

## Friendly Psychological Services

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### PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Name</b>	SMITH, Jane	<b>School</b>	Friendly Public School	
<b>Date of Birth</b>	09/16/2000	<b>Grade Level</b>	08	<b>Age</b> 13
<b>Testing Dates</b>	August 1, 2 and 3, 2013			

#### REASON FOR REFERRAL

*Mr. and Mrs. Smith requested an updated assessment for Jane to ease her transition from elementary to high school.*

#### ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Interview with Mrs. Smith (Jane's mother)  
Teacher Observation of Academic Functioning (Cornerstone Form)  
Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children - 4th Edition (WISC-IV)  
Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration - 6th Ed (VMI-VI)  
Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning - 2nd Edition (WRAML2)  
Conners Rating Scales - 3rd Edition (Conners-3) (Parent\*\*)  
Conners' Continuous Performance Test II (CPT-II)  
Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF) (Parent\*\*)  
Wisconsin Card Sorting Test - 64 (WCST-64)  
Delis-Kaplan Executive Function System (D-KEFS)  
Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement (WJ-III Ach)  
Test of Word Reading Efficiency (TOWRE-2)  
Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP)  
California Verbal Learning Test- Children (CVLT-C)  
BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory; Youth Version (EQI:YV)  
Behavior Assessment System for Children - 2nd Edition (BASC-2)  
School Motivation and Learning Strategies Inventory (SMALSI)  
Informal Interview with Jane

#### Document Review

Previous Psychological Assessment (Cornerstone, November 2007)  
Grade 6 and 7 Report Cards (YRDSB)  
IEP (Grades 6 and 7)

**- CONFIDENTIAL -**

*SMITH, Jane* (Continued)

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Jane was born in Canada. She lives with her parents and younger sister. Their home life is described as family oriented, stable and supportive.

Mrs. Smith recalled that her pregnancy with Jane was normal although Jane was delivered via a C-section because of an irregular heartbeat during labor. Nevertheless, she rallied quickly and did not require any further medical intervention. While Jane had a light case of pneumonia in Grade 2 as well as some minor elbow surgery, she otherwise has been healthy with no other reported hospitalizations, high fevers, long-term illnesses, head injuries, seizures or accidents. Likewise, her hearing and vision were each described as good although she has been susceptible to having ear infections recently and so she is being monitored by an ENT. Of note, depression and ADHD run in the family.

As a baby and toddler, Jane was described as friendly, exceptionally good-natured and easy to manage. For the most part, she met her developmental milestones at the expected rates and, according to her mother, she spoke early and well. Typically, Jane has been a friendly and social child who is well liked. She displays a good sense of humor, she generally is in a happy mood and she is responsive to the needs of others. Although considered adaptable, Jane sometimes needs to get used to new situations and/or to prepare for transitions.

Despite the strengths just noted, Jane is distracted by small things in her environment, she is inattentive to details and she is prone to making careless mistakes. She finds it hard to sit and concentrate on tasks for long periods of time and she fatigues in situations that require sustained mental effort. Similarly, while she has good intentions, she can be impatient, blurt or interrupt. In December 2007, she was diagnosed as a child with ADHD of a predominantly inattentive type (see Previous Assessments section below). Various forms of medication have been used with some success. However, at present, Jane has not been on a regular therapeutic dose.

Academically, Mrs. Smith sensed that Jane is a real world learner and that she prefers these types of activities to theoretical concepts. Still, Jane appears to understand most information that is communicated to her, she can converse well and she can be creative and have good ideas. At the same time, she struggles to capture what she knows from her head into writing, she rarely applies language conventions and she displays limited note taking and spelling skills. Consistent with this, she reads slowly, she finds it hard to understand the "main point" and she has difficulties in all areas of math.

Contributing to these academic difficulties, Mrs. Smith reported many issues with Jane's memory. To illustrate, she noted challenges with short-term memory in that Jane cannot follow complex directions, she has difficulty with multi-tasking and she cannot readily perform multiple-stepped procedures. Likewise, she noted that Jane struggles to mentally keep track of her thoughts, she has to re-read material to remember it and she struggles to retrieve details "on the spot". While Mrs. Smith maintained that they have to put excessive preparation time into studying, Jane is unable to reliably carry over what she has learned to test-taking situations and she runs out of time

SMITH, Jane (Continued)

unless given time extensions. Still, Jane is a conscientious and dedicated student who regularly completes her homework, who tries to keep her own belongings organized and who uses a computer to help manage tasks that involve written output.

Since Mr. and Mrs. Smith are aware that the demands for independence in learning are increasing, they are particularly interested in acquiring an updated assessment so that relevant support can be offered and/or continued as Jane finishes elementary school and transitions to high school.

