

FALL 2011 ISSUE

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY: FROM SCIENCE TO PRACTICE

THE BOOK REVIEW ISSUE

Fall 2011 Issue

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Greetings SASP Members! Please consider nominating a graduate student in school psychology for election to the 2012 SASP Executive Board.

Being on the SASP Executive Board is an excellent opportunity to work collaboratively with other faculty, practitioners, and graduate students in school psychology across the nation and help shape the future of our field. Executive Board members develop programs, publish student research, and produce materials that have wide-spread impact on the field of school psychology.

To nominate a student (self-nominations are encouraged and accepted) for a SASP Execu-

tive Board position, please send the following information about the nominee to the 2012 President, Kaleigh Bantum at kaleigh.bantum@gmail.com

- 1.Name
- 2.Email Address
- 3.Graduate Program and Degree
- 4.250 word candidate statement from the nominee

Positions include:

- President-Elect
- Student Interest Liaison
- Membership Chair
- Convention Chair
- Diversity Affairs Chair
- Editor
- Co-Editor
- Communications Liaison

C A L L F O R N O M I N A T I O N S

Important Dates:

October 1, 2011: Nominations Open

October 30, 2011: Nominations Close

November 2, 2011: Candidate Statements distributed to members via SASP Listserv and SASP Network for voting.

November 23, 2011: Voting Period Closes

December 5, 2011: Election Results Announced

Position Descriptions

President

Serving as SASP President not only allows students to hone their leadership potential, the position gives students a chance to form important connections with current leaders in the field as well as students from other programs who become both friends and colleagues.

President-Elect

After the one-year term, the President-Elect becomes the President. The President-Elect gains the knowledge and experience to effectively lead a national student organization that impacts students' graduate education and the field of school psychology.

Student Interest Liaison

The Student Interest Liaison represents training and internship needs of school psychology students by attending meetings and networking with APA and other affiliations.

Membership Chair

The Membership Chair position is great for meeting new colleagues, as well as being developmental in recruiting new School Psychologists.

Convention Chair

The SASP Convention Chair is responsible for the overall planning and running of the SASP Student Forum held annually during the APA Convention. This position provides the opportu-

nity to make connections with others in the field, develop leadership skills, demonstrate a commitment to furthering the field, and gain experience in research review and planning.

Diversity Affairs Chair

The Diversity Affairs Chair works with other offices within APA and works to address issues of diversity within APA, SASP, and the field of school psychology at large.

Editor

As part of the Communications Committee, the Editor's primary responsibility is to make decisions regarding the SASP newsletter, *School Psychology: From Science to Practice (FSTP)*.

Co-Editor

As part of the Communications Committee, the Co-Editor works with the Editor in developing the SASP newsletter, *School Psychology: From Science to Practice (FSTP)*.

Communications Liaison

As part of the Communications Committee, the Communications Liaison works to communicate effectively with SASP members via numerous media outlets and provides support to the Editor and Co-Editor as needed.

For a complete list of position descriptions and duties please visit: <http://www.apa.org/divisions/div16/sasp/>

**SASP CONVENTION NEWS
BY KELLY HUGGER**

On behalf of the 2011 SASP Executive Board thank you to everyone for a successful 2011 SASP Mini-Convention!

A Brief Recap of the Event:

The 2011 SASP Mini-Convention was held on Thursday, August 4th from 4:30 – 7:30pm at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Washington, DC in the Division 16 Suite. Division 16, the parent organization to SASP, funded the refreshments and food for the evening, and also awarded each of the presenters with a scholarship to partially offset the cost of travel.

The evening formally commenced with a keynote address given by Beth Doll, Ph.D., Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the College of Education and Human Science at the University of Nebraska Lincoln. Dr. Doll's keynote address was titled, *Why Mental Health and School Success are One in the Same*. The remaining time was allotted to paper presentations, a poster presentation session, and networking.

The following topics were presented during the paper presentation portion of the convention:

- The Utility of Brief Behavior Rating Scales: A Discussion of the SEARS Short-Form Assessment System. Rhonda Nese, *MEd*, Erin Doerner, *BS*, Nicole Kaye, *BA*, Natalie Romer, *MS*, *University of Oregon*.
- Developing Service-Learning to Teach a Social Justice Framework. Gregory Moy, *MEd*, Alissa Briggs, *MEd*, Sofia Flores, *MEd*, David Shriberg, *PhD*, *Loyola University Chicago*.

The following topics were highlighted in the poster session portion of the convention:

- Applying Functional Thinking to Parent Engagement and Participation in Education. Susan Jarmuz-Smith, *MS*, *University of Southern Maine*.
- A School-Based Approach for Addressing Female Physical Aggression. Jennifer M. Cooper, *MA*, *The Ohio State University*.

- Learning to be an Effective Consultant: Collaborating with teachers to implement behavioral interventions that work. Amy Bremer, *BA*, *The Ohio State University*.
- Out-of-School Time Programs & Family Involvement: Theoretical Framework and Applications. Amanda Spalter, *MS*, Paige Mission, *BA*, *University of Wisconsin - Madison*
- Searching for Meaning: Emotional Intelligence and Mindfulness in At-Risk Youth. Glori Gray, *MSW, MA*, Kimberly Snow, *MA*, *George Fox University*.

