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PLS™-5 Screening Test *for* Early Childhood Educators



Azadeh, age 3 years, six months

The preschool teacher for the 3-year-olds at New Discoveries Preschool is an early childhood educator. At the beginning of every school year, she conducts a language screening for her entire class. Because the teacher has training in administering and scoring standardized assessments, she uses the PLS-5 Screening Test for Early Childhood Educators to screen speech and language skills and identify students who may need to be referred for additional testing.

One of students in the class is Azadeh, a gregarious, boisterous 3 ½-year-old who likes to play outdoors with two friends in her preschool. Azadeh's parents are bilingual (Farsi/English) and are professionals who have lived in the U.S. for five years. Her parents have spoken both Farsi and English to her since she was born, and she is able to have a conversation in either language. In conversations in class and with her friends, the teacher has heard Azadeh stutter at times, repeating single words or whole phrases.

Azadeh's Performance on the PLS™ -5 Screening Test for Early Childhood Educators

Language Section

Azadeh was able to do the following tasks:

Language Task 1— Recognizes action in pictures.

Azadeh correctly identified the first four pictures (1a–1d). Because the criterion to earn a score of 1 is four correct answers, the teacher did not have to administer items 1e or 1f (washing and running).

Language Task 2—Understands words like no and not in sentences. Azadeh pointed to the correct pictures for items 2a and 2b. Because she met the criterion for a score of 1, the teacher skipped item 2c.

Language Task 3—Names a variety of pictured objects. Azadeh pointed to each picture and named them correctly. Because Azadeh named pictures so rapidly, the teacher did not stop her after the first five correct answers (which was all that was needed to earn a score of 1). She let Azadeh finish the task, naming the rest of the pictures on the page.

Language Task 4—Uses plurals. Although the criterion of scoring 1 for this item was two correct answers, the teacher did not stop Azadeh from naming the last item (cats). Azadeh pointed to all the pictures and used plurals correctly for each item.

Language Task 5—Can say a four- or five-word sentence. Throughout testing, Azadeh commented on pictures and chatted with the teacher using complete sentences at least four to five words in length.

The pass criterion for the language section of the screening is “Score of 4 or more items correct.” Azadeh earned a score of 5, so she passed the language section of the screening.

Articulation Section

In the articulation section of the screening, Azadeh made no errors on the sounds that were tested. Because the pass criterion was five or more sounds correct, Azadeh passed the articulation section of the screening.

Connected Speech Section

Because the teacher marked “You understand most of what the child says,” Azadeh passed the connected speech section of the screening.

Social/Interpersonal Section

The teacher checked all six socially appropriate communication behaviors in the social/interpersonal section, such as “Greet you when you say ‘hi’”, “Responds to your questions,” and “Speaks to other children”. With a pass criterion of four or more statements checked, Azadeh (with six statements checked) passed the social/interpersonal section of the screening.

Stuttering Section

The teacher selected the description “Occasionally repeats part of a word” and “Occasionally repeats whole words” on the checklist. The pass criterion for this section of the screening is “No atypical characteristics noted”, so the teacher marked ‘Refer for Additional Testing’ in the screening summary box.

Voice Section

The teacher selected the description “Voice sounds like other children of the same age and sex.” Because no atypical characteristics (such as “Voice sounds hoarse, rough, or breathy” or “Coughs or clears throat often”) were selected, Azadeh met the pass criteria of “No atypical characteristics noted” in the voice section of the screening.

Azadeh's Performance on the PLS™ -5 Screening Test for Early Childhood Educators

Screening Summary

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Check only one box for each section. If the child does not meet the pass criteria, check "Refer for Additional Testing."

Section	Pass	Refer for Additional Testing
Language	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Articulation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connected Speech	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social/Interpersonal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stuttering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Voice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Screening Summary for Azadeh, age 3 years, 6 months

In the notes section, the teacher commented that Azadeh is very comfortable switching from Farsi to English and back again when speaking with her parents when they bring her to class. She makes a few age-appropriate grammatical errors in English when she speaks and occasionally stutters when she talks—repeating parts of words in some instances, and whole words in other instances. She doesn't appear aware when she stutters, and it does not appear to slow her down when talking with peers or answering questions during story time. The teacher will discuss Azadeh's results with the speech-language pathologist, who will determine if further examination of her stuttering behavior is warranted.

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