### **Previous Assessments**

Jane received a psychological assessment from this clinic in December 2007 when she was in Grade 2. At the time, Average results were evident in her Verbal Comprehension and Processing Speed (55th and 58th percentile, respectively). At least moderate difficulties emerged with respect to her Perceptual Reasoning (13th percentile), visual-motor integration (8th percentile) and Working Memory (1st percentile). Other deficits surfaced in her Verbal Memory (21st percentile) and Visual Memory (5th percentile) as well as in areas that involved the retention of information over time (5th to 16th percentile). Compounded with this, Jane displayed challenges with concentration, attention span and executive skills. Subsequently, she was diagnosed with a *learning disability* as well as with an *attention deficit disorder of a predominantly inattentive type (ADHD-PI)*.

### **School History, Review of Report Cards and Teacher Observation Form**

Jane has had a stable school history in that she has been at the same school since Kindergarten. However, after her diagnoses were established, she participated in a community class for 3 months in Grade 3 and then was placed into a Student Support Centre (SSC) with integration for non-core subject areas.

In keeping with what her mother relayed, on her Grade 6 and 7 report cards, Jane was described as a positive student with strong learning skills and good work habits. *With the support of accommodations and an IEP*, Jane's English marks hovered between the B's and A's or 70s and 80s whereas her math fluctuated between the 80s and 90s. In fact, she received a 100 in a Grade 7 measurement unit. Most other subjects also ranged from the 70's to the 80's.

According to her most recent (Grade 7) IEP, Jane has been identified and/or supported as an exceptional student since her psychological assessment was completed in 2007. According to this document, Jane has received modified expectations in the math and language areas. Also, she has received various accommodations such as: additional time; use of a computer; assistance with chunking/organization; calculator use; memory aids; and direct support with reading and writing.

### **OBSERVATIONS**

During the current assessment, Jane displayed an appropriate sense of humor, she was cheerful, eager to please and wanting to do well. Similarly, she was highly appreciative of and responsive to

*SMITH, Jane* (Continued)

praise. For these reasons, it is felt that this assessment is a valid and reliable estimate of her current functioning in an optimal one-to-one learning environment.

In general, Jane spoke with well-formulated sentences, she used appropriate vocabulary words and her vocal modulation was suitable. However, during the more formal aspects of testing, she struggled where she was given multiple-step directions, she lost place of what she was working on and she relied on instructions being simplified and/or repeated. Likewise, she was challenged to organize her own answers, she seemed at a loss to find the right words and she could be brief/vague unless prompted to help her elaborate upon her own ideas.

Despite wanting to do well, Jane struggled to shift her attention when presented with rapid changes in task demands and, as a result, she benefited from an extended "warm up period" to get used to what was expected. Also, she faded in situations that placed an emphasis on sustained mental effort (e.g. did better on first than second half even if the activities were not getting harder). Still, it was evident that she was putting good effort into whatever was asked of her.

In the nonverbal aspects of testing, Jane could be analytical and methodical and she especially liked opportunities to work with puzzles and when she could assemble things. While her pencil grasp was appropriate, she pressed very hard on the page while she worked.

## **SUMMARY AND FORMULATION**

Jane is a good natured, kind and sensitive young woman with very few mental health concerns. Information gathered from this assessment is consistent with other testing in that she continues to meet the diagnostic thresholds of possessing a **learning disability** as well as an **attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder of a predominantly inattentive type (ADHD-PI)**.

In terms of her learning, Jane displayed generally Average abilities across the Verbal Comprehension and Perceptual Reasoning areas (each at the 32nd percentile). Although her pencil and paper clerical skills and scanning abilities were all well within mid Average limits, her fine-motor coordination and visual-motor integration skills were limited (21st to 1st percentile). As such, related challenges were observed with respect to illegibility, copying and fine-motor planning on a page.

In addition, concerns continue to be raised about Jane's working memory (0.1st percentile) and about her immediate and delayed verbal and visual memory (9th to 16th percentile). While additional learning trials as well as recognition items helped elevate her scores to some extent, she was confused with competing and newer information that was introduced. Moreover, challenges with attention/working memory contributed to difficulties with organizing new information, sizing up a bigger picture and mentally keeping track of details to work in an efficient and flexible manner. Partnered with challenges in phonological skills, Jane struggled to sound out words and she was additionally slow to identify common sight words. As such, reading is a labor intensive process. In the real world of reading longer and drier books/articles, it is felt that she would be hard pressed to

*SMITH, Jane* (Continued)

integrate all the details she has read and so this accounts for why she may struggle to "see the forest because of the trees". It, too, would negatively impact her capacity to write, spell and embellish her work with relevant details and it would help explain why her numeracy scores are so weak and inefficient.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ***General Considerations***