For more information and electronic copies of the presentations, please visit <http://www.apa.org/divisions/div16/sasp/> and click on the convention link.

2012 SASP Convention Update: Name Change

The SASP Mini-Convention will officially change its name to the **SASP Student Forum** for the 2012 year. The change in name reflects a common agreement among board members that the mini-convention was more than “just a mini-convention.” Rather, it is a forum for networking and presentation of research for school psychology students. In addition, it is an opportunity to listen to some phenomenal keynote speakers in a setting that is conducive to student-led question and answer sessions. We hope the new name will better reflect the intent of the mini-convention.

Once again, I want to thank everyone involved in the planning and organization of the 2011 event, as well as all presenters and attendees. It was a great event and I look forward to seeing everyone next year in Orlando, Florida!

Cheers!

Kelly Hugger

SASP Convention Chair

School Psychology Doctoral Student

University of Southern Maine

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD
BY ROBYN SULLIVAN
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

School psychologists are in the position to work with students who are experiencing parental illness. School psychologists may work with students in a one-on-one situation, and may provide a safe space for a child to communicate about situations that may be occurring both in and outside of school (McCue & Bonn, 1994). There are many different methods that may be utilized during individual counseling. Methods that have been found to be particularly helpful when working with children are play therapy and art therapy. Both of these are ideal methods as a child is allowed to communicate their thoughts and feelings through actions as opposed to words (Heiney et al., 2001).

Group counseling methods may also be employed, with family counseling and student support groups as two popular methods for child dealing with parental illness (Heiney et al., 2001). In a study of fourth grade students who were classified as academic underachievers, it was found that among fourth grade boys, involvement in group counseling led to improved academic performance; the same result was not found for girls (Munger, Winkler, Teigland, & Kranzler, 1964). This case study reviews my experience delivering short-term counseling services using a variety of counseling methods to a 10-year old, fourth grade boy who was coping with his father's recent stroke.

Counseling Sessions

The first session was intended for the student and I to become familiar with each other. Following my attaining his assent for us to work with each other and an explanation of confidentiality, I allowed him to pick a game for us to play together, and as we played I encouraged him to describe to me his interests. Based on my previous academic training and work experiences, the child-centered play therapy model was one in which I was most familiar and therefore most comfortable, and as a result I decided to attempt to apply this method to our first session. I attempted this by listening at-

tentively, and I attempted to convey unconditional positive regard.

The second counseling session began with the student deciding upon a game for the two of us to play. During this session concepts from child-centered play therapy, such as unconditional positive regard, were employed, however, I also decided to attempt to incorporate aspects of a family systems approach. I realized that this would be a difficult task as I only had one member of the family system present, however, I felt that it was important to discuss the student's family and the impact that they are having on his current academic performance.

The goal for my third counseling session was to discuss with the student his peer relations. Prior to our counseling session, he had been asked to stand in a time-out as a result of talking in the lunch line. I felt that this would be an optimal opportunity to practice the techniques of reality-based counseling, and to have him discuss the consequences of actions and to develop a plan of action in case he were again in a situation where he felt compelled to talk when talking was against the rules.

In our fourth session together, I decided to focus the session around art therapy. The student had previously mentioned his interest in drawing and I felt that by spending our time together drawing pictures related to different topics, I may be able to learn a bit more about him. I presented the student with different colors of construction paper and both crayons and colored pencils and asked him to draw both a picture of his family and a picture of his friends. My goal was to talk about these pictures with him with the hope that I would learn more about his views of his family and his friends. After this activity we still had a bit of time together, so I assisted the student in finishing the sentence, "The most important thing about me is..." This activity was chosen as I felt that it would help him verbalize a positive characteristic about him, and

my goal was to leave him with a positive feeling at the end of our session.

For our fifth and final session, I wanted to once again draw upon art therapy; however, I also wanted to practice working with another method. I felt that bibliotherapy would lend itself to being combined with art therapy, and as a result I read a short passage to the student about overcoming a conflict with a peer, and asked him to draw a picture about a time when him and a friend disagreed. As this was our last session together, at the end of our session we wrote a plan of action, discussing what the student could do if he felt distracted in class.

Discussion

In working with this student it became apparent that he is a very mature boy who is eager to discuss his experiences with his father's stroke to any adult who will listen. The fact that he was willing to discuss the stroke with me in only our second session provided me with evidence that this was a topic he was interested in discussing. This made me question if he has other adults in his life who he may discuss this topic with, or if he is not given a space to discuss his opinion about it. In my discussions with his teacher it appears that she is willing to talk to him about this topic, however, I am not sure that the student realizes that she is an adult with whom he may discuss personal matters.

Throughout the counseling sessions, this student appeared to respond well to unconditional positive regard and also appeared to be at ease in discussing his current family situations and his feelings about

them while drawing. Though, as a result of the counseling sessions the student did report comfort in being able to speak to an adult about his father's illness, his problem with absenteeism continued. However, problems that occurred within the school (such as arguing with other students) were addressed, and the student appeared ready and able to create plans to prevent such situations from continuing in the future.

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About the Author

Robyn Sullivan earned her B.A. in psychology from Saint Michael's College and M.A. in psychology and graduate certificate in women's studies from the University of Rhode Island. She currently is a doctoral candidate in the school psychology program at the University of Rhode Island.

Important Message!!!

