I. ORDER OUT OF CHAOS.

You have just finished giving a huge battery of diagnostic tests. How do you begin to put some order into it all? It may seem overwhelming and confusing. But you can save your sanity by being systematic and working a step at a time.

Organize Your Data: Using the STIF

Assuming that the tests are correctly and completely scored, the first step in writing a diagnostic report is to organize your data including test scores, observations, case history and interview data, and other information meticulously by area. That is, for each heading in the report you must gather all the relevant information you possess. Use the Summary and Test Interpretation Form (STIF) for this purpose.

NOTE: Every minute you invest in thoroughly organizing your data before you write will pay off in the long run. The STIF is not another dumb form to fill out. It is a thinking guide. It is what will help you systematically sort through the massive and confusing array of tests, and make some sense of them. It is what will help you conceptualize the client’s problem. It is only a very experienced clinician who can go straight from the test data to a diagnosis. So don’t think you can skip over this step or that you don’t have time. Correct use of this form will save you time when you actually write the report. In a very real sense using this form correctly is the most important thing you can do to ensure that you write a good report.

Here's How

Organizing Background Information. Page 1 of the STIF will help you write the sections of the report that discuss background information, health and illness, behavior during testing, and social/emotional status and the vision and hearing screenings. Go through the case history and any other forms you have. Use the STIF to summarize data as you read through the child’s records and to list every important point that you want to remember to include on the report. Sometimes sorting through the tests may jog your memory about specific behaviors or observations that you remember from testing. Jot them down in the appropriate section of page 1. Additional things may occur to you at odd times. Keep the STIF close at hand and jot things down as they occur to you.

Organizing the Tests. For the sections of the report that discuss testing, use the STIF to identify the tests you gave that are relevant, to record the scores of those tests, to interpret those scores, to add relevant observations, and to make notes to yourself about how results from one test or section relate to other tests. Do this for each section of the STIF. Let’s take these in order.

a. Identify Relevant Tests. For each small section of the STIF identify all the tests that are relevant. Check off all the tests or subtests that you gave. Then sort meticulously through all the test protocols and see if you gave any other tests that are not listed on the STIF, but that do relate to the area that you are working on. List these under “Other” For example: under Expressive Vocabulary you may have given the WJ-R Picture Vocabulary test, so you check it on the STIF. But as you sort through your protocols you see that you also gave the TOLD-I which has a subtest (Generals) that also measures oral vocabulary. You must add this to the list.
b. **Record the Scores.** Record the percentile (and/or other relevant scores). Some tests only give you a grade score. If you are testing a person who is older than the norms for a given test, be sure to note this in the interpretation section. For example: if you are testing a 12 yr old on the MVPT write

\[ \text{MVPT} \quad 37 \text{%ile} \quad \text{norms are for 10 yr. olds.} \]

\[ \text{PPVT} \quad 40 \text{%ile} \quad \text{average range but not adequate for demands of college} \]

\[ \text{Wepman} \quad 2 \text{errors} \quad \text{norms are for 8 yr olds, any errors are significant} \]

c. **Interpret the Scores.** How did the child do? What does the score mean? In what range does the score fall? 1 - 15 %ile = below average; 16 - 24 %ile = low average; 25 - 75 %ile = average range; 76 - 85 %ile = high average; 86 - 99 %ile = above average. Include any specific thoughts about test interpretations. For example: for a college student you might write

\[ \text{TOLD-I} \quad 5 \text{%ile} \quad \text{Below average - heavy memory load} \]

\[ \text{Key Math} \quad 15\text{%ile} \quad \text{Does not know facts; uses fingers; errors involve problems with 0} \]

d. **Make Relevant Observations.** Add notes about any observations or reports that have a bearing on test scores. You might want to note things that had an impact on the test score, child’s attention on the test, whether they understood the instructions, spontaneous strategies, response to difficult items, etc. If a score is really not reliable (for example because the child is not feeling well) note this. Also you will want to make note of relevant errors or error patterns. For example:

\[ \text{WRMT} \quad >1 \text{%ile} \quad \text{Significantly below average - affected by poor oral vocabulary and poor decoding; will interfere with comprehension in context} \]

When completed accurately and thoroughly you will have a highly condensed summary of all diagnostic information and you will be in a very good position to write the report.
II. WRITING THE REPORT

Getting Started

The Diagnostic Report Form (DRF) is available in both printed and computer versions. If you have any facility at all using a computer, you will make the most efficient use of your time by far if you compose the report at the computer. It is entirely feasible to do so if you have done a good job of getting organized with the STIF. The computer version was designed to help you write the report as efficiently as possible.

The DRF provides much of the structure of the report. You don't have to worry about organization, headings, and so on. It also takes the drudgery out of the parts of the report that actually report test scores. These are the features of diagnostic reports that rarely change from one to the next. Reporting the score of the PPVT in one report is pretty much the same as reporting it in another. You can see that this is an enormous time saver. You don't have to organize the report from scratch. Nor do you have to worry about how to word much of it.

However, and this is a big however, there are two large dangers in providing you with the DRF. The first is that you will think that all you have to do is fill in the blanks and hand in the report. This is not the case. There is much left for you to do. Although the DRF provides the structure you still have to provide the content. A good diagnostic report goes far beyond just reporting test scores. You must interpret and integrate those scores with other test scores and with observational data. A good report writer is an artist drawing a verbal portrait of the child. The DRF provides you with something like a tracing of only the very most basic outline of the portrait, a silhouette that could be virtually anyone. It is up to you to make the person come alive, to provide all the important individual colors, shadings and highlights.

The second danger is that you will forget that the wording in the DRF is only suggested wording. It is only a place to start. Please do not get the idea that you are expected to use all of the wording exactly as it is. In fact just the opposite. You must modify the wording to fit the child you are describing; don't allow the wording to distort the picture of the child simply because it's there and easier to use than to make up wording of your own, or because you think you are required to use it. All of the wording in the DRF is optional and should be modified or completely abandoned if it doesn't say quite what you want it to say. but it will get you started thinking. And that is the beauty of the computer! You can use the "canned" language if it fits what you need, but with the stroke of a few keys you can change it, or erase it if it doesn't. With the computer you can easily insert a sentence, delete a phrase, invert the order of two sentences and so on as you are composing.

Don't. You are discouraged from using the printed version of the DRF to write the report out longhand. You will find there is not always enough space for what you need to say. You will see that it is much more difficult to change the wording of the "canned" language because there is little space to edit on the printed DRF form. You will have to scratch out much of the optional language provided and the end result will be difficult to read because so much is crossed out. Furthermore, you will find that if you first write it out longhand and then try to type it into the computer version, you will have duplicated effort and wasted time.

Do. You can use the hand written version to give you an overview of the report, so you can look at more of a page than what shows up on the computer screen. Use the DRF to write notes on; jot down examples you want to include in the report, or points you want to be sure to make.
On the computer version there are two sets of files, one in which the pronouns are female, the other male. To begin the report select either the male or female version and retrieve the file. Save it immediately with a different name (usually the name of the child you have tested), e.g., MIKE. You may want to save this file onto another disk or onto your hard drive. From now on use this new file whenever you work on your report.

The computer version also has a simple convention by which you can, in one operation, insert the child's name into the report. Wherever the child's name should appear in the "canned" language of the report, the symbol $$ is now acting like a place holder. Most computer programs have the ability to search for all occurrences of any string of characters (such as $$) and replace it with whatever you specify (such as the child's name). Thus, with just a few keystrokes the report will be personalized with the child's name as well as the correct gender for pronouns. After you have retrieved the version (boy or girl) and saved it with a different name, personalize the report by substituting the child's name for $$. Then with all your test protocols and your STIF ready at hand you should be ready to write.

**Here's How**

**COVER PAGE/IDENTIFYING INFORMATION**

Fill in the name, address and other identifying information on the cover page. In the final version the cover page will be printed on DePaul letterhead.

**INSTRUMENTS OF EVALUATION**

Here we want to list every test that was given to the child being described in the report. The list of tests on the cover page contains most of the tests regularly administered. Delete the tests not given. Add any tests given that are not on the list under "other." You should then have a complete record of every test administered to a particular child.

**REFERRAL AND IDENTIFYING DATA**

In this section you encounter the first of the optional language of the DRF. Certain conventions will be followed throughout.

**Choice of Words.** Words or phrases in parentheses are choices. Select the appropriate choice (or substitute your own) and delete the other choices. You will also have to delete the parentheses around the word or phrase that you chose. The first sentence will typically read something like this:

Johnny, 7 years of age, is currently attending Washington School.
Of course you could change it to:

Johnny, 7 years of age, is currently in second grade at Washington School, in Elmhurst, where he has been enrolled only for the past two weeks.

The point is that you should feel free to use the language provided if it fits. If it is not appropriate, add, subtract or revise to make it say what you need to say.

Optional Sentences. In the next sentence you will see another convention used throughout the report. Optional sentences and paragraphs are starred with an asterisk. Use these options if they fit the child you are writing about. Otherwise revise or delete them. They might give you ideas for things you should say that you otherwise might not have thought to include.

Note that the various sentences and options are separated by blank space. This is just to make it easier on you visually. And to subliminally implant the idea that additional information can be inserted in between "canned" sentences as is necessary or desirable.

Constructing Good Paragraphs. Note also that the DRF suggests possible paragraphing. As you write, the empty lines within a paragraph should be eliminated. So, for example, this first section typically (but not necessarily) has two paragraphs, one focusing on why the child was referred and a second one focusing on basic family information. Every time you finish a section of the report, you should stop and check that section to see that your paragraphs are well constructed. The advantage of the computer is once you have gotten your ideas down, you can rearrange sentences into coherent paragraphs without rewriting and recopying the entire section.

Using the Child's Name. Finally a good rule of thumb is to use the child's name once at the beginning of each paragraph, and thereafter in the paragraph use the appropriate pronoun. Frequently students use the child's name too much and the result is very awkward.

