer or iPad that is outfitted with the appropriate apps should be permitted for Frankie to use for tests, at this point, he would benefit from oral testing/oral elaboration and scribing where he can be prompted to stay on the point and to add whatever necessary elements he may have missed.

6. Frankie may require breaks during tests or in exam situations that should not be counted against his extended time limits.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached at the telephone number listed on the letterhead or by email at p.wisc@gmail.com.

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