

Introduction

Answering *yes/no* questions is an integral part of our communication. We ask and are asked *yes/no* questions every day. But the ability to answer these questions is frequently impaired in someone who has language or thinking difficulties.

Many factors can hinder one's ability to comprehend or answer these kinds of questions correctly, such as:

- Difficulty understanding language or concepts due to aphasia.
- Impulsivity or decreased attention skills causing one to answer before reading or hearing the entire question.
- Fixation on giving all *yes* or all *no* responses.
- Difficulty with manipulating/comparing information when thinking.
- Tendency to fixate on exceptions to the most common answers.

The exercises in *Just for Adults: Yes/No Questions* address several levels of comprehension of *yes/no* questions and begin with the easier level at the beginning of the book and progress to a harder difficulty level. The tasks can be given orally, can be read and done independently, or can be read by a presenter while the client is reading the question. When done graphically, the tasks require circling or marking the *yes* or *no* answer.

On page 6, you will find a screening tool that is not to be used as a test but rather as a way to observe a client's use of strategies and reasoning patterns. Some questions to think about while observing how the client completes the screening include:

1. Does the client need to use verbal rehearsal to aid comprehension?
2. Is the client impulsive, and does his impulsivity lead to errors?
3. Does the client read too much into the task and become confused?
4. Is the client aware of his error responses?
5. Does the client ask for clarification when having difficulty or does he just keep going, whether the item is understood or not?
6. Does the client miss salient information?
7. Is the client able to think convergently and divergently?
8. Does the client have trouble shifting from one task to the next?

These guidelines will help you present the activities in this book.

- The goals of these exercises are to improve attention, mental manipulation of information, and for comprehension of words and concepts. Be flexible with presentation and accept answers that are different from your viewpoint if the client can give a logical explanation. The answers in the Answer Key are provided as a reference and are not intended to be all inclusive.

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- The exercises are not for testing purposes. Try to make doing them as enjoyable as possible. Talking about the questions, particularly when correcting error responses, will likely improve the ability to achieve the goals. Do not get into debates if the person is unable to see another viewpoint for a response. Just move on to the next item.
- Be flexible with presentation and with accepting answers that differ from your viewpoint if a logical explanation can be provided by the person. But there is a caution: You will frequently have to remind the client to answer the questions “in general” as it is human nature to try to think of the one or two exceptions and then generalize it to distort the best answer for that item.

I hope you and your clients find these exercises enjoyable and beneficial.

Kathy