
CONFIDENTIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Name:	Alejandro N.	School:	Intermediate School
DOB:	xx/xx/2003	Grade:	6 th
Age:	11 years, 7 months	Examiner:	Kaitlyn Zofcin, M.A. (Intern)
Sex:	Male	Date of Evaluation:	4/30, 5/11, 5/12/15

Reason for Referral

Alejandro has been referred to the Child Study Team for an evaluation by the Intervention and Referral Services committee (I&RS) due to academic concerns. An **Initial Evaluation** is being conducted as required by N.J.A.C. 6A:14 to determine if Alejandro is eligible for special education and related services.

Assessment & Evaluation Procedures

Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Fourth Edition (WISC-IV) – Standard Battery
Bender Visual-Motor Gestalt Test, Second Edition (Bender-Gestalt)
Multidimensional Sentence Completion Test
Student interview
Observation
Record review

Background Information

Alejandro is an eleven-year, seven-month old student at Intermediate School in the Regional School District. He was referred for psychological testing by the Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) committee due to academic concerns. Alejandro received English Language Learners (ELL) services in first, second and fourth grade. He received Response to Intervention (RTI) Tier 2 support in language arts/literacy while in the third grade. Alejandro also received Tier 2 support in math while in the fourth grade. He received RTI Tier 3 support in language arts/literacy for the fourth, fifth and sixth grades.

An initial planning meeting was held on April 9, 2015. At the meeting Mr. N. mentioned that Alejandro was born with an inflamed kidney and that a doctor followed him for six years; his kidney is no longer a presenting concern. Mr. N. indicated that Alejandro met all developmental milestones. Alejandro has glasses that he should be wearing, however, he does not wear them on a consistent basis. He stated that Alejandro enjoys math and dislikes writing because it makes his hands hurt. Mr. N. indicated that writing has always been challenging for Alejandro and that he never enjoyed drawing or coloring. Mr. N. reported that Alejandro reports that he completes his homework even when it is not completed, so he can engage in activities he enjoys doing, such as playing video games or playing outside with friends.

Alejandro's teachers completed I&RS paperwork in order to report on his current levels of functioning and interventions that have been tried. In all of Alejandro's classes his teacher's indicated that his homework and classwork are rarely complete or turned in. His teachers noted that Alejandro struggles to complete material for class independently and he does not ask for help when needed. Interventions that have been tried have been redirection or restating of directions, extra time to complete assignments, preferential seating, having a classroom buddy, and study guides. Alejandro has also been provided encouragement and praise for work that is completed.

School records indicate that prior to attending Intermediate School, Alejandro attended Kindergarten through fourth grade at Primary School, which is also a part of the Regional School District. Alejandro's term three report card for the sixth grade indicated that he received an: A+ in computers; A in physical education, music, art, and health; a C- in science; and a U in social studies, math, and language arts/literacy. On the most recent state-wide testing (NJASK), which was conducted in the 5th grade, Alejandro scored in the Partially Proficient range in English/Language Arts (score of 175), and the Proficient range in Math (score of 203).

Student Interview

Alejandro reported living at home with his father, mother, eighteen-year-old sister, and two cousins. Alejandro described that his typical mood tends to vary day to day. He mentioned that he typically reacts to things immediately, which can affect his mood. Alejandro indicated that he wears glasses to see at a distance; however, it should be noted that he did not wear glasses to the testing sessions. Alejandro reported that he also speaks Spanish at home, and although Spanish was his first language he feels that his stronger language is English. When asked what he does for fun outside of school, Alejandro stated that he enjoys playing video games and playing with his friends outside when the weather is nice. Alejandro mentioned that his favorite subject in school is math because he enjoys working with numbers. His least favorite subject in school is language arts/literacy because he finds the class confusing and knows what he wants to say but most of the time does not know how to write it.