If you are consider nominating a graduate student in school psychology for election to the 2012 SASP Executive Board. Please visit: <http://www.apa.org/divisions/div16/sasp/>

RESEARCH REVIEW

READING AND WRITING DISORDERS: RESEARCH-BASED ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION

BY LAYNE NEEL, ASHTON JOHNSON,
& JEFFREY SHAHIDULLAH

Abstract

Approximately one-half of all children who receive special education services are classified under the specific learning disability category (U.S. Department of Education, 2006). When one considers the role that reading and writing play in students' educational outcomes, it is evident that educators and mental health practitioners are in need of empirically-based assessment and intervention procedures to help identify and treat children with reading and writing disorders. The primary purpose of this paper is to inform school psychology students and professionals of best practices within the areas of assessment and intervention for reading and writing disorders.

Approximately one-half of all children who receive special education services are classified under the specific learning disability category (U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Thus, widespread concern exists among school psychologists regarding the assessment and intervention of children with learning disabilities. Of specific concern to educators, is the fact that reading disorders affect 4% of school-age children (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2000), and constitute about 90% of students with learning disabilities (Hardman, Drew, & Egan, 2008). Additionally, writing disorders are estimated to affect 10% of the school-age population (Lyon, Fletcher, & Barnes, 2003), and are frequently associated with other learning disabilities (APA, 2000). When one considers the role that reading and writing play in students' educational outcomes, it is evident that educators and mental health practitioners are in need of empirically-based assessment and intervention procedures to help identify and treat children with reading and writing disorders.

The primary purpose of this paper is to inform school psychology students and professionals of best practices within the areas of assessment and intervention for reading and writing disorders. First, definitions of these disorders are discussed. Second, best practices in the assessment of reading and writing disorders will be discussed, including what instruments should be used, the effectiveness of utilizing cross-battery assessment, and cultural considerations. Finally, empirically-based interventions, including those at the school level, classroom level, and individual level, will all be considered.

Definition

Many definitions of learning disabilities exist, but it has been common to identify a child as learning disabled if there is a significant difference (1.5 standard deviations) between cognitive and achievement test scores (Fletcher et al., 1994). That is not to say that the use of IQ-achievement discrepancy as an indicator for learning disabilities is not without its critics (Dombrowski, Kamphaus, & Reynolds, 2004), but debating the definition and specific criteria of a learning disability is beyond the scope of this paper. The federal definition of a specific learning disability is stated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004:

"Specific learning disability" means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include

children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of intellectual disabilities, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. (IDEA 2004, PL 108-446, Sec. 602[30])

Nevertheless, the APA continues to utilize the IQ-achievement discrepancy as an inclusionary criterion to diagnose learning disorders (Lyon, Fletcher, et al., 2003). According to the APA (2000), "the essential feature of Reading Disorder is reading achievement that falls substantially below that expected given the individual's chronological age, measured intelligence, and age-appropriate education" (p. 51). Additionally, the disturbance must significantly interfere with academic achievement or daily activities that require reading skills. The essential feature of Disorder of Written Expression, according to the APA (2000), is "writing skills that fall substantially below those expected given the individual's chronological age, measured intelligence, and age-appropriate education" (pp. 54-55). The disturbance must also significantly interfere with academic achievement or daily activities that require writing skills.

Assessment

In the evaluation of reading and writing disorders, empirically-based assessments provide school psychologists with reliable and valid data. School psychology assessment for reading and writing includes direct observation of students during instruction, teacher interview about reading and writing curriculum and teaching methods, administration of standardized tests of reading and writing and related processes or skills, and progress monitoring with probes linked to lessons or curriculum-based measures (Berninger & Wagner, 2008). Also, best practices in school psychology (Berninger & Wagner, 2008) encourages school psychologists to consider identifying children with learning disabilities on the basis of their limited response to effective instruction using a response-to-intervention (RTI) model, rather than using the common method of computing the ability-achievement discrepancy. Both norm-referenced instruments and curriculum-based measurement are useful in helping school psychologists with the assessment of reading and writing disorders within this problem-solving frame-

work. Curriculum-based measurement techniques can be used to assess student progress in all three RTI tiers (Malacki & Jewell, 2003). Norm-referenced tests allow comparison to age or grade levels based on national samples, and allows for a comparison group outside the local context of a particular school (Berninger & Wagner, 2008).

Flanagan et al. (2006) detail the norm-referenced instruments that can be used by school psychologists to assess for reading problems. The most commonly utilized tests to assess basic reading include: Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Second Edition (WIAT-II) Word Reading subtest, the Woodcock Johnson III Tests of Achievement (WJ III) Letter-Word Identification subtest, and the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, Revised/Normative Update (WRMT-R/NU) Word Attack subtest. These subtests include word lists involving real words or nonsense words where the examinee is required to read a series of words that are presented in isolation (Flanagan et al., 2006). The most commonly used tests used to assess reading comprehension include: WJ III Passage Comprehension and the WIAT-II Reading Comprehension subtests. Common measures of reading fluency include the WJ III Reading Fluency subtest, the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Second Edition (KTEA-II) Word Recognition Fluency subtest, and the Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TSWRF) subtest. These subtests require the examinee "to read a simple sentence (e.g., the sky is always green) and determine if the statement is true or not and mark it accordingly" (Flanagan et al., 2006, p. 13). For a comprehensive list of basic reading subtests, reading comprehension subtests, and reading fluency subtests school psychologists and other educational professionals are encouraged to consult Flanagan et al. (2006).

