

LEARNING NEEDS SCREENING TOOL

Question Descriptions and Follow-up Explanations

The following are descriptions, background, rationale, and follow-up explanations of the thirteen questions contained on the Learning Needs Screening Tool.

Section A

1. Have you had any problems learning in middle school or junior high?

- ◆ These are typically grades six-eight, sometime through grade nine.
- ◆ Learning problems are sometimes more frequent due to the multiple classrooms, teachers, and activities.
- ◆ Learning problems could include being held back, special reading or math groups, tutoring during or after school, behavior, or just couldn't learn, etc.

2. Do any family members have learning problems?

- ◆ Family is defined as immediate – parents, siblings, grandparents.
- ◆ Learning Disabilities have a genetic frequency in families.
- ◆ Learning problems could include all cited in question 1 as well as not finishing school, difficulties reading, writing, etc.

3. Do you have difficulty working with numbers in a column?

- ◆ This pertains to simple one, two or three digit numbers and mostly has to do with visual skills, visual-spatial orientation and alignment.

◆ Example:

42	678	9	234
12	<u>+346</u>	<u>-3</u>	<u>-78</u>
<u>+39</u>			

4. Do you have trouble judging distances?

- ◆ Examples to use for “judging distance” are the number of car lengths between two parked cars, what two or three blocks represents, the length of a hallway, or the distance between two people.
- ◆ Spatial orientation and visual skills.

5. Do you have problems working from a test booklet to an answer sheet?

- ◆ Most tests in schools have a test booklet that cannot be written in and a “bubble” answer sheet set up in columns/rows.
- ◆ Ask if the person remembers taking an achievement test in grade school or high school. Then follow-up with questions about “bubbling” in or putting answers in the right columns/rows.
- ◆ Visual discrimination and visual-spatial skills; writing, visual-motor, and tracking.

Section B

6. Did you have any problems learning in elementary school?

- ◆ Elementary school is usually grades kindergarten through fifth or sixth.
- ◆ Typically those who experienced problems learning were in special reading groups, disliked school, were in “pull-out” programs, were in trouble a lot, wanted to learn but were frustrated, etc.
- ◆ Established history of problems.

7. Do you have difficulty or experience problems mixing mathematical signs (+/x)?

- ◆ The best way to describe this question is to write a plus sign on a piece of paper, hold it up to the client, and turn it so it becomes a multiplication sign and ask: “Do math signs ever do this?”
- ◆ Visual-spatial and visual discrimination skills.

Section C

8. Do you have difficulty remembering how to spell simple words you know?

- ◆ Examples of simple words are was, where, their, there, table, teach, apple, etc.
- ◆ These are words that the individual should be familiar with but has difficulty spelling or complains look wrong or different even when spelled correctly.
- ◆ Individuals with this difficulty may have trouble with writing, visual-motor skills, recall, word retrieval, or visual discrimination skills.

9. Do you have difficulty filling out forms?

- ◆ Forms are defined as anything requiring information be written into designated spots on a pre-printed paper.
- ◆ Follow-up with a question regarding the individual’s ability to read and interpret the form.
- ◆ This could be the result of writing, visual-motor, visual discrimination, reading and interpretation, sequencing, organization, attention and concentration, visual tracking, etc.

10. Did you (do you) experience difficulty memorizing numbers?

- ◆ Numbers are abstract concepts and require sequencing, organization and connecting parts to wholes/wholes to parts.
- ◆ Most individuals with learning difficulties had significant trouble with multiplication tables and could not conquer fractions.
- ◆ Follow-up with a question about memorizing times tables or steps to subtract or divide.
- ◆ Second follow-up could be recall of phone numbers. Could also relate to dates/times (history dates or appointment times).

Section D

11. Do you have trouble adding and subtracting small numbers in your head?

- ◆ Small numbers is defined as numbers less than 20.
- ◆ Possible difficulty involving sequential concepts, visualization, abstract concepts, recall, and part to whole skills, etc.

12. Do you have difficulty or experience problems taking notes?

- ◆ Notes are defined as written/picture-based information briefly summarized from information presented in a meeting, lecture, training, etc.
- ◆ Note taking requires very sophisticated skills including auditory processing, synthesizing, sequencing and organizing, sorting, prioritizing, writing, visual-motor, and visual discrimination. Simultaneously processing.

13. Were you ever in a special program or given extra help in school?

- ◆ Special programs includes resource room, special education, speech and language services, communication programs, before-in-after school tutoring, chapter programs, title I programs, and LAP (learning assistance programs).
- ◆ Could also include a teacher assistant, and Individual Education Plan (IEP), Transition Plan and/or a 504 plan for academic improvement, behavior modification or accommodations for medical/disability reasons.