TRI-STATE WEBINAR SERIES

Getting to Know the ABLLS-R

Presented by:
Teresa Schultz

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Polling Questions

• Questions will be asked throughout the webinar

• When the poll opens on your screen respond by clicking on or filling in your answer

Presenter Information

• Teresa Schultz, Private Speech/Language Pathologist and a Verbal Behavior Trainer. Formerly Speech Language Pathologist/Early Childhood Special Education Teacher.
Learner Objectives

- The learner will be introduced to a thorough description of the contents within the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills-Revised protocol.
- The learner will become familiar with Dr. Partington’s normative data regarding the ABLLS-R.
- The learner will become familiar with scoring the ABLLS-R, given steps and ideas to alleviate time.

Presentation Summary

- The ABLLS-R is an assessment and curricular tool for students.
- The ABLLS-R has been normed with children on the spectrum as well as typically developing children ages 2-5 years of age.
- Highlights of scoring the ABLLS-R.
Let’s Do This!

• Let’s begin learning about the ABLLS-R.

• All forms discussed will be available to you electronically.

Why Should I Use The ABLLS-R?

• To help identify language and other critical skills in need of intervention necessary for a child to become more capable of learning from his everyday experiences.
• To provide a method for identifying a child’s specific skills in a variety of learning domains.
• To provide a curriculum guide.
• To provide a method for visually displaying the acquisition of new skills.
• It is important to know what a child can and cannot do in order to know which skills should be the focus of current instruction.
Assessment and Curriculum: The ABLLS-R
The Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills-Revised

• Developed/Revised by Dr. James Partington in 1996
• The ABLLS-R system is an assessment tool, curriculum guide, and skills-tracking system.
• Helps guide the instruction of language and critical learner skills for children with autism or other developmental disabilities.
• Practical and parent-friendly tool.
• Facilitates the identification of skills needed by your child to effectively communicate and learn from everyday experiences.

Tri-State Webinar Series
Polling Question #1

• The Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills-Revised (ABLLS-R) is:

A. A scope and sequence tool.
B. A standardized tool that one can use to verify a child with ASD.
C. An assessment tool, curriculum guide, and skills-tracking system.

Answer

• C: An assessment tool, curriculum guide, and skills-tracking system.

The ABLLS-R is a comprehensive tool that can be utilized to give an assessment, a guide to curriculum ideas, and a skills tracking system for 25 domains.
Normative Data from Typically Developing Children on ABLLS-R

• Dr. Partington conducted research to quantify the nature of specific skill acquisition by typically developing children across 25 repertoires.

• Data showed typically developing children acquire most of the basic language and learning skills measured by the ABLLS-R, by the time they are 3 to 4 years of age.

• These data make it possible to use the criterion-based measures of this tool to identify specific differences in the acquisition of basic skills between children with ASD and typically developing children at specific ages.
Polling Question #2

• What does the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills-Revised (ABLLS-R) facilitate?

A. How the child is doing in the classroom.
B. The identification of skills needed by the child to effectively communicate and learn from everyday experiences.
C. A comprehensive protocol that gives age ranges.
D. Benchmarks of behaviors that gives you state guidelines.
Answer

B: The identification of skills needed by the child to effectively communicate and learn from everyday experiences.

The ABLLS-R is a comprehensive protocol that identifies skills with a strong emphasis on communication and learning to learn skills from the child’s everyday experiences.