Observations

Classroom: Alejandro was observed in his language arts/literacy (LAL) class on May 12, 2015. During the LAL block, the class was working in their book clubs. Alejandro's group was reading *Freak the Mighty*. Throughout the class the students were reading parts of the book aloud to each other and reflecting on what they read. Alejandro's peers had their books out on their desks along with their reflection notebooks; However, Alejandro did not have a reflection notebook out on his desk. He remained quiet but attentive for the first half of the period. The teacher paused the class and took a poll asking whether they were using facts or stating opinions when talking in their groups. Alejandro did not raise his hand to participate in the poll and continued to remain quiet. Once the student's got back to work, they continued to take turns reading and going

back to write in their reflection notebooks; Alejandro did not write during the period. When it was his turn to read, Alejandro read for the group. His teacher prompted him to reflect on what emotions the author was trying to convey in the passage he read to which he complied and sparked conversation in the group. Alejandro was attentive when his other group members were reading, which was evidenced by him following along in the text. Throughout the period Alejandro remained quiet and appeared to be attentive to the task at hand.

Overall Presentation: Alejandro completed the administered battery during three testing sessions, each session was approximately forty minutes. Although Alejandro was cooperative and polite, he presented as quiet; he did not spontaneously initiate conversation with this examiner in between tasks and was brief in his responses to conversational questions posed.

Attention: Alejandro was able to sit without fidgeting and did not demonstrate any difficulty sustaining his attention toward the tasks at hand.

Attitude towards testing: Alejandro exhibited appropriate effort, maintained good eye contact, focus and attention throughout testing. He was engaged in each task, made an attempt to answer every question, and appeared motivated to put forth his best effort and do well. Additionally, when his verbal responses required elaboration in order to be awarded credit, he attempted to provide additional information.

Assessment Results

Cognitive Functioning:

Ability levels were assessed using the WISC-IV as a basis for intellectual evaluation along with the administration of additional assessments to evaluate specific areas in greater depth. The WISC-IV is one of the most widely used scales of individual intellectual development for children and adolescents. It not only measures general intelligence but, through subtest interpretation and the development of area composite scores, generates a diagnostic profile of a student's learning style.

Psychological testing resulted in the following WISC-IV cognitive ability scores (Table 1). Interpretations from psychological testing suggest that Alejandro's nonverbal reasoning abilities are above the range of age level expectations. His verbal reasoning abilities, ability to hold information in mind and manipulate it to produce a result (Working Memory), and rate of work production (Processing Speed) are within the range of age level expectations.

Review of the WISC-IV composite scales shows Alejandro's Full Scale IQ score of 103 to be at the 58th percentile, placing him within the Average range of intellectual ability. As there is a small statistical margin of error on all standardized tests, there is a 95% chance that his actual score falls between 98 and 108. Alejandro did evidence variability between his index scores, therefore his Full Scale IQ should be interpreted with caution.

Alejandro’s Perceptual Reasoning and Processing Speed scores are revealed to be relative strengths when compared to his other index scores. His performance suggests that his non-verbal reasoning abilities as well as his rate of work production are stronger than his verbal reasoning abilities and his ability to hold information in mind, manipulate it and produce a result. Because of the significant discrepancies among some of Alejandro’s index scores, his Full Scale IQ score is not considered to be a valid measure of his global cognitive functioning, and should therefore be interpreted with caution. His performance on the individual WISC-IV indices will be of greater diagnostic significance. It is also important to note that there is significant inter-subtest scatter on certain indices.

Table 1.

WISC-IV Composite Scale	Index Score	Confidence Interval (95%)	Percentile	Range Descriptor
Verbal Comprehension (VCI)	95	89-102	37 th	Average
Perceptual Reasoning (PRI)	112	103-119	79 th	High Average
Working Memory (WMI)	94	87-102	34 th	Average
Processing Speed (PSI)	109	99-117	73 rd	Average
Full Scale IQ (FSIQ)	103	98-108	58 th	Average

(Scores between 90 and 110 are considered average)

Verbal Comprehension

Verbal comprehension is the ability to understand and manipulate verbal concepts on both a concrete and abstract level. On those WISC-IV subtests measuring this ability (Table 2)—Similarities, Vocabulary, and Comprehension—Alejandro's composite score of 95, (37th percentile), is within the range of age expectations. When asked to orally define vocabulary words, to apply practical judgment in social situations, and to apply knowledge learned from his environment, Alejandro’s abilities are comparable to those of his same-aged peers.

