

Pre-Tutoring Assessment for Maverick Perry

Prepared by Lorna Wooldridge
Wise Owl Services, LLC

Date: 2nd November 2018

Date of Testing: October 30th, 2018

Date of Birth: November 3rd, 2007

Age at Time of Test: 10 years, 11 months and 27 days .

Grade Level at Time of Test: 5

Introduction:

An important part of our personalized tutoring service is our assessment of each new student. This suite of tests allowed me to interact with Maverick and observe, not only his performance, but also how he tackled each one. These tests assess a range of skills, from the ability to segment words, to advanced vocabulary comprehension.

Executive Summary:

After our parent conference and processing Maverick's assessments, Maverick's listening comprehension was found to be good, but his reading comprehension is being challenged by his obvious decoding and fluency difficulties. His school evaluations indicated that in the past Maverick has had a processing speed issue, but his recent evaluation showed this had apparently been resolved. This wasn't my experience working with Maverick. He is a student that will require longer processing time than most to make a number of decisions and answer questions about unfamiliar text. His school evaluations also indicated that auditory working memory, especially working memory for words, is an issue which is probably impacting his processing speed. It was also indicated that expressive language may also be a weakness.

Maverick appears to have deficits affecting both phonological and phonemic awareness, and fluency, sometimes called a "double deficit." A student that demonstrates deficits in both these areas can find the remediation process a challenge, and progress may be slower as a result. More practice is required to make the same progress as a student with a deficit in just

one of these areas. However, there is no reason he cannot learn to read, write, and spell, with sufficient effort from him and those who are supporting him.

Maverick's ability to express himself easily may well be impacted by his ability to recall names for items quickly enough. He had a very hard time recalling names for items he was trying to describe. He appeared to have great difficulty with this when asked to describe a "sidewalk" following a passage he was read, as well as recalling the name of a park he had visited, or the naming the different kinds of playground equipment there. That said, he appeared to be reasonably good at describing something, even if he couldn't name it easily.

Perhaps Maverick's greatest challenge is orthographic mapping which is the mental process used to store words for immediate and effortless retrieval. It is the mechanism for sight-word learning. It requires good phonemic awareness, letter sound knowledge, and the alphabetic principle. The alphabetic principle is the insight that the oral sounds in spoken words are represented by letters in print. It forms the basis for phonic decoding and orthographic mapping. Phonic decoding is the process of sounding out unfamiliar words (or nonsense words) via a letter-sound conversion process, combined with phonological blending. I have noticed that Maverick has several challenges with phonological blending.

Despite these challenges Maverick is a super young man with some great strengths; he is sociable, inquisitive, creative and hard working. His spatial and kinesthetic skills appear to be a strength. He also enjoys stories and imaginative play. I plan to leverage these strengths to develop his weaker academic skills.

Appendix 2 is a checklist of the specific teaching that should be covered.

Tests Conducted:

Phonological Awareness

The ability to distinguish individual words, syllables and phonemes¹ is an important component of fluent reading. In Maverick's case, the morphological (meaning) pathway is reasonably developed, but the phonological path is weak and is hampering Maverick's ability to decode words and encode them for spelling.

Decoding Survey

This measured Maverick's ability to read a selection of real and nonsense words as well as simple sentences. It is a measure of a student's ability to read a combination of decodable

¹ Phonemes are the approximately 44 basic sounds that make up the entirety of English words.

(regular spelling patterns that follow predictable phoneme-grapheme or letter-sound relationships) and a few non-decodable high-frequency words, words that are considered phonetically irregular such as “the” and “a”, which were included in the sentences. It provided insight into his sight word vocabulary (words that he can read automatically regardless if they are regular or irregular in their spelling patterns), knowledge of graphemes, and pronunciation choices. For skilled readers, virtually all words eventually become sight words, which means they are read without conscious attention.

Phonics Survey

The ability to sound out unfamiliar or new words is an essential part of being an accomplished reader. This survey confirmed that Maverick has a reasonably automatic knowledge of the alphabet letters in terms of their names and sounds, and he is generally able to use this knowledge to sound out words, but he has difficulty transferring such simple words to memory, so they can become “sight-words.” My definition of “sight-word” means they are read without conscious attention. Maverick finds it necessary to either “sound out” such words, or guess them and replace them with similar looking words. He is unable to recall them from memory and recognize them immediately, even though he must have seen many of these words numerous times. In other words, his orthographic mapping skills are very weak.

Graded High Frequency Words, Sight Word Fluency Surveys and San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Level.

