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Clinical Psychology for Children through Young Adults

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**PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION
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NAME: Jack Black SEX: M BIRTHDATE: 05/12/2002 AGE: 13 - 5

SCHOOL: The Queens Academy GRADE: 7.9

PARENTS: Jeb and Robin Black

DATE OF EVALUATION: 06/16/2015

PSYCHOLOGIST: Gary M. Eisenberg, Ph.D.

REASON FOR REFERRAL:

This tournament hockey player in training frequently has court meltdowns when he misses a shot. His coach, Sunshine Day, also reports he has difficulty making normal conversation. "Interestingly, he has very little pro-hockey insight." In other words, Jack stays fully focused on whether or not he has lost a point, not how he has done so.

BACKGROUND:

Jack Black is the oldest child of Jeb and Robin Black. He lives with his parents and two younger siblings in Gainesville, Florida. By way of family history, Dr. Black, a rheumatologist, reports that he himself was shy and may have overcome mild dyslexia.

Jack was the result of a normal delivery. He was colicky for a few months. Interestingly, he was easily overstimulated by characters such as Elmo. He avoided light and kept his eyes closed. He cried with new sensations such as ice cream. This was a clingy child who needed his mother to hold him in order to sleep to about age nine months. Even at age two he liked to hang onto his mother's hair or be carried. He wanted to play with mother, rather than playing independently. Some of this continued into preschool where he wanted to hold the teacher's hand. Hence, the aforementioned history is consistent with the development of anxiety. In fact, Jack was fearful of the dark. He needed to keep a light on until last year. At nighttime he is still occasionally scared and wants to sleep with his sister.

As a kindergartener, it did take him a long time to grasp common concepts. Fine-motor coordination including tying shoes and using scissors was below average. As a Queens's

Academy first grader, reading development took a bit longer. Eventually his fluency was satisfactory, but he had trouble with context and subtleties.

At that point he was evaluated for the gifted program by Dr. Brown and given a Full-Scale IQ of 128.

Now a seventh grader at Queen's Academy the youngster likes math but is inconsistent in English and dislikes grammar. He truthfully responded that sometimes he double checks his work but sometimes he does not. He is frequently the last to hand in his tests. Jack attends Queen's for about half of his school day because of his competitive hockey. There is also some homeschooling.

Previous evaluations include one by the pediatrician who diagnosed Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder, Inattentive type but did not recommend medication. Dr. Paula Bloom did diagnose Central Auditory Processing Deficit (CAPD) deficits. The youngster is currently in speech therapy with Jodi Smith of the Speech School. He clearly does have articulatory deficits.

As aforementioned behaviors have been of concern, in general Jack throws incongruities out of proportion. These things occur to a greater extent outside of the school setting. Even a video game could provoke a temper tantrum. Everyday home directions including the word "no" may also yield such a result. The youngster is known to be quiet at school.

Parents are concerned about some obsessive behavior including his resistance to foods being mixed together. At this point he may gag and cry. He likes his pizza perfectly shaped without condiments. Jack prefers elastic shorts without buttons.

Parents also describe a "hand drumming" behavior if he is excited. His mouth also clicks.

OBSERVATIONS:

Jack Black is a handsome young man of average height and weight for his age. Throughout testing was initially shy but easily warmed up. Throughout testing he was always open, honest and forthright. Throughout testing he was a very slow processor across the board. In general, his memory was above average, but his reasoning was weaker.

TESTS ADMINISTERED:

Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Fifth Edition (WISC-V)

Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests Of Cognitive Ability

Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests Of Achievement

Social Responsiveness Scale-2

Youth Inventory - 4

Sentence Completion Test

The Empathy Quotient (EQ)

Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule – 2 (ADOS-2)

Adolescent Symptom Inventory – 4

Continuous Performance Test (IVA)
 Telephone conference with hockey coach

TEST RESULTS:

Composite Scores Summary

Scale	Composite Score	Percentile Rank
Verbal Comprehension (VCI)	104	61
Perceptual Reasoning (PRI)	88	21
Working Memory (WMI)	110	75
Processing Speed (PSI)	94	34
Full Scale (FSIQ)	99	47

Verbal Comprehension Subtest Score Summary

Subtest	Scaled Score	Percentile Rank
Similarities	12	75
Vocabulary	12	75
Comprehension	9	37

