

The Simple View of Reading Comprehension

- The simple View of Reading indicates that reading comprehension is the product of
 - word-level reading skills
 - language comprehension skills
- Reading comprehension addressed in two ways
 - Direct attempts to assess reading via reading comprehension tests and subtests
 - Attempts to assess the underlying language-related skills needed for successful reading comprehension

Review of the Types of Reading Difficulties

- Dyslexia
- Hyperlexia
- Combined/Mixed

Differing Ways to Assess Reading Comprehension

- Reading comprehension has been assessed in multiple ways
 - Silent or oral reading followed by an examiner's verbal questions
 - Silent or oral reading followed by student-read multiple-choice questions
 - Silent or oral reading followed by a point response
 - Silent or oral reading followed by student acting out instructions
 - Close procedure
 - Timed sentence reading with yes/no comprehension questions
 - Story retells
- The reading for any given text or subtest may involve single sentences or lengthy passages, narrative or expository text

Not All Reading Comprehension Tests are Created Equal

- Word-level reading tests and subtests inter-correlate very highly
- Reading comprehension tests and subtests have much more modest inter-correlations
- This means that our testing-based impressions of a student's reading comprehension abilities may sometimes be task specific

Reasons for Differing Outcomes Among Tests

- Outcomes between tests may be due to response format
- Researchers have also identified length of passage as an important factor affecting outcome
 - Tests with brief passages or single sentences correlate more strongly with the word-reading side of the Simple View equation
 - Tests with lengthier passages correlate more strongly with the language comprehension side of the Simple View of equation
- In briefer passages, gaining meaning will more likely hinge on a single word. Lengthier passages provide the reading with more context to figure out what is going on

Interpreting Reading Comprehension Test Performance

- Differing outcomes can occur based upon test formats and differing passage length
 - Word-reading skills and language comprehension skills interact differently with different test formats and passage lengths
- Ideally, use more than one format to assess comprehension
- Examine language skills and word-reading skills independently of the reading comprehension subtest
 - A student with strong language skills may do much better with longer passages than a single sentence-based approach
 - Reading comprehension tests can only be properly interpreted if a student's word-level reading skills and language skills are known

Best Practices Can Become Time consuming

- To address the problem of test-specific outcomes, more than one type of reading comprehension test should be given
- To address the problem of subtest reliability, ideally two subtests of each type would provide for more confident conclusion
- Unlike word-level reading tests, reading comprehension subtests can be time consuming
- Regardless of format or passage length of test items, reading comprehension subtest results must be interpreted in the context of assessments of a student's language comprehension skills and word-level reading skills