

Severity Rating Scales and Treatment Time/Frequency for School-Based Speech Language Pathology

Information from:

*American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA; 2000),
Individuals with Disabilities Act (2004), Department of Education
Guidelines (Colorado, 2001; Tennessee, 2003; Idaho, 2007; New Jersey,
2007; South Dakota, 2007; and Connecticut, 2008; Illinois, 1993,
Spaulding, et. al., 2012)*

Disclaimer: This guideline was created from information from sources that are cited on the first page and throughout the document. Note, this is a general guideline, and SLPs using this resource should exercise clinical judgment, district and state protocols when determining level of severity and treatment recommendations.

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LANGUAGE SEVERITY RATING SCALE

- Instructions:
1. Do not include regional or dialectal differences when scoring.
 2. Circle score for the most appropriate description for each category: *Formal and Informal Assessment* and the *Functional Academic*
 3. Compute the total score and record below.
 4. Circle the total score on the scale below.

Student _____ School _____ Grade _____ Date of Rating _____ DOB _____ Age _____ SLT _____

<p>FORMAL ASSESSMENT Comprehensive, standardized measure(s) and scores:</p>	<p align="center">0</p> <p>1 standard deviation from the mean for example: Standard Score (SS) = 85+, with a mean of 100 and SD of 15.</p>	<p align="center">2</p> <p>>1.0 - 1.5 SD below the mean for example: Standard Score (SS) = 84-78, with a mean of 100 and SD of 15.</p>	<p align="center">3</p> <p>>1.5 – 2.0 SD below the mean for example: Standard Score (SS) = 77-70, with a mean of 100 and SD of 15.</p>	<p align="center">4</p> <p>>2.0 SD below the mean for example: Standard Score (SS) = 69 or below with a mean of 100 and SD of 15.</p>
<p>INFORMAL ASSESSMENT <i>Check descriptive tools used:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Language/communication sample <input type="checkbox"/> Checklist(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Observations <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>	<p align="center">0</p> <p>Language skills are within the expected range.</p>	<p align="center"><i>At least one of the following areas are deficient:</i></p> <p align="center">2</p> <p>Check areas of weakness: <input type="checkbox"/> Sentence length/complexity <input type="checkbox"/> Word order/syntax <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary/semantics <input type="checkbox"/> Word finding <input type="checkbox"/> Word form/morphology <input type="checkbox"/> Use of language/pragmatics <input type="checkbox"/> Auditory perception</p>	<p align="center"><i>At least two of the following areas are deficient:</i></p> <p align="center">3</p> <p>Check areas of weakness: <input type="checkbox"/> Sentence length/complexity <input type="checkbox"/> Word order/syntax <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary/semantics <input type="checkbox"/> Word finding <input type="checkbox"/> Word form/morphology <input type="checkbox"/> Use of language/pragmatics <input type="checkbox"/> Auditory perception</p>	<p align="center"><i>At least three of the following areas are deficient:</i></p> <p align="center">4</p> <p>Check areas of weakness: <input type="checkbox"/> Sentence length/complexity <input type="checkbox"/> Word order/syntax <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary/semantics <input type="checkbox"/> Word finding <input type="checkbox"/> Word form/morphology <input type="checkbox"/> Use of language/pragmatics <input type="checkbox"/> Auditory perception</p>
<p>FUNCTIONAL/ACADEMIC LANGUAGE SKILLS</p>	<p align="center">0</p> <p>Functional/Academic Language skills within expected range.</p>	<p align="center">2</p> <p>The student performs effectively most of the time with little or no assistance required.</p>	<p align="center">3</p> <p>The student needs more cues, models, explanations, and checks on progress or assistance than the typical student in class</p>	<p align="center">4</p> <p>The student does not perform effectively most of the time, despite the provision of general education modifications and supports</p>

0 2	3 4 5	6 7	8 9 10 11 12	TOTAL SCORE _____
WNL	Mild	Moderate	Severe	

Based on compilation of the assessment data, this student scores in the *Mild, Moderate* or *Severe* range for a Language Disability. ___Yes ___No

There is documentation/supporting evidence of adverse effects of Language Disability on educational performance. ___Yes ___No

***Determination of eligibility as a student with Speech and/or Language Impairment is made by the IEP team.**

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SPEECH SOUND PRODUCTION SEVERITY RATING SCALE

Instructions:

1. Do not include regional or dialectal differences when scoring.
2. Circle the score for the most appropriate description for each of the four categories: *Sound Production, Stimulability, Oral Motor, Intelligibility*.
3. Compute the total score and record below.
4. Circle the total score on the scale below.

