I interview Cathy Hunter, the school psychologist for Whitley County. She had three different catalog books that she showed us. She had the specific tests that she wanted to talk to us about marked, which was helpful. She started out by telling us that she normally starts with an IQ test, an Achievement assessment, a receptive language and a visual motor integration. She also mentioned that she adds additional assessments as needed. The norm-referenced assessment that she talked about the most was the WISC-IV for ages 6.0 to 16.11. She also talked about the WPPSI-III for ages 2.6 to 7.3 and the WAIS-III, which is an adult test that starts at age 16. Some achievement and standardized assessments she talked about were the WJ-III for ages 2 to 90+ years and the WIAT-II, which is the same group population as the WJ-III. She also talked a lot about the KTEA-II that is for ages 4.6 to 90+ years. A test that is used for students who can’t have a language test or are questionable for autism is the BAYLEY Scale, which is a more informational-basic tasks test. She said that she observes the students in testing situations and compares behaviors from other sources. Another assessment Cathy talked a lot about was the BASC-II, which is set for preschool (2-5), child (6-11), and adolescence (12-21). For language uses she uses the PPVT-III for listening and the EVT for expressive skills. Cathy told us that she really enjoys giving the tests to the preschool age because they are so much fun. Cathy briefly talked a little about informal assessments because she does not give them. One thing she told us that I thought was kind of interesting was that when she gives the KTEA for math she likes to tell the students that she can’t even do some of it so just try your best. Another thing Cathy told us is that she does not typically need to
give rewards to her students because they mostly just enjoy the interaction they get with her. This tells me that she really cares about her students and I am sure they know it from the way she interacts with them. I think this is really important. Lastly, a comment Cathy made to us that is also very important is to always take the test yourself or practice on someone, like a family member or friend, when you get a new test. This way you can understand what your students are going to go through while taking the test. Also you will know what the questions are and if you can do them yourself or not. You never get a full understanding of a test until you take it yourself. It is also important to practice the scoring before you actually give the test.


The *WISC – IV* is a norm-referenced assessment for ages 6.0 to 6.11. The test has verbal questions and words to define. It is more thinking than manipulation. When they use the blocks the tests looks more at matching the designs rather than actual hands on with the blocks. Cathy Hunter likes this test because she is familiar with it and it is broken down into four parts. The four parts are Verbal Comprehension (Similarities Vocabulary Comprehension), Perceptual Reasoning (Matrix Reasoning Block Design Picture Concepts), Working Memory (Letter-Number Sequencing Digit Span), and Processing Speed (Symbol Search Coding). The supplemental subtests are Information, Word Reasoning, Picture Completion, Arithmetic, and Cancellation. The hands’ on tasks are usually timed and it looks more at a student’s processing speed. Cathy Hunter presents the information to the student and then she lets him/her them go with it. While they are taking the test, she observes what they do and she writes down specific things
she notices. She sees how the student approaches and does the test. For scoring, she has a
book that tells her word for word what to ask and then she goes back and looks at the
manual to look up the standard score. She compares the standard score to subtests scores.
When looking at the results, she looks for patterns of strengths and weaknesses in
particular areas. The results also depend a lot on the teachers in the building. Cathy
Hunter also looks at the student’s permanent record and looks to see if he/she is
progressing. Lastly, she takes all the information and they have a Case Conference to
discuss what they need to do for the student. She looks to see if the student meets the
eligibility requirement when given an assessment and what are his/her weaknesses.

ed.). American Guidance Service Publishing.

The KTEA is an individually administered assessment for school-aged students. It
is for ages 4.6 through 90+. The test is presented in easel fashion with computation and
spelling subtests using paper and pencil tasks. The comprehensive form consists of five
subtests. The five are Mathematics Applications, Reading Decoding, Spelling, Reading
Comprehension, and Mathematics Computation. Cathy Hunter prefers the KTEA reading
comprehension part to other test’s reading comprehension part because the student has to
actual read the story and read the questions. The KTEA is adapted for the student’s grade
for written expression. For the writing portion, the children actually help the form a story
and look for specific things and at the end he/she has to rewrite the story. There is a
student’s response booklet for math, which is geared more kid friendly. Cathy Hunter
likes to tell her students that she can’t do some of the problems and to just do them and
try their best. Cathy Hunter informed us that the oral expression scores are usually high and that it is a good idea to use a tape recorder for this part because the students say so much and it is difficult to write all the responses down. With a tape recorder you can go back and listen to it, if needed, after the test is over. The scoring is age-level appropriate and there are scores for different grade levels. Cathy Hunter refers to the book for the answers for the reading comprehension because they don’t give all the answers on the test (easel). The book also gives examples of how to score a writing part. The scoring consists of determining the raw score, using norm tables to determine standard scores, percentile ranks, bands of error, grade equivalents, and descriptive categories for student performance, and comparing the student with his/her own performance.