Flanagan et al. (2006) also detail the norm-referenced instruments that can be used by school psychologists to assess for writing problems. The most commonly utilized tests to assess basic writing can be found in the Test of Written Language, Third Edition (TOWL-3), the WJ III, and the Test of Early Written Language (TEWL-2). The basic writing subtests focus on evaluation of one's spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. The most commonly used tests to assess written expression can be found in the

WIAT-II and the Peabody Individual Achievement Test, Revised/Normative Update (PIAT-R/NU). For a comprehensive list of basic writing subtests and written expression subtests, school psychologists and other educational professionals are encouraged to consult Flanagan et al. (2006).

Curriculum-based measurement techniques are helpful when assessing for reading and writing problems.

Hosp and MacConnell (2008) recommend utilizing the following tests to follow best practices in curriculum-based evaluation in early reading: Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF), Letter Sound Fluency (LSF), Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF), Word Identification Fluency (WIF), and Oral Reading Fluency (ORF). PSF is an assessment of phonemic awareness designed to assess a student's ability to orally segment words made up of three to four phonemes. LSF is designed to measure a student's ability to map sounds to letters. NWF measures a student's ability to produce or blend letters that represent their most common sound. WIF assesses a student's accuracy and fluency on high-frequency words from early elementary and reading curricula. ORF is an assessment of reading accuracy and fluency in connected text. To follow best practices in curriculum-based evaluation in advanced reading Howell (2008) recommends using the following measurements: Cloze and maze, vocabulary matching, and ORF. Cloze and maze passages are designed to measure a student's ability in reading comprehension, vocabulary, decoding, and syntax. Vocabulary matching assesses a student's vocabulary knowledge. Additionally, Howell (2008) recommends utilizing think-aloud interviews in which educators can examine text comprehension strategies by simply telling the students to report what they are thinking about as they work. The evaluator then records the student's comments and later codes the comments in alignment of metacognitive and text comprehension strategies. Finally, Howell (2008) states that retell probes are useful for obtaining a qualitative impression of a student's comprehension of written text as well as skills at identification of main ideas and discernment of pertinent information.

Some classroom writing assessments that are appropriate for all writers, including those that struggle with writing include observations, inventories, and rubrics (Romeo, 2008). Informal observation is an effective method to assess students' writing. These anecdotal

records can be done while students are writing drafts, working on revisions, editing alone, or with peers, or during conferences regarding the process or product (Romeo, 2008). After the observation is completed, it should be assessed to discover a student's strengths, measure growth, and determine specific weaknesses (Rhodes & Nathanson-Meijia, 1999). The information can then be analyzed to form categories that can be used to drive instructional practices (Farr, 1999). Inventories are another effective writing assessment that could be used in a student's curriculum. From them, information can be gained regarding students writing interests, their perceptions of their abilities in writing, and writer self-efficacy (Romeo, 2008). The knowledge gathered from these, can be used to guide writing instruction that is tailored to the specific student. Rubrics can be used to assess samples of various types of student's writing throughout the school year (Romeo, 2008), and Piazza (2003) recommends using the six writing traits (ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions) as criteria when constructing rubrics. Also, a scale should be used to chart progress throughout the year.

While norm-referenced instruments and curriculum-based evaluations are both methods that school psychologists can employ when assessing for reading and writing disorders, evidence also exists supporting the use of Cross-Battery Assessment (XBA). XBA is a relatively new approach (introduced in the late 1990s) to intellectual and academic ability testing. Alfonso, Flanagan, and Radwan (2005) define XBA as a time-efficient method of assessment and interpretation that is grounded in Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) theory and research. It "provides a set of principles and procedures that allows practitioners to measure a wider range of abilities than that represented by most single intelligence or achievement batteries, in a theoretically and psychometrically defensible manner" (Alfonso et al., 2005, p. 192). One of the primary strengths of utilizing XBA when testing for a reading or writing disability, is that it allows the practitioner to examine a particular academic domain in a more in depth and selective manner than if just one battery was used to assess a broad range of academic abilities that are unnecessary for the goal of the particular evaluation. If using a XBA approach, the practitioner should examine the depth of coverage of a specific academic domain (e.g., reading ability or writ-

ten expression) on particular batteries that they consistently utilize and supplement the reading or writing tests of a particular comprehensive core battery with tests from another battery (Flanagan et al., 2006). Overall, best practices in the assessment of reading and writing disorders do map on to XBA: "Cross-Battery procedures can aid practitioners not only in the comprehensive measurement of cognitive abilities but also in the selective measurement of both academic and cognitive abilities that are deemed important with respect to the examinee's presenting problem" (Flanagan, 2006, p. 91). The specific CHC domains that appear to relate most to reading achievement are Comprehension-Knowledge (*Gc*), Short-Term Memory (*Gsm*), Auditory Processing (*Ga*), Long-Term Retrieval (*Glr*), and Processing Speed (*Gs*) (Evans, Floyd, McGrew, & Leforgee, 2001; Flanagan et al., 2006). The CHC domains that appear to relate most to writing achievement are *Ga*, *Gsm*, *Gs*, and *Gc* (Flanagan et al., 2006; Floyd, McGrew, & Evans, 2008).