Perceptual Reasoning Subtest Score Summary

Subtests	Scaled Score	Percentile Rank
Block Design	7	16
Picture Concepts	7	16
Matrix Reasoning	10	50

Working Memory Subtest Score Summary

Subtests	Scaled Score	Percentile Rank
Digit Span	12	75
Letter-Number Sequencing	12	75

Processing Speed Subtest Scores Summary

Subtests	Scaled Score	Percentile Rank
Coding (CD)	8	25
Symbol Search (SS)	10	50

**WOODCOCK JOHNSON - III
TESTS OF COGNITIVE ABILITIES (NU)**

Subtest	Grade Equiv.	Std. Score	%ile
FLUID REASONING	7.2	98	45
PROCESS SPEED	5.2	83	12
PHONEMIC AWARE	6.8	97	42
Analysis-Synthesis	5.9	95	37
Sound Blending	5.2	91	28
Visual Matching	5.8	87	20
Incomplete Words	13.0	106	66
Retrieval Fluency	3.1	77	6
Concept Formation	8.7	102	55
Decision Speed	4.4	83	13

**WOODCOCK JOHNSON - III
TEST OF ACHIEVEMENT (NU)**

Subtest	Grade Equiv.	Std. Score	%ile
BROAD READING	8.2	102	54
BROAD MATH	11.9	113	80
MATH CALC SKILLS	13.0	116	86
ACADEMIC APPS	6.9	96	40
BRIEF READING	7.9	100	50
BRIEF MATH	10.1	107	68
Letter-Word Identification	9.5	108	70
Reading Fluency	8.8	104	60
Story Recall	11.5	103	59
	9.4	105	64

Calculation			
Math Fluency	16.7	126	96
Passage Comprehension	5.4	90	26
Applied Problems	10.6	106	66
Writing Samples	4.8	87	19
Oral Comprehension	5.6	94	34
Story Recall – Delayed	>17.8	126	96

DISCUSSION OF TEST RESULTS:

Wechsler defined intelligence as “the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his environment.” Currently it is assumed to be a measure of potential, not actual achievement, the latter of which is affected by such factors as motivation and ability to process information. Although I.Q. test scores may vary a few points in time, the general level or “range” does not generally vary as achievement test scores do.

Jack's unique set of thinking and reasoning abilities make his overall intellectual functioning difficult to summarize by a single score on the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – Fifth Edition (WISC-V). His verbal reasoning abilities are much better developed than his nonverbal reasoning abilities. Making sense of complex verbal information and using verbal abilities to solve novel problems are a strength for Jack. Processing complex visual information by forming spatial images of part-whole relationships and/or by manipulating the parts to solve novel problems without using words is a weakness.

Jack’s verbal reasoning abilities as measured by the Verbal Comprehension Index are in the Average range and above those of approximately 61% of his peers (VCI = 104; 95% confidence interval = 97-111). The Verbal Comprehension Index is designed to measure verbal reasoning and concept formation. Jack’s performance on the verbal subtests contributing to the VCI is somewhat variable although it is not especially unusual. Examination of Jack’s performance on individual subtests provides additional information regarding his specific verbal abilities.

Jack’s nonverbal reasoning abilities as measured by the Perceptual Reasoning Index are in the Low Average range and above those of only 21% of his peers (PRI = 88; 95% confidence interval = 81-97). The Perceptual Reasoning Index is designed to measure fluid reasoning in the perceptual domain with tasks that primarily assess nonverbal fluid reasoning and perceptual organization abilities. Jack performed comparably on the perceptual reasoning subtests contributing to the PRI, suggesting that his visual-spatial reasoning and perceptual-organizational skills are similarly developed. Jack performed much better on tasks that require abstract concept formation and categorical reasoning that must be verbally expressed (Similarities = 12), than tasks requiring abstract categorical reasoning without verbal expression required (Picture Concepts = 7).

Jack's ability to sustain attention, concentrate, and exert mental control is in the High Average range. He performed better than approximately 75% of his age-mates in this area (Working Memory Index = 110; 95% confidence interval 102-117).

Jack's abilities to sustain attention, concentrate, and exert mental control are better developed than his nonverbal reasoning abilities. Good mental control may facilitate the processing of complex information and ease the learning of new material.

Jack's ability in processing simple or routine visual material without making errors is in the Average range when compared to his peers. He performed better than approximately 34% of his peers on the processing speed tasks (Processing Speed Index = 94; 95% confidence interval 86-104).