BACKGROUND

Guidelines. Since every child's background is quite different and since the information provided on the case history form varies considerably from client to client, it was not possible to provide any canned language for this section of the report. However guidelines are provided. The topics you should cover if you can (that is, if you have information about them) are listed at the bottom of the section. They are listed in chronological order. The main idea of this section is to give a brief but coherent developmental history of the child from birth to his current problems in school.

Paragraph Unity. This section can usually be written in three or four paragraphs. As you write each paragraph remember that paragraphs need topic sentences. When writing topic sentences for your paragraphs you may use the concepts in bold type below:
(1) Typically the first four topics covering **birth history** (pregnancy, delivery, birth and post-natal) can be covered in one paragraph.

Johnny's birth history was uneventful. Pregnancy and delivery were normal and there were no post-natal complications.

(2) Then the next three topics covering **developmental history** (developmental milestones, infancy and toddler stages) can be covered in the next paragraph.

(3) The third paragraph should be a **school history**, including schools attended, any problems that arose and so on.

(4) Some children come with a long history of **special problems** (family problems, school problems, special testing). These all need to be documented (perhaps in a fourth paragraph). For other children, virtually no information is available, so you write what you have been able to find out.

As you complete this section on the computer, simply delete the guideline list of topics and close up any unwanted blank space. By the way, at this point it is not necessary to worry about formatting considerations such as where the page breaks will occur. You will undoubtedly be revising, so for now simply ignore the page breaks.

**GENERAL HEALTH AND ILLNESS**

Once again as in the previous section, children's health histories vary considerably, so no canned language is provided beyond starting you off on the first sentence. If you write more than one paragraph, don't forget topic sentences. This section is typically quite short. The main idea here is to highlight anything in the child's health history or current health status that might have an impact on learning or school performance, on the testing or on your diagnosis. For example, the child may have an allergy or be taking medication that interferes with testing. You may want to suggest later in the report that poor performance on a particular test was the result of health-related problems (as opposed to being the result of a processing problem in that area). This section gives you a place to document the health problems so that when you refer to them later in the report the reader knows what you are talking about.

The guidelines for this section refer to vision and hearing **history**. Here you may have nothing to say, in which case, simply ignore the guidelines. On the other hand this is the place to discuss such things as previous vision or hearing testing, whether or not the child wears glasses, how long he's been wearing them, whether he has them but doesn't wear them and so on.

If the child is healthy, you will have very little to say, which is fine. Don't feel that you have to report all the things that the child has not had.
HEARING AND VISION ASSESSMENT

The point of this section is to report the results of the hearing and vision screening done during the evaluation. Again you will see that you have some choices of wording within the canned language as well as some optional sentences. Simply delete what you don't use. Typically this section consists only of two paragraphs (hearing and vision) unless there are unusual circumstances or significant problems.

Modifying the Canned Language. Some modification may need to be made to the canned language. If the child wears glasses, you should note whether or not he/she wore them while being tested. One possible way to do that in the first sentence is to say:

$$'s vision was screened during this evaluation with the Keystone Telebinocular device while he was wearing his glasses.

or:

$$'s vision was screened during this evaluation with the Keystone Telebinocular device although he did not bring his glasses to the testing session.

Sometimes if the child is very young the results are not really reliable. You might need to write something like:

$$'s vision was screened during this evaluation with the Keystone Telebinocular device. However, it is often difficult to get reliable results with very young children. Johnny was often not able to indicate what he saw through the telebinocular device, so an examination by an eye specialist is recommended.

Smoothing Out the Language. Other modifications can make the sentences flow more smoothly. For example, instead of this:

These results suggest that $$ has normal visual acuity for distance, and normal visual acuity for close work.

You could write:

These results suggest that $$ has normal visual acuity for both distance and close work.

Interpreting and Integrating the Results. The last two optional sentences in the vision screening paragraph provide you with possible ways to interpret the scores for the reader and to show how vision or vision problems relate to school work. The first one allows you to talk about what is OK. The second one is to be used only if there are problems. You can combine appropriate parts of both sentences. So it could read something like:

With glasses near point vision is adequate for school work such as reading and writing. Problems with far point vision may interfere with school work such as copying from the board.
As in the vision section the hearing section has some optional sentences. A common convention throughout the DRF is that the first option is used to discuss what is OK, and the second is used to discuss problems. If there are no hearing problems the paragraph will be very short:

The results of an audiological screening during this evaluation revealed that hearing was within the average range. Hearing should be adequate for school work.

The second option is to be used only if there are clear hearing problems.

**BEHAVIORAL OBSERVATIONS**

Once again, there is so much variation in children's behavior it is difficult to give you much by way of canned language to use here except to start you off. In the first sentence you are to come up with some adjectives that describe the child. Try to avoid "nice." The point of this section is not only to give the reader as well-rounded a picture of the child as possible but also to provide information that you may need to refer to later in the report. Say, for example, that the child's impulsivity made test results questionable. When you get to the testing section of the report, you can refer back to this earlier discussion of impulsivity, and the reader will know what you are talking about.

The two paragraphs each have a different focus. The first paragraph focuses on personal characteristics. A list of items to consider are at the bottom of the section. Except for the first which is only relevant for young children, you should have some observations to offer on all the other topics. Do not feel limited by this list. Remember you are trying to draw a verbal portrait of this child.

The focus of the second paragraph is on the child's academic behavior. You will need to stop and think how to organize this material. You may need more than one paragraph. You can bring in information not only from your own observations but also from parent and teacher reports, the child's observations about himself, etc. You should have observations on many of the listed characteristics. Again, do not feel constrained by the list. Add anything that is relevant.

**SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL ASSESSMENT**

As the report says, an emotional assessment is beyond the scope of our testing, but we can summarize case history and observational information. Talking to the child and the parents can give you some basic information. This section has three paragraphs because there are essentially three sources of information about the child: parents, teachers, and you, the clinician.

At the bottom of each section there is a short list of items for you to consider and to guide your writing. Use these ideas to structure the paragraph, but do not be constrained by them. Add anything that is relevant.

The third paragraph should not rehash what you already said about the child's test taking behavior. Here we are more interested in social behavior. Assuming that you have been chatting with the child between
tests, or as you take a break during the testing sessions, you should have some sense of the child's social
skills and how he gets along with you, his friends, family etc.

MENTAL ABILITY

Now that the stage is set with as much background information as possible, we are ready to move into the
various areas of testing, starting with mental ability. From here on out, each section will follow the same
format and structure for discussing testing: scores and interpretation, examples and discussion, summary
and integration. For our purposes "interpretation" means explaining what the numerical score means.
"Integration" means tying information together, making connections for the reader.

We begin by reporting the results of a test of general cognitive ability (Woodcock Johnson
Psychoeducational Battery - I).

Begin with Test Scores. Every section begins with a report of test scores. These are usually reported in
the form of a percentile score. But this is simply the bare bones. You must then flesh this out by discussing
highlights of the child's performance, patterns of strengths or weaknesses, or patterns of errors. The
guidelines at the bottom of the section will remind you of points you will want to include in your
discussion. On the Woodcock a few subtests are specifically focused on reasoning. (See the STIF section
on Mental Ability.) Highlight these in your discussion.

Standard Error of Measurement. If the test you are reporting provides a standard error of measurement,
you should report not the simple percentile score, but the range in which the child's true score probably
falls. You can do this by a quick modification of the canned language. For example you can change "_____ scored at the ___%ile" to:

 _____ scored between the ___ and ___ %ile or

 _____'s score fell between the ___ and ___ %ile

Test Names and Descriptions. Notice that the test names always appear in parentheses. This convention
is followed throughout the DRF and these parentheses should not be removed like you remove the
parentheses around optional language that you choose to leave in the report. The rationale here is that
reader will frequently not be familiar with the names of specific tests. Therefore we want to avoid using
the name of the test in a way that assumes the reader is familiar with it. Instead, we describe the task, and
put the name of the test immediately afterwards in parentheses. So you might write:

On a test of verbal intelligence (Slosson Intelligence Test) Johnny scored ......
(We would never write: On the Slosson Johnny scored ....)

In the DRF the phrase or sentence that describes the test is almost always provided for you. But if you are
reporting any tests that are not in the basic battery, you will probably have to write a description of the test
yourself. Remember the name of the test always goes in parentheses.

Discussing the Test. Y our discussion of the WJ-R should highlight a few particularly high or low subtests.
But remember do not refer to the subtests by name; the reader won't know what you are talking about.
Instead describe the task. If there is a pattern to high or low tests be sure to highlight this. Perhaps the two or three highest or lowest tests are memory tests, or reasoning tests. You might say:

Johnny did particularly well on tests of visual perception and spatial relations. He was able to match pairs of numbers and also to identify shapes that fit together to make a geometric pattern. Both of these tests were timed and he worked quickly and accurately.

Notice again that we want to avoid just reporting scores. We are trying to give as much information as possible about how the child learns, processes information, etc. You do this by focusing on the tasks and how the child performs them, not on the score or the name of the test.

Other IQ Tests. Most of the time you will also have given one or two screening tests, one for verbal, and one for nonverbal ability. You should report first whichever of the two scores is highest. That is, you may need to switch the words verbal and nonverbal in the first two sentences, which is of course easily done on the computer.

Test Interpretation. After all the mental ability tests are reported, you are asked to make a general interpretation of the testing by highlighting where the child did best, and worst. If you gave the Slosson, was there any pattern to the errors. For example, did the child miss all the math questions, all the analogies? Then look at verbal vs. nonverbal tests. Is there a significant contrast? (Since these are just screening measures we cannot make any mention of a contrast or discrepancy being an indication of a learning disability, but we can highlight the contrast.)