Intervention

Empirically-based interventions at the school, classroom, and individual level should all be considered when school psychologists utilize strategies for students who struggle with reading and writing. Graham, Harris, & Larsen (2001) examine how schools can help learning disabled children become skilled writers by applying six principles designed to prevent and alleviate writing difficulties. These include providing effective writing instruction, tailoring writing instruction to meet each child's need, intervening early to provide additional assistance, expecting that each child will learn to write, identifying and addressing academic and non academic roadblocks to writing, and deploying technological tools that improve writing performance. Research studies have been done to examine the effectiveness of early intervention programs in writing (Berninger et al., 1997; Jones & Christensen, 1999, Graham, Harris, & Fink, 2000). Jones and Christensen (1999) show that at the end of a treatment period, both the handwriting and story writing quality of children who received extra writing instruction improved to the point where it was indistinguishable from that of their regular peers who were initially better hand writers and story writers. The Early Literacy Project (ELP) is an example of a literacy program that has

been implemented recently in schools. In this program, reading and writing are integrated together, taught around thematic units and supplemented by more conventional skills instruction, as participants are explicitly and systematically taught reading and writing strategy (Graham et al., 2001). The writing process of students in the ELP program was compared to the performance of similar children in the same school district and showed that the ELP students made greater gains in writing even after just one year of instruction (Englert et al. 1995). A study by Graham et al. (2000) found that supplemental handwriting instruction can boost compositional fluency. Both of these studies demonstrated that early intervention programs that provide instruction in either handwriting or spelling can have a positive effect on one aspect of struggling writers' composing; namely, compositional fluency, as measured by children's ability to either craft sentences or generate text when writing (Graham et al., 2001). These findings have important implications for the prevention of writing problems, as data collected by Berninger et al. (1997), indicate that impaired compositional fluency in the primary grades may serve as the developmental origin of writing in later grades. Additionally, Graham et al. (2001) state that reading and writing skills are closely related, and so schools that increase the amount of reading experiences will likely enhance their students' writing skill development as well.

At the classroom level, Graham & Harris (1997) contend that an aspect of tailoring writing instruction to meet the need of the student is to emphasize instruction of meaning, process, and form, and to adjust emphasis placed on each child, depending on an individual child's needs. Also, it is important to allow students to write about topics that interest them. Students do best with frequent and extended opportunities to read and write and when exposed to a body of literature that represents a variety of genres, topics, and styles (Blatt & Rosen, 1987). Providing students with choices in writing topics and reading materials, with opportunities to write about topics and ideas that interest them and with which they are familiar with, positively affects their attitudes toward learning (Hanson, 1991; Rubin & Hansen, 1986). Research from Englert et al. (1995) shows that children with special needs, including those

with learning disabilities, can be taught to write within the classroom. An aspect of developing any successful writing program is for these students to recognize that they are capable (Graham et al., 2001). These children need to be positively engaged in class work without ever being stigmatized and high but realistic expectations should be set and expressed to these kids. Teachers help students explore their understanding by providing them with ample opportunities to consider personal responses to texts they compose and to make links between prior experiences and what they are reading and writing. Students share their ideas and insights with class members, believing the class community accepts them, and thus affirm their efforts in future writing (Blatt & Rosen, 1987). Another key component to enhancing the writing development of children is to identify and address any other factors that may be impeding their writing ability. Educators need to address any other roadblock that might impede the writing development of students (Graham et al., 2001).

Wendling and Mather (2009) give numerous research-based interventions for writing that can be used at the individual level. A few examples include word sorts, spelling irregular words, writing aids, teaching text structures, and editing checklists. A study by Sexton, Harris, and Graham (1998) used a planning strategy to help students improve on written work. Following through with the strategy, students papers became longer and qualitatively better, and there was a positive change in attributions for writing. Furthermore, technological devices provide new options for minimizing writing difficulties by providing support for planning and revising through the use of outlining and semantic mapping software, multimedia applications, and prompting programs (Graham et al., 2001). When these are used as supplements to traditional writing instruction, they have been shown to accelerate writing performance. For a more comprehensive list of evidenced-based writing interventions, school psychologists and other educational professionals are encouraged to consult Wendling and Mather (2009).

In regards to the implementation of efficacious, empirically-validated interventions for reading difficulties and disorders, a comprehensive system including diagnostics and infrastructural supports is essential to ensuring the success and proliferation of

educational programs throughout an entire school district. Sadler and Sugai (2009) reported on the Effective Behavior and Instructional Support Program (EBIS). This educational plan was modified and modeled to incorporate RTI in 2001, and was partially funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Key principles include district-wide educational screening, reading skill introduction with respect to sequential concept mastery, the utilization of reading programs such as Open Court and Success for All in regular education, and positive, proactive behavioral plans.

EBIS teams are school-based and are tasked with identifying students who display a pressing need for either Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions. These teams accomplish their tasks by ensuring that regular education settings adequately promote student development, could not otherwise reasonably accommodate students in consideration for special education services, and that any student in consideration for special accommodation has displayed deficient academic achievement and progress in relation to their peers. These EBIS leadership teams also meet with school-based grade-level teams and behavioral support teams, in an effort to ensure that each school is properly monitoring the overall and individual academic and social development of the student body both as a whole and on a student-by-student basis. Specific program options for reading difficulties utilized by the EBIS program include both the utilization of Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), as a benchmarking tool, and programs such as Open Court and Success for All in regular education. Tiers 2 and 3, which are assessed via criterion-referenced and curriculum-based testing, include a plethora of empirically-validated programs including Reading Mastery, Read Naturally, Great Leaps, and Corrective Reading. These systems have all been assessed and are considered highly useful as supplemental materials in the development or remediation of reading skills in students with reading difficulties or reading disorders. For a more comprehensive review of these programs see Sadler and Sugai (2009) and Wendling and Mather (2009).

