

The wechsler intelligence scale for children

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The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, or WISC-III, evaluates the cognitive ability of children from 6 - 17 years old through a battery of tests (Campbell, n. d.). Originally developed by David Wechsler (" David Wechsler", 2006), WISC-III consists of Verbal and Performance Scales (Campbell, n. d.). The Verbal Scale is an orally administered test with verbal responses evaluating language expression, comprehension, listening, and logical problem solving (Campbell, n. d.). The Performance Scale consists of puzzles, picture analysis, and block designs used to determine nonverbal problem solving, perceptual organization, speed, and visual-motor proficiency (Campbell, n. d.). An index of general functioning, or Full Scale IQ, is determined utilizing the results of the Verbal and Performance Scales (" Dumont-Willis", 2001).

The examinations are administered one-on-one. (Hishinuma, 1995). The oral nature of the test offers accommodation to those with low reading skills and other disabilities; however, more extensive modifications might be required based on the needs of the child involved (Hishinuma, 1995). The accommodations may include limiting the number of subtests performed and providing interpreters for certain disabilities, such as hearing deficiency (Hishinuma, 1995). Most of these modifications are determined during the administration of the subset and may limit the comparison to established norms; therefore, performing the initial examination without modification allows for the use of standardized data (Hishinuma, 1995). Repeating the examination with modification might also skew the data due to the time need to administer the test and the fatigue of the child (Hishinuma, 1995). One of the most common modifications, increasing the time limit, has the potential to increase the overall score. If it is determined the disability of the

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child makes the test unsuitable, it may be eliminated from the examination. The removal of the battery may favorably skew the entire test. Knowledge of disabilities and disorders might also favorably skew the test results, even if accommodations are not utilized during the examination. Administrators needed to exercise caution not to allow bias for or against the subject, regardless of circumstances (Hishinuma, 1995).

The prevention of bias in the administration and scoring of the WISC-III is one of the most important rights all test takers should be guaranteed. Other rights include reasonable accommodations that may improve their score, information on the test's purposes, information on potential usage of the results, and required or prohibited materials (Geisinger, Schafer, et al., 2006). Administrators are bound to ensure all of these rights are relayed to the subject and/or consenting guardian. Failure to fulfill these basic securities, especially bias, has been an accomplice in the prevalence of lower scores amongst different cultural, economical, and racial backgrounds. The basic obligation is to meet the need of a student, regardless of any factor in that student's life (Ford, 2004). When a test or administrator fails to accurately measure the ability of a subject due to a bias, the myth of the educational superiority of the white culture continues. Ignoring the culture of the child is impossible. The child will view everything from the perspective of the culture he was raised in, regardless of the test's developer efforts of diversity (Ford, 2004). The even more devastating bias to the child is when the administrator is unable to view the subject objectively, outside of the administrator's or the child's culture.

The subjectivity of this test comes into play by the labels placed on the children based on the results. Schools have been allowed to label children as

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gifted or learning disabled on the basis of one test (Ford 2004). They have not been accountable for using the test results to teach to the potential of all children. Children who receive an erroneous label, good or bad, are left to deal with failure and stigmatism. All administrators need to be conscientious of always remembering the goal of intelligence tests is to aid in education, not discourage learning or reinforce stereotypes.

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