When you are discussing what the child did well in, give examples of items passed that are above his age level. In other words let the reader see the most difficult items the child could do. When discussing the weak areas, give examples of the easiest items the child failed below his age level. In other words show the reader the items of worst performance. This is a convention used throughout the DRF. Whenever you give examples, if you are discussing a strong area, show the reader just how strong the child is. If you are discussing a weakness, give examples that illustrate just how weak the child is.

Within this section you should also include a discussion of any clear strengths or weaknesses in the types of higher level thinking skills that are listed at the bottom of this section in the DRF. You can draw on items from all the IQ testing, and also from your observations during testing.

Sometimes a specific problem pulls down a test score so it is not a really valid measure of ability. Second language differences for example, will probably make the Slosson score very low, and this is then not a valid measure of mental ability. This needs to be highlighted. You need to interpret the scores for the reader. You could say something like this:

Johnny did most poorly on tests measuring verbal abilities. However, since English is not his native language, in effect the test measures his language competence, and is not a good measure of mental ability. The nonverbal tests are probably a better measure of Johnny’s potential.
Interpreting Relative Performance. Note that if a child has no really high scores (or really low ones) you may still want to talk about scores that were high or low relative to his overall performance. But be sure you discuss it something like this:

Compared to his overall performance, Johnny showed a relative strength in memory for sentences. While this ability was still slightly below average, it is, for him, one of his strongest areas.

or

Compared to his overall performance in receptive and expressive language, Johnny showed a relative weakness in oral vocabulary. Although this ability was still within the average range, it was one of his weakest areas.

Reporting Questionable Results. Sometimes if the IQ results (or any other tests results) are questionable we might give another test to back up the original findings. You will have to add a discussion of this. For example, if the additional test came up with the same results you could say something like this:

Because of the questionable results on this measure, additional testing was done. On another nonverbal test of mental ability (name of test) Johnny also scored in the _____ range, confirming the results of the initial testing.

Sometimes in the DRF language will be provided for discussion of a test you did not give. This happens most frequently when there are different tests or subtests for various age levels. These are marked with asterisks. Simply erase discussions of any tests that you did not give.

Using Connecting Language. Part of good test interpretation in report writing is to call the readers attention to similarities or differences in test scores, whether within one area such as mental ability, or between areas. When discussing tests within an area, you can accomplish this by using phrases such as "However," "Similarly" or "In contrast." You will see this device appear in the optional language in many places in the DRF, but you should remember to use it as often as possible. Don't overlook possibilities for pointing out similarities or differences in test scores. As mentioned in the introduction, a good report goes far beyond simply saying on test A he did _____, on test B he did ______, on test C he did ______. You want to illuminate the pattern of test scores and one way to do this is by using words such as "however," "similarly," and "in contrast," "better," and "worse," "consistent," and "discrepant." Even the simple word "also" used appropriately describes a relationship between tests as in: On this test Johnny also scored ______. You must make the comparison explicit for the reader. Even though readers could look back and compare the scores themselves, most will not think to do so. So you must do it for them.

Integration. The summary paragraph asks you to make a judgment about the relationship of mental ability to school performance. You should notice that in the DRF every major section of the first half of the report ends with an attempt to relate the child's ability in that area to academic performance, i.e., to draw relationships between mental ability, language ability, and processing ability on the one hand, and academic performance on the other. We try to predict whether difficulties in these abilities will interfere with academics. The basic language is provided for you in the report, but you should modify it, expand upon it etc. as is needed to describe the child you are writing about.
As before, the first of the options is used when mental ability is OK. If the child is in the average range, he should probably be at grade level. Since classroom circumstances often do not encourage children to actually perform above their grade level (however desirable in theory this may be) it is probably best, if the child has above average potential to say:

Based on $$'s performance on these measures of mental ability and aptitude he would generally be expected to achieve at or above his current grade level.

The next three options are to be used if the child is expected to have problems. The third option is for the special case where the child has a low verbal score, but at least average nonverbal IQ. In this case even though the nonverbal measure is a fair measure of overall potential, kids with low verbal ability (for whatever reason: low verbal IQ, language disorders, second language differences) generally do not do well in school because the whole educational experience is so clearly geared toward verbal skills. In this case you would predict that in spite of average nonverbal abilities Johnny might have difficulty in areas such as language arts, reading, and writing.

In every case be sure to finish up this summary paragraph with the last sentence in this section, which is a caution about putting too much value on IQ scores. Attach it to the end of the paragraph. Avoid one sentence paragraphs.

**LANGUAGE DOMINANCE**

This section is to be used only when testing a bilingual child. It is designed to provide a rationale for the language used in testing. It is assumed that every child with a bilingual background will be given at least one screening measure for language dominance, and these are reported in this section.

The LAS manual provides interpretations of the various level scores (limited speaker, fluent speaker etc.) You can use these phrases to fill in the blanks by way of interpreting the level scores for the reader. Beyond simple reporting of the scores, you can discuss problems or weakness that you noted during the testing (if appropriate).

In the summary paragraph, in the second sentence you may need to change the word "and" to "but," so the sentence makes conceptual sense. For example: Johnny speaks Spanish at home, but his language of instruction has been English.

**RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE**

**Organization of this Section.** The receptive language section is reporting auditory testing in three main areas: (1) discrimination, (2) comprehension and (3) memory. As you review the STIF in preparation for writing this section you should mentally divide up the tests into those three large areas. The comprehension tests that measure understanding of language are further divided into two levels: single words (vocabulary) and connected language. The memory tests are organized according to two areas: unrelated items, and then more meaningful related items. These divisions can of course be modified if necessary, but keeping paragraph unity here helps the reader to understand the organization of information (explained to you here
Reporting and Interpreting Test Scores. Each paragraph begins with a report of actual test scores. Then you need to elaborate on those test scores, giving examples of performance, describing problems, pertinent behaviors or strategies used by the child, etc. A feature found throughout the DRF is the little reminders at the end of each section or paragraph, about things you need to consider or include in that paragraph. Sometimes it will say "Notable behaviors or problems; Examples or lists of errors." This is to alert you that you should provide that type of discussion. For example, if you notice that a child’s performance on a timed test was accurate but slow, you should note that. If you notice that the child subvocalized during a memory test, mention it. If you noticed that the test seemed particularly difficult, or that attention problems interfered with scanning all the picture choices, note it. If second language differences interfered with the test mention it. Describe anything you observe that can shed light on and interpret the child’s test performance, or the score of the test. Always remember that you are drawing a verbal portrait of the child.

Giving Examples. When giving examples, you must use a consistent way of indicating the words you use as examples. You should use either quotation marks, or underlining. For example: Johnny had difficulty with "pillar," "gable," and "parallel." Or pillar, gable, and parallel. It doesn't matter which one you choose, but be consistent throughout the whole report.

NOTE: If you are reporting more than one test score in a paragraph (in the memory section for example) write your discussion of that test immediately after reporting the score. This may mean inserting your discussion in between sentences provided by the canned language. If the child does OK on the test give examples of the hardest items passed. If the child does poorly give examples of the easiest items failed.

Integration. If the child has problems in a particular area, you should end the paragraph by predicting what that means for performance in school. Some canned language is usually (but not always) provided for you, but you should add or revise as necessary. Do not be constrained by the language provided. It is only a way to start you thinking, or to provide words if you are completely stumped as to how to say what you need to say. Let it be a catalyst and modify it if necessary to fit the child. If a child is OK in that area then simply omit this part of the paragraph, because there is no reason to discuss the impact of problems when the child has no problems. (An overall interpretation of the impact of receptive language is provided at the end of the section).

Auditory Discrimination. In the paragraph on auditory discrimination, the first test to be reported is typically the Wepman. Since as with most perceptual tests, the norms only go up to 8 or 9, many of the children we test are above the age norms. In this case we do not report a score. If the child is above the age norms and makes no errors, you can simply report that auditory discrimination is adequate. Certainly two or more errors are significant for children above the age of 8 or 9. So we report the number of errors, list or describe them, and interpret something like this:

Johnny made 3 errors on this test. He had difficulty discriminating (list the errors.) Since development of auditory discrimination is usually complete by the age of 8 these errors indicate that discrimination of fine differences in words is not easy for Johnny.

For bilingual kids, if the errors reflect second language interference be sure to note this. Also, here is a good example of why it is necessary to sort through the tests carefully when you are doing the STIF. There
is a discrimination measure on the LAS and it should be reported here. But there is no canned language for this test. However if you have done your homework on the STIF you will know that you have to include a discussion here.

**Comprehension.** The paragraphs on comprehension seem pretty straightforward. Report the scores and describe the child’s performance giving examples and using the little reminders.

However, at the bottom of the comprehension of connected language section the list of reminders of topics is considerably longer:

- Note any difficulties with comprehension during conversation.
- Note any difficulties with comprehension during testing (test directions, comprehension of questions)
- Compare comprehension of ordinary conversation to more academic tasks
- Notable behaviors or problems
- Examples or lists of errors

In addition to giving examples, you need to consider and write about several other items. This paragraph is supposed to describe the child’s comprehension of discourse, which includes the testing you did, but also includes your observations about comprehension during the testing sessions (directions and questions) and also comprehension of conversation. You should discuss comprehension in all these contexts and then note whether there is consistency or a discrepancy. If there were no difficulties in comprehension of discourse and all areas are consistent you could say something like:

> No difficulties were noticed in comprehension of test directions, or in comprehension of ordinary conversation, which is consistent with Johnny’s good comprehension of academic material.

Notice how this not only interprets the results for the reader, but also points out relationships between tests and observations.

**Additional Comprehension Testing.** If comprehension was weak, you probably did some additional testing to get further information. You may have done additional assessment of comprehension of vocabulary and/or grammar. The report form provides several optional paragraphs that describe other tests that measure these areas. Select the paragraphs that are applicable, report the tests and provide appropriate interpretive information.

