Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VB-MAPP): Overview

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Where Do We Begin?

Begin with a systematic and comprehensive evaluation of a child’s abilities across all areas of functioning.
Critical Components of an Assessment

For use in early intensive behavioral intervention (EIBI) assessment should:

1. Be comprehensive.
2. Target early childhood development.
3. Consider behavior function, not just behavior topography.
4. Have a direct link from assessment items to specific curricula targets.
5. Be useful in tracking student progress over time.

Gould, Dixon, Najdowski, Smith, & Tarbox (2011)
What if We Use an Inadequate Assessment?

Inadequate assessment can result in a curriculum that:

1. Is lopsided or unbalanced.
2. Is non-individualized or in a “cookbook” format.
3. Heavily focuses on unnecessary skills and/or inappropriate skills.
What if We Use an Inadequate Assessment?

• The most important aspect of an educational program for children with autism is the language intervention program (Sundberg, 2008).

• The procedures of ABA along with Skinner’s analysis of verbal behavior can provide valuable assessment and intervention strategies for children with autism. (Sundberg & Michael, 2001).

• Most Speech/Language assessments focus on form without function. 26 out of 28 assessments studied, had no mand component and most had no systematic measurement for the intraverbal (Esch et al. 2010).
Overview of the VB-MAPP

• Criterion-referenced assessment tool, curriculum guide, & skill-tracking system.

• Designed for children with autism and others who demonstrate language delays.

• Based on:
  B.F. Skinner’s (1957) analysis of verbal behavior
  Established developmental milestones
  Research from the field of behavior analysis
Overview of the VB-MAPP

Five components collectively provide:

- baseline level of performance
- direction for intervention
- system for tracking skill acquisition
- tool for outcome measures
- framework for curriculum planning

GUIDES THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EFFECTIVE INDIVIDUALIZED LANGUAGE, SOCIAL SKILLS, AND LEARNING CURRICULUM.
Overview of the VB-MAPP

Provides information for determining the basic elements of an IEP:

• What skills need to be the focus of intervention?
• What level of the skill should the intervention begin with?
• What barriers to learning and language acquisition need to be addressed?
• What specific teaching strategies might be most effective for the student?
• What type of educational setting might best meet the student’s needs?
Overview of the VB-MAPP

Five Components:

1. Milestones Assessment
2. Barriers Assessment
3. Transition Assessment
4. Task Analysis & Skills Tracking
5. Placement & IEP Goals
VB-MAPP Milestones Assessment

- Representative sample of a student’s existing verbal and related skills.
- 170 learning and language milestones:
  
  Sequenced and balanced across 3 developmental levels –

  \[
  \text{Level 1 (0 – 18 mos.)}
  \]

  \[
  \text{Level 2 (18 – 30 mos.)}
  \]

  \[
  \text{Level 3 (30 – 48 mos.)}
  \]

- Includes the Early Echoic Skills Assessment (EESA) subtest developed by Barbara E. Esch, Ph.D., CCCSLP, BCBA.
• Assessment of 24 common learning and language acquisition barriers.

• Teacher can develop specific intervention strategies to help overcome these problems, which can lead to more effective learning.

• LOW scores on Milestones Assessment (absence of skills) can relate closely to HIGH scores on Barriers Assessment (presence of barriers).
VB-MAPP Transition Assessment

- 18 assessment areas that cover 3 areas:
  1. VB-MAPP scores and academic independence
  2. Learning patterns
  3. Self-help, spontaneity, and self direction

- Is student making meaningful progress?

- Has student acquired the skills necessary for learning in a less restrictive educational environment?

  Can provide a measurable way for a child’s IEP team to make decisions and set priorities in order to meet the child’s educational needs.
• Provides a further breakdown of the skills.

• Serves as a more complete and ongoing learning and language skills curriculum guide.

• Approximately 900 skills presented covering the 16 areas of the VB-MAPP.

• These skills may not be significant enough to identify as Milestones or IEP goals.

• Can play an important role in moving a child’s repertoire closer to that of a typically developing child.
VB-MAPP Placement & IEP Goals

• Provides specific direction for each of the 170 milestones in the Milestones Assessment as well as suggestions for IEP goals.

• Can help to balance out an intervention program, and ensure that all the relevant parts of the necessary intervention are included.
Three Scoring Forms:

1. Milestones Scoring Form

### Milestones Scoring Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### VB-MAPP Milestones Master Scoring Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>OA</th>
<th>OA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Navigating Through the Protocol and Guide Books

Three Scoring Forms:

1. Milestones Scoring Form
2. Barriers Scoring Form
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Three Scoring Forms:

1. Milestones Scoring Form
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Three Scoring Forms:

1. Milestones Scoring Form
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Three Assessments:

1. Milestones Assessment:
   Level 1
Three Assessments:

1. Milestones Assessment:
   Level 2

   Milestones Assessment: Level 2 (18-30 Months)

   (T) = Direct testing; (O) = Observation; (E) = Either testing or observation; (TO) = Timed observation

   **Mand**

   **TOTAL SCORE:**

   Does the child demonstrate frequent and spontaneous manding primarily controlled by motivation (MOs)?

   1. Mand for 20 different missing items without prompts (except, e.g., What do you need? (e.g., mand for paper when given a crayon) (E)

   2. Mand for others to emit 5 different actions or missing actions needed to enjoy a desired activity (e.g., open to get outside, push when on a swing) (E)

   3. Emits 5 different mands that contain 2 or more words (not including I want) (e.g., Go fast. My turn. Pour juice) (TO: 60 min.)

   4. Spontaneously emits 15 different mands (e.g., Let's play. Open I want book) (TO: 30 min.)

   5. Emits 10 new mands without specific training (e.g., spontaneously says Where is my go without formal mand training) (O)

   **Tact**

   **TOTAL SCORE:**

   Does the child tact nouns and verbs?

   6. Tacts 5 items when asked. What's that? (e.g., book, shoe, cat, dog, hat) (T)

   7. Generalizes tact across 3 examples of 50 items, tested or from a list of known generalizations (e.g., tact 3 different cars) (T)

   8. Tacts 10 actions when asked, for example, What am I doing? (e.g., jumping, sleeping, eating) (T)

   9. Tacts 50 two-component verb-noun or noun-verb combinations, tested or from a list of known two-component tacts (e.g., washing face, Joe swinging, baby sleeping) (T)

   10. Tacts a total of 200 nouns and/or verbs (or other parts of speech), tested or from an accumulated list of known tacts (T)

   Comments/notes:
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Three Assessments:

1. **Milestones Assessment:**
   Level 3
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Additional Subtest:

Early Echoic Skills

Assessment (EESA)
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Three Assessments:

1. **Milestones Assessment:**
   - Level 1, 2, 3

2. **Barriers Assessment**
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Three Assessments:

1. **Milestones Assessment:**
   - Level 1, 2, 3

2. **Barriers Assessment**

3. **Transition Assessment**
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Three Assessments:

1. Milestones Assessment:
   Level 1, 2, 3

2. Barriers Assessment

3. Transition Assessment
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Task Analysis & Skill Tracking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>MAND — LEVEL 1</th>
<th>Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-a</td>
<td>Makes eye contact (gaze shift) as a mand for attention or other reinforcers 2 times (O)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-b</td>
<td>Moves close to a reinforcing item to indicate the presence of an MO 2 times (O)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-c</td>
<td>Pulls an adult to get access to a reinforcing item 2 times (O)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-d</td>
<td>Points or gestures towards a reinforcer in order to obtain it 2 times (O)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-M</td>
<td>Emits 2 words, signs, or PECS, but may require echoic, imitative, or other prompts but no physical prompts (e.g., cracker, book) (E)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-a</td>
<td>Points to 2 different reinforcers in order to obtain them 2 times (E)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-b</td>
<td>Nods or says yes or no when offered a reinforcer 2 times (not an early target) (E)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-c</td>
<td>Emits 2 different mands without echoic prompts — can be with verbal or object prompts (E)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-d</td>
<td>Emits 5 mands without echoic or imitative prompts — can be with verbal or object prompts (O)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-e</td>
<td>Generalizes 2 known mands across 2 different people and 2 settings (E)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-M</td>
<td>Emits 4 different mands without prompts (except What do you want?) — the desired item can be present (e.g., music, slinky, ball) (T)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart
Navigating Through the Protocol and Guide Books

Activity:

On what page(s) in the Protocol Book will you find the following:

1. Barriers Assessment Scoring Form:
2. Transition Assessment:
3. Early Echoic Subtest (EESA):
4. LRFFC Skill Area(s):
5. Mand Skill Area(s):
6. Task Analysis & Skill Tracking Chart for Level 2:
Activity: Key

On what page(s) in the Protocol Book will you find the following:

1. Barriers Assessment Scoring Form:  5
2. Transition Assessment:  31 - 34
3. Early Echoic Subtest (EESA):  24
4. LRFFC Skill Area(s):  15 (Level 2) & 21 (Level 3)
5. Mand Skill Area(s):  6 (Level 1), 11 (Level 2), & 17 (Level 3)
6. Task Analysis & Skill Tracking Chart for Level 2:  36
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VB-MAPP Guide:

1. Introduction (Verbal Behavior, VB-MAPP)
2. General Administration Guidelines
3. Milestones Assessment Scoring Instructions
4. Barriers Assessment Scoring Instructions and Interpretation
5. Transition Assessment Scoring Instructions and Interpretation
6. Milestones Assessment Interpretation:

   Curriculum Placement and Writing IEP Goals
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Helpful information in the VB-MAPP Guide:

• Tips for testers

• Materials list

• Examples of test items

• Criteria for scoring Milestones Assessment

• Additional information for Barriers and Transition Assessment criteria
Tester should have a basic understanding of:

- Behavior analysis
- Skinner’s analysis of verbal behavior
- Components of linguistic structure
- Various types of prompting
Administration of the VB-MAPP: General Information

Tips for the tester:

• Pair with reinforcement

• Pre-score what you can

• Maintain control of materials/reinforcers

• Make it fun!

• Use a pencil initially (easier to fix mistakes!)

• Have materials prepared and ready to go

• Test in shorter sessions

• Have the guide available

• Use different color ink for each assessment

• Assess during scheduled individualized times during the day
Suggested Order of Administration

1. Score Milestones Assessment (Levels 1, 2, 3) – Skip Echoic in Levels 1 & 2
2. Score EESA (Then go back to Milestones Echoic Levels 1 & 2 and score.)
3. Review scores of Milestones Assessment (Consider another set of eyes!)
4. Complete Milestones scoring form
5. Score Barriers Assessment
6. Review scores of Barriers Assessment (Consider another set of eyes!)
7. Complete Barriers scoring form
8. Score Transition Assessment
9. Review scores of Transition Assessment (Consider another set of eyes!)
10. Complete Transition scoring form
11. Optional: Task Analysis & Skill Tracking and Chart
Look for future VB-MAPP resources including:

- VB-MAPP: Administration
- VB-MAPP: Interpretation