1. Jane should continue to be identified as an exceptional student and she should receive an updated Individual Education Plan (IEP) that reflects accommodations to her learning. Many of the strategies listed below would be relevant to incorporate.
2. Due to significant challenges with reading, writing and memorizing, Jane should be granted a Spanish exemption.
3. Jane will require a transition plan as she moves ahead in school. This report should be shared with the Special Education Department at her new high school well in advance of her attendance so that she has several supportive mechanisms in place (e.g. course selection, technology, test-taking, reading, writing, test-taking, etc.)
4. Courses should be balanced across semesters with some electives offered in each.
5. Given Jane's difficulties with attention, memory, fine-motor output and organization, it is essential that she use adaptive equipment such as an iPad and/or computer in order to fully access the curriculum. In this way, she will be able to type or dictate faster than she can write (so that she can capture her ideas before they get muddled or disappear), she can incorporate point form ideas into sentences and she can make revisions to her work neatly and easily. Reading/note-taking programs (e.g. Speak; Read, Write and Gold; LiveScribe; Notability; AudioNote), and access to the full Windows/Mac suite of programs such as Word/Pages and PowerPoint/Keynote would be beneficial in supporting her learning. Also, graphic organizers (e.g. Inspiration) will be critical in helping Jane pre-plan and organize her thoughts.
6. Jane should consult with an adaptive technologist to help determine what will be useful for her and she should receive specific training to understand how to apply these tools properly.

### ***Attention/Retention***

#### **Personal Strategies**

1. The use of a free digital notebook such as Evernote ([www.evernote.com](http://www.evernote.com)) may be helpful for Jane to keep track of her notes, ideas, research, and any other additional sources of

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information she would like to retain for future use. Beyond providing a simple depository for information, this program will allow her to search her notes (including hand written ones) so that she can quickly find specific material she needs and it will allow her to access this information from any internet enabled computer, tablet or Smartphone.

2. When doing work, Jane should turn off distractors such as TV, phone, text messaging, Internet, etc. to assist with concentration.
3. To assist with retention, Jane 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), she can also use various flashcard apps such as [www.quizlet.com](http://www.quizlet.com). Also, consider using [www.khanacademy.com](http://www.khanacademy.com) , Educreations (iPad App) or a LiveScribe pen to rehear and review lessons.
4. Studying should be done in shorter bursts over a longer period of time and never be left to the last minute).
5. An excellent website with over 3600 lessons on math and science is [www.khanacademy.com](http://www.khanacademy.com) .
6. Wherever possible, schedule undesired before desired activities so that Jane can complete her work “while she has the momentum”. However, all activities should have “measurable outcomes” (e.g. “when I complete 5 questions properly in math, then I can watch TV”).
7. Jane should continue to work with an agenda book or electronic calendar and task management system on a Smartphone and/or tablet or computer (e.g. iCal, Awesome Calendar, Google Calendar, Wunderlist). Also, she can use electronic reminders to help cue her when items/appointments are due. Being on top of her work would help Jane continue to cope effectively with stress and anxiety.

*School-based Strategies/Accommodations*

8. Permit Jane to work in a quieter space or consider using a study/office carrel.
9. Make a booklet or binder of all handouts and assignments, which Jane can use as a reference book.
10. Having access to notes *before* a lecture would help Jane follow prepare herself for some of the concepts/vocabulary that will be used, which will aid in her attention and comprehension.
11. Allow the use of noise cancelling headphones (with/without background music).
12. Present information in a “step by step” or “cookbook” and sequential manner.

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13. The quality of work should be emphasized instead of the quantity. Often, capable students perform best if streamlined toward learning the concepts. In other words, they may need to get “right to the main point” with not as much emphasis placed on non-essential details (e.g. have her do half of the math questions with mastery rather than all of them and risk fatigue and carelessness).
14. To minimize mistakes when reading, make sure lists of activities or lists of work expectations are visually easy to see. Instead of embedding expectations in a paragraph, organize the page with a list like this: 1....2....3....4....5 and so fort

**Reading**

School-based Strategies/Accommodations

1. All of Jane's books and assigned reading should be made available to her in electronic or PDF format for text-to-speech, annotation and storage purposes.
2. 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](http://www.audible.com); [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com); [www.kobo.com](http://www.kobo.com); [www.bookshare.com](http://www.bookshare.com); [www.books2go.com](http://www.books2go.com); and [www.overdrive.com](http://www.overdrive.com). Moreover, audio books are read dramatically which may improve Jane's comprehension.
3. Videos on related topics may help prepare “frame” the material better (e.g. youtube) and “warm up” Jane's brain to learning new units/concepts.
4. Jane will need to be guided as to what is important in reading material. Otherwise, she will find it hard to sort essential from unessential details and “miss the point”. Likewise, she will need to have key concepts highlighted in reading materials so she won't miss what is relevant or have to re-read entire sections when reviewing the content.
5. Due to challenges in interpreting language, use non-fiction for reading so that Jane can locate facts or story lines rather than draw inferences from what she is reading (e.g. better with reading biography, historical novel to Shakespeare, etc.)
6. Text to speech software such as Speak, Read, Write and Gold, Kurzweil and/or other programs would be useful to support Jane's reading.
7. Annotation programs (e.g. iAnnotate, Everclip, Lightly) would help with highlighting important points and then collapsing these onto just a few sheets to help summarize material.

## **Writing/Fine-Motor**

### School-based Strategies/Accommodations

1. Limit Jane to printing or writing responses on forms or with short-answer responses only.
2. Jane will need access to a note-taker or others' notes and/or she should be permitted to take pictures of flipcharts/the blackboard or of others' notes and record specific lessons for later review (e.g. Notability, LiveScribe pen, Audionote, etc.). Use of a Bamboo stylus would make drawing and notating easier.
3. Permit the use of a computer or iPad to generate charts, diagrams and artwork.
4. Conferencing beforehand with someone would help Jane to formulate her ideas more efficiently. The use of mapping and scaffolding techniques will help Jane organize and expand upon her thoughts in written language. Mapping techniques are useful in producing a visual guide to aid with organization and content (e.g. Inspiration, PowerPoint, Keynote or use a Q&A format).
5. Use graph paper to assist with lining up columns and numbers.
6. 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 she doesn't have to rewrite the revised copy.
7. Assignments that require Jane to reproduce questions before she answers them would be time consuming and difficult. This is because she is prone to making copying errors and because the effort that is required to copy the question may prematurely tire her out before she is able to follow through with the actual "thinking" portion of the task. Instead, allow her to work directly in her textbook or have her complete what is assigned from photocopied or scanned sheets.
8. Jane will need to rely on others for editing support.

## **Test Taking**

### Personal Strategies

1. To reduce potential anxiety with test taking, Jane is encouraged to do the simpler questions first to "warm up" her brain and to help her relax and concentrate better.

### School-based Strategies/Accommodations

2. Test questions should be straightforward rather than contain "tricks", jargon, double meanings or "plays on words". Due to challenges with managing competing information, minimize multiple-choice questions and, instead, use short answer questions she can respond to orally.
3. All tests should be either read to Jane or provided to her in PDF format so that she can have the questions read to her electronically.



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4. Jane needs a quieter room for all tests/exams.
5. Jane should use noise cancelling headphones to help block out ambient noise if this assists with her concentration. Additionally, if supportive, she should be permitted to listen to music to help her concentrate and relaxed during tests/exams.
6. Grant the use of a calculator if this helps alleviate the stress of multi-tasking when Jane is involved with multiple-step math procedures.
7. Given her legitimate limitations with respect to prioritizing information and managing details, it would be helpful if Jane could be told specifically what to study for prior to tests and exams. In this way, Jane could streamline her efforts to perform better.
8. While the computer or iPad that is outfitted with relevant adaptive software should be permitted for Jane to use for tests/exams, she would benefit from oral testing/oral elaboration where she can be prompted to stay on the point and to add whatever necessary elements she may have missed.
9. Jane needs extended time limits (at least 50% more time) for all tests/exams.
10. Teaching staff should monitor Jane during testing to ensure that she understood what the questions asked her.
11. Jane should be permitted to “retake” tests, particularly, if she feels she has “blanked out”. Often just knowing that this is an option helps students relax and do better first time around.
12. To get acclimatized to test-taking, Jane is encouraged to acquire and be permitted to use previous tests that she can practice with. In this way, she can become acclimatized to the amount of information, pace and “test style” she needs to prepare for.
13. Encourage and permit the use of an electronic dictionary or use the dictionary that is embedded in common apps (e.g. Kurzweil, Speak, Read, Write/Gold) for reading and writing in test-taking situations.
14. Where possible, provide similar types of test questions grouped together. Alternately, have Jane circle all similar questions in one color and do these followed by doing other types of similar questions to minimize mistakes to ease challenges with shifting attention and to reduce her making careless errors (e.g. do all addition before subtraction questions etc.).
15. Wherever possible, permit the use of faculty approved memory aids for tests/exams.
16. Due to Jane's very limited capacity to spell and to identify spelling errors, she should be granted a spelling exemption during tests-exams.

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17. Examinations and project deadlines will need to be evenly spaced so that Jane has sufficient time to complete her work.

*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 [melissa.cait@gmail.com](mailto:melissa.cait@gmail.com).*

Dr. Wisc  
Psychologist

Sample