Table 2.

WISC-IV Verbal Comprehension Subtest Scores	Scaled Score	Descriptor
Similarities – Verbal concept formation: Abstract and logical reasoning with objects and ideas placed in meaningful categories.	11	Average
Vocabulary – Tests ability to describe the meaning of words. Related to educational environment and language development.	8	Average
Comprehension – Requires understanding of what is involved in social situations and the ability to provide answers to social problems. “Common-sense.”	8	Average

(Standard scores between 8 and 12 are considered average)

Visual-Spatial

Perceptual reasoning involves visual integration/organizational skills, including the ability to recognize or conceptualize shapes and to construct abstract designs. Assessments administered in this area are also designed to measure abstract, categorical reasoning ability. On the WISC-IV subtests pertinent to this area (Table 3)—Block Design, Picture Concepts, Matrix Reasoning—Alejandro's composite score is 112, (79th percentile), which is above the range of age expectations, suggests that his ability to recognize shapes, construct abstract designs, observe details and recognize specific features of the environment are an area of strength.

On the Block Design subtest, as tasks grew harder (i.e. working with 9 blocks instead of 4), Alejandro worked at a slower rate and doubled checked his work multiple times. Although his pace slowed when tasks became more difficult, his reproductions of the abstract designs were accurate.

Table 3.

WISC-IV Perceptual Reasoning Subtest Scores	Scaled Score	Descriptor
Block Design – Tests visual perceptual organization and visual-spatial skills ability by reproducing a design with blocks. Timed test.	13	Above Average
Picture Concepts – Categorical reasoning, student chooses a picture from each row of pictures to form a group with a common characteristic.	13	Above Average
Matrix Reasoning – A measure of visual information processing and abstract reasoning skills.	10	Average

(Standard scores between 8 and 12 are considered average)

The Bender-Gestalt, II measures fine motor development, perceptual discrimination ability, the ability to integrate perceptual and motor processes, and the ability to shift attention between the original design and the design that is being drawn (Table 4). Alejandro was asked to copy designs onto a blank sheet of paper. Each of the designs increased in difficulty as he progressed. Alejandro was observed to have an odd pencil grip, which could be causing the pain in his hands when he has to write. Alejandro’s approach to copying the designs was somewhat organized; however, he did not fully plan out his approach, did not utilize the entire paper, and some of the designs were close together. Alejandro was also asked to immediately recall as many figures as he could onto another blank sheet of paper, to which he accurately recalled ten out of the twelve designs. On both the Copy and Recall trials Alejandro performed well above the range of age expectations. Alejandro’s performance suggests that his perceptual and motor processes are an area of strength.

Table 4.

Bender-Gestalt Test	Standard Score	Percentile	T-Score	Descriptor
Copy Trial – Shown stimulus cards with designs and asked to copy each design on a blank sheet of paper.	112	79 th	58	High Average
Recall Trial – Redraw the designs from memory.	133	99 th	72	Very High

Memory

Working memory skills were assessed through the administration of several tasks designed to measure recall of orally presented material. Working memory is the ability to hold information in mind for the purpose of completing a task and it is essential to carry out multi-step activities and follow complex instructions. On the WISC-IV subtests assessing auditory memory (Table 5)—Letter-Number Sequencing and Digit Span—Alejandro’s composite score of 94 (34th percentile), is within the range of age level expectations, suggesting that Alejandro’s ability to hold and manipulate orally presented information in his short-term working memory is comparable to same aged peers.

There is a 6-point range among Alejandro’s performances on subtests contributing to his Working Memory Index score. This composite then should be interpreted with caution, as it is not representative of his overall ability to hold orally presented information in his short-term memory. Alejandro’s performance on the Letter-Number Sequencing task, where he is provided with a structure for organizing information to be recalled (i.e. alphabetical order or numerical order), was significantly stronger than on tasks where he had to rely on rote memory alone. Alejandro had considerable difficulty with the digits forward trial of the Digit Span task, which asked him to repeat strings of orally presented numbers, first in the same order as this examiner and then in reverse order as this examiner.