Wendling and Mather (2009) give numerous research-based interventions for reading that can be used at the individual level. A few examples include decodable text, speed drills, predicting, and repeated reading. For a more comprehensive list of evidenced-

based reading interventions, school psychologists and other educational professionals are encouraged to consult Wendling and Mather (2009).

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BOOK REVIEW

PSYCHOLOGY 101 1/2: THE UNSPOKEN RULES FOR SUCCESS IN ACADEMIA BY
ROBERT J. STERNBERG (2004, APA).

REVIEWED BY JEFFREY D. SHAHIDULLAH, ED.S., NCSP
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Many graduate students, whether inspired by an undergraduate professor, called by a pursuit of knowledge, or intrigued by the freedom and flexibility that the job offers, pursue a career in academia. They oftentimes have a general sense of the obstacles in getting there (e.g., acceptance into a doctoral program, completing the thesis, dissertation, and internship, etc.). While passing these obstacles are certainly prerequisites, they do not alone assure attainment of an academic position. In *Psychology 101 1/2: The Unspoken Rules for Success in Academia*, Robert J. Sternberg, a renowned intelligence researcher, offers insights into what he calls “tacit knowledge” for success in academia. This tacit knowledge, usually acquired through personal revelation after setbacks, defeats, and many years of experience in the field is presented to graduate students and young professionals in the form of 101 (and 1/2) rules for success.

With 101 1/2 rules, it should come as no surprise that many present as trite and clichéd (e.g., “Be true to yourself; Be respectful and pleasant towards others; Don’t try to please everyone”). However, while still fairly obvious on the surface, these rules cannot be reiterated enough as they truly are of such import that one’s career will be dictated on these non-academic activities just as much as one’s academic contributions. While teaching, conducting research, publishing articles, and writing grants are vital for progress in an academic career, navigating professional and personal relationships, being trustworthy, ethical, and easy to

work with are just as important.

The books’ greatest strength is its straightforward advice supplemented by personal examples. Accumulated throughout his rather extensive and illustrious career from interactions with students and colleges, the examples provided portray situations and scenarios in which all students and young professionals are likely to find themselves in. Sternberg offers commentary on some of the moral and ethical dilemmas which the field presents. The rules are invaluable to students and young professionals as they continually emphasize how small the world of academia can be and how oftentimes our reputations may precede us. Also, many of the rules remind graduate students, in particular, that their careers do not start upon the attainment of a faculty position, but rather from the time they first step foot on campus for graduate school, if not before. Sternberg’s *Psychology 101 1/2* should be a part of every graduate students required reading and a constant reminder that while scholarly contributions to the field may open doors, living with integrity, honesty, and pride in both personal and professional life will keep them open.

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A REVIEW OF NINNESS AND GLENN'S *APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS AND SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY: A RESEARCH GUIDE TO PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES*

BY RHONDA N. T. NESE, M.ED.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Many individuals within the field of education often propose that a gap exists between research and practice. Techniques and procedures that are proven effective in experimental or quasi-experimental research are frequently not used in the environments they were intended for. As a result, there is a level of knowledge that exists within the field that too often remains distant from those who would benefit most from the information. Explicit instruction, opportunities to respond, flexible grouping, contingency contracting, and token economies are demonstrated to be effective but are seldom used in the classroom. Researchers and practitioners are then posed with the question, how do we bridge this gap between research and practice?

It is a question that delivers few simple answers. Loaded with systemic implications for policy changes and educational practice, scholars and researchers alike realize the amazing feat that surrounds joining the separate worlds of research and practice together. While more processes that are developed in research are being designed for the schools (i.e. Schoolwide Reading Model, and Positive Behavior Support), most practices developed in research are not developed to change the structural dynamics of school systems. What is left to bridge the research to practice gap are professional conferences, practitioner oriented journals, professional development opportunities, educational newsletters, and books.

Although books have the potential to communicate a wealth of information, often little attention is given to them. Factors like time, schedule constraints, and various school activities can keep practitioners from reading books that would benefit their practice. It is for these reasons that Ninness and Glenn's (1988) *Applied Behavior Analysis and School Psychology: A Research Guide to Principles and Procedures* is recommended for the practicing school psychologist. Written with the goal of combining research tech-

niques with practical goals, this book discusses effective behavioral procedures that are supported by research in an efficient manner. Each chapter is written concisely, aiming to first describe the utility of the subject being discussed and second to include research that has been conducted on the relevant topic. What results is a happy marriage of research and practice.