ABLLS-R Protocol

- Basic Learner Skills (Sections A-P)
- Academic Skills (Sections Q-T)
- Self-Help Skills (Sections U-X)
- Motor Skills (Sections Y-Z)
### Verbal Operants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal Operant</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Antecedent (Sd)</th>
<th>Behavior (Response)</th>
<th>Consequence (Consequence)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mand</td>
<td>A request for an item, for an action or for information</td>
<td>Motivative Operation (Wants cookie)</td>
<td>Verbal Behavior (Says cookie)</td>
<td>Direct Reinforcement (Gets cookie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tact</td>
<td>A label</td>
<td>Sensory Stimuli (Sees or smells cookie)</td>
<td>Verbal Behavior (Says cookie)</td>
<td>Non-Specific Reinforcement (Gets praise, i.e.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intraverbal</td>
<td>Answering Questions, Fill-In, Conversation (No visuals)</td>
<td>Verbal Stimulus (Someone says, What's something you eat?)</td>
<td>Verbal Behavior (Says cookie)</td>
<td>Non-Specific Reinforcement (Gets praise, i.e.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echoic</td>
<td>Vocal Imitation</td>
<td>Verbal Stimulus (Someone says cookie)</td>
<td>Verbal Behavior (Repeats all or part of the antecedent (Says cookie))</td>
<td>Non-Specific Reinforcement (Gets praise, i.e.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Other Operants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Operant</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Antecedent (Sd)</th>
<th>Behavior (Response)</th>
<th>Consequence (Consequence)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receptive (Discrimination)</td>
<td>Chooses a picture or item from an array</td>
<td>Verbal Stimulus (Someone says Touch cookie)</td>
<td>Non-Verbal Behavior (Child touches cookie)</td>
<td>Non-Specific Reinforcement (Gets praise, i.e.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receptive (Listener Respon-</td>
<td>Follows a direction</td>
<td>Verbal Stimulus (Someone says Get the cookie from the plate)</td>
<td>Non-Verbal Behavior (Gets the cookie)</td>
<td>Non-Specific Reinforcement (Gets praise, i.e.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d to Directions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitation</td>
<td>Copies a motor action</td>
<td>Non-Verbal Stimulus (Person performs an action)</td>
<td>Non-Verbal Behavior (Person imitates same action)</td>
<td>Non-Specific Reinforcement (Gets praise, i.e.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match to Sample</td>
<td>Matches a picture or object to the sample</td>
<td>Non-Verbal Stimulus (Presentation of stimuli)</td>
<td>Non-Verbal Behavior (In presence of 1 stimulus, a second stimulus is selected with shared properties)</td>
<td>Non-Specific Reinforcement (Gets praise, i.e.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ABLLS-R VERBAL OPERANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task (SECTION A)</th>
<th>Visual Performance (SECTION B)</th>
<th>Receptive (SECTION C)</th>
<th>Inference (SECTION D)</th>
<th>Schema (SECTION E)</th>
<th>Acts (SECTION F)</th>
<th>Intermodal (SECTION G)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>*Initiates sounds and sound combinations</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>*After the student has about 10 sounds acquired, start teaching new sounds.</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>*Label reinforcing items</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>*Label common objects</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>*Label common people</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>*Label common pictures</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>*Label common ongoing actions</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>*After teach and reinforce these new sounds, only work on the sounds that the student is motivated and enjoys.</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
</tr>
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<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>After teach and reinforce these new sounds, only work on the sounds that the student is motivated and enjoys.</td>
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<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>*While others are singing, the student will be able to fill in some words and pictures of songs.</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>*Early: Matching regarding letters and sounds</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>*Animal sounds</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
<td>Early Learner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ABLLS-R VERBAL OPERANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module (SECTION A)</th>
<th>Visual Performance (SECTION B)</th>
<th>Receptive (SECTION C)</th>
<th>Initiative (SECTION D)</th>
<th>Expressive (SECTION E)</th>
<th>Intraverbal (SECTION F)</th>
<th>Intraverbal (SECTION G)</th>
<th>Intraverbal (SECTION H)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advanced Learner</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Asks others to perform specified actions</td>
<td>* Identifies missing items needed for a task</td>
<td>* Requests help in completing sentences</td>
<td>* Requests help to ask others to attend to their actions</td>
<td>* Requests help in completing sentences</td>
<td>* Requests help to ask others to attend to their actions</td>
<td>* Requests help in completing sentences</td>
<td>* Requests help to ask others to attend to their actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Block design (puzzle pieces)</td>
<td>* Completes simple mazes</td>
<td>* Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect</td>
<td>* Identifies non-examples</td>
<td>* Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect</td>
<td>* Identifies non-examples</td>
<td>* Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect</td>
<td>* Identifies non-examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Requests attention (child will ask others to attend to their actions)</td>
<td>* Identifies missing items needed for a task</td>
<td>* Requests help in completing sentences</td>
<td>* Requests help to ask others to attend to their actions</td>
<td>* Requests help in completing sentences</td>
<td>* Requests help to ask others to attend to their actions</td>
<td>* Requests help in completing sentences</td>
<td>* Requests help to ask others to attend to their actions</td>
</tr>
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<td>* Requests help in completing sentences</td>
<td>* Requests help to ask others to attend to their actions</td>
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<td>* Requests help in completing sentences</td>
<td>* Requests help to ask others to attend to their actions</td>
<td>* Requests help in completing sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Identifies non-examples</td>
<td>* Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect</td>
<td>* Identifies non-examples</td>
<td>* Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect</td>
<td>* Identifies non-examples</td>
<td>* Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect</td>
<td>* Identifies non-examples</td>
<td>* Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect</td>
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<tr>
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<td>* Identifies non-examples</td>
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<td>* Identifies non-examples</td>
<td>* Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect</td>
<td>* Identifies non-examples</td>
<td>* Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Advanced Learner**

- Asks others to perform specified actions
- Identifies missing items needed for a task
- Requests help in completing sentences
- Requests help to ask others to attend to their actions
- Requests help in completing sentences
- Requests help to ask others to attend to their actions
- Requests help in completing sentences
- Requests help to ask others to attend to their actions