Student _____ School _____ Grade _____ Date of Rating _____ DOB _____ Age _____ SLT _____

Sound Production	0 No sound/phonological process errors; errors consistent with normal development.	1 Sound errors/ phonological processes less than one year below age	3 Sound errors/phonological processes one to two years below age	4 Sound errors/phonological processes two or more years below age
Stimulability	0 Most errors stimulable in several contexts	1 Most errors stimulable in at least one context	2 Although not correct, most errors approximate correct production	4 No error sounds are stimulable for correct production
Oral Motor and/or Motor Sequencing	0 Oral motor and/or sequencing adequate for speech production	0 Oral motor and/or sequencing difficulties are minimal and do not contribute to speech production problems	3 Oral motor and/or sequencing difficulties interfere with speech production	4 Oral motor and/or sequencing greatly interfere with speech production, use of cues, gestures or AD needed
Intelligibility	0 Connected speech is intelligible	2 Connected speech is intelligible; some errors noticeable; more than 80% intelligible	4 Connected speech sometimes unintelligible when context is unknown; 50-80% intelligible	6 Connected speech mostly unintelligible; gestures/cues usually needed; less than 50% intelligible

0 1 2 3
4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13
14 15 16 17 18
TOTAL SCORE _____

WNL
Mild
Moderate
Severe

Based on compilation of the assessment data, this student scores in the *Mild, Moderate* or *Severe* range for Speech Sound Production. ___Yes ___No

There is documentation/supporting evidence of adverse effects of the Speech Sound Production on educational performance. ___Yes ___No

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FLUENCY SEVERITY RATING SCALE

- Instructions:
1. Circle the score for the most appropriate description for each of these categories: *Frequency, Descriptive Assessment, Speaking Rate.*
 2. Compute the total score and record below.
 3. Circle the total score on the rating scale below.

Student _____ School _____ Grade _____ Date of Rating _____ DOB _____ Age _____ SLT _____

Formal/Informal Assessment	0	1	2	3
Frequency	Frequency of dysfluency is within normal limits for age, gender and speaking situation and/or ≤ 2 stuttered words per minute and/or ≤ 4 % stuttered words	Transitory dysfluencies are observed in speaking situations and/or 3-4 stuttered words per minute and/or 5% to 11% stuttered words	Frequent dysfluent behaviors are observed in many speaking situations and/or 5-9 stuttered words per minute and/or 12% to 22% stuttered words	Habitual dysfluent behaviors are observed in majority of speaking situations and/or More than 9 stuttered words per minute and/or ≥23% stuttered words
Descriptive Assessment	Speech flow and time patterning are within normal limits. Developmental dysfluencies may be present.	Whole-word repetitions Part-word repetitions and/or Prolongations are present with no secondary characteristics. Fluent speech periods predominate.	Whole-word repetitions Part-word repetitions and/or Prolongations are present. Secondary symptoms, including blocking avoidance and physical concomitants may be observed.	Whole-word repetitions Part-word repetitions and/or Prolongations are present. Secondary symptoms predominant. Avoidance and frustration behaviors are observed.
Speaking Rate	___Speaking rate not affected	Speaking rate affected to mild degree. Rate difference rarely notable to observer, listener and/or General Rate Categories Slow Rate: 82-99 WSM Fast Rate: 125-150 WSM	Speaking rate affected to moderate degree. Rate difference distracting to observer, listener and/or General Rate Categories Slow Rate: 60-81 WSM Fast Rate: 150-175 WSM	Speaking rate affected to severe degree and distracting to listener/observer and/or General Rate Categories Slow Rate: <59 WSM Fast Rate: >175 WSM

0 1 2	3	4 5	6 7 8 9	TOTAL SCORE _____
WNL	Mild	Moderate	Severe	

Based on compilation of the assessment data, this student scores in the *Mild, Moderate* or *Severe* range for Fluency disorder. ___Yes ___No

There is documentation/supporting evidence of adverse effects of the Fluency Disability on educational performance. ___Yes ___No

***Determination of eligibility as a student with a Speech and/or Language Impairment is made by the IEP Team.
(Source for this scale: Colorado Department of Education, 2001)**

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VOICE SEVERITY RATING SCALE

- Instructions:
1. Do not include regional or dialectal differences when scoring.
 2. Circle the score for the most appropriate description for each category, i.e., Pitch or Intensity.
 3. Compute the total score and record below.
 4. Circle the total score on the scale below.