**All identifying information has been changed for confidentiality*

Table 5.

WISC-IV Working Memory Subtest Scores	Scaled Score	Descriptor
Digit Span – Short-term auditory memory, Sequencing ability and concentration.	6	Below Average
Digit Span Forward:	5	Below Average
Digit Span Backward:	8	Average
Letter-Number Sequencing – Involves sequencing letters & numbers demonstrating short-term auditory memory, mental manipulation and attention skills	12	Average

(Standard scores between 8 and 12 are considered average)

Processing Speed/Mental Flexibility

Processing Speed involves one’s rate of mental and graphomotor processing. The two WISC-IV subtests that fall within this category (Table 6)--Coding and Symbol Search -- measure the ability to quickly complete tasks involving visual scanning and short-term visual memory. Alejandro’s composite score of 109 (73rd percentile), falls within the range of age expectations, suggesting that his rate of work production comparable to same aged peers.

Table 6.

WISC-IV Processing Speed Subtest Scores	Scaled Score	Descriptor
Coding – Visual-motor co-ordination speed. Requires short-term visual memory. Related to skills necessary for reading and writing.	11	Average
Symbol Search – Measures visual scanning speed and symbol discrimination.	12	Average

(Standard scores between 8 and 12 are considered average)

Social-Emotional Functioning

Alejandro was also asked to provide endings to a variety of incomplete sentences about himself, his family, school, and his friends. Alejandro conveyed positive feelings towards his family in statements such as “My family...is nice whenever I do good on a test,” and “I feel loved... at my house around my parents.” He expressed having positive relationships with his peers statements stating, “My friends... and I play games outside,” “Boys tell me...I am funny when I am telling jokes,” and “Other kids think... I am fun to play with.” Alejandro portrayed a positive outlook regarding school in statements that read, “At school... I am a hardworking student,” “I know a lot about... math because it is my favorite subject,” and “School is ... hard but I try my best.” Alejandro described being a determined and persistent individual in sentences stating, “I feel disappointed... when everything goes wrong,” “When things are difficult, I... always ask questions about it,” and “I know that I can... pass school so I won’t get grounded.”

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The themes expressed in Alejandro’s sentence completion items suggest that he experiences having positive relationships with his parents, family, and his peers. His sentences suggest that he is a confident and hard working student in school. Alejandro expressed having positive feelings towards school as well as working hard in his classes so he will pass. His sentences indicate that he is a persistent and determined young boy, who actively tries to seek out information he does not know.

Summary

Alejandro is a sixth grade student at Intermediate School in the Regional School District. He was referred for psychological testing by the Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) committee due to academic concerns. Alejandro received English Language Learners (ELL) services in first, second and fourth grade. He received Response to Intervention (RTI) Tier 2 support in language arts/literacy while in the third grade. Alejandro also received Tier 2 support in math while in the fourth grade. Alejandro received RTI Tier 3 support in language arts/literacy for the fourth, fifth and sixth grades.

Alejandro’s learning profile on the WISC-IV suggests that his nonverbal reasoning abilities are above the range of age level expectations. His verbal reasoning abilities, ability to hold information in mind and manipulate it to produce a result (Working Memory), and rate of work production (Processing Speed) are within the range of age level expectations. Review of the WISC-IV composite scales shows Alejandro's Full Scale IQ score of 103 to be at the 58th percentile, placing him within the Average range of intellectual ability. Alejandro’s Perceptual Reasoning and Processing Speed scores are revealed to be relative strengths when compared to his other index scores. Because of the significant discrepancies among some of Alejandro’s index scores, his Full Scale IQ score is not considered to be a valid measure of his global cognitive functioning, and should therefore be interpreted with caution.

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Further recommendations with regards to educational placement, supports and accommodations will be discussed and reviewed during the parent/child study team meeting in which information from this report can be collaboratively examined and supplemented by a thorough multi-modal team decision.

Kaitlyn Zofcin, M.A.
School Psychology Intern

Date