

Learning Process Profile

Appraisal Forms

For use by teachers or adolescent to adult students
in collaboration with educational intervention specialists
to guide development of learning and instructional strategies

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Preview

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Excerpts of Text from the Manual

Introduction and Guidelines

"If you are planning for a year, sow rice;
if you are planning for a decade, plant trees;
if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people."
Chinese Proverb

This author designed the appraisal forms to facilitate the conceptualization and development of observational and experiential learning process profiles by those who actually do the work, with the collaborative support of a qualified intervention specialist. In turn, the users work with the specialist to apply the profile information in designing informal, individualized instructional and learning support strategies specific to each student's needs. This profile system is intended to help teachers gain better understanding of the learning needs of struggling students to enhance support planning, or to guide older students in improving self-understanding and self-direction in learning and achievement. Some uses for these forms include:

- To bolster services in private tutoring or educational therapy settings
- To assist school staff with general education pre-referral support
- To help facilitate group problem-solving or development of intervention plans by student study or collaboration teams
- To support assessment or program planning
- To improve progress monitoring
- To improve collaborative support across educational settings in conjunction with specialized intervention services

The best practice in educating struggling students is early identification. Every effort should be made to recognize when students are struggling and provide needed support and intervention before the problems become serious enough to require referral and assessment for more intensive or specialized services. This applies not only to moderate and severe disorders, but also to learning problems that are considered on the mild side. By catching problems early, intervention or support can minimize intensity and duration, and allow struggling students to progress to their true potential in the most efficient, effective manner. Such early intervention provides the greatest hope of improvement and success for the student. It also does the most to alleviate stress and disruptions for teachers and families.

The forms contain rating items that are designed for pre-referral use when specialized intervention is not an immediate need. The intended purposes are to establish a meaningful framework for delineating and defining concepts and processes; guide informal observation, reflection, and monitoring; facilitate hypotheses regarding learning strengths and concerns; set the stage for developing effective strategies to enhance progress; and provide structure for progress monitoring. The outcome goals are to target and define needs and to generate informal strategy ideas that capitalize on strengths in overcoming or compensating for targeted weaknesses. The procedures and intended outcomes with this profile method are at a practical, informal level that promotes flexibility and creativity in developing and implementing strategies based on the understanding and experiences of those directly involved.

Two forms are included:

- **Teacher Appraisal Form:** this is for use by elementary and secondary teachers in seeking to provide pre-referral support for their students. It guides educators in:
 - conceptualizing, considering, and exploring essential functions of educational performance
 - focusing student observation or monitoring by targeting and defining perceived and experienced strengths and concerns
 - delineating the student's learning processes as recognized by the teacher
 - clarifying understanding and determining student needs

- **Adolescent to Adult Self-Appraisal Form:** this is for use by adolescent or adult students in working with an intervention specialist. The goals are to define learning processes, promote metacognition, structure problem-solving, and develop strategies to improve independence and performance in learning and achievement. It is best completed by the student and specialist together as a structure for interview, exploration, and concept development due to the advanced or specialized nature of some process descriptions and vocabulary. Combining this specialized vocabulary with standard language use helps maintain validity and efficacy in profile development and strategy planning. It also helps the students master important vocabulary for use as needed in seeking further resources, obtaining specialized evaluation or intervention services, understanding professional reports, and self-advocacy.

As the developer and author, I created these appraisal forms and procedures using my knowledge of theory, research, and educational applications acquired through advanced education and training, ongoing professional development, and

professional experience in assessment and intervention. These profile forms and the procedures used in completing them and implementing the results are for informal use by professional educators, and by older students with the support of professional educators. They are not evidence-based or standardized. The appraisal forms are also not ability tests, nor are they for use in diagnosing any disorder. Concerns regarding the possibility of a disorder or disability must be addressed through consultation with a qualified professional (e.g., school, educational, or clinical psychologist) or adherence to school consultation and referral procedures.

Learning in a Nutshell: A Process Perspective

*"What we want to see is the child in pursuit of knowledge,
and not knowledge in pursuit of the child."*

George Bernard Shaw

Everything we do in our minds when we start with information or experiences on the outside, work our way through the learning processes, and eventually generate the target outcomes is amazing and incredibly complex. Early in my college psychology education a quote from an unknown speaker was related to my class, and it has stuck with me ever since: "If the brain were so simple that we could understand it, we would be too simple to understand it." Yet, here I am trying not only to make our brains' learning functions reasonably understandable with information that is practical, but also to do so in only six pages of standard English (for the most part). Please forgive my oversimplifications as well as the inevitable incomprehensible convolutions and occasional jargon, but I do hope it paints an accessible, useful picture of what students must go through when we expect them to learn.

For teachers and specialists, this is essentially a review and synthesis of what you already know and what you do with your students on a daily basis. I am hoping this provides a practical conceptual basis, semantic structure, and reference for progressing from knowledge to systematic application and improved outcomes in your work to facilitate student learning. In particular, this might set the stage for productive use of these profiles in helping students who are struggling. This is also a more descriptive, cohesive guide to the learning processes addressed in these profiles that can guide recognition and understanding of how the various processes manifest and work together.

For specialists working with older students, this might serve as a launching pad for helping the students gain deeper understanding of their own learning, leading to improved self-control and self-direction in both the process and the outcomes. The presentation needs to be adjusted individually to align with each student's ability levels and needs. By sharing a descriptive conceptual framework to help the students gain an essential sense of learning processes, hopefully they can start to fit the pieces of their daily learning experiences together. Combine this descriptive framework with the profile in this book to guide them in generating an overview and recognizing patterns in how they learn best and where they struggle. This forms the basis for engaging in their own effective problem solving and strategy planning, with your facilitation until they become independent.

Sample Items from Teacher Appraisal

	<u>Concern</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Strength</u>
1. The student can compare, contrast, and combine information to draw inferences and establish conclusions.	___	___	___
2. The student can solve novel problems by thinking logically, processing sequential information, reasoning with numbers, and seeing patterns. She can think of what the potential outcomes might be to test an idea or confirm a hypothesis.	___	___	___
3. The student is able to brainstorm multiple potential solutions for solving problems and devise alternatives when an attempted solution does not work.	___	___	___
1. The student remembers information he learned previously. ___ Check here if he struggles with independent recall, but demonstrates notable improvement when cues are available (e.g., multiple choice, starters).	___	___	___
2. The student remembers prior events well enough to describe them clearly.	___	___	___
3. The student learns and automatizes routine procedures.	___	___	___
4. The student performs adequately on fluency tasks and other timed tasks, asks and responds to questions without excessive delays, works at a reasonable pace, and can keep up with discussions and conversations.	___	___	___
5. The student is able to think ahead and set goals, plan procedures, create schedules, plan what to write, and plan how to complete tasks and assignments.	___	___	___