To provide a rationale for the book, Ninness and Glenn (1988) devote the beginning pages to illustrating the difficulties that teachers experience because of behavior management problems. An overemphasis on discipline, increases in school security, and a lack of knowledge of effective techniques are described as problems that teachers experience in the schools. The authors argue that the role of the school psychologist is to facilitate learning and implementation of behavioral interventions to remediate and prevent more problems from occurring. Encouraged to move away from the test and place model (which results in what Forness, 1970 labels a "paralysis of analysis"), school psychologists should come equipped with the knowledge to implement behavior management principles. What is needed is not only a thorough understanding of the principles of behavior, but also an awareness of how to apply these principles to the complex skills involved in behavior management.

The authors continue the introduction by explaining the behavioral processes and procedures that guide and shape behavior. They review processes like reinforcement, extinction, and generalization, and procedures like differential reinforcement, shaping, and instructional training. Unfortunately, the discussion stops there. Few examples and "real life" classroom situations are provided to illustrate how to facilitate the procedures. Little room is devoted to highlighting the benefits and pitfalls of each procedure. Additionally, no diagrams are provided to demonstrate how the procedure would interrupt the behavioral chain. Ninness and Glenn (1988) do a fine job of explaining the

conceptual underpinnings of behavior analysis but do little to demonstrate these ideas through examples and visual models.

Following the first two chapters, each successive chapter falls into one of three main categories: behavioral intervention, behavioral difficulty, or behavioral characteristics of classrooms. Behavioral intervention chapters include topics like behavioral contracting and self-management. Behavioral difficulties attend to discussions of hyperactivity and withdrawal, depression, and suicide. Finally, behavioral characteristics of classrooms describe the importance of time on task and group-oriented contingencies. While this model is appreciated for its comprehensiveness and attention to detail, it is limited by its goal in attempting to cover what the authors deem as all of the relevant topics in behavioral analysis and intervention. Limiting the book to discussions of either behavioral interventions and classroom characteristics or the display and course of behavioral difficulties over time might be more effective. While the authors incorporate effective interventions into all of the chapters, it appears as though they fell short by attempting to cover too much behavioral ground.

The importance of incorporating multiple behavioral interventions cannot be ignored however. What is appreciated about the solutions described in the book is that all the interventions have two things in common. One, they are presented as effective only if they have been tested by the scientific method and found replicable. Two, they were derived through an understanding of the basic principles of the science of behavior. What results is a presentation of studies that found significant results when testing the effects of behavioral interventions. The advantage of this combination is that readers are exposed to research that illustrates the behavioral principles behind the recommended practices.

For example, Ninness and Glenn (1988) describe studies conducted using token economies to highlight the benefits of generalized conditioned reinforcers. Results from the studies demonstrate the relationship between the implementation of a token system and a reduction in inappropriate behavior. Readers are exposed to the specifics of the methods, the resulting data, and the behavioral principles utilized in the intervention.

Interestingly enough, many of the studies cited throughout the book are dated as being published in the 1960's and 1970's. This is understandable considering some of the seminal work in behaviorism was conducted during this time period. The authors make the claim that they are citing research that demonstrates significant results, regardless of when it was conducted and whether or not it coincides with their own views on behaviorism. This point is well taken because influential studies with significant results transcend time periods. However, a responsibility that comes with writing a book is examining current research and incorporating it to demonstrate the contemporary relevance of the topic to the field. This practice allows others to build on recent research and extend the practices to elaborate on what has already been done. To their credit, this book was published in 1988 and the authors do include research that was conducted in the 1980's. However, it appears that more recent research, even those published in the late 80's, would further the goal of linking behavioral studies to practical procedures in the schools.

Considering the year of publication, it is impressive that Ninness and Glenn (1988) realized the importance of changing the role of the school psychologist. Throughout the book they emphasize the utility of the interventions and how, when these are coupled with knowledge of behavioral principles, the likelihood of behavioral success increases. This is of critical importance for school psychologists, as more people are being trained to incorporate similar methods into their practice. With the most recent reauthorization of IDEA and the ongoing nationwide shift in the roles of school psychologists, this book can provide a guideline for professionals hoping to utilize methodologically sound behavioral principles. Armed with this information, school psychologists can work effectively and efficiently to create lasting behavior change in students.

What is interesting about this book is that the theoretical model and conceptual ideas presented are not new. The authors discuss the main principles and procedures of behaviorism as they have existed since their conception in the early 1950's. Little or no attention is devoted to more recent developments in the field like functional assessment, functional analysis and school-wide models of behavior support.

Yet, their application of behavioral principles to the classroom environment is appropriate and relevant. Readers walk away with a greater understanding of how rule governed and contingency governed behaviors can be modified by the use of behavioral interventions.

The book is impressive in its attempt to address the relevant research areas in behaviorism and apply them to the school setting. However, a few recommendations can be made. First, it would be helpful to limit the discussion to behavioral strategies, rather than including them with a discussion of behavioral disorders. To single out hyperactivity and withdrawal, depression, and suicide as the relevant disorders that can be impacted by behavioral strategies seems presumptuous and limiting. Second, it would be beneficial to provide more specific examples to highlight the recommended procedures so readers walk away with concrete skills, rather than just an idea of how to implement these procedures. Finally, including recent studies on the use of behaviorism in the classroom would help to illustrate that these ideas are not outdated but are continuing to develop.