These survey the student’s ability to read a set of words that are in common use (high frequency) at each grade level. The assessment entitled “Sight Word Fluency” is a measure of a student’s ability to read a combination of decodable² and non-decodable high-frequency words, words that are considered phonetically irregular such as *of*, *said*, or *some*. This assessment includes more non-decodable high-frequency words than there were in the Decoding Survey. For skilled readers, virtually all words eventually become sight words, which means they are read without conscious attention. The words on this assessment were selected from the Dolch 220 list of high-frequency words, and they have been leveled (e.g., Pre-Primer, Primer, etc) using the same Dolch lists. These words are presented in short sentences as well as individual words.

The Sight Word Survey showed Maverick was far from proficient even at a Pre-Primer stage. The Graded High Frequency words demonstrated that Maverick was at a benchmark level for 1st grade words, but he made two errors and one self-correction at this level, and he was far from automatic. He even attempted to “sound out” a few of these irregular words. The San

² Decodable words are those that use regular spelling patterns which follow predictable letter-sound relationships.

Diego Quick Assessment showed Maverick, although independent at Pre-Primer and Primer, was making errors and often having to correct words he had read. 1st Grade would appear to be where he reaches a frustration point; reading a text at this grade level would probably frustrate him if he were left to read it alone.

RAN/RAS

Rapid Automatized Naming/Rapid Alternating Stimulus tests measure how quickly our minds can recognize and name common objects, colors, numbers, and letters. A deficiency in this skill makes reading an exhausting exercise, and can seriously impair fluency. This would appear to be the case for Maverick.

MASI-R Oral Reading Fluency Measures

Using oral reading of passages calibrated to reflect the difficulty of each grade level, it is possible to obtain an objective measure of fluency in terms of correct and incorrect words per minute. This in turn provides an estimate of which material would be too easy or too challenging for a student. For Maverick, it would appear that reading a 1st Grade passage by himself would be very challenging and frustrating.

Core Vocabulary Screening

This is an assessment of word meaning that involves selecting the best synonym for a given word, from three possible choices. The test is untimed, and so provides another measure of reading ability in terms of grade level. Maverick completed this task independently initially and then it was read to him. Maverick's oral vocabulary and understanding of words appears to be good.

Reading Maze

This timed test measures a student's silent reading fluency and comprehension, using passages in which every 7th word is replaced by a choice of three words in parentheses. The student should circle the word that makes the most sense in the context of the text. Passages are provided that reflect different grade levels.

The results are calculated by counting the number of correct word choices made in 3 minutes. It should be noted that in Maverick's case the passage was read to him.

Spelling -New Stanford Achievement Tests-Sentence Dictation

This is an untimed test where students are given a series of dictated sentences until three successive sentences have all the underlined words misspelled.

Unaided Writing

Students are asked to spend five minutes putting their thoughts on paper, from a choice of topics. Parents can help with discussion beforehand, but the writing needs to be all their own work.

The assessment is based on quantitative measurements, as you will see in the results, but this can provide information on multiple levels: Letter formation, spelling, the ability to plan a sentence mentally and then commit it to paper, punctuation, capitalization and grammar, to name a few.

Interpretation of Results and Tutoring Plan

This is just intended to be an overview of the tutoring plan. More detail will be provided in the Scope and Sequence documents.

Each lesson will incorporate some of the following, at least in the beginning. As we progress I may alternate some of the following to make the best use of lesson time and Maverick's ability to remain focused. One-to-one teaching can be exhausting:

- Phonological and Phonemic awareness, blending, and segmentation. The tests indicated where Maverick has challenges: Rhyme supply, segmentation of sentences into words, segmentation of words into phonemes, and phoneme deletion. The Great Leaps "Language Growth" program will be helpful in developing some of the earlier skills. This will need to be completed at home. It can also be used to develop expressive language skills. Although Maverick didn't appear to have issues with phoneme blending, we are going to need to work upon his phonological blending skills with the letters/graphemes to build from VC (vowel-consonant) to CVC, then to CCVC words and so on, with Maverick retaining such words and adding them to his sight word vocabulary. I will aim to provide 10 minutes of instruction and practice in this area at the start of each lesson using a variety of materials, before using the "Equipped for Reading Success" program. He can further practice these skills at home using this program, the Great Leaps "Language Growth" program, and the "HearBuilder" program.

