



Recommended Assessment

It is very important to rule out the presence of an attentional disorder before testing more complex cognitive abilities. Problems with attention and concentration can result in impaired performance on these tests resulting in “false positive” findings. We would recommend having the Vanderbilt ADHD Diagnostic Parent Rating Scale or the Adult ADHD Self Report Scale filled out as an initial screening. These rating scales are located on the Reference Materials page. If the results support concerns about an attention problem, then objective testing should be performed to confirm the existence of an attention disorder. The two tests that have the best diagnostic accuracy, in our experience, is either the Test of Variables of Attention (TOVA) or the Intermediate Visual and Auditory Continuous Performance Test (IVA). Both tests can be used for medication challenge testing to objectively adjust medication to the proper dosage, rather than relying on behavioral observations alone, which can lead to errors. You can contact the test distributors to find a professional in your area that uses one of these tests at:

The TOVA Company
800-729-2886
www.tovatest.com

Brain Train (IVA)
800-822-0538
www.braintrain.com

It is also recommended that a cognitive assessment be performed in order to develop an appropriate treatment plan before utilizing the Brain Power program. The minimum basic evaluation for a learning disability should cover the following areas of cognitive functioning:

1. Auditory (phonemic) processing
2. Visual processing
3. Language processing
4. Nonverbal reasoning

While there are many tests which could serve this purpose, selected subtests from the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities-III and the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Academic Achievement-III probably represents the most affordable and accessible assessment as these tests are commonly administered by psychologists, educational professionals (schools and private tutors), and speech pathologists. This test produces a computer printout of the results, so a written report is unnecessary. While the entire Woodcock-Johnson could be administered, the following subtests have proven adequate in identifying areas of deficiency for purpose of developing a treatment plan:

1. Auditory (phonemic) processing
 - Sound Blending
 - Incomplete Words
2. Visual processing
 - Spatial Relations
 - Visual Matching
 - Pair Cancellation
3. Language processing
 - Oral Comprehension
 - Understanding Directions
4. Nonverbal reasoning
 - Concept Formation
 - Analysis-Synthesis

This battery of tests should take no more than two hours to administer and score. Depending on the hourly rate of the person administering the test, this assessment should be very affordable.

For more complicated developmental disorders and brain injuries, we would recommend a more comprehensive assessment which would include fine and gross motor coordination, visual-motor integration, visual processing, auditory processing, expressive language, receptive language, executive functions, and visual and verbal memory. A neuropsychologist would be able to perform an evaluation covering these areas or this information can be compiled from evaluations performed by a clinical psychologist, school psychologist, resource teacher, speech pathologist and/or an occupational therapist.