Jack achieved his best performance among the nonverbal reasoning tasks on the Matrix Reasoning subtest and lowest score on the Picture Concepts, and Block Design subtests. His performance across these areas differs significantly, suggesting that these are the areas of most pronounced strength and weakness, respectively, in Jack's profile of nonverbal reasoning abilities. His weak performances on the Block Design, and Picture Concepts subtests were below that of most children his age. The Matrix Reasoning subtest required Jack to look at an incomplete matrix and select the missing portion from five response options. This subtest assesses fluid visual information processing and abstract reasoning skills; (Matrix Reasoning scaled score = 10). The Block Design subtest required Jack to use two-color cubes to construct replicas of two-dimensional, geometric patterns. This subtest assesses nonverbal fluid reasoning and the ability to mentally organize visual information. More specifically, this subtest assesses his ability to analyze part-whole relationships when information is presented spatially. Performance on this task also may be influenced by visual-spatial perception and visual perception-fine motor coordination, as well as planning ability; (Block Design scaled score = 7).

Overall, the WISC-V suggests a very average IQ (99), which is in direct contrast to the 128 received when tested for the gifted program. It is estimated that the previous IQ is an inflation. Inconsistently, Jack struggled with conceptual reasoning throughout the IQ examination.

The Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests Of Cognitive Ability using the Normative Update series yields three scores: Grade Equivalent, Percentile, and Standard Score. The latter is on the same mathematical scale as the I.Q. and hence is directly comparable to it as "expectation." Since Jack received a Full Scale I.Q. of 99, one would use this as the hallmark with which to compare the WJ Standard Scores (SS). The Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests Of Achievement using the Normative Update was administered to rate actual academic skills as they stand currently.

Three tests of reading achievement were administered: Letter-Word Identification, Reading Fluency, Passage Comprehension. Letter-Word Identification measures isolated sight vocabulary, the ability to quickly recognize letters and words by sight. Passage Comprehension measures comprehension of contextual information. The test requires a subject to read a phrase, sentence, or short paragraph, to understand the main idea of the written material, and then to

supply a missing word to complete the passage. In Reading Fluency, the student quickly reads simple sentences and decides if they are true or false.

The Broad Reading cluster score falls exactly on grade level and commensurate with expectation. However, note the reading comprehension or Passage Comprehension score was below average. Here indeed Jack had difficulty with context.

Math was rated well above average, as shown by the Broad Math cluster score. Three tests of math achievement were administered: Calculation, Applied Problems and Math Fluency. Calculation measures the ability to perform mathematical calculations fundamental to more complex mathematical reasoning and problem solving. Applied Problems measures skill in analyzing and solving practical problems in mathematics. This test requires subjects to comprehend the nature of the problem, recognize relevant information, identify and perform necessary calculations and sometimes include distracting information. Math Fluency requires students to solve simple addition, subtraction, and multiplication facts quickly. It is a timed test, similar to a school's "mad minute" math test. Scores relate to processing and math skills.

Jack enjoys math and it is an area of strength.

Writing was measured by the Writing Samples subtest. Writing Samples allow the student to creatively complete sentence stems. Jack's sentences were complete, terse, flat and somewhat naïve given his grade level. Writing was rated below average.

Subsequently, the Woodcock Johnson III, Test Of Cognitive Ability using the Normative Update was administered to check learning disabilities or processing. Here, auditory, visual, memory function, logic and reasoning are evaluated on the same three statistical scales as the WJA.

Auditory processing was checked via the Sound Blending and Incomplete Words subtests and summarized on the Phonemic Awareness cluster score. Auditory processing is the ability to analyze and synthesize auditory stimuli. Auditory processing involves the perception of patterns among sounds. Sometimes called "phonological awareness" auditory processing plays an important role in acquiring reading and spelling skills. Deficiencies in auditory processing can negatively impact language development and comprehension of one's native language. Phonemic Awareness, as well as the low Sound Blending subtest all do suggest mild auditory processing weaknesses.

Dovetailing with auditory processing is listening comprehension. This was checked via the Story Recall and Oral Comprehension subtests. In Story Recall, the youngster must listen to a story and then recall the elements of that story as close to verbatim as possible. Both receptive and expressive language skills are required. Hence linguistic competency, listening comprehension, and language development are measured. Oral Comprehension asks the student to listen to a long sentence and complete it with a single word that makes sense. There are limited correct choices.

