

You are participating in an evaluation to assess the behavior of a student with exceptional needs. Using your knowledge of assessment and students with exceptional needs, prepare a response in which you:

- Briefly describe the student whose behavior will be evaluated (e.g., age/grade level/developmental level, strengths/needs) and the behavior that you will be evaluating.
- Identify and describe in detail **two** types of assessments you would select as part of this evaluation.
- Explain in detail why you would select **each** of these **two** types of assessments for this particular student.
- Discuss the advantages and limitations of using **each** of these **two** types of assessments.
- Discuss the types of information you would be able to gather about the student using **each** of these **two** types of assessments.

Madison is a 6th-grade student who currently receives Exceptional Children's services in the category of Other Health Impairment due to her ADHD diagnosis. She is developmentally age-appropriate. She is great at sports, and enjoys participating in classroom discussions. Math has typically been an area of difficulty for her, but until now she has always managed to pass with limited supports. Recently she has begun refusing to complete any work in math class. She attends to instruction and participates in discussions, but shuts down as soon as she is given an assignment to work on. Her parents are concerned, and asked for an IEP meeting. The IEP team decided to conduct an evaluation to determine the cause of the behavior.

One type of assessment I would select is a series of formal observations across settings. I would choose this in order to get a better understanding of Madison's typical behavior in her other classes and to judge if there were patterns across other subjects, or if it was only math. I would hope to understand what contributing factors might be present only in the math class that may be affecting her behavior. The drawback to this assessment is that it relies on how observant the person conducting the observation is; he or she might not pick up on important factors. The other drawback is that it is time-consuming; in order to get the most information, the observations must be long enough and in enough different settings that they reveal useful information.

Another type of assessment I would choose is formal educational testing in both reading and math. I would want to assess reading in order to rule out if she was having difficulty reading the math word problems, and I would want to assess math to see where she was functioning in relation to her peers in the area of math calculation and math reasoning. I would use the Woodcock-Johnson-III to assess. One advantage of this is that teachers trained in giving this assessment can administer it, instead of having the school psychologist give it. Students typically perform better if assessed by someone they know and are comfortable with. I would hope to determine if Madison was fluent in basic reading and decoding, and also reading comprehension of short passages. I would also look to see if she could perform basic math calculations expected for her age/grade, and also what types of word problems she could or could not do. Hopefully this would shed some light on or rule out any difficulty she may be having in the area of math and maybe lead to an understanding of why she was refusing to do any math work. The drawback to using the WJ-III is that in the past I've tested students who did not reach the portion of the assessment that covered 2-step word problems because they got too many incorrect problems before that.