- Reading (Decoding). We will start by reviewing knowledge of the consonant and short vowel sounds, recognizing syllables, and the blends that occur at the beginning and ends of words. Some simple rules such as the Cat/Kite Rule will be covered at this level. It is likely that Maverick will require a lot of additional help and practice to develop his orthographic mapping skills and phonic decoding with an emphasis on phonological blending before we can move on further. We shall then move to third column of the *Suggested Order & Checklist for Phonemes, Rules and Patterns* and then on to the *Scope and Sequence for Orton-Gillingham Level 1*, when Maverick is ready to deal with syllabication and multi-syllable words.
 - As Maverick's orthographic mapping skills are built and he starts to build a sight word vocabulary I will present him with connected text (decodable readers suitable for his age and reading ability) to help him practice that knowledge.
 - Maverick should also practice his "ear reading" using the services of *Learning Ally*, where he can read books at his grade level and follow the text with his eyes to build his sight word vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension skills.
 - I will supply you with a copy of all these scope and sequence documents, and they each will be available in his tutoring folder. I will also be practising reading "red words" or irregular words with Maverick. When doing this I shall focus first on the regular parts of a word in terms of its spelling, and then we shall learn the irregular parts.

- Spelling (Encoding). Reading and spelling are not bidirectional skills. If you can spell a word, you can read it, but the ability to read a word does not imply it can be spelled correctly. Maverick will follow the same progression for this as for reading. Decoding and encoding are skills I teach alongside one another, so as to develop orthographic mapping skills. Words that don't follow the common phonetic rules, I'll be teaching as "Red Words."

- Writing. I'll work on Maverick's reversals using the *Reversing Reversal* resources.
 - I recommend the inexpensive *Handwriting Without Tears Wet Dry Try* app to practice correctly forming the lower and upper case letters. I will use many of the physical *Handwriting Without Tears* (HWT) materials to practice letter formation, but most of the practice will need to take place at home.
 - After this we will move to working through the HWT print book for practice, and at the same time Maverick can start the *Keyboarding Without Tears* program.
 - From the outset, Maverick will be asked to spell words and write short dictated sentences during our sessions. It is during these times I will ask him to review

correct capitalization, his handwriting, spacing, reversals, punctuation, and spelling.

I will provide exercises to reinforce these concepts outside of lesson time, but I do understand that Maverick's schedule is already crowded, especially while school is in session. However, I'm also aware of the gap between Maverick and his peers in terms of academic achievement, which it is important to start to close.

A good target is 40-60 minutes per day, but I realize this might only be possible if school homework can be reduced to a minimum. This would be similar in length to his current weekly session with me, but on a daily basis.

Additional Recommendation

While we work to close this gap, I highly recommend that Maverick undergoes an Assistive Technology evaluation to assess which technologies might be most effective in allowing him to be as independent as possible when reading, writing, and spelling at school and at home. As part of this evaluation, recommendations should be made for the necessary training that Maverick will require, so he can learn how to use these technologies successfully and with confidence.

Appendix 1: Test Results

Phonemic Awareness

Test Name	Raw Score	Notes
Rhyming	15/16	Maverick was easily able to tell me if two words rhymed, but he had far more difficulty supplying me with a rhyming word when asked for one following being given two words that rhymed. Maverick was unable to supply a word that rhymes with rug and bug. I allowed him to supply me with a nonsense word, if he struggled to come up with a real word and on two occasions he came up with nonsense words.
Onset and rime	8/8	
Phoneme blending	8/8	3 sounds such as /t/, /a/, /p/. He initially gave lit for lid, but corrected himself.
Segmentation tests: Part 1, providing a count of number of words/syllables/ phonemes.	Sentences->words: 3/5 Words->syllables: 8/8 Words into phonemes: 8/10	Maverick needs intensive help at the Sentences into Words level. He treats syllables in words as words and even combines two words as one. Maverick scored at a strategic level for first grade at the Words into Phonemes level.
Segmentation tests: Part 2 identifying individual phonemes in words.	7/15	Some intensive remediation is required. This is a very important skill for developing Maverick's orthographic mapping skills.

Phoneme deletion: Initial sound	5/5	
Phoneme deletion: Final sound	4/5	Grade 3+ Intensive help required in this area. Maverick is far from automatic in this area.

Decoding Survey:

Beginning Survey: Maverick did not score enough correct words on this survey to meet the benchmark for his grade. He read 43 words correctly out of a possible 50 words. 48 correct words represents benchmark. I have noted in the Grapheme to Phoneme Checklist in Appendix 2, the vowel and consonant discrimination issues that Maverick appears to exhibit when reading individual words and words in sentences.

