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A Guide to the Extra Lesson Grade 2 Developmental Assessment

The Extra Lesson Assessment is not a measure of *skills* or a test of *knowledge*; rather, during about ninety minutes of games and activities, we look at the interrelated areas of development listed below. These areas represent a child's *capacities or readiness* for learning. Please feel free to discuss any aspect of these with your child's teacher or the Educational Support Team.

CONSTITUTION: We attempt to form a picture of the student's healthy capacity for meeting the world, and the ability to harmoniously perceive.

TOUCH SENSE: The Touch Sense is the inner sense of "where I end and the outer world begins." It is closely related to the child's ability to connect to others.

ORIENTATION IN TIME: Becoming "anchored in time" is part of developing academic capacities.

GROSS MOTOR/PROPRIOCEPTION: The Movement Sense refers to the inner sense of one's own movement; proprioception. This sense is related to the Language or Word Sense; developing proprioception helps to develop language.

SPATIAL ORIENTATION: The child's inner awareness of himself in space is the foundation for the ability to move from inner to outer and hope to get down to shapes which create letters and numbers on paper.

BODY GEOGRAPHY: Through drawings and movement, we look at how the child is "coming down to earth".

DIRECTION & GOAL: Through the inner awareness of left and right, above and below, the child comes to the ability to orient a chaotic collection of lines and curves into letters and words. Difficulty in this area may be seen in an inability to follow more than one simple direction at a time, or in letter reversals when writing.

EARLY CHILDHOOD REFLEXES: Nature blesses the little child with a number of instinctive movements, for instance the startle reflex which leads the child to cry out for protection. These reflexes usually pass by the wayside of childhood, but can cause learning delays if retained past their useful age.

MIDLINE BARRIERS, MOVEMENT PATTERNS: The first seven years of life usually produce the ability to work crossing from above to below and from left to right, as well as the ability for 'movement independence', that is, for the right side to move independently of the left, the limbs independently of the head, and so forth. Letter or number reversals may be a sign of a need for support in this area.

FINE MOTOR - EYE, HAND, SPEECH: Fine motor control is needed for clear speech, legible printing, and reading. These capacities are not usually complete until first or second grade.

BALANCE/VESTIBULAR: The Balance Sense (the fourth of the "lower" or "inner" senses) begins before birth and develops through the critical activities of rolling, crawling and struggling to learn to walk. It is related to the Hearing Sense.

LATERALITY: The young child is naturally ambidextrous and needs to be brought over time to an organized inner and outer pattern of hand, foot, eye and ear use. An uncertain or mixed pattern can be an important clue when there are language based difficulties.

HANDEDNESS PATTERN: (occasional supplementary activity) By giving the student a set of new tasks, we assess whether laterality has been fully integrated as a foundation for learning.

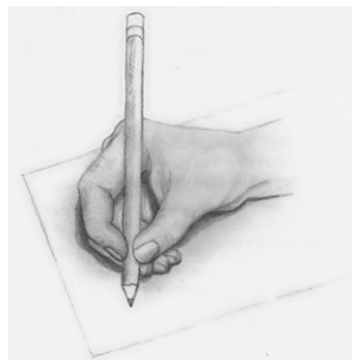
TIMING, RHYTHM & TONE: Singing a rhyme, marching or clapping with a tune will lead the child to the natural connection between body awareness, memory through movement, agile thinking and an inward understanding of words. Difficulty in this area may be accompanied by monotone speech or disorganized reading skills.

SEQUENCING: Some children who seem unable to follow the right order of words, figures or letters, will also be uncertain about the days of the week, the months of the year, and other natural sequences. Sequencing, Direction and Spatial Orientation are linked.

MEMORY: During the hour of the assessment, the child is given a number of memory tasks. For example, at the beginning of the assessment, the child is asked to keep in mind a phrase, a sentence, and a drawn shape. An hour later, the child is asked to recall these.

ATTENDING & IMITATING: The abilities to wait, watch, listen and follow are important pre-learning skills, as well as the preparation for independent work and responsibility at a later age.

FOUNDATIONS FOR LITERACY AND NUMERACY: Observations of vocabulary, speech, sight-word reading; and of counting, number grouping and arithmetic abilities.



PENCIL GRIP: Finger position and fine motor control for writing and drawing. A relaxed, coordinated, mature pencil grip has the ends of the thumb and index finger facing each other. This grip allows for fine and gross motor movements to be in balance.