**Memory.** The section on memory follow the same patterns discussed above. Note the additional reminders. Memory is not a unitary ability and frequently memory for some types of information is better than for others. We want to bring out any pattern that emerges. When you discuss these points try to weave them into two coherent, related paragraphs (memory for unrelated sequences and memory for related, meaningful sequences).

**Summary.** The very last paragraph of the section on receptive language provides an overall summary of this area. The first option is to be used only if the child’s receptive language is average or better. If this is the case you will use only this paragraph. The first sentence summarizes all the areas that are OK (average or above average). The next sentence relates receptive language to academic performance. This
might read:

Overall, in the area of receptive language, discrimination of words, comprehension of vocabulary, grammatical structures, connected language and memory for language are in the average range. No problems were seen and receptive language should be adequate for the development of academic skills.

If there were any problems, use the second option. Following the standard convention of the DRF first we talk about what was OK. Then we discuss problems. In your first sentence identify only those areas (if any) that are OK. Then move on to the second sentence and fill in the blank with all the problem areas. Finish the sentence by identifying the academic areas that may be affected by those problems. This might read something like:

Overall, in the area of receptive language, discrimination of words and memory for language are in the average range. Problems were seen in comprehension of words, sentences and connected language which may interfere with the development of academic skills, especially, understanding lessons presented orally in class, following directions, and reading comprehension.

**EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE**

**Organization of the Section.** Expressive language is tested in three basic areas: oral vocabulary, oral expression, and conversational ability. The section begins with the report of a general test of expressive ability. This is quite straightforward.

**Vocabulary.** In the next paragraph (on expressive vocabulary) you probably gave at least two tests (WJ expressive vocabulary and WJ antonyms and synonyms). You should present examples of items passed or failed and any other relevant points immediately after reporting the score. This means that you will have to insert your discussion in the middle of the canned language.

At the end of the vocabulary paragraph is some canned language that attempts to relate expressive vocabulary to receptive vocabulary, trying to tie various parts of the testing together. If both receptive and expressive vocabulary are approximately the same, you can simply write:

In general, expressive vocabulary was in keeping with his receptive understanding of vocabulary described above.

If receptive vocabulary is substantially better than expressive vocabulary, choose the first option:

In general, expressive vocabulary was not in keeping with his receptive understanding of vocabulary described above, suggesting that although $$ intuitively knows the meaning of many words, he has more difficulty using those words.

If expressive is substantially better than receptive, choose the second option:
In general, expressive vocabulary was not in keeping with his receptive understanding of vocabulary described above, suggesting that although knowledge of vocabulary may be limited, he is able to use the words he knows.

**Oral Expression.** The paragraphs on oral expression describes the oral language samples collected from various sources: the WIAT, informal language sample, and conversation during testing. The WIAT and oral language sample require the child to use language to: (1) describe (2) explain and (3) narrate a story. These are "academic" uses of language which need to be coherent and precise. These contrast with ordinary conversation which is typically not as precise and full of false starts and reformulations.

After explaining objectively the content of the language samples, you must provide a discussion evaluating the child's descriptive, explanatory and narrative use of language. Appropriate items to consider are those features of language that are relevant at the level of discourse: quality and appropriateness of ideas, organization, sequencing, cohesion, flow of ideas, etc. However, if vocabulary, retrieval, or syntax problems interfere you should note these things as well. Notice that these ideas are summarized on the little list of reminders.

**Including excerpts.** If expressive language is a problem you should include either examples of errors, excerpts of language samples, or (if short) the entire language sample. The point is to reproduce enough of the child's language so that the reader gets a clear picture of the child's oral language. The more extensive or severe the child's problems, the more care must be taken to provide a large corpus of transcribed language which highlights the problems.

**Conversational Ability.** The paragraph on conversation highlights pragmatic aspects of language. During testing you should have made observations on which to base this paragraph. The words "able," "occasionally unable," and "frequently unable" are meant to be suggestive, they are not the only ones that can be used here. The paragraph works best the way it's written if the child has no problems in this area. If there are problems you will have to select "occasionally" or "frequently" to reflect the severity of the problems. You could also use "unable," but that is a very strong word (unless of course the child was completely unable). You may want to say "had (mild) difficulty" or "had some problems." Additionally, you should keep in mind the need to insert or modify connectives such as similarly, in contrast, also, but etc.

Interpret this section by contrasting conversation to more academic language. Many times children are fine in terms of conversational skills, but have difficulty with the kind of narrative and expository language demanded in school, and this needs to be highlighted.

**Additional Testing.** The next several paragraphs are optional and are to be used only if the child has expressive problems and you did follow-up testing. You will find language here to help you report and interpret additional testing of vocabulary, grammar, pragmatics and articulation.

In the vocabulary section, there is a discussion of retrieval problems. Here is meant true retrieval problems, i.e. frequently not being able to think of common words. If there is a true retrieval problem you will probably have evidence not only from several expressive tests, but also from the expressive language sample, and from observations during conversation with the child. Some children have difficulty thinking of words on expressive vocabulary tests that are above their level of vocabulary development or because
of second language problems, but these are not really retrieval problems (they don't know the word in the first place) and they should not be discussed here.

The paragraph on expressive grammar follows the same conventions as the previous paragraph. Don't forget the little reminders to include discussion or examples, behaviors etc. The conclusion of this paragraph again tries to connect receptive grammar to expressive grammar (children who have problems receptively, generally also have problems expressively) and to predict the effect of expressive grammar problems on academic achievement. If both receptive and expressive grammar are OK you can say something like:

Expressive grammar appears to be consistent with Johnny's understanding of grammatical structures (and end the paragraph there).

If there are problems, select from the options as appropriate. The first option is to be used if receptive grammar is better than expressive. The choice of "appropriate" or "complex" is to indicate the severity of the problem. Some children may only have difficulty with complex or difficult sentence structure. Others with more severe problems will have difficulty forming any appropriate sentences at all. The second option is to be used if both receptive understanding and expressive grammar are poor. In either case you can finish up with the third option which ties these problems into school achievement.

Articulation is not a frequent problem so we tack that on at the end. All of the standard conventions of the DRF are followed here. Except for young children articulation will not be formally assessed. Thus you will probably choose the first option and leave it at that. Sometimes, although there will be no problems with articulating individual sounds, children have difficulty producing multisyllable words. To report this you may pick pieces of various options and put them together something like:

Articulation of individual speech sounds was not formally assessed, but no problems were noted in conversational speech. However, some difficulty was noted with pronunciation of multisyllable words. On an informal test where $$ was asked to repeat multisyllable words....

Be sure to note the list of reminders, and if there are problems, finish up with an appropriate tie-in with academic performance.

Summary. The format of the summary paragraph is exactly like the one for receptive language. The first option is for children whose expressive language is OK. If everything is OK then follow up with the tie-in to academic performance. If there are problems use the second option, list the areas that are OK (if any), then list problems areas in the blank and then show how these problems will interfere with academics.

EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

This first section of the second half of the report looks at numerous auditory and visual processes that can have an impact on basic academic skills.

Auditory Discrimination, Analysis and Synthesis. The first two paragraphs deal with auditory skills; one
paragraph discusses auditory discrimination. The second discusses analysis and synthesis. Note first that the Wepman is discussed here again. Go back to the section on receptive language and report the results here a second time. Notice that the LAC is discussed in two parts. The first half of the test is discussed under discrimination, the second under analysis and synthesis. Otherwise there are no surprises here. Remember to discuss performance and give examples as appropriate. Finish up with an interpretation of the scores and if there are problems you can use the optional sentence that ties problems to academic performance.

**Visual Discrimination.** The first test to be reported in the visual discrimination section typically is the MVPT or a similar test. Like other perception tests the norms only go up to 10 or 11, so many of the children we test are above the norms. In this case it is better not to report a score, but rather to report the number of errors and describe them and then to interpret this by saying something like:

These errors indicate that visual discrimination is an area of difficulty for Johnny.

or:

These errors indicate that visual discrimination is not easy or automatic for Johnny.

**Visual Memory.** The paragraphs on visual memory seem pretty straightforward and follow all the convention we have discussed before. Note the additional reminder. You should analyze the errors for any possible patterns of reversals, omissions and so on and discuss these if appropriate. As long as there are no problems in these areas, the paragraphs will be quite short and will require only provision of a few examples. If there are problems, then you need to provide as much observational information as possible, and end the paragraph with a tie-in to academic performance.

**Other Visual Abilities.** For the rest of this section, there should be no surprises if you follow all the conventions discussed above.

**READING**

**Emergent Reading.** This section is to be used only for preschoolers, kindergartners or older children who are non-readers. If a child is reading at least at the first grade level, there is no need to discuss readiness skills. But please read this section of the manual anyway so you will know how to report and discuss criterion referenced tests.

**Reporting Results.** Notice that this section contains a mix of norm-referenced and criterion referenced tests. On the criterion referenced tests there are no scores to report. However, you should describe in detail what the child can and cannot do. You can describe what letters the child knows the name of and which ones he does not; which letter he knows the sounds for and which he does not; which letters he can write and so on. Include as much information as possible from observations and the tests you gave.

The final paragraph should contain a summary and interpretation of the child's reading readiness. We start you off with: In general, reading readiness skills are __________ . You should decide whether the child's reading skills are well enough developed for reading instruction and fill in the blank with your appraisal. If the child is OK you could say:
In general readiness skills are in the average range and Johnny should be able to profit from beginning reading instruction.

Integration. However, if there are problems, then a new consideration comes into play. Up until now we have been making tie-ins between processing problems and academic areas by predicting the impact of processing problems on academic areas. Now we have reached the part of the report where the areas of academic achievement are the topics of discussion. So in order to integrate the test data now we must look back and specify the processing problems that appear to be interfering with achievement.