Phonics Survey

The ability to sound out new and unfamiliar words is an essential part of being an accomplished reader. Maverick has many gaps in his knowledge in this area, and for this reason, I did not complete the whole survey.

Letter Names

Maverick knows all the letter names when seeing the alphabet in upper and lowercase, although he initially called the letter 'U' an 'O' and lowercase 'q' was called 'p', an error he left unchanged. I imagine this is more of a reversal issue.

Consonant Sounds

Maverick was able to correctly give all of the consonant letter sounds. Maverick again made what appears to be a reversal error, when the letter 'b' was called 'd', however, this time he corrected the error.

Vowel Sounds

Maverick was able to correctly give the short and long vowel sounds. The subsequent test of short vowels in consonant vowel consonant (CVC) words and words with consonant blends with short vowels(CCVC and CVCC) confirmed that he is generally able to use this knowledge to sound out words, but he has significant difficulty transferring such simple words to memory, so they become "sight words." As mentioned previously, he appears to be unable to recall high frequency words from memory, instead resorting to sounding them out letter by

letter, or guessing and replacing them with similar looking words. In the Grapheme to Phoneme Checklist in Appendix 2, I have noted the the vowel and consonant discrimination issues Maverick exhibited. Explicit teaching is necessary to correct all this.

Sight Word Fluency Surveys

Grade Level of Words	Score out of 25	Competency
Pre-Primer (Kindergarten)	20 =80%	Approaching proficiency
Primer (Kindergarten)	23=92%	Established proficiency.

Approximate Reading Level Assessment using the San Diego Quick Assessment.

Grade Level of Words	Score out of 10	Competency
Pre-Primer	10	Independent
Primer	9	Independent
Grade 1	3	Frustration

RAN/RAS

The raw score is the time taken to name all 50 items in the test. This is then ranked using a detailed set of tables for each age range. The number of errors made is not taken into account unless it is severe, in which case the examiner should probably be running a different test altogether. The results indicate Maverick has a delay recalling letter names, which is related to reading speed and fluency. He was also below average for recalling numbers and color names.

Test	Time in seconds	Percentile Rank	Descriptive Rating
Objects	44	32	Average
Colors	54	12	Below Average

Numbers	35	16	Below Average
Letters	38	7	Poor
Letters and digits	39	19	Below Average
Letters, digits, colors	49	9	Below Average

MASI-R Oral Reading Fluency Measures

Maverick was asked to read a passage at a Grade 1 level, out-loud. The test allows calculation of words-correct-per-minute (WCPM) and words-incorrect-per-minute (WIPM) and provides a measure of reading accuracy. Maverick was only able to read 15 words in a minute, so I read the passage to him. Maverick answered some comprehension questions following my reading of the passage.

The results are tabulated below.

Level	WCPM	WIPM	Accuracy	Notes
1	14	1	93% (Instructional for 1st grade)	Maverick had to sound out virtually every word he read. He read "pink" for park.

Maverick's reading speed is below the 10th percentile for a First Grade reading level. He sounded out virtually every word he read. His reading rate and poor sight vocabulary are impacting his ability to *read for information*. When Maverick was read the 1st grade passage, he was able to successfully answer the comprehension questions I posed, but I noticed he often needed further prompting to expand his answers and at times he didn't fully elaborate on the answers he gave. He had a very hard time recalling names for items he was trying to describe. He found it hard to describe a "sidewalk" following my reading of the passage, and had problems recalling the name of a park he had visited, or naming the different kinds of playground equipment there. That said, he appeared to be reasonably good at describing something, even if he couldn't name it easily. Maverick will benefit greatly from listening or "ear reading" text while simultaneously reading along with it. It is highly recommended that all his text books and story books are available in this format at school and home.

Core Vocabulary Screening

This assessment of word meaning involves selecting the best synonym for a given word, from three possible choices. Scores of 23 and above are considered *benchmark*, meaning a student can access material at that level with a reasonable chance of making sense of it. A score of 15-22 (*strategic*) means they may have some difficulty without receiving additional input. Scores of 14 and below require intensive help. When Maverick attempted this by himself he took 1 hour and 10 minutes to complete it. When this was read to him he achieved a benchmark score at every grade level. Maverick's oral vocabulary and understanding of words appears to be good.

