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Boston College Public Schools
Evaluation Summary Assignment

I. Identifying Data

Name: Janina Jones DOB: May 12, 2003 Age: 8 years, 6 months

Language of Home: English

School: Washington-Mann School

Program: Inclusion-based Grade: 2

Examiner: Maria Valarezo

Position: Special Education Teacher

Date of Testing: October 25 & 26 and November 1 & 2, 2011

Date of Classroom Observation: November 8, 2011

Date of Report: November 10, 2011

II. Reason for Referral

An evaluation was requested by Janina's parents due to concern with her academic performance.

III. Background History

Janina presents as a confident, talkative, and carefree young girl. Throughout her childhood, Janina has demonstrated great difficulty meeting grade level benchmarks that relate to reading and writing. According to Janina's mother, she "had trouble learning to read since kindergarten and has always struggled with spelling words... When she reads aloud, she sounds choppy, stops at random places, and then has trouble remembering what happened." Currently, Janina is enrolled in an inclusive second grade classroom at the Washington-Mann school. Her teacher, Mrs. Beige, describes Janina as a "thoughtful, warm child, but a student who completes reading and writing tasks significantly below grade level."

During her evaluation, Janina also shared information about her reading preferences inside and outside of the classroom. When Janina was presented with the Awareness of Purposes of Reading Inventory (Garner & Kraus, 1981), Janina described herself as a “not-so good” reader and having to read as “sometimes really hard, but fun with a good book.” When asked, “What makes someone a good reader?” Janina responded, “They need to read like they are talking and they need to understand what happened in the story.” When she completed the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, an informal reading interest inventory, Janina indicated that she feels “very happy” when going to a book store, “slightly happy” when she spends free time reading a book, but “very upset” when she reads out loud in class.

IV. Behavioral Observations During Testing

Janina is right handed and does not wear corrective lenses because she has perfect visual acuity. She did not require any significant accommodations or utilize assistive technologies during testing. Janina was tested in the kindergarten-3rd grade learning center at the Washington-Mann School on four distinct occasions ranging from 20 to 60 minutes each. It is crucial to mention that testing was discontinued on the third day after Janina demonstrated difficulty and expressed a high level of frustration with the Reading Vocabulary section of the Woodcock Johnson III assessment. During the other evaluation sessions, Janina was cooperative and eager to complete the items on the assessments.

Based on Janina’s performance and educational history, the following results appear to be a valid representation of Janina’s abilities in the areas tested.

V. Sources of Information, Tests, and Procedures

The sources of information for this report are: the student, Janina, Washington-Mann Elementary School’s student records, parent feedback to referral inquiry, teacher reports, and classroom observations.

Standardized Assessments:

Woodcock-Johnson Test of Achievement (WJ-III, Form A)

Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI)

Rosner Test of Auditory Analysis

Test of Written Spelling (TWS-4)

VI. Test Results: The following measures were used to gather information regarding Janina’s reading and spelling abilities.

1. Woodcock-Johnson—III, Test of Achievement Form A: The WJ-III measures current performance in 22 individual subtests in the areas of reading, math and language/content. The following is a summary of Janina's current performance for her chronological age group as compared with the norming group of 1999 on 8 selected subtests.

WJA-III- #1—Letter-Word Identification:

This test is designed to measure the subject's skills in the area of graphophonics. The subject is shown a list of printed words in isolation and is asked to identify each word orally.

Janina obtained a standard score of 86 and a percentile rank of 18, which fall within the low average range as compared with the norming group (1999) on this subtest.

WJA-III- #13—Word Attack:

This test is designed to measure the subject's graphophonics skills by decoding nonsense words presented in isolation. These words incorporate letter patterns that should be familiar to most English-speaking subjects.

Janina obtained a standard score of 88 and a percentile rank of 21, which fall within the low average range as compared with the norming group (1999) on this subtest.

WJA-III- #9—Passage Comprehension:

This test is designed to measure the subject's reading comprehension. A sentence or groups of sentences are presented, with one word missing from the text. The subject must read the passage silently and provide the omitted word verbally. This cloze procedure assumes the subject can fully comprehend the meaning of the passage.

