

### **Book Review**

#### **A DIAGNOSTIC INVENTORY REVIEW**

**Bader Reading and Language Inventory (4<sup>th</sup> Edition).** Lois A. Bader. 2002. Merrill-PrenticeHall/Pearson Education, Inc. (Upper Saddle River, N.J. 07458, USA). US\$39. ISBN 0-13-089598-9. Softcover. 162 pp. [Reader's Passages Booklet also included].

This edition of the Bader Reading and Language Inventory reflects current thinking in reading acquisition, diagnosis and instruction. Literacy specialists, resource teachers and classroom teachers have found the Bader to be a useful resource because it can be used from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Many universities use the test battery in training teachers as well as advanced educational specialists. Furthermore, the inventory is being adopted by school districts across the nation. Categorizing this publication is difficult because the scope of the test battery is broad and it goes beyond being just an informal reading inventory. Within the test battery, the subtests are practical and can be used for quick screenings or for an in-depth diagnostic evaluation.

### **Content**

For those not familiar with the Bader Reading and Language Inventory, a summary of its contents are provided here. The publication is divided into three major parts: 1) Information on the Bader Inventory; 2) the Test Battery itself; and 3) Recording Summarizing, and Interpreting information. The first sections give information on the development of the inventory and directions for administration. The Test Battery section contains Word Recognition Lists and Graded Reading Passages on levels preprimer through high school with three sets of passages at each level appropriate for children (C) adults (A) or for either (C/A). Subject matter in the Graded Reading Passages is interesting, varied and includes narrative and expository text.

Both qualitative and quantitative guidelines are included for interpretation of the reading of the graded passages. To the best of my knowledge, this test was the first to provide retelling as an alternative to questions and the first to provide an option for prepared and unprepared oral reading which is important when assessing readers who do not retrieve oral language readily. Prior to reading each Graded Passage, a question is provided to assess conceptual background. This also assists in activating prior knowledge. Then a motivating statement is given to focus the reader during the

reading. Thus, the passages serve to reveal a great deal about the reader's development in a non-threatening, time-conserving manner.

Other portions of the battery include assessment of student priorities and interests, English as a second language (both a quick start test and a checklist), spelling, visual discrimination, auditory discrimination, pre-literacy assessment, phonics and structural analysis, semantic and syntactic evaluation, oral language, writing, arithmetic, open book reading assessments (sometimes called curriculum-based assessment) and portfolio assessment.

The Readers' Passages are in a separate booklet, with illustrations and the passages are clustered by level, making the selection of appropriate passages easy for a person giving the test. The adult section continues to be keyed to the areas selected for evaluation of literacy in the 1992 national Adult Literacy Survey sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. This section provides a good example of relating assessment to curriculum standards.

The English as a Second Language Quick Screening test may be new to some who are unfamiliar with the Bader Inventory. With ever increasing numbers of children and adults in schools and tutorial programs who do not speak English, this subtest is particularly useful to identify levels of proficiency and communicate a student's level of development in English to

teachers and tutors.

### **New in This Edition**

The fourth edition has been revised to improve its organization, increase its passages' appeal to beginning child and adult readers, provide more guidance for subtest selection, provide additional information on English as a second language, and include more phonemic and emergent literacy assessment. The diagnostic flowcharts have been printed on the front and back covers. This, and the page numbers printed on the flow chart, allows easier access to the charts themselves as well as appropriate pages in the test battery. An instructor's checklist now supplements the English as a second language-screening test. A case study provides a clear example of the reasoning of a diagnostician. The case study has proved to be valuable with undergraduates and those new to diagnosis.

### **Presentation**

The instructions for administration, interpretation and scoring are clear, straightforward and easy to follow. Diagnostic flowcharts are provided for assessing pre-literacy, K-12 adult literacy, diagnostic testing and quick screening. The flowcharts help in selecting an appropriate subtest and an appropriate testing sequence. The flowcharts are especially helpful to examiners who

are new to one or more of the diagnostic areas. Other helpful additions include teacher referral forms, a home information form, a K-12 summary form, an adult intake form, and an adult summary form. It is difficult to overstate the practicality of these forms. While they are specific and easy to follow, they also reflect a great deal of sophistication and experience on the part of the author.

The examiner's and reader's copies of the tests are visually clear and appealing. The illustrations that accompany the passages are delightful and add another tool that a diagnostician can use. The print size in the passages is also appropriate for beginning readers.

### Comments

This edition of the *Bader Reading and Language inventory* is the most useful and comprehensive diagnostic inventory that I have found available. The reorganization and expansion of the fourth edition has resulted in an instrument that is even more complete, easy to administer and interpret. The author has continued to provide excellent tools for assessing children as well as adults. I know of no other test that is so flexible and yet so sound. The components in this booklet can be used for quick screening as well as for an in depth analysis of reading abilities.

In addition to being a professor at Michigan

State University, Dr. Bader also directs the Capital Area Literacy Coalition in Lansing, Michigan that works with adults, migrants, refugees and school children of different ages. As of the writing of this review, more than 10,000 children, teens, and adults have been assessed at the Capital Literacy Center. Consequently, the procedures, forms, and information in this test battery have been used and refined by various people with different levels of expertise. The end result is a battery that is easily used while still supplying in-depth information.

Among the different components of the Bader, especially impressive is the validity and reliability information given on the subtests and graded passages. I am aware of no other inventory that contains this degree of documentation.

I recommend the Bader without reservation. On the one hand, this test provides all of the material needed for a comprehensive reading diagnosis. On the other, it is "user friendly" enough to be used as a "quick screen" by undergraduate students in an initial reading course.

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