Grade Level	Independent Score/When Read to Score	Rating
1	23/30 30/30	Benchmark
2	9/30 30/30	Intensive/Benchmark
3	9/30 30/30	Intensive/Benchmark
4	16/30 29/30	Strategic/Benchmark
5	4/30 28/30	Intensive/Benchmark

Reading Maze

This timed test measures a student's silent reading fluency and comprehension, using passages in which every 7th word is replaced by a choice three of words in parentheses.

For each grade, a calibration table indicates whether the student is reading at or below benchmark. It should be noted that in Maverick's case the passage was read to him.

The results are tabulated below.

Grade level	Words correct in 3 minutes	Performance
2	21	Benchmark
3	26	Benchmark
4	31	Benchmark
5	38	Benchmark

Maverick does not appear to have a language comprehension issue, but he should be using assistive technology, such as the services that Learning Ally provides, or some other form of text-to-speech. This should be happening at both home and school.

Spelling Dictation.

Maverick has major difficulties making the correct grapheme choices when spelling. His spelling is around a First Grade level: He scored 6 years and 11 months. I can also see that his phonemic weaknesses play a part in this area. While spelling by sounding out is the weakest driver for spelling choices, it is still important for selecting the correct vowels, and consonants. Maverick appears unaware of any of the basic spelling rules. I won't highlight all the errors he made, but I have used them in selecting the foundational spelling rules in the checklist in Appendix 2. While Maverick was undergoing this assessment, I noted that he routinely forgot to use a capital letter at the beginning of his sentences, although as he progressed, he did notice and went back to make the correction. He forms a number of his letters incorrectly, writing from the bottom up or using non-standard sequences. He didn't angle his paper, which made it hard to write in a straight line. His pencil grip appears to be good, but he doesn't always use his free hand to steady the paper.

Unaided Writing

The raw results from this exercise are tabulated below, after which I have listed some additional observations:

Measurement	Score	Notes
Total words written (TWW)	27	
Total letters written (TLW)	86	17 letters per minute: Performing at a first grade level in terms of writing fluency.
Words spelled correctly (WSC)	14 or 10	Maverick asked his dad to give him the first four words "Once upon a time." This impacted CWS and the spelling and overall accuracy.
Correct writing sequences (CWS)	6 or 2	A complex measurement involving accuracy of spelling, grammar, capitalization and punctuation.
Spelling accuracy	52% or 37%	
Average word length	3.2	News reports average around 5 characters/word.
Overall accuracy	6/30=20% 2/30=7%	Considering spelling, punctuation and usage.

Students with dysgraphia face several hurdles with writing: Not just letter formation, but also that the cognitive effort required leaves little working memory available for sentence composition, spelling, and grammar.

Handwriting remediation involves teaching the correct start points and sequences plus *lots* of practice. Maverick struggles in this area and would benefit from help, but keyboarding and speech to text should also be considered as other options alongside handwriting to allow Maverick to more quickly and easily record his thoughts and ideas. The problem with improving handwriting is that, unless the practice is repetitive and cognitively simple, it is hard to develop automaticity.

Appendix 2 Specific Tutoring Checklist

Grapheme to Phoneme Checklist

This is a list of the graphemes that Maverick will benefit from knowing in order to successfully sound out an unfamiliar CVC, CCVC and CVCC words.

Grapheme	Sound Choices
d/b	Maverick confused b and d in a few cvc words. This is very likely a reversal issue.
e	Maverick confused the short e sound with the short u sound.
i	Maverick gave a short a and a short u sound for this letter in two different cvc words.
a	Maverick replaced the word tack with take, therefore making the short vowel long. This probably has to do with his lack of knowledge of the closed syllable, and a lack of knowledge and application of the 'ck' or Soldier Spelling Rule as well as lack of knowledge of the vowel-consonant-e syllable type.
t	Maverick replaced rut with run. He did correct this.
q	Maverick gave the sound /p/ for q, which again likely demonstrates a reversal issue.

Spelling Rules

I shall endeavor to teach these essential, reliable and simple rules. Maverick will learn far more than these as we progress through Orton-Gillingham Level 1, but this will be our starting point.

c/k/ck rules	Whether to use 'c', 'k', or 'ck' is well defined, with few exceptions. (Cat/Kite Rule & the 'soldier rule.')
ch/tch rule	Also known as the 'soldier rule'.
FLOSS rule	The letters 'f', 'l', 's', and 'z' are almost always doubled at the end of closed single syllable words.
Recognizing, spelling, and handling some simple suffixes.	

Punctuation and Capitalization

I will cover basic punctuation, and capitalization. Grammar is covered by the Basic Writing Skills course which follows O-G Level 1.