Note that Jack received an adequate score on Story Recall where he only has to memorize information! However, when comprehension was required as in the Oral Comprehension subtest, his score dropped. Again, we show difficulty with context.

Reasoning and sequencing were checked via the Concept Formation and Analysis-Synthesis subtests. Fluid Reasoning is the ability to reason, form concepts, and solve problems that often include unfamiliar information or novel (to the subject) procedures. It includes such mental processes as identifying relationships among unfamiliar concepts, drawing inferences, and shifting cognitive strategies when necessary. Fluid reasoning is essential for successful academic, social, and vocational performance. Individuals who have well developed fluid reasoning abilities are usually flexible, creative, and abstract thinkers.

The Fluid Reasoning cluster score places his sequencing and abstract reasoning skills at a level considered about average or a bit below.

Processing speed was checked via the Visual Matching, Retrieval Fluency and Decision Speed subtests. Visual Matching measures the ability to quickly identify and circle the two identical numerals in a row of six. In the Retrieval Fluency subtest, the individual is given one minute to name as many items (e.g., animals) as possible. This test measures the fluency of retrieval from stored knowledge, or how quickly one can “pull out” information from memory. In computer language, it is analogous to the RAM relative to the hard drive. Decision Speed is a timed test that requires the subject to examine a row of pictures and point out the two that are most conceptually similar. The task is designed to measure the speed of processing simple concepts. It is used in this test battery as part of the processing speed evaluation.

Note the very low Processing Speed cluster score, falling at a 12%’ile. Very clearly, Jack is a sluggish worker. This was consistent with examiner observations throughout. The low Processing Speed cluster score of the WJ was consistent with the low Processing Speed Index of the WISC-IV.

Jack himself was checked for psychological symptoms via the Youth Inventory – 4. He endorsed many of the symptoms consistent with ADHD including distractibility and forgetfulness. He does report anxiety, especially about whether or not he will win a hockey tournament. He might be anxious before a tournament. He was honest about his other anxieties including darkness and lightning. He knows that he might get upset if he loses a match and will retain that feeling for some time. Jack acknowledges being shy around peers. He also does not like being left at home.

Mrs. Black completed a similar scale with the parents’ perspective. She too saw fidgetiness and distractibility. Temper loss only occurs with parents. She did acknowledge anxieties across the board including worries, edginess, difficulty relaxing and overconcerns about his abilities. She reiterated his “hands twirling” movements. Mrs. Black was concerned about the fact that the youngster is very rarely interested in close peer relationships. He does not like to hug. She is concerned about his confidence level.

Next, Mr. and Mrs. Black completed the Social Responsiveness Scale. Here they rated their youngster on 66 different items. The psychologist subsequently classified them into diagnostic categories. Mr. and Mrs. Black were concerned about their child's emotional distance, his tenseness in social situations, his monotonic tone of voice and his odd repetitive behaviors. Sometimes he looks too serious or is oversensitive to textures and sounds. Jack's scores spiked at a very clinically significant level of a T-score well above 90. In other words, Mrs. Black's ratings of his autistic-like behaviors fell at the maximum of the scale. Clearly, this youngster met criterion for high-functioning autism, formerly called Asperger's Syndrome.

Given social concerns plus a history of preoccupations the youngster was administered the ADOS – 2. During that test he had very limited eye contact and only immediate awareness of the examiner's needs and procedures. When direct questions occurred, they occurred without eye contact. Descriptions of oral test stimuli were done in a flat fashion. Only factual information was communicated, never emotions or a creative element. In fact, Jack seemed uncomfortable with anything other than black and white information. He does not discuss his feelings. Jack's final ADOS– 2 Comparison score was an 8, placing him well above clinical criteria for Autism.

The Sentence Completion Test was administered to better understand his underlying feelings. Jack acknowledged some of his anxieties including the dark and lightning in his response to "hide under his covers." He also acknowledged his anger about losing hockey matches and the fact that he might continually review how he could have made a better shot.

Jack talked about power struggles at home. His mother is often pushing him to complete his homework, which Jack responds "I do not want to." Jack is worried about new things in his life, such as going to eighth grade.