Student _____ School _____ Grade _____ Date of Rating _____ DOB _____ Age _____ SLT _____

Pitch	0 Pitch is within normal limits.	1 There is a noticeable difference which may be intermittent.	3 There is a persistent, noticeable inappropriate raising or lowering of pitch for age and gender.
Intensity	0 Intensity is within normal limits.	1 There is a noticeable difference in intensity which may be intermittent.	3 There is persistent, noticeable, inappropriate increase or decrease in the intensity of speech or the presence of aphonia.
Quality	0 There is a noticeable difference in nasality which may be intermittent.	1 There is a noticeable difference in nasality which may be intermittent.	3 There is persistent, noticeable, breathiness, glottal fry, harshness, hoarseness, tenseness, stridency or other abnormal quality.
Resonance	0 Nasality is within normal limits	1 There is a noticeable difference in nasality which may be intermittent.	3 There is persistent, noticeable cul-de-sac, hyper or hyponasality, or mixed nasality.

0 1
WNL
2 3
Mild
4 5 6 7
Moderate
8 9 10 11 12
Severe
TOTAL SCORE _____

Based on compilation of the assessment data, this student scores in the *Mild, Moderate or Severe* range Voice Disorder. Yes No
 There is documentation/supporting evidence of adverse effects of the Voice disorder on educational performance. Yes No

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PRAGMATIC RATING SCALE

Instructions:

1. The Speech-Language Pathologist will determine whether to use the COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OR OBSERVATIONAL ASSESSMENT ONLY RATING SCALE.
2. Circle the most appropriate description for each category: Normative (Standardized), and/or Observational (Descriptive), Pragmatics Social Language and Adverse Effects.
3. Compute the total score and circle below to determine the Overall Rating.

Student _____ School _____ Grade _____ Date of Rating _____ DOB _____ Age _____ SLT _____

	SCORE = 1	SCORE = 2	SCORE = 3	SCORE = 4
Normative Assessment of Pragmatics Social Language: Standardized measure(s) and scores	1 standard deviation from the mean for example: Standard Score (SS) = 85+, with a mean of 100 and SD of 15.	>1.0 - 1.5 SD below the mean for example: Standard Score (SS) = 84-78, with a mean of 100 and SD of 15.	>1.5 – 2.0 SD below the mean for example: Standard Score (SS) = 77-70, with a mean of 100 and SD of 15.	>2.0 SD below the mean for example: Standard Score (SS) = 69 or below with a mean of 100 and SD of 15.
Observational Assessment of Pragmatics Social Language: <i>Check descriptive tool used:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Pragmatics Social Language/Communication sample <input type="checkbox"/> Checklist(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Observations <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <i>The lists are possible suggestions and are NOT intended to be all inclusive lists.</i>	1 Pragmatics social language skills are judged as average relative to expectations when compared to same age peers	2 At least one of the following areas is deficient: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Interaction (participation in group activities, turn-taking, etc.) ○ Social Communication (requesting, maintenance, repair, protest, etc.) ○ Academic Communication (gaining attention, peer interaction, requesting clarification, etc.) ○ Non-Verbal Communication (personal space, facial expressions, gestures, etc.) ○ Perspective Taking (viewpoints, feelings, interests, etc.) ○ Other _____ 	3 At least two of the following areas are deficient: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Interaction (participation in group activities, turn-taking, etc.) ○ Social Communication (requesting, maintenance, repair, protest, etc.) ○ Academic Communication (gaining attention, peer interaction, requesting clarification, etc.) ○ Non-Verbal Communication (personal space, facial expressions, gestures, etc.) ○ Perspective Taking (viewpoints, feelings, interests, etc.) ○ Other _____ 	4 At least three of the following areas are deficient: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Interaction (participation in group activities, turn-taking, etc.) ○ Social Communication (requesting, maintenance, repair, protest, etc.) ○ Academic Communication (gaining attention, peer interaction, requesting clarification, etc.) ○ Non-Verbal Communication (personal space, facial expressions, gestures, etc.) ○ Perspective Taking (viewpoints, feelings, interests, etc.) ○ Other _____
Adverse Effect on Educational Performance/Social Language:	1 Social language skills are adequate for the student’s participation in educational settings. Settings may include: playground, lunchroom, vocational, community, etc.	4 Social language skills are developing and can be addressed in educational settings. Settings may include: playground, lunchroom, vocational, community, etc.	6 Social language skills frequently affect the student’s ability to participate in educational settings. Settings may include: playground, lunchroom, vocational, community, etc.	8 Social language skills consistently affect the student’s ability to participate in educational settings. Settings may include: playground, lunchroom, vocational, community, etc.