Janina obtained a standard score of 82 and a percentile rank of 12, which fall within the low average range as compared with the norming group (1999) on this subtest.

WJA-III #17—Reading Vocabulary:

This test measures the reading comprehension of words in three sections: Section A is designed to measure the subject's skill in providing antonyms; Section B is designed to measure the subject's skill in providing synonyms. Section C measures the subject's ability to complete analogies. In each section, the subject is presented with a prompt and is required to provide an oral response.

Janina obtained a standard score of 82 and a percentile rank of 12, which fall within the low average range as compared with the norming group (1999) on this subtest.

WRITTEN LANGUAGE

WJA-III #8—Writing Fluency:

This test is designed to measure the subject's skill in the areas of written expression and fluency. The subject is provided with a pencil and test protocol with items containing three words and a stimulus picture. The subject is required to formulate and write a sentence for as many items as possible within 7 minutes.

Janina obtained a standard score of 84 and a percentile rank of 14, which fall within the low average range as compared with the norming group (1999) on this subtest.

WJA-III #11—Writing Samples:

This test is designed to measure the subject's written language skills with a focus on composition. The subject is provided with a protocol and a pencil while tasks are presented via two modes: visual (pictures or written text) and auditory (directions are read aloud by the examiner). In this test the subject is required to formulate sentences incorporating the visual and auditory information provided. The subject is not penalized for errors in basic writing skills, such as spelling or punctuation.

Janina obtained a standard score of 93 and a percentile rank of 21, which fall within the average range as compared with the norming group (1999) on this subtest.

MATHEMATICS: COMPUTATION

WJA-III #5—Calculation:

This test is designed to measure the subject's computation skills. The subject is required to perform basic mathematical operations involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division as well as advanced level mathematical calculations involving decimals, fractions, geometry, logarithms, trigonometry, and calculus. The subject is provided with a pencil and protocol and is required to record responses in a traditional worksheet format.

Janina obtained a standard score of 93 and a percentile rank of 32, which fall within the average range as compared with the norming group (1999) on this subtest.

WJA-III #6—Math Fluency:

This test is designed to measure the subject's ability to solve simple addition, subtraction, and multiplication facts quickly. The subject is provided with a pencil and protocol and is required to record responses in a traditional worksheet format. This test has a 3 minute time limit.

Janina obtained a standard score of 75 and a percentile rank of 5, which fall within the borderline range as compared with the norming group (1999) on this subtest.

2. Qualitative Reading Inventory-5: The Qualitative Reading Inventory-5 is an informal reading inventory (IRI) and was developed to measure proficiency in word identification skills and reading comprehension. Additionally, the QRI is regarded as a reliable and valid measure of reading based on determining a student's independent, instructional, and frustration levels in the grade level word lists and reading passages. Other important areas of reading that are assessed by the QRI-5 include oral reading fluency, prior knowledge, retelling ability, and explicit and implicit comprehension.

Word Identification: In order to determine an adequate starting point for the QRI reading assessment, Janina was presented with a list of words identified as equivalent to those commonly used at the primer grade level. Janina read the list of 20 words automatically (within 1 second) and with 85% accuracy. Based on her performance, she was then presented with the first grade word list. Janina's ability to accurately and automatically identify words on this list, with 70% accuracy, was at the instructional level. Then, Janina was asked to read the second grade level sight word list and read the words automatically with 65% accuracy, which denotes that this list is at her frustration level.

When reading the words on each list, Janina was observed to read most of them confidently and by correctly applying her word attack skills. However, when she was presented with words that she considered difficult, she read them in a slow and labored manner. Based on the scoring criteria for this assessment, Janina demonstrated instructional level proficiency with first grade level items and frustration reading level for second grade words. Since Janina did not achieve independent level on any of the word lists administered, it is very likely that pre-primer words are at her independent level. Even though her reading of the word lists suggest Janina is competent at identifying initial sounds, her miscues suggest that she makes substitutions for medial sounds, especially those with long vowel patterns. She also made several errors in decoding several digraphs and blends.

Text Passage Reading: Based on Janina's performance reading words from the first grade level Word List, she was presented with the level one narrative reading passage, "Mouse in a House." A narrative passage was selected for this portion of the assessment because the passage is representative of the

type of text that is usually read by second graders. Specifically, this passage resembles the text that Janina would read in reader's workshop and guided reading groups.

