

Case study 14

Dyslexia is a brain-based condition. Individuals with dyslexia have trouble matching the letters they see on the page with the sounds those letters and combinations of letters make.

Dyslexic children and adults struggle to read fluently and spell words correctly. These difficulties have no connection to the overall intelligence of an individual. While people with dyslexia are slow readers, they are often very fast and creative thinkers. And can have strong reasoning abilities.

Dysgraphia is a specific learning disorder featuring difficulties with language, (regardless of reading ability), including the inability to; produce legible, meaningful, structured writing; express ideas clearly; and spell accurately. Quite surprisingly, there are two types of dysgraphia: motor-based and language-based.

Description: 10-year-old boy is in grade 5. He is sociable and friendly. He does not feel isolated in class and is supported by his classmates. His main educational difficulties are in Lithuanian language classes: his reading skills are still not sufficient (he can at least syllabise slightly longer words), resulting in difficulty in comprehending and retelling the text he has read. Difficulty with any grammatical task: difficulty in constructing correct sentences, inserting omitted letters, pronunciation, personalisation, applying the rules learnt in practice. When transcribing text, he leaves many mistakes because of the mechanical copying of letters. Very weak independent writing and dictation skills, with the same repetitive mistakes. Letters are irregular and the notebook is full of scribbles and corrections. Slow pace of work. The child is sensitive, very emotional, gets frustrated by failures, gets angry and tearful quickly.

Key words: dyslexia / dysgraphia.

Tool 1

1. How to recognise specific learning disabilities (dyslexia / dysgraphia)

2. Description of the tool: using this tool, you will find out if the child being assessed has a reading / writing disability.

3. Instructions: for each statement, tick the appropriate option (yes or no).

Statement	Yes	No
Slow reading/writing pace		
Replaces letters/syllables when reading/writing, guesses		
Does not notice punctuation marks when reading		
Does not distinguish between sentence boundaries (does not feel where one sentence ends and another begins)		
Reads without intonation		
Loses the place being read		
Rapid reading fatigue is typical		
Mechanical reading - poor comprehension of the text read (difficulty in retelling the text read)		
Difficult to remember letters		

Confuses visually similar letters when reading and writing g-k, t-d, b-p, i-y, m-n		
Omits individual letters/syllables when reading or writing		
Omits shorter words frequently when reading aloud		
Avoids reading aloud in front of the class		
Spells letters incorrectly		
Ignores lines when writing		
Handwriting is messy, difficult to read, many corrections, scribbles		
Makes many grammatical and/or punctuation errors in writing		
Difficulty transcribing sounds into letters		
Often does not understand instructions, tasks read to him/her		
Altered spatial perception (left, right, top, bottom, on, under, between)		
Difficult to grasp the concepts of time ('earlier-later', 'yesterday-morning'), seasons, days of the week, their sequence		

4. Interpretation of the results. If you have marked more than 7 of the statements in „Yes“ column, you may suspect that your student has a reading / writing disorder. It is recommended to consult educational support professionals for further action.

5. Key words: dyslexia / dysgraphia

6. Links for more information

<https://www.noodlepros.com/blog/2018/01/04/recognizing-signs-dyslexia/>

Tool 2

1. House-Tree-Person Test

2. Description of the tool: the house-tree-person test (HTP) is a projective test intended to measure different aspects of personality. Test takers are asked to draw a house, a tree, and a person. The interpretation of these drawings is used to create a picture of the person's cognitive, emotional and social functioning.

The test is used by clinical psychologists, occupational therapists, and educators. It is also employed as part of a series of personality and intelligence tests, including the Rorschach, TAT, and WAIS, as a means of personality assessment. What's more, the HTP test is an effective tool in evaluating brain damage in patients with schizophrenia.

3. Methodology: the house-tree-person test takes on average 150 minutes to complete.

Therapists (teacher) can choose between a one-phase test where a pencil or crayon is used for drawing and a two-phase test that uses a crayon in the first phase and a pencil in the second. Each phase has two parts where the first nonverbal and creative step is followed by the structured, verbal one.

Test takers are instructed to draw a house, a tree, and a person as accurately as possible on separate sheets of paper. They are then asked a number of questions about their drawings. Buck proposed a list of 60 questions; however, trained test givers are free to create their own variations and ask follow-up questions.

Here are some examples of the questions that might be asked:

The house:

- Who lives in the house?
- Do people visit the house?
- Is it a happy house?
- What is the house made of?
- What goes on inside the house?

The tree:

- What kind of tree is it?
- How old is the tree?
- What season is it?
- Is the tree alive?
- Who waters the tree?

The person:

- Who is the person?
- How old is the person?
- How does that person feel?
- Is the person happy?
- What does the person like doing?

After the respondents have answered the questions, their drawings are analysed and interpreted.

4. Interpretation of the results: the house-tree-person test is based on the idea that drawings reflect feelings. The details of a drawing are seen as representations of various personality traits.

Drawing a house

The house is considered being the expression of the respondent's family relations and family values.

- The roof stands for the intellectual side and spiritual life of the individual.
- The walls might be related to the test taker's character strength.
- The doors and windows represent the individual's relationship to the outside world and the level of social integration.

Drawing a tree

The tree is thought to suggest the deepest, unconscious aspects of the personality.

- The branches may show the degree of social connectedness. A tree with no branches indicates, for instance, that the person has little contact with others.

- The trunk is often seen as a representation of inner strength.
- The tree crown stands for ideas, thoughts, and self-concept.

Drawing a person

The person is a symbolic representation of the ideal self and one's social interactions.

- The head symbolizes intelligence, communication, and imagination.
- The eyes indicate the perception of the world.
- The hands give information about affectivity and aggressiveness.

There are several other aspects of drawings that therapists take into account when analysing HTP tests:

Dimensions of objects

The dimensions of objects in a drawing are thought to indicate the level of self-esteem and confidence. A very small house, for example, might show the individual's dissatisfaction with life at home.

Level of detail

The level of detail is another revealing factor in outlining the respondent's personality through drawing. A very detailed face might indicate a need to present oneself in a favourable social light. On the contrary, pictures lacking details often indicate depression.

Location of objects

The location of objects on the page is also charged with significance. Drawings close to the top of the page are considered being related to dreams and imagination, while the ones at the bottom are connected to the physical world. Drawing on the right side of the page is linked to the future, in the centre are related to the present, and left to the past.

Strokes and lines

The pressure, firmness, and solidity of strokes and lines indicate determination and decision-making facilities. The same line drawn twice shows insecurity, dissatisfaction, or perfectionism. Emotional strength, high self-esteem and confidence, on the contrary, are reflected in the firmness of the lines.

Test taker's attitude

In addition to all of the above elements, therapists also consider the test taker's attitude, words, and gestures while drawing. Any display of frustration, anger, or satisfaction is taken into account in test analysis.

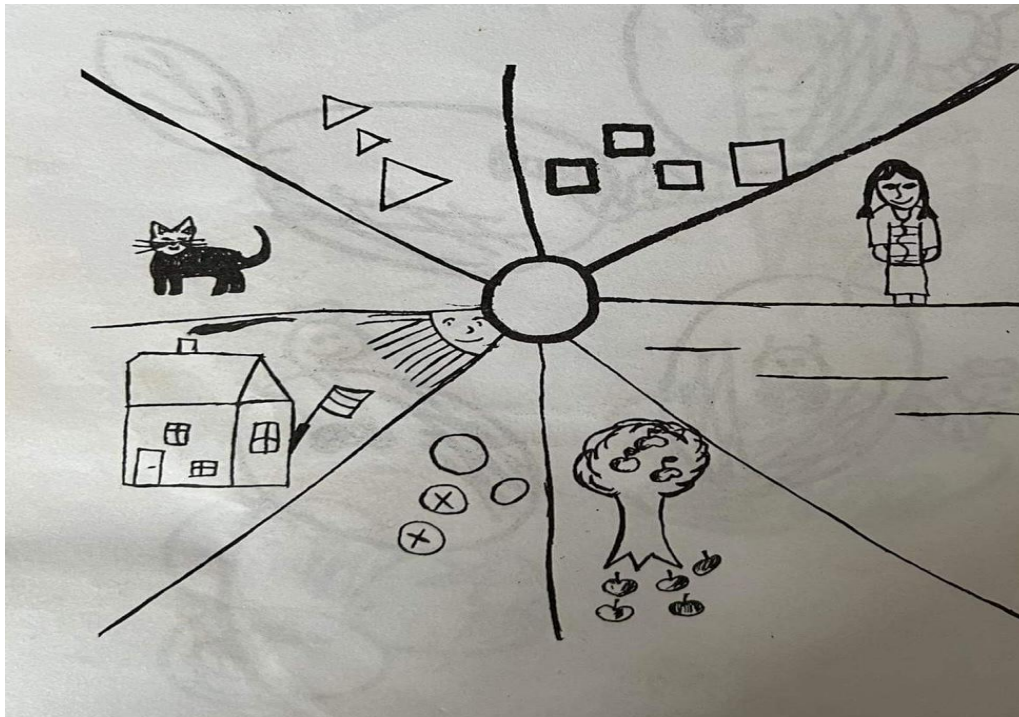
5. Key words: cognitive, emotional, social

6. Links for more information

Video on YouTube: <https://practicalpie.com/house-person-tree-test/>

Tool 3

1. Controlled Drawing Observation for predicting academic achievement by Tove Krogh



Example. Drawing of a child with no psychological, emotional or learning difficulties

2. Description of the tool: as a teacher, it's important to be well prepared to observe a child's behaviour during the drawing process and document the child's interpretation of the drawing. This can provide valuable insights into a child's thought processes and imagination, and can also help identify areas for growth and improvement.

3. Instructions: when given a piece of paper and a pencil and told to "draw what will be said to you, but only once," this task requires the person to quickly understand and interpret verbal information and translate it into a visual representation.

- Draw a ball in the centre of the leaf,
- draw a line from the ball to one corner of the leaf,
- draw lines from the ball to the other corners of the leaf,
- Draw lines to the other edges of the leaf.

We have received rooms:

- Choose one of the rooms. Draw three lines, they should be of different lengths.
- Choose another room. Draw three triangles inside it. The middle one should be the smallest.
- Draw four squares. The last one should be the largest.

- Draw four circles. Two of them should be the same size. Mark the same ones with a cross.
- Draw an apple tree. There are three apples on the tree and five on the ground.
- Draw a house. The house has doors, three windows, a chimney on the roof with smoke coming out, a flag near the house, and the sun shining.
- Choose another room. Draw a person inside it.
- In the last room, draw a cat.

4. Interpretation of the results:

This drawing can help to determine:

- Orientation of the leaf in space
- Awareness of the centre, corners, and edges
- Ability to distinguish and identify geometric shapes and understand their relationship
- Mathematical skills
- Fine motor skills and ability to hold a pencil
- The person drawn in the picture represents the child's intelligence and creativity
- The cat drawn in the picture represents the child's observance, attention to detail, and memory.

5. Key words: Awareness, skills, intelligence, creativity, attention, memory.