For example, after you have interpreted the test data for the reader (i.e., made a generalization about the adequacy of readiness skills), then you should highlight any processing weaknesses that are implicated in the problems. You might say:

In general, Johnny still has not developed adequate readiness skills. He does not know the names of any letters, and cannot identify the beginning sound of words. Problems with auditory discrimination, and memory appear to be interfering with his ability to develop appropriate prereading skills. Difficulty with auditory memory may make it difficult for him to remember the names of the letters. Difficulty hearing differences in sounds may make it difficult for him to identify sounds in words.

Then you should indicate briefly where the child still needs work at the readiness level.

(READING)

Organization of the Section. The reading section begins with a paragraph that describes in general terms the testing done in this area (WIAT and QRI). Use the first two paragraphs to report the results of these two tests. After that the section is divided into two optional areas--decoding and comprehension--which can be used if the child has problems in either area. The optional decoding section is broken down further into four sections corresponding to the four strategies that readers use to decode: phonics, sight words, structural analysis, and context cues. The optional comprehension section is broken down into two sections: comprehension of single words and comprehension in context. If the child is a good reader, use these first two paragraphs of the report only and then skip to the summary section.

General Considerations. If the child has reading problems, then this becomes perhaps the most difficult section of the whole report to think through because, if the child has problems (and so many of them do) you must deal with three possible layers of analysis.

(1) First, you must integrate previous findings about processing problems with reading problems. For example, problems with auditory analysis and synthesis interfere with decoding; problems with language comprehension interfere with reading comprehension.

(2) Second, if there are decoding problems, you must analyze reading errors looking for patterns, and relate these to possible decoding strategies as well as to processing problems. For example, a child who reads floppy as foy and tomato as tonto uses a decoding strategy based on the word's overall visual
configuration. Looking back at his processing scores (poor auditory analysis and synthesis) you conclude that he is at least trying (but not very successfully) to use his stronger visual modality for decoding.

(3) Third, you must integrate the findings from the various types of reading testing with each other. For example, problems with decoding frequently interfere with comprehension. Problems dealing with words in isolation make it more difficult to deal with those words in context and so on. You must be clear on these three layers of analysis before you start writing. You must be sure of what you want to say, or the report will be muddled (or wrong).

Integration. The sections on decoding and comprehension must be related to the QRI which you reported earlier. STOP AND THINK! Do the findings on these additional tests confirm the findings of the QRI? Do you get different results? If so, why?

You must discuss how processing areas are related to achievement by predicting or retrospectively relating strengths and weaknesses in processes to specific academic skills. "Poor _______ ability will interfere with _______." or "Difficulty with _______ appears to be affecting _______."

(3) You must also integrate achievement in one area with achievement in another area in much the same way. "Problems with _______ make it difficult to _______."

Remember that integration is accomplished by the language you use, and that you must be explicit in making these connections for your reader. There are three points to keep in mind as you write. You integrate test scores within a section by drawing comparisons or contrasts, by using words such as "however," "also," "similarly," "in contrast," "but," "better," "worse," and by using phrases such as "confirming the results of other tests," or "test results in this area were (not) consistent."

With these general considerations in mind, you begin an analysis of the child’s reading problems. Decoding is considered before comprehension because decoding problems usually affect comprehension. In order to understand why the child has difficulty decoding we proceed to look more closely at the various decoding strategies: phonics, sight words, structural analysis, and context cues.

DECODING

Phonics. First we investigate phonics ability. Does the child know the basic sounds in isolation? If not which ones does he know, which ones not? Does he know blends, digraphs, diphthongs? Give as much specific information as you can.

Now take this information and compare it to the QRI. Stop to think about the child’s errors, because you must write a well-constructed, coherent discussion. Are there problems with vowels? Problems with the less common consonant sounds? Does the child know the sounds in isolation but cannot use that knowledge to decode words. When the child decodes incorrectly, does he come up with a similar real word, or nonsense? Does he make errors typically only on word endings? If you find a pattern, make that clear for your reader and present your examples in a way that will illuminate the pattern. The more information you
can give about exactly what the child can and cannot do, the better position you will be in to make really useful recommendations. Finish up this section with some kind of interpretive generalization about the child's ability to use phonics and if there are problems try to relate them to processing strengths and weaknesses. You might write:

Johnny still does not know the letter/sound correspondences for vowels. Problems with auditory discrimination may make learning these correspondences very difficult. Because he does not know the sounds of common vowels he has significant difficulty using phonics as a strategy for decoding words.

If phonics is OK you might write:

Johnny appears to have mastered all of the basic letter/sound relationships and makes good use of phonics as a strategy for decoding.

Sight Words. Now we look at sight words and ability to use visual configuration. Give examples of the sight words the child knows and does not know. Look at errors in decoding sight words. Compare them to the QRI. Does the child try to decode sight words phonetically? Does the child seem to get the beginning and end (overall configuration) of the word, but make mistakes in the middle? When the child decodes incorrectly, does he come up with visually similar real word, or nonsense? Try to relate knowledge of sight words to processing strengths and weaknesses. Finish up this paragraph as above with an interpretive summary.

Structural Analysis. Next we look at the child's ability to use structural analysis and syllabication. These are most relevant for children above 3rd or 4th grade when it becomes necessary to decode multisyllable words. But frequently this is exactly where many children's decoding skills break down. They can decode 1 or 2 syllable words using phonics or sight words, but they haven't a clue as to how to break down multisyllable words. Once again, look at the errors the child makes on all the multisyllable words he reads and compare to the QRI. What ones can he read, if any? Is there a pattern to the errors? Does he look at the first few letters and guess? Does he get the overall configuration? Does he literally try to sound it out, but can't hang onto all the sounds when blending it back together? Sometimes kids can identify the syllables in a word when you ask them to say it orally, but they don't apply that skill when decoding. Try to give as much information as you can about what the child can and cannot do. Again, finish up with an interpretive summary.

Use of Context Cues. In this section the main focus is on how the child can decode words in context. In other words, what impact does the context have on the child's ability to decode. There is little canned language to help you along, because children's problems are too varied to be able to say the same thing for each one. Instead there are a series of little reminders of ideas that you want to be sure and cover.

If the child is having problems you should explain why. You can do this by focusing on differences or similarities in decoding between reading words in isolation and reading words in context. By comparing these two we get an idea about an additional strategy that children use to decode words, i.e., context cues. (a) If reading in context is the same or worse than reading of isolated words, it is unlikely that the child is using context cues. (b) If reading in context is better than reading of isolated words, then the child is
probably using context.

Compare results on tests used here with the QRI. By looking at the decoding errors, you can sometimes get a clue about whether the child uses meaning (semantics) or grammar (syntax) to help him decode. (a) If the sentence containing the error does not make semantic sense, then the child is not using semantic cues. (b) If the sentence containing the error does not make grammatical sense, the child is not using syntax cues. Also note self-corrections, these are a good indication that the child is using context. Organize your discussion paragraph around these ideas. Give examples that illustrate any patterns of context cues you have found.

Finish up by trying to paint an overall picture of what is going on in decoding. What is the effect of context on decoding? Tie this in with problems decoding words in isolation. Are they about the same? Does decoding get worse because of the cumulative effect of so many unknown words? Does it get better because the child uses context cues? If the child does not use context cues, is there a reason in underlying abilities (poor vocabulary and grammar skills? Lack of background knowledge?) What impact do decoding problems have on oral reading skills (phrasing, etc)? What will the impact of decoding problems be on comprehension? For example:

Because of Johnny's problems with both auditory memory and visual memory, he has not been able to develop any good strategies for decoding. He simply looks at the first letter and guesses, or refuses to try. Difficulty decoding words in isolation often interferes with all other aspects of reading, including understanding what is read.

**COMPREHENSION**

This optional section discusses further assessment of reading comprehension and is divided into two sections.

**Comprehension of Single Words.** As in previous sections, after reporting scores, you need a paragraph of interpretive discussion. Here the focus should be on how the child does when he has to understand the words he reads. You can get a handle on this question by first comparing comprehension of what the child reads to comprehension of what the child hears. Oral vocabulary ought to have a clear relationship with reading vocabulary. Are both strong? Are both weak? Is oral vocabulary better than reading vocabulary? Compare with QRI oral reading.

If everything is OK, then this section will be quite short. You can give a few examples of the most difficult words the child can understand, highlight the relationship between oral and reading vocabulary, and end with the second optional sentence that predicts that reading vocabulary is probably good enough for comprehension in context.

If there are problems with understanding individual words when they are read, we need to discuss why. The little reminders at the end of the section suggest possible reasons for you to consider and discuss. Poor comprehenders have difficulty for basically three reasons: decoding problems, oral language problems (either retrieval or vocabulary), or thinking problems. Think how these might relate to the strengths and weaknesses of the child you have tested. Are there decoding problems? language problems? thinking
problems? You need to tie previously discussed problems as explanations for the comprehension problems in a well-organized coherent paragraph. You will probably want to end this section with the first of the two optional sentences (modified if necessary) that predicts the impact on comprehension problems on context.

**Comprehension in Context.** In this section you can use the first paragraph pretty much as it is, simply filling in the blanks. If you gave the Gray Oral, be sure you report the comprehension score, not the passage score. Compare with performance on the QRI.

It is very difficult to give examples of errors in a discussion of comprehension in context, but it is certainly possible to provide a discussion of comprehension. If comprehension is OK, you can mention that comprehension is adequate for both oral and silent reading, and for both short and long passages. You should also describe performance on inferential and factual questions.