**Intermediate Learner**

- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples

**Basic Learner**

- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples

**Receptive (SECTION C)**

- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples

**Initiative (SECTION D)**

- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples

**Expressive (SECTION E)**

- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
- Identifies features of objects that are missing or incorrect
- Identifies non-examples
Ablls-R Excel Grid

Each Vertical Column represents 1 Skill Domain

The rows within a column represent individual skills in that skill domain
Skill Domain G: Labeling

- Skill Domain G is broken down into 47 individual skills
- These skills are identified by both the domain letter and the skill number, for example:
  - G1, G2, G3, G4...G45, G46, G47
- Each skill is unique, for example:
  - G1: Labels Reinforcers
  - G2: Labels Common Objects
  - G3: Labels Common People
  - G4: Labels Pictures of Common Objects
  - etc.
### LOOKING AT THE SCORING PROTOCOL

#### ABLLS-R SCORING PROTOCOL DESCRIPTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK SCORE</th>
<th>TASK NAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1 0 1 2 3 4 0 1 2 3 4 0 1 2 3 4</td>
<td>Puzzle with a single-piece type of inset</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### VISUAL PERFORMANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
<th>TASK NAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Puzzle with a single piece type of inset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Single-piece type of inset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Single-piece type of inset</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTION:** Can the student put a single, uniquely shaped puzzle piece into a known test set? **EXAMPLES:** 2 pieces presented as group by looking and positioning. 2+ 3 pieces presented as group by looking and positioning. 2+ 5 pieces handled separately using trial and error.
ABLLS-R SCORING PROTOCOL DESCRIPTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When given single, uniquely-shaped pieces from an inset puzzle; the student will put the puzzle pieces into the puzzle frame.</td>
<td>Can the student put single, uniquely-shaped puzzle pieces into a frame board?</td>
<td>![Example Image]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ABLLS-R SCORING PROTOCOL DESCRIPTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4= places 5 pieces presented as group by looking and positioning. 3= 3 pieces presented as group by looking and positioning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2= 5 pieces handed separately using trial and error</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= places up to 3 pieces handed separately using trial and error</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scoring

• Each skill has a maximum score that varies from one skill to the next. The maximum score is always either a 2 or 4.

• For skills with a maximum score of 2, the child may score a 0, 1, or 2.

• For skills with a maximum score of 4, the child may score a 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4.

• The score DOES NOT tell you how important the skill is. For example, a skill with a maximum score of 4 is not “better” than a skill with a maximum score of 2.

Polling Question #3

• When scoring the ABLLS-R:

A. The child can score a half point on a skill.

B. Can score 6 for a maximum on each skill.

C. Each skill has a maximum score that varies from one skill to the next. The maximum score is always either a 2 or 4.

D. Each skill is a 0 or a 1.
Answer

- C: Each skill has a maximum score that varies from one skill to the next. The maximum score is always either a 2 or 4.

Having a score of 2 or 4 does not make a skill more or less important.

Using the ABLLS-R as an Assessment Guide

- Comprehensive Nature
  - Number of Skill Areas
  - Number of Skills Within Each Area

- Decision Making:
  - Should I assess all sections of the ABLLS-R?
  - What materials do I need to complete the assessment on individual skills (pictures, objects, etc.)?
  - Who can help me complete the assessment? (Paraeducators, OT/PT, Speech-Language Pathologist, Parents)
Hints for Completing the Assessment

1. Go through each section that you have prioritized for assessment and mark all the items that you know the student CAN do.
2. Go through each section that you have prioritized for assessment and mark all the items that you know the student CAN’T do.
3. Now you just assess what is left after you’ve completed the above two tasks.
4. Decide who will assess what skills and have the necessary materials ready to go.
5. Mark in the ABLLS-R Skills Tracking Guide, all skills assessed (through direct assessment or through your knowledge of what the student can/cannot do).

Final Polling Question

Which one is NOT a hint when scoring the protocol?

A. Start at the beginning and go all through the protocol.
B. Go through each section that you have prioritized for assessment and mark all the items that you know the student CAN do.
C. Go through each section that you have prioritized for assessment and mark all the items that you know the student CAN’T do.
D. Decide who will assess what skills and have the necessary materials ready to go.
Answer

A. Start at the beginning and go all through the protocol.

It is very helpful to first go through the document with all staff and caregivers involved and mark which skills they do know and which ones they don’t know.

Conclusion

• The ABLLS-R system is an assessment tool, curriculum guide, and skills-tracking system.
• It is practical and parent-friendly.
• It is easy to score, with specific criteria given for each skill.
• The skills-tracking system is a useful tool that visually demonstrates growth from one assessment period to the next.
Electronic Forms Available

- ABLLS-R Blank Grids
- Verbal Operant Definitions
- Brief Description on the Verbal Operants Within the ABLLS-R

References


- Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network: Autism Initiative Project: Mike Miklos & Amiris Dipuglia


THANK YOU!

Teresa Schultz
Email: teresaschultz117@gmail.com