
