If there are problems, we are once again trying to answer one basic question: if comprehension is poor, why is that the case? The little reminders are a series of questions that can help you analyze what is going on and answer this question. Although these questions can provide a structure for your discussion paragraph, you should not simply answer each question separately, as if they were unrelated. The questions are to help you see a pattern emerge from all of the testing done so far. (Note the reminders that relate directly to the analysis from the QRI.) It is patterns that need to be the focus of your discussion. For example, for a child with language problems you might write:

Johnny's severe language comprehension problems make it very difficult for him to understand what he reads. Although he can decode the words that are in his speaking vocabulary and even many that are not, he has difficulty understanding much of the vocabulary at his grade level. This in turn makes it difficult to understand what he reads. His comprehension is equally poor whether he reads orally or silently, because he simply does not understand the meaning of the words. His reading comprehension is actually slightly better when tested by asking him to answer questions about a paragraph than when tested by asking him to fill in a word in a sentence. Filling in a word in a sentence requires specific knowledge of vocabulary and grammar which is difficult for Johnny. Answering questions about a longer paragraph allows him to use his stronger thinking skills and background knowledge to figure out the answer.

**Summary.** The reading section, because it is often quite long, ends with a short summary paragraph. First you should give an overview of decoding skills and comprehension. In some cases a word or two (such as adequate or poor) may suffice to fill in the blank. In other cases you may need a more elaborate description. Then we relate the two areas, and finish up with a very general recommendation. If reading is not a problem (occasionally we do see kids like that!) then you will need to include a prediction about the impact of reading skills on other areas something like this:

Both decoding and reading comprehension are in the average (above average) range and no problems were seen. Reading skills are adequate for content area subjects such as literature, social studies etc.

If there are problems, then you may want to choose one of the three options. Option one indicates that there are decoding problems and also that the child has really never developed comprehension skills. Option two indicates that even though there are decoding problems, comprehension skills are good, and would be better
if we could just fix up the decoding problems. Option three indicates that decoding is fine, but there are comprehension problems. Select the option that fits, or rewrite as necessary.

**WRITTEN LANGUAGE**

**Organization of the Section.** The discussion of written language is broken down into the areas of handwriting, spelling and composition. They are placed in that order because problems in more basic skills such as handwriting or spelling can interfere with composition. This ordering makes it easier to organize your discussion when you need to tie lower level problems into higher level ones.

**Handwriting.** By now the pattern of each section should be fairly familiar: scores, interpretation, examples and discussion, summary and integration. In this section there are typically no scores to report. Generally, instead of scores we give some observational information on handedness, pencil grip and so on. Then, from observation of a writing sample, we first identify aspects of writing that are OK, and second indicate any problem areas. So, for a child whose writing was fine except that he couldn't form a few letters correctly you might write:

Spacing and alignment were adequate. Formation of all the capital letters and most lower case letters was good, but he had some difficulty with formation of lower case f, k, and y in cursive.

If the child makes reversals, try to tie that in to visual processing scores or any other evidence of reversals, visual perception problems, or visual motor problems. Finish up with the integrative sentence found at the end of the section.

**Spelling.** Spelling is typically tested in two ways: dictation and spontaneous spelling when writing. So this section typically has two paragraphs. We discuss dictation spelling first, then spontaneous spelling. If spelling is poor, you may have also given a recognition test (PIAT), so you may select a third optional paragraph. Recognition spelling has more relevance for proofreading. We also test recognition spelling, because a comparison of recognition and recall spelling can sometimes give us clues about processing.

**Dictated Spelling.** Report the test score(s) for dictated spelling. Before you write the discussion it is important to think about patterns of errors. What kind of words can the child spell correctly: sight words, phonetically regular words, words with rules? Make a list of all the errors. Are sight words spelled correctly? Phonetically? Does he know the vowel sounds? Does the child manage the overall configuration but get mixed up in the middle? Does he know common letter patterns (tion, ine,) or syllables? Is there evidence that the child tries to use rules, even if incorrectly. If you can detect any kind of a pattern, see if it corresponds to decoding error patterns, (it should). Try to determine what sort of strategy the child uses to spell words. Is he using strategies that make use of strong processing abilities? or ones? When you write don't try to answer each one of these questions separately, as if they were unrelated. It is the whole pattern that emerges that should be the focus of your discussion. Use these questions and the reminders in the DRF to guide your thinking.

**Spontaneous Spelling.** The next paragraph, which discusses spelling in spontaneous writing, should just elaborate or add to the first paragraph. You do not have to repeat the previous discussion. Sometimes there
is little to say because the child does not write very much spontaneously or because he only uses words he can spell. If this is the case you can simply note this and go on to the next paragraph.

If the child has produced an adequate writing sample, you will want to focus the discussion on a comparison of dictated to spontaneous spelling. Remember that you must make the comparison explicit for the reader. Even though the reader could look back and actually compare the errors in both kinds of spelling, most will not think to do so, so you must do it explicitly, by using comparison words like better, worse, similar, consistent, and discrepant. If the child's spontaneous spelling and dictated spelling are pretty much the same, you can note this quickly and go on. Sometimes the child will make more mistakes in spontaneous writing. If this is the case you should try to explain it.

**Recognition Spelling.** The paragraph on recognition spelling, should elaborate on the first paragraph. First we report the score(s) and then compare recognition to recall. Again, you must be very explicit for the reader. Although the reader could look back at the scores for recall and recognition, most will not think to do so or not know what the numbers really mean. For example, you might say:

Johnny's ability to recognize the correct spelling of a word is much better than his ability to recall it.

Comparing recognition to recall spelling frequently can help identify processing strengths and weaknesses. If there is a difference between recognition and recall, you should highlight this and interpret it for the reader, referring back to the child's processing profile as appropriate. Again, the focus of the entire paragraph should be to highlight patterns, and interpret those patterns for the reader. Finally if recognition is poor, the child will most likely have proofreading problems, and this should be noted.

**Summary.** The last two little reminders will help you structure a summary paragraph. You need to summarize overall spelling ability, make a connection between decoding and spelling, relate spelling problems to processing strengths and weaknesses, and finish up with a prediction of how spelling will be related to other academic areas. A summary paragraph might read something like:

Overall, Johnny's spelling is below the average range. He can recognize the correct spelling of some words, but cannot remember how to write them. His poor spelling is to a large extent a result of difficulty with decoding. He cannot spell words that he cannot read. Problems with auditory perception and memory as well as with visual perception make both decoding and spelling very difficult. Johnny's stronger visual memory helps him remember some words, and recognize their spelling. Difficulty with spelling frequently interferes with written composition and limits productivity.

**COMPOSITION**

**Organization of the Section.** The composition section begins by reporting the results of the WIAT and describing the child's performance in six areas of writing skills: ideas and development; organization, unity and coherence; vocabulary; sentence structure and variety; grammar and usage; punctuation and capitalization. Reporting these is fairly straightforward, but note that instead of a percentile for each subtest we can
only indicate the quality points the child received. Don’t forget to give examples and to note relevant behaviors or other observations. You will also weave into these six areas, relevant information from informal written language samples. If there are problems in any of these areas, be sure to show how they are related to weaknesses in processes or skills discussed earlier. For example, are problems in written language grammar related to weaknesses in oral receptive and/or oral expressive grammar? Include excerpts of the child’s writing to illustrate your points.

**Smoothing Out the Language.** You should also remember to make the section flow smoothly and relate the results of one test to the next. You can do this by making simple but very effective modifications in the canned language. For example the canned language looks like this:

On another aspect of composition, vocabulary, $$ received ___ out of 4 points, indicating that he (was able to) (had difficulty) using a variety of words when writing. He could __________________________. On a different test of written vocabulary (TOWL) vocabulary usage was in the _________ range (___ percentile). He used words such as ________________

Although these two sentences flow reasonably well, you can make this flow much better, like this:

On another aspect of composition, vocabulary, $$ received ___ out of 4 points, indicating that he (was able to) (had difficulty) using a variety of words when writing. He could __________________________. He did equally poorly on a different test of written vocabulary in which vocabulary usage was in the _________ range (___ percentile). He used words such as __________________________

**Informal Writing Sample.** After you discuss the formal testing, then briefly discuss the informal writing sample(s). Describe the essay(s), and provide excerpts as examples as appropriate. Here you must structure your own discussion, and it should just elaborate on the previous information. If the same problems show up in these informal samples, you can note that quickly and move on. If there are additional or different problems, these should be discussed based on the six areas of composition mentioned above: ideas, organization, vocabulary, sentence variety, grammar, and mechanics. If there are problems, highlight where the composition process breaks down. Are the ideas good, but the mechanical aspects poor? do they limit production? Are the mechanical aspects OK, but the content very limited or the ideas immature? and vocabulary poor? Are things pretty much OK except that the organization is nonexistent?

**Excerpts.** Don’t hesitate to include relevant excerpts of the child’s written language to illustrate the strengths and weaknesses. Sometimes this means including a transcription of the entire essay. That’s fine. If it’s very long, it can go in an appendix.

**Summary.** As you compose the summary, review the child’s strengths and weaknesses in the various written language skills, discussed above. Discuss strengths first; then problems. The little reminders at the bottom of the section provide a guide for integrating written language problems with other problems in processing and skills. For example, if there are no problems you might say:

Overall, written composition is well above average. Ideas and vocabulary are creative and mature. Organization, grammar and mechanical skills are adequate and no problems were found.
If problems do exist, summarize them and then focus the rest of the paragraph on why this is so. Virtually any kind of processing problem or lack of lower level skills can have an impact on writing. If writing is poor for more than one reason you may need to stop and think how best to organize the presentation and tie in all of the relevant strengths and weaknesses.

MATHEMATICS

Organization of the Section. The math section is divided into three parts: concepts, computation and applications. The applications section is further divided into problem solving and applied skills such as measurement. We discuss them in this order because problems in developing math concepts can interfere with computation, which can in turn interfere with problem solving.

Math Concepts. We start out with math concepts. You will need to do an analysis of the test items and try to determine whether there is a pattern of errors. Does the child know basic numeration concepts? math symbols? geometric concepts? and fraction concepts? Don't forget to provide examples and relevant observations.