What Ninness and Glenn (1988) offer is a practical method for using behavioral procedures that are supported by research. This marriage of research and practice advances the field of behaviorism by illustrating that these principles are not just appropriate for laboratory experiments, but are essential for stu-

dent success in the classroom. By combining research and practical strategies, the authors achieve their goal in creating a book that provides knowledge about behavioral interventions and their origins. In demonstrating that these methods can be used in schools, the authors begin to bridge the gap between research and practice and allow readers to see behaviorism as not just a technical science. Behaviorism also can function as an applied science, that when used appropriately, can help school personnel achieve the goal of ensuring success for all students.

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BOOK REVIEW: *DISSERTATIONS AND THESES FROM START TO FINISH: PSYCHOLOGY AND RELATED FIELDS* (2ND ED.) BY JOHN D. CONE AND SHARON L. FOSTER

**BY MARLA PFENNINGER SAINT GILLES
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

Writing a master's thesis or a doctoral dissertation can be one of the most confusing and overwhelming elements of a graduate school career. As you embark on your graduate school journey, what could be more sought after than a book designed to make your life more manageable? *Dissertations and Theses From Start to Finish: Psychology and Related Fields (second edition)*, by John D. Cone and Sharon L. Foster, serves as a logistical, procedural and emotional roadmap to the core of every student's graduate career: writing the master's and/or doctoral thesis or dissertation. This second edition text reflects advances in research technology, ethical research standards, new style manuals and statistical texts produced since the first edition, written in 1993. Although no guide can provide a completely comprehensive review of every facet of the writing process, this book makes a solid attempt by covering everything from, "Why do a thesis or dissertation in the first place?," to a checklist assessing students' academic and emotional readiness, to chapters on choosing proper statistical analysis and disseminating your dissertation once it has been defended. This "nuts and bolts" guide is a necessary read for the psychology graduate student at any level.

Dissertations and Theses From Start to Finish is composed of 14 chapters arranged in a thesis/dissertation timeline from the beginning such as thinking about entering graduate school and writing a project proposal to the "end," signified by defending a doctoral thesis and disseminating findings. Chapters are arranged by how the authors believe students will produce the best possible product in the most efficient way. For example, the chapter dealing with selecting statistics is strategically placed before chapter ten, "Collecting, Managing and Analyzing the Data,"

so that students will avoid statistical nightmares, which could have been prevented by thinking about statistical analyses before completing their proposal and collecting data.

Chapter subsections further deal with organization and forethought. The second chapter "Starting Out: Assessing Your Preparation for the Task Ahead" begins with a "Research Readiness Checklist," the first of many checklists readers encounter along the way. After all, before you begin writing, not midway through the process, is the best time to think about if you have taken a sufficient number of statistical courses (number eight on the "Research Readiness Checklist"), or if you have the agreement and support of family members and close friends (number 21). The authors suggest that in order to curb procrastination, students should set measureable goals including meeting regularly with an advisor, being task focused versus. time focused (e.g., reading four articles, , instead of working for two hours), and using the time management template provided in chapter three.

For a first-year graduate student, even the seemingly elementary tasks of developing a research question or conducting a literature review can be daunting. This guide makes these tasks manageable by breaking down even the most overwhelming tasks and giving concrete advice. When discussing writing the literature review, the authors suggest students search databases including *PsycINFO*, *Dissertations Abstracts International*, *ERIC*, and *PsycSCANS*. The book also includes many charts and tables to organize ideas and information, such as a flow chart to help students choose proper statistical analyses. However, if further assistance is necessary (which the authors assure it will be), each chapter provides a list of Sup-

plemental Resources for more information. For example, *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference* (Shadish et al., 2002) is a suggested read in the Research Methodology and Ethics chapter.

The more experienced graduate student will benefit from later chapters, which include software analysis suggestions, tips on how to collect data and present results effectively and a long list of “Common Problems to Avoid.” Although the authors note that it is impossible to foretell exactly how a dissertation defense will turn out, they devote two chapters to defending and presenting projects. The chapters include everything from strategies to reduce anxiety and Paul’s (1966) Timed Behavioral Checklist for Performance Anxiety to a list of possible questions that committee members may ask during an oral defense. The final chapter makes it clear that dissemination does not end with the oral defense, but should then continue with poster presentations followed by publication. A comprehensive Appendix (“Selected Ethical Standards Relevant to the Conduct of Research in Psychology”) is included.

The burgeoning graduate student may not believe it, but *Dissertations and Theses From Start to Finish* is a page-turner! It is a highly-readable, well-organized, down-to-earth manual (or, better said, bible) for surviving the most intimidating part of a graduate career. Whereas Leslie S. Phillmore makes valid criticism in her 2008 review of the book from the point-of-view of an established faculty member, as a beginning graduate student, I believe this book gave me the head start I needed to start thinking about the theses and dissertation processes in the field of school psychology.

However, readers should be forewarned that this is NOT an in-depth guide to writing a thesis or dissertation, nor will it take the place of appropriate course work (although it may fill in the holes!). It may seem too elementary for a graduate student who has already completed a large portion of the dissertation process. It is also important to remember that no text can take the place of a supportive and knowledgeable chairperson and committee that

is well-versed in your university’s procedures. In addition, it is important to read this guide with caution as some students may become frustrated when advice provided may be contrary to that given by their university.

Despite these few limitations, *Dissertations and Theses From Start to Finish: Psychology and Related Fields* is a highly recommended read for graduate students in the early stages of their careers, as well as for veterans searching for a different prospective, or wanting a refresher in the nuts and bolts of the process.

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