

Tests for Adult Literacy Students

What was the goal of the study?

The researchers wanted to know whether literacy tests designed for adolescents and children are appropriate for adult learners.

Why was the study conducted?

The study was conducted to determine which literacy tests designed for adolescents and children are applicable to adult learners.

What did the study find?

Out of the 29 tests included in this study, 5 (17%) were determined to have a high level of appropriateness; 13 (45%) were determined to have a medium level of appropriateness; and 11 (38%) were determined to have a low level of appropriateness. See Table 1 for more detail.

Table 1

Appropriateness of Test Administration for Adult Literacy Students

Test	Skill Measured	Level of Appropriateness
CASL Ambiguous Sentences	Oral language	Low
CASL Grammatical Morphemes	Metalinguistic awareness	Medium
CASL Inference	Oral language	Medium
CASL Meaning from Context	Oral language	Medium
CASL Nonliteral Language	Oral language	Medium
CELF Recalling Sentences	Memory	High
CELF Understanding Spoken Paragraphs	Oral language	Low
CELF Word Definitions	Oral language	Medium
CELF Word Classes	Oral language	Medium
CTOPP Blending	Metalinguistic awareness	Low
CTOPP Elision	Metalinguistic awareness	Medium
CTOPP Phoneme Isolation	Metalinguistic awareness	High
Test of Irregular Word Reading Efficiency	Word reading	Medium
Test of Silent Word Reading	Word reading	High
Test of Contextual Word Reading	Word reading	Low
WJ Academic Knowledge A: Science	Background knowledge	Low
WJ Academic Knowledge B: Social Studies	Background knowledge	Medium
WJ Academic Knowledge C: Humanities	Background knowledge	Low
WJ Auditory Working Memory	Memory	High
WJ General Information A: Where	Background knowledge	Low
WJ General Information B: What	Background knowledge	Medium
WJ Letter-Word Identification	Word reading	Medium
WJ Memory for Words	Memory	Low
WJ Numbers Reversed	Memory	Low
WJ Passage Comprehension	Reading comprehension	Low
WJ Picture Vocabulary	Oral language	Low
WJ Story Recall	Oral language	High
WJ Understanding Directions	Oral language	Medium
WJ Word Attack	Word reading	Medium

Note. CASL = Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language. CELF = Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals IV. CTOPP = Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing. WJ = Woodcock-Johnson III Normative Update.

Who participated in the study?

The participants in this study were adults enrolled in literacy classes targetting adults who read at the 3rd-8th grade levels of reading.

How was the study conducted?

The researchers conducted a statistical analysis informed by item response theory, which is used to evaluate items in tests. Based on the results, the researchers determined whether each test had a high, medium, or low level of appropriateness for adult literacy students.

How can people use the results?

The results of this study demonstrate which reading-related tests designed for adolescents and children may or may not be appropriate for adult learners.