If there are problems, you need to consider why this is the case and tie math concept problems into processing strengths and weaknesses (integration). The little reminders suggest possible processing reasons. However, sometimes the problem is lack of exposure or instruction. Don't overlook this as a possible explanation especially for higher level geometry and fraction concepts. Some children have math concept problems because of nonverbal processing problems (i.e., deficits in non-verbal, visual perceptual or visual motor abilities). Children with nonverbal processing problems frequently do not easily make connections between the physical world and quantity, time and space (the foundations of math). Look back over all the testing to find clues to nonverbal processing problems and tie them in here. Other children understand math concepts nonverbally, but have trouble learning the verbal labels for the concepts, they don't know the right words. Children with language problems or second language differences may score low on math concepts, not because they lack the nonverbal concepts, but because they don't have the vocabulary. This section ends with a statement of the impact of concepts on other areas of math.

Computation. Now we turn to math computation. Report the score(s). Then follow the standard convention of first discussing what is OK, what the child is able to do, giving examples of course. Then we discuss the problems. Before you discuss the problems take a look at all the errors, searching for patterns. Is the problem that the child does not know the basic addition, subtraction, multiplication or division facts? Are there consistent errors in the algorithms? Problems with aligning the columns? Etc.

If there are problems you should provide an integrative summary considering reasons for the problems. The little reminders provide guidelines. First, consider other math areas. Do any of the problems with concepts show up on computation errors. For example, if the child does not understand the concept of place value, it is likely that he will not be able to work problems with 0’s or with carrying or borrowing. Try to make these connections. Then consider processing problems: you will see by looking at the little reminders that problems at virtually any level of the hierarchy can cause problems with math computation. Think through this carefully based on what you know about the child's processing strengths and weaknesses. Be sure to make all these connections explicit for your reader. For example, visual perceptual and visual motor problems are related to difficulties writing the math problems with columns aligned well, and this in turn
results in incorrect answers. You can finish up with a sentence stating the impact that computation will have on problem solving.

Applications. As noted, this section is subdivided into problem solving (story problems) and applications such as time, measurement and money. The score you report is once again from the WIAT. We start with a discussion of problem solving. In the first sentence, fill in the blank with an adjective, such as adequate or excellent. Then as usual, discuss what was OK, and then the problems. The two starter phrases are only that. Revise or modify as necessary. Be sure to tie in problems in lower level math skills. For example, frequently, poor computation skills limit problem solving. Then move on to applied areas (money, time, etc.) and proceed in exactly the same way. Since there is no separate score for these two areas, you will need to do an item analysis of the test questions, to see if the child has particular difficulty with money, time, etc. Here often lack of basic math concepts will prevent the child from solving problems in these applied areas.

If there are problems, you should be able to explain them. Look at the list of reminders. Again, problems at all levels of the hierarchy can interfere with problems solving, just as for computation. Notice that there is one additional reason in the list: reading problems. Children who are dyslexic often cannot solve word problems because they cannot read them. Also, children with language disorders or second language differences cannot solve the problems because they do not understand or have not learned the specific language of math problems ("of" means multiply, "in all" means add, etc.). It is important here to paint a very clear picture for the reader that ties processing problems into the various levels of math skills (concepts, computation, problem solving) that shows how processing problems affect each area, and how lower levels of math skills have cumulative effects at higher levels.

Further Testing. If the child has problems in math, you probably gave an informal math interview and perhaps the Key Math. Since the math interview will be unique to the child, you will need to tailor this section to your results. Be sure to include excerpts of the transcript of this interview to illustrate your points. Also be sure to make connections between this interview and performance on standardized tests.

If you gave the Key Math or any other tests, you can report them here. If the results are similar to other tests, you can report the testing briefly. However, be sure to highlight any additional information not available from other tests.

Summary. The summary follows the conventions of the entire report. A final note here: often we see LD kids who have various kinds of oral or written language problems, but who have relative strengths in math. If this is the overall pattern, it is helpful to end this section on a positive note, and emphasize the math strength, especially if it is combined with good thinking skills, or other nonverbal strengths. If there are problems, recap the relationship of poor math skills to the processing problems.

REPORT SUMMARY

The summary of the report is perhaps the most important section, not only because it is where all the pieces get tied up into one final portrait of the child, but also because it is sometimes the only part of the report that is read. So it must be well done.
Start with Something Positive. It is most important to start out the summary with as much positive information about the child as possible. Discuss personal qualities, temperament, interests, strengths, etc. The child is above all a child, not just a problem. You might mention creativity, imagination, intuition, sensitivity to feelings, sensitivity to other people or animals, thinking skills, problem solving ability, visual or motor skills, athletic, musical or artistic abilities, social skills, personal qualities, energy, drive, ambition, persistence, easy-going temperament, sense of humor etc. Try to give a picture of the whole child.

Organization of the Section. The summary is structured according to the clauses of the definition. First we report IQ (potential) and achievement. If the child is underachieving, and the reason appears to be one of the various "exclusionary" causes, then we indicate that the child is not LD but rather is underachieving because of some other handicapping condition, cultural differences, etc. Or, if a learning disability is present, we indicate that and discuss processing and relate it to achievement.

Potential. The first paragraph briefly summarizes why the child was referred for testing and the results of the IQ testing. Although canned language is provided here, it may be much more desirable to discard it and write your own summary. The main point in this summary is to be sure to highlight average or above average potential. It is generally most effective to report the highest score first, especially if there is a discrepancy between verbal and non-verbal scores.

Achievement. Then the next paragraph reports achievement. If there are any areas where the child is achieving above average use the first sentence. (If there are none, omit this sentence) Then report areas where achievement is in the average range. If achievement is OK in all areas then finish up with the third sentence: Johnny is not underachieving in any area. Finally, if appropriate, list areas of underachievement. Avoid overgeneralizations. You may need to be fairly specific. For example:

A verage areas of achievement include reading comprehension, and math concepts and computation. Johnny is significantly underachieving in reading decoding, spelling, and math problem solving.

Exclusion and Diagnosis. There now follows a list of possible diagnoses. Two of them state that the child is not underachieving relative to potential. Several of them relate to the exclusion clause: yes, the child is underachieving, but it is probably due to another handicapping condition or one or more external reasons, not a learning disability. The last one is the LD diagnosis.

Of course, in some cases there may be another diagnosis, and none of these options is exactly appropriate. For example the child may have multiple problems (more than one handicapping condition) or a handicapping condition plus additional environmental problems) Do not distort your diagnosis simply to fit one of these options. You may need to write your own, or modify the canned ones.

For now, let's go through the canned ones a little more carefully, so you can see the intent of each one.

(1) No difference between potential and achievement:

In general, our assessment of mental ability suggests that $$ is currently achieving at a level that is in keeping with his potential.
This diagnosis can be used in any case where the child is not underachieving relative to his potential. It can be used for children at all levels of functioning although you may need to modify it to fit a particular child. Some children have average potential and average achievement, others have low average potential and low average achievement. It can also be used for a child with a diagnosis of mental retardation, where again there is the expected relationship between low potential and low achievement.

This basic statement will probably need to be elaborated. For example: Johnny appears to be functioning in the low average of mental ability on three different measures of potential. Achievement scores in reading, spelling, writing and math are also all in the low average range.

If a child is in this situation (no difference between potential and achievement), but school grades are worse than achievement testing would predict, then we would recommend that the parents look elsewhere for the source of the low grades, e.g., classroom behavior, poor study skills, etc. Also in some cases the child is simply in a school where expectations are too high for his ability level. This is the point of the next diagnosis.

(2) Expectation too high.

In general, $$ is not underachieving in any areas relative to his own potential or based on the national norms of the standardized tests used in this evaluation. However, in our experience, it is possible that a child appears to be underachieving, but only relative to the pace of the curriculum and expectations of a particular school.

This diagnosis is frequently useful for high school students (or younger children in private schools). Often we see average or low average high school students in high powered suburban high schools, where the problem is that they can't compete. But parents in these high powered situations often immediately think "L D."

(3) No processing problems, some other (exclusion) problem

In general, although $$ is underachieving, our assessment of those abilities that are important for the development of good academic skills all appear to be (at least) within the average range. However, there are indications that $$ is experiencing ____________ problems which may play a significant role in his learning difficulties.

This diagnosis should be used when it is clear that there are no processing problems (i.e. that processing scores are all within the average/above average range), and when some other handicapping condition, or external factor might account for the underachievement. You can fill in the blank with whatever is appropriate: vision, hearing, medical, emotional, motivational, second language, cultural, environmental etc.

(4) Some very mild or questionable weaknesses plus exclusionary causes

The next three diagnoses are all variants of one main idea: We're not sure if it's a learning disability or not, and it might be something else. These statements can be used when you want to equivocate a bit. In other words, it's not clear that it is a learning disability, and there are other things going on as well. There is
some indication that there might be a processing weakness, but either it is not clear, or it is very mild, and
this seems to be complicated by other external factors.

(a) In general, although $$ is underachieving, none of his weaknesses was serious enough to make it
clear that he warrants a diagnosis of learning disability at this time. However, there are indications that $$
is experiencing (mild) emotional problems which may play a significant role in his learning difficulties.
(It is our experience that children with relatively mild learning weaknesses often do not have difficulty
learning in school. But if they have the additional burden of emotional concerns, the learning weaknesses
often seem more prominent and do interfere with learning.)

(b) In general, although $$ is underachieving, none of his weaknesses was serious enough to make it
clear that he warrants a diagnosis of learning disability at this time. However, there are indications that
there are other (social) (motivational) (environmental) factors which may play a significant role in his
learning difficulties. (It is our experience that children with relatively mild learning weaknesses often do
not have difficulty learning in school. But if they have the additional burden of (social) (motivational)
(environmental) problems, the learning weaknesses often seem more prominent and do interfere with
learning.)

(c) In general, although $$ is underachieving, none of his weaknesses was serious enough to make it
clear that he warrants a diagnosis of learning disability at this time. However, there are indications that
there are (language) (and) (cultural) differences which may play a significant role in his learning
difficulties. (It is our experience that children with relatively mild learning weaknesses often do not have
difficulty learning in school. But if they have the additional burden of (language) (and) (cultural)
differences, the learning weaknesses often seem more prominent and do interfere with learning.)

The rest of the guidelines in the summary are most appropriate for children who are diagnosed LD. For
children who are not diagnosed LD, you must consider how to write an appropriate conclusion to the
report. Skip down to the comments about ending the report on a positive note. If the child is not LD and
the recommendations are few you can include them in this final paragraph instead of a separate list. For
children who are not LD, you will still need to include specific educational suggestions, depending on the
diagnosis and the nature of the problem. These should be listed separately.

(5) Learning disability

In general, $$ is underachieving relative to his potential. Our assessment of his abilities that are
important for the development of good academic skills suggest that a learning disability may be
interfering with ___________________________.

LD Diagnosis. Obviously this is the LD diagnosis. Fill in the blank with the areas of achievement that are
affected by the learning disability.

For children who are LD, refer to the rest of the guidelines. In contrast to other places in the report, here
we discuss weaknesses first and then strengths, in an effort to end up on a positive note. This section should
be thorough. You may feel that it is repetitive (and you may be sick to death of this report) but remember
that sometimes it is the only part that will be read. You must provide enough discussion so that a person
could just pick up the summary and really understand the child.
First we discuss weaknesses. Integration (relating processing problems to each other, relating processing to achievement, and one area of achievement to another) should be the major focus of this section. First discuss any underlying processing problems, and then carefully show how these are related to any achievement problems. (If appropriate, relate processing problems to areas of achievement outside of school, i.e., adaptive behavior, social skills, (pre)vocational skills.) Then (if appropriate) draw relationships between achievement and emotional factors. Does poor achievement cause stress? behavior problems? Poor self-image? Does the child seem to have preserved a good self-image in spite of poor achievement? On the other hand, is there stress from some additional source that is complicating the LD picture.

End on a Positive Note. Now we come to a discussion of strengths, or relative strengths. If the child has real or relative strengths these should be highlighted here. It is so important for parents and teachers to begin to understand his areas of strength instead of only focusing on the weaknesses, that this paragraph is really important and should not be overlooked. It is also important to suggest that the child be made aware of those strengths. The discussion of strengths should not be limited to processing strengths although it is important to highlight these. You should also repeat here other areas of strength you might have mentioned at the beginning of the summary: creativity, imagination, intuition, sensitivity to feelings, sensitivity to other people, thinking skills, problem solving ability, visual or motor skills, athletic, musical or artistic abilities, social skills, friendliness, leadership potential, personal qualities, energy, drive, ambition, persistence, willingness to please, to try, to take risks, sense of humor etc.) Obviously these may not all come out in testing (though some of them will), but you can gather much information from chatting with the child between tests about hobbies, interests, and so, and from shrewd observations. Strengths are important because they can be used to both bypass and remediate weak areas. They are also important for the person's sense of self. It is much easier to keep a weakness in perspective if you are also aware of your strengths. The little reminders provide only a short list of possible items to consider when writing the paragraph on strengths. Refer to the list here, and observe the child carefully.

Begin by relating processing strengths to areas of academic achievement. Then branch out to discuss any positive strategies that the child employed or you taught him to employ. Discuss any of the broad range of strengths suggested above, and end on a positive note about the child's character. There always has to be something good to say.

There can be no specific guidelines since each child is an individual. Remember that your main task is to paint a verbal portrait of the child. Stop and think about the whole child. You have spent the whole report discussing parts, although hopefully you have given considerable effort to tying the parts together. But this is your chance to really see the child as a whole.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The list of recommendations generally appear beginning on a separate page after the body of the report. If the child is not LD and the recommendations are few, you can include them in the last section of the report. The subheads are for your guidance, and generally should not be included in the list of recommendations, unless there are so many recommendations that they need some kind of organization or division.
Select as many recommendations as are appropriate. Of course, you may need to modify them to fit your particular client. Also be aware of the line marked "Other." This is to remind you that this is only a starter list of recommendations. You must add any others that are appropriate. For example, a child may not be LD, but you may feel that he needs a Title (Chapter) I program, or after-school tutoring to help him with reading or math skills.

**EDUCATIONAL SUGGESTIONS**

If the child is LD, you should start this sections with a rationale, an explanation of the general direction remediation should take. This needs to be a paragraph or two in which an overall plan for remediation is outlined and explained in terms of the child's strengths and weaknesses. In other words you need to integrate the findings of the report into a well thought out remedial plan. You should begin by outlining the areas that need remediation. Then, if applicable, make suggestions as to which areas will need to be taught as an integrated whole and explain why. (e.g., decoding and spelling; oral language, reading comprehension and writing; oral language and math story problems). For example you might say:

> Because Johnny's oral language problems make it difficult for him to understand what he reads and to write compositions, remediation should integrate oral language instruction with reading and writing. Instead of working on isolated skills, instruction should focus on interesting topics or activities about which he can listen, talk, read and write.

Then you will need to make suggestions about how to approach each area or combination of areas for remediation, incorporating an explanation about how the suggested approach takes account of learning strengths and weaknesses. For example:

> Decoding and spelling should be taught as one unit. Johnny should be taught to spell the same words that he is learning to read. Since he has strong visual and visual motor skills, and significant problems with discriminating and analyzing letter sounds, he should first be taught to decode and spell using a method that stresses seeing and writing such as the Fernald method. Once he experiences success with this approach, then supplementary instruction in his weaker area (phonics) can be slowly introduced. When introducing phonics, it will be necessary to provide many cues from his strong visual and visual/motor modalities to help him learn and remember the letter sounds. The Auditory Discrimination in Depth (ADD) program is one such approach, in which the sounds of the letters are taught on the basis of how they are articulated, how they feel when you say them.

Once you have provided an overall rationale for the best approach to remediation, then you may add specific suggestions. Provide specific recommendations tailored to the child's strengths and weaknesses. Frequently it is a good idea to provide recommendations for school and also for home. Don't overlook Mel Levine's book as a source of excellent recommendations.
FINISHING AND FORMATTING THE REPORT

Now that you have finished writing, you are undoubtedly exhausted, and never want to see it again. However, your work is not finished. You must allow enough time for final touches. The report is going out to the public (schools, parents, and other professionals) with your name on it, your supervisor’s name on it and DePaul’s name on it. It must be as understandable, readable, and as technically perfect as you can make it.

Revising. Revising is too large a job to do all at once. You must follow the following steps:

1. Spell-check. Start by putting it through the spell-checker.
2. Print a Draft. Now print out a draft copy. This is absolutely essential! I can tell you from vast experience that you will find it much more efficient, and you will do a better job of reading it over if you read it from a printed copy rather than from the screen. I guarantee you will not do a good job of proofing if you try to do it all from the screen.
3. Read for Sense. First, read through the report to see if it all makes sense. Then read through it again with only one focus in mind: are you painting an accurate and full picture of the child? Revise or rewrite as necessary. New ideas may occur to you as you read; or something that you observed during testing but had forgotten might pop into your mind. Add these.
4. Read for Interpretation and Integration. Then read the report asking another question: Have you provided as much interpretation and integration of the findings as possible?
5. Read for Organization. Now look at the paragraphs. Are they well organized? Do they have topic sentences? Does the wording flow smoothly?
6. Proofread for Mechanics. Once you are satisfied about the content and the organization, proofread for mechanical things. You have already checked the spelling; check for grammar, run-on or fragment sentences, punctuation and so on.
7. Look Over the Format. Finally, print out another copy or go back to the screen and look at formatting considerations. Check that all unwanted space is closed up. Check to see that there is enough space between sections of the report. Check to see that headings are not stranded down at the bottom of the page.
8. Printing. Now you can print the document. Be sure that the parent letter and the first page of the report are on DePaul letterhead. Be sure that the ribbon is dark enough so that xerox copies can be made from your original. Especially if you only have a dot matrix printer, a dark ribbon is essential. Finally please do not staple the final copy; it will be xeroxed, so just use a paper clip.
III. SUMMARY CHECKLIST OF GUIDELINES

Use this checklist as you write each section of the report:

Revise, modify add or subtract from the canned wording to make it fit the child. Don't distort the picture of the child, just so you can use the canned language.

When there are choices of optional language, delete the parentheses around the choices you select. Delete the asterisks in front of optional sentences. Do not delete the parentheses around test names, or test scores.

If you are reporting a test for which there is no canned language, describe the task and put the test name afterwards in parentheses.

Use the child's name at the beginning of the paragraph; then use pronouns for the rest of the paragraph.

If the child is above the age norms for a particular test, do not report standard scores; instead report the number of errors and describe them. Interpret the performance informally.

Incorporate the reminders and guidelines for each section.

Be sure to include examples. Hardest items passed, easiest items failed.

For the discussion of each section begin with what the child can do, and areas that are OK. Then discuss problems and what the child cannot do.

Where possible, highlight strengths as well as weaknesses.

Remember to interpret the tests and test scores. Interpretation means stating the meaning of a test score, describing the range in which the score falls, explaining performance or explaining factors that affect test performance.

For bilingual children, keep constantly in mind places where you need to interpret scores in light of the effect of second language differences. There is no canned language in the report that reminds you to do this.

Remember to integrate test performance. Integration means relating or tying together the child's performance in one area with other areas: integrate test performance within a section; processing areas with achievement; achievement in one area with achievement in other areas.

Sections should be coherent and well organized. When you finish a section, stop and read the section you have written. Revise if necessary. Sections should be structured so they start out reporting test scores. Then interpret the scores and provide a discussion using examples, observations, etc. Finally integrate the information with processing and achievement.