



Reading, Relationships, & Resources

A Road Map for Remediation

Part 2 Gathering Information About a Child

In my [last blog](#), I spoke about the importance of reading, writing, and spelling models when planning a remediation program for a child struggling with reading, writing, and/or spelling. Today, I will discuss the importance of gathering both formal and informal information about a child. This can include anything from parent observations, to school and private evaluations; several possibilities are described below. The information allows anyone creating a remediation plan for a child to build a “big picture” view of that particular child’s strengths, weaknesses, learning styles, and character. This, in turn, better informs a teacher, tutor, or parent when it comes to choosing informal assessments to use with that child. Informal assessments will be the topic of my next blog.

In both of my webinars on the informal assessment of reading, writing, and spelling deficits, I guided participants through this process of gathering information about a child in some detail, and provided example forms for recording those findings. This blog provides readers with an overview of the process of information gathering, and lists resources and links to explore, including a new one I have discovered since writing my previous two webinars.

For a teacher or tutor there is an initial interview with a parent, where basic information is gathered, such as the child's name, birth date, address, parents' details, school, teacher, and grade level. Beyond that, a teacher or tutor may ask about school or private testing, whether the child has an IEP (Individualized Educational Program), and any medications a child is taking. A discussion might follow that includes the child's strengths and weaknesses in all areas, not just academics. As mentioned in my last blog, it is also important that a parent gather such information if they plan to write an informal report.

As a follow up to an initial interview, I like to request that a student interview be conducted by a parent, though it could also be completed by a teacher if they are creating a remediation plan for their student. This can include asking the child to talk about their family, what they do when they aren't in school, and what they like or don't like about school. After that the interviewer asks how the child feels about reading, writing, or spelling. To discover specifics about how a particular child learns, a reading and writing inventory can be used. Details about these are provided with my webinars.

A Strengths and Attitude Assessment is available free from Headstrong Nation, under the website link entitled, "[Map Your Child's Dyslexia.](#)" These assessments provide the child, as well as the parent, teacher, and tutor, with a visual indicator of their strengths and attitudes towards learning; it takes the form of an irregular star where the points are the child's strengths. Recently I discovered [Thrively](#), which provides free assessments to assess a child's strengths, learning styles, and organizational skills. The site can even start them on a positive journey of self discovery, enabling them to find their passion and purpose in life based on those outcomes. These kinds of assessments are invaluable in providing a positive view of a child who is struggling in an academic situation. In addition to this, Richard Lavoie's book, "[The Motivation Breakthrough.](#)" provides readers with a motivation checklist. Again, this can provide valuable information about a child, and is easily completed by a parent, tutor, or teacher.

Interpreting the results of a professional diagnostic evaluation can be very time consuming and challenging, but I have listed below a number of books, a

webinar, and a website that will help parents, teachers, and tutors do just that. It is important to be aware that a child is evaluated by a school only to determine whether they are eligible for additional services. A private evaluation by contrast is intended to determine a child's strengths and weaknesses, to highlight where they need help, and to make recommendations for the best kind of intervention or remediation to help that particular child. Many of these resources will also help with understanding the IEP process.

Gathering this kind of information can provide you with invaluable insights into your child, or the child you are working with, that will help you develop a remediation road map to meet their specific needs.

Resources to Assist in Understanding Diagnostic Evaluations and IEPs.

- [The Diagnostic Evaluation](#)
- [Dyslexia Screening](#), by Dr. Richard Selznick
- [What to Do About Dyslexia: 25 Essential Points for Parents](#), by Dr. Richard Selznick
- [Dyslexia Advocate! How to Advocate for a Child with Dyslexia Within the Public Education System](#) by Dr Kelli Sandman-Hurley
- Susan Barton's webinar, "[How Do You Measure Progress](#)"
- Making Sense of School Evaluations and Test Scores. This training course is offered by Vaughn Lauer of the [Special Educational Decoder](#).

My webinars on informal assessment of reading, writing, and spelling deficits are available from the Orton Gillingham Online Academy at the links below. These were written for teachers, tutors, and parents who wish to explore informal assessment of these skills in depth.

- [Informal Assessment of Reading Deficits](#)
- [Informal Assessment of Writing and Spelling Deficits](#)

Lorna Wooldridge is a dyslexia specialist tutor with over twenty-five years of experience and qualifications in the field of learning differences, from both the UK and USA. Lorna has a unique perspective on this condition as she has dyslexia, and her passion is to serve this community in any way she can. She can be contacted through her website [Wise Owl Services](#) or her [Facebook page](#). Here she provides numerous resources for parents, tutors and teachers working with children and adults with dyslexia.