COMPREHENSIVE PRAGMATICS SOCIAL LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT TOTAL SCORE:																
<i>Normative (Standardized), Observational (Descriptive), Adverse Effect</i>																
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16			
No Impairment			Mild Impairment				Moderate Impairment				Severe Impairment					

OBSERVATIONAL ONLY - PRAGMATICS SOCIAL LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT TOTAL SCORE:											
<i>Observational (Descriptive), Adverse Effect</i>											
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
No Impairment		Mild Impairment			Moderate Impairment			Severe Impairment			

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GUIDELINE FOR SPEECH-LANGUAGE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA/MATRIX FOR SCHOOLS

Determination of Severity and Treatment Frequency

	Mild 1 Service Delivery Unit Minimum of 15-30 Minutes per Week, Consultation or Discharge	Moderate 2 Service Delivery Units Minimum of 31-60 Minutes per Week	Severe 3 Service Delivery Units Minimum of 61-90 Minutes per Week	Profound 5 Service Delivery Units Minimum of 91 + Minutes per Week
Severity of Disorder	Impairment <u>minimally</u> affects the individual's ability to communicate in school learning and/or other social situations as noted by at least one other familiar listener, such as teacher, parent, sibling, peer.	Impairment <u>interferes</u> with the individual's ability to communicate in school learning and/or other social situations as noted by at least one other familiar listener.	Impairment limits the individual's ability to communicate appropriately and respond in school learning and/or social situations. Environmental and/or student concern is evident and documented.	Impairment prevents the individual from communicating appropriately in school and/or social situations.
Articulation/ Phonology	Intelligible over 80% of the time in connected speech. No more than 2 speech sound errors outside developmental guidelines. Students may be stimuable for error sounds.	Intelligible 50-80% of the time in connected speech. Substitutions and distortions and some omissions may be present. There is limited stimulability for the error phonemes.	Intelligible 20-49% of the time in connected speech. Deviations may range from extensive substitutions and many omissions to extensive omissions. A limited number of phoneme classes are evidenced in a speech-language sample. Consonant sequencing is generally lacking. Augmentative communication systems may be warranted.	Speech is unintelligible without gestures and cues and/or knowledge of the context. Usually there are additional pathological or physiological problems, such as neuro-motor deficits or structural deviations. Augmentative communication systems may be warranted.
Language	The student demonstrates a deficit in receptive, expressive, or pragmatic language as measured by two or more diagnostic procedures/standardized tests. Performance falls from 1 to 1.5 standard deviations below the mean standard score.	The student demonstrates a deficit in receptive, expressive or pragmatic language as measured by two or more diagnostic procedures/standardized tests. Performance falls from 1.5 to 2.5 standard deviations below the mean standard score.	The student demonstrates a deficit in receptive, expressive or pragmatic language as measured by two or more diagnostic procedures/standardized tests (if standardized tests can be administered). Performance is greater than 2.5 standard deviations below the mean standard score.	The student demonstrates a deficit in receptive, expressive or pragmatic language which prevents appropriate communication in school and/or social situations. Augmentative communication systems may be warranted.

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			Augmentative communication systems may be warranted.	
Fluency	2-4% atypical disfluencies within a speech sample of at least 100 words. No tension to minimal tension. <u>Rate and/or Prosody</u> Minimal interference with communication.	5-8% atypical disfluencies within a speech sample of at least 100 words. Noticeable tension and/or secondary characteristics are present. <u>Rate and/or Prosody</u> Limits communication	9-12% atypical disfluencies within a speech sample of at least 100 words. Excessive tension and/or secondary characteristics are present. <u>Rate and/or Prosody</u> Interferes with communication	More than 12% atypical disfluencies within a speech sample of at least 100 words. Excessive tension and/or secondary characteristics are present. <u>Rate and/or Prosody</u> Prevents communication.
Voice	Voice difference including hoarseness, nasality, denasality, pitch, or intensity inappropriate for the student's age is of minimal concern to parent, teacher, student, or physician. Medical referral may be indicated	Voice difference is of concern to parent, teacher, student, or physician. Voice is not appropriate for age and gender of the student. Medical referral may be indicated.	Voice difference is of concern to parent, teacher, student or physician. Voice is distinctly abnormal for age and gender of the student. Medical referral is indicated.	Speech is largely unintelligible due to aphonia or severe hypernasality. Extreme effort is apparent in the production of speech. Medical referral is indicated.

Clinical judgment may necessitate modification of these guidelines

Treatment Frequency Source: Spaulding, T. J., Szulga, M. S., & Figueroa, C. (2012). Using norm-referenced tests to determine severity of language impairment in children: Disconnect between US policy makers and test developers.

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