The Empathy Quotient was administered. Here Jack acknowledged that he has difficulty knowing what to do in a social situation. He acknowledges lack of motivation in meeting new friends. He knows he cannot perceive if someone else wants to enter a conversation. He knows he struggles in predicting how well he or someone else feels. Jack's Empathy Quotient Score was a 15, which fell well within the range for "lower than average ability for understanding how other people feel." It was very consistent with an Asperger's diagnosis.

SUMMARY:

Jack Black is a 13-year-old student about to enter eighth grade. He trains in competitive hockey and attends Queen's Academy for only half of the day. His hockey coach reports frequent meltdowns on the court with missed shots. He also struggles in making normal conversations or understanding the bigger picture of a hockey match. In hockey and elsewhere Jack is very concrete. If he wins he played well and if he loses he played poorly. Jack has trouble perceiving his own style.

Psychoeducational testing indicated a very average IQ. Subtests within the WISC-IV do suggest some concreteness and difficulty with comparison and contrast.

Achievement testing indicated very average reading skill with perhaps below average reading comprehension. This is because Jack has trouble understanding the context. Math was a strength and rated above average.

Processing tests show slight weaknesses in auditory processing. There are inconsistent but diagnosable concerns in sequencing, abstract reasoning and logic.

This student falls well below criterion for ADHD. This disorder has been ruled out.

All reports indicate that Jack has difficulty understanding his own and others' feelings. He does not experience his temper until it already is emerging. He has difficulty reading his friends' faces, especially any social subtleties. He shows very little interest in having close relationships and does not like to hug.

This student's history is very consistent with anxiety. He was easily overwhelmed by characters as a child. He did not like light and fussed about his food. He cried with the sensation of his first ice cream. Even through preschool he needed his hand held by an adult. Now he overreacts to lightning and the dark.

However, anxiety is most apparent in social situations. This youngster is fearful about initiating any form of social relationship with even peers that he knows.

The possibility of preoccupations was reviewed. This youngster is preoccupied with hockey. He watches it constantly and talks about it all the time. However, this is also a family activity. There is, however, clear indication of self-stimming. This is what parents refer to as the "hand twirling movements."

Hence, this pattern of diminished social skills, preoccupations and self-stimming is very clearly Asperger's Syndrome, now called high-functioning Autism.

DIAGNOSIS:

DSM 5: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Level 1

Without Intellectual impairment

Without Language impairment

Formerly called Asperger's Syndrome (with secondary anxiety)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Individual therapy that emphasizes helping him read his own emotions as well as that of others. To this end, Jack will be taught how to understand how each of his body parts might reflect emotions. For instance, a banging fist will indicate escalating anger.
2. In this case the psychologist will work closely with the hockey coach so that incidents of tantrums on the court can be used as teaching opportunities.

3. Most important will be a social skills training class. Specific recommendations were made.
4. Given the severity of his anxiety, it would be productive if this youngster was placed on an antidepressant/antianxiety agent such as an SSRI. He was referred to Dr. Pinky for this purpose.
5. Role-playing social skills scenarios was discussed with the parents. The parents can also play sitcoms on TV and help Jack read the faces of these individuals. This too helps with social skills.
6. Given the slow processing speed, extended-time testing at Queen's Academy is strongly recommended. Queen's Academy may also be help by understanding the youngster's diagnosis. They may need to reexplain directions to him, as well as help him to be more assertive in asking questions when he does not understand.
7. Teach social interaction patterns by role playing, teaching and practicing plus modeling. Such examples include:
 - A) turn taking
 - B) complimenting
 - C) negotiating
 - D) waiting
 - E) responding
 - F) joining
 - G) accepting answers
 - H) handling joking and teasing
8. These findings were explained to Mr. and Mrs. Black. It will be important for them to educate themselves on Asperger's Disorder. Asperger's children often "do not get it," meaning that they are delayed in their conceptual abilities. Explanations often fall on deaf ears. Asperger's children also have difficulty reading the subtle needs of their parents, peers, or teachers. Hence, this child will not know instinctively what course he should take.

Hence, Asperger's children must be taught what others learn naturally!
9. Teaching Jack means that tasks should be presented singularly, in that he will be unable to multitask. Social skills should be handled by role-playing. It will be appropriate to "prompt" Jack before he enters certain situations as to the right thing to say. In other situations, should he be socially inappropriate, role-play can be used to teach him new skills.

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