Before reading the passage, Janina was asked three "concept questions" designed to assess her level of prior knowledge. Janina achieved a familiarity score at the frustration level, indicating that she possessed limited prior knowledge of the topic/ideas in the reading passage.

When presented with the passage, "Mouse in A House," Janina showed competency in decoding the majority of the words while utilizing context clues. In her reading of the story, Janina only made 14 miscues, which mostly comprised of word substitutions and mispronunciations. Although Janina decoded the words with ease, she struggled with reading the passage in a fluent manner. Throughout her reading, Janina maintained a consistent tone, did not pause in appropriate locations, and did not attend to punctuation cues. During this assessment, Janina's reading speed was also timed. The QRI guidelines suggest that Janina's reading rate of 72 WPM for the 250-word passage was equivalent to a 1st grade reading rate. Furthermore, in her retelling of the story, Janina had difficulty recalling both main ideas and supporting details. However, it is important to note that Janina incorporated other ideas into her retelling, such as "I think the last people weren't scared of the mouse" and "they liked the mouse," which are examples of inferences. In the reading comprehension section, Janina answered one explicit and two implicit questions correctly. Her ability to answer more of the implicit questions properly might indicate that Janina shows strengths in inferring.

3. Rosner Test of Auditory Awareness: The Rosner Test of Auditory Analysis measures proficiency in the area of phonemic awareness among school age children. As part of the assessment, children are required to segment syllables and delete phonemes. Scores on this assessment are compared to ranges of items on three age levels: kindergarten, first grade, and second grade.

Janina answered 9 of the 13 items on this assessment correctly. Therefore, her score falls at the end of the first grade score range, which is 4-9. Her performance on this assessment suggests that she is capable of isolating compound words, initial sounds, and final sounds. Nevertheless, it also indicates that Janina has difficulty with isolating sounds within blends.

4. Test of Written Spelling: Fourth Edition (TWS-4): The Test of Written Spelling is a formal, norm-referenced spelling assessment. It is administered by dictating the first word, reading it in a sentence, and repeating the word. This process is repeated for all test items until the child reaches a ceiling. Through the TWS-4, educators can identify students who require spelling interventions and monitor student progress in spelling throughout the year.

On the Test of Written Spelling, Janina managed to spell four of the ten test items correctly. Based on her performance, she obtained a standard score of 77, which is equivalent to the 6th percentile. Janina's responses show that she is more skilled at spelling words with short sounds. However, her misspellings indicate that she needs extensive practice and instruction in spelling final sounds, consonant blends, and digraphs.

VII. Conclusions

1. Relative Strengths: Janina's highest achievement scores were attained on the following measures: The Woodcock Johnson-III subtests in calculation (32%ile) and writing samples (32% ile). On the passage section of QRI-5, Janina obtained a reading accuracy percentage of 94% and read at a rate of 72 WPM. She also attained a score of 9/13 on the Rosner (1st grade level).

2. Areas of Need: Based on the assessments administered, it is evident that Janina struggles in the areas of reading and spelling. On the three sections of the WJ-III Reading Vocabulary subtest, Janina did not reach the required basal score of 4 consecutive correct responses. For this subtest, Janina scored at 12th percentile. In addition, on the Letter-Word Identification subtest, Janina achieved a score at the 18th percentile. On the QRI-5, Janina read second grade level words at a frustration level, which suggests her difficulty with phonics, decoding, and automatic word identification. She also received a score equivalent to the 6th percentile on the TWS-4.

3. Past Assessment Summary:

Developmental Reading Assessment:

First Grade: B (beginning of year), D (middle of year), D (end of year)

DIBELS- First Grade:

Nonsense Word Fluency: 10 (deficit- beginning of year), 15 (deficit- middle of year), 25 (deficit- end of year)

Oral Reading Fluency: 6 (at risk- middle of the year), 17 (at risk- end of the year)

VIII. Summary & Recommendations

According to the Massachusetts Department of Education guidelines (Technical Assistance Guide, 2001), a child's evaluation/multidisciplinary Team is required to determine eligibility at an initial and reevaluation meeting. Determining whether or not a child is eligible for special education services is a multiple step process requiring consensus among Team members. Several considerations guide the process, but the law is clear in stating that no single procedure may be used as the sole criterion for determining "whether a child is a child with a disability" (Federal Register, p. 12456). Moreover, the Team must determine: (1) if a child meets criteria for one of the disability categories recognized under the law, (2) is/is not making effective progress, and (3) requires specialized instruction.

Under Massachusetts guidelines, the following questions are required to be addressed by members of the Team while considering formal and informal assessment data.

1. Does the student have one or more than one disability?

- Autism
- Developmental Disability
- Intellectual Impairment
- Sensory-Hearing, Vision, Deaf-Blind
- Neurological Disability
- Emotional Disturbance
- Communication Disability
- Physical Disability
- Health Disability
- Specific Learning Disability

According to Massachusetts Department of Education's Technical Assistance Guide "a disabling condition is characterized by significant delays, impairments, or limitations in the student's capacity(ies)." To make this determination, a Team should consider all of the following as indices of limited, impaired, or delayed capacity: a pattern of difficulty that persists beyond age expectations; a pattern of difficulty across settings; a pattern of difficulty that is not solely the result of cultural, linguistic, or socioeconomic differences; and a pattern of difficulty that persists despite instructional support activities" (p. 18)

2. (a) Is the student making effective progress in school?

(b) Is the lack of progress a result of the student's disability?

(c) Does the student require specially designed instruction in order to make effective progress in school OR does the student require related services in order to access the general curriculum.

Student Summary:

Even though the members of the team will reach a consensus regarding the final determination of eligibility, it is essential for each member to provide their professional judgment regarding a student's performance on the evaluation. By analyzing Janina's previous schooling history, her performance on the assessments carried out during this evaluation, and observations of her in the classroom environment, it is evident that she exhibits consistent difficulty in completing reading, writing and spelling tasks.

In particular, the assessment results from this evaluation demonstrate that Janina is not making effective progress in the areas of reading, spelling, and writing. Janina struggles with decoding words at her grade level, reading in a fluent manner, reading comprehension, and integrating key ideas and supporting details into a retelling, and spelling words at her current grade level. If Janina continues to struggle in these areas, she will experience even more difficulty in the upper elementary grades, where students utilize reading as a method to learn and approach reading and writing tasks with greater independence.

Student Summary:

Through this investigation of Janina's academic abilities, it is clear that she lacks several foundational literacy skills contribute to her development as a reader and writer. To begin with, Janina requires strengthening in her phonological awareness skills. On the Rosner Test, Janina was able to split compound words and isolate beginning and final sounds. However, her inability to isolate sounds within blends explains her difficulties in spelling words with these blends. Moreover, Janina's issues in phonological awareness and phonics are directly related to the problems she displays in decoding skills. Her difficulty in recognizing how digraphs, blends, and long vowel patterns sound result in her reading words with these patterns incorrectly. To add, Janina's limited fluency impairs her reading comprehension skills. Ultimately, the cognitive load that she devotes to decoding words correctly and rapidly prevents her from accessing the main ideas and supporting details in the text.

In order to prevent Janina from developing a negative attitude towards reading, she requires explicit instruction, scaffolding during reading tasks, and access to books that reflect her reading interests. Moreover, Janina needs to have more opportunities to read books at her instructional and independent level in school and at home so that she practices the reading strategies that she has learned. Lastly, hearing read alouds, practicing her parts for reader's theatre orally, and listening to books on tape or CD frequently would improve her fluency.

Recommendations:

Based on Janina's performance on evaluation measures and daily observations in class the following recommendations are offered:

1. Explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and decoding strategies during guided reading sessions.
2. Explicit instruction in reading comprehension strategies such as summarizing, inferring, questioning, making connections, and determining importance.
3. Direct instruction in utilizing a story grammar marker to increase the depth of Janina's story retellings. Janina should also receive instruction in using a story grammar in her writing.
4. Increased opportunities to listen to books on tape/CD, engage in partner reading, and partake in reader's theatre skits.

It was a pleasure to work with Janina. If there are any questions regarding this assessment please feel free to contact me at mvala21@bu.edu.

Maria Valarezo,

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