The BASC –2 is a comprehensive set of rating scales and forms including the Teacher Rating Scales (TRS), Parent Rating Scales (PRS), and Self-Report of Personality (SRP). All of these together help to understand the behaviors and emotions of children and adolescents. By analyzing the child’s behavior from three perspectives you get a more complete and balanced picture. The TRS is used to measure adaptive and problem behaviors in the preschool or school setting. These forms can be completed at three age levels – preschool (2-5), child (6-11), and adolescent (12-21). The PRS is used to measure both adaptive and problem behaviors in the community and home setting. These forms can be completed at the same three ages of the TRS. Both the TRS and PRS can be completed in about ten to twenty minutes. The scales on the form are adaptability,
aggression, anxiety, attention problems, atypicality, conduct problems, depression, functional communication, hyperactivity, leadership, learning problems, social skills, somatization, study skills, and withdrawal. The SRP is a little different than the other two. It provides an insight into a child’s or adult’s thoughts and feelings. Each form can be used for child (8-11), adolescent (12-21), and college (18-25). It includes validity scales for helping judge the quality of completed forms and it takes about thirty minutes to complete. The scales on this form are alcohol abuse, anxiety, attention problems, attitude to school, attitude to teachers, atypicality, depression, hyperactivity, interpersonal relations, locus of control, relations with parents, school maladjustment, self-esteem, self-reliance, sensation seeking, sense of inadequacy, social stress, and somatization. The scoring is based on rating the tally of numbers and on severity. Compare behavior expected and not expected.

Informal Assessment – Reading Comprehension

Cathy Hunter does not give informal assessments. However, she did mention to us about an Informal Assessment of Reading. The areas of reading that teachers assess using informal methods are comprehension, decoding, and fluency. Cathy Hunter specifically talked to us about the reading comprehension part. She said the students read a passage and then they answer questions about the passage after they read it. There are typically five questions and they tend to focus on details, sequence of events in the story, or the main idea of the story. If the student does not get all five questions, then the person giving the test has the student go down one. The informal reading comprehension test gives an idea of what reading level the student is. It provides a general screening of
whether or not the student is able to comprehend written material. If the student misses all five questions, he/she is considered to be at the frustration level. It is very important that the teacher carefully constructs the questions for the student to answer.

Informal Assessment – *Curriculum-based Assessment*

Another informal assessment that Cathy Hunter talked about was a *Curriculum-based Assessment*. *Curriculum-based Assessment* uses direct observation and recording of a student’s performance in the local curriculum as a basis for gathering information to make instructional decisions. It is referred to as the direct assessment of academic skills. This assessment is helpful in determining when instruction should be adapted; however, it does not necessarily provide information about what to change or how to provide the instruction. Cathy Hunter mentioned that *Curriculum-based assessment* is typically used with other diagnostic tests. When administering the *Curriculum-based Assessment*, the teacher tests the students across several levels of the curriculum. Typically, student responses are measured for speed, proficiency, and accuracy. The *Curriculum-based Assessment* form is developed to record the student responses. Then, performance criteria are established to determine acceptable levels of student performance or mastery. A useful procedure for establishing mastery criteria is normative sampling, which involves taking samples of average and acceptable student performance in the mainstreamed class as a basis for deciding what the absolute mastery criteria should be. It is said that students typically enjoy participating in the *Curriculum-based Assessment*. Their active participation in this process may increase their feelings of responsibility for learning. Teachers can easily adapt Curriculum-based methods to include direct daily
measurement. The only major criticism for *Curriculum-based Assessment* is that it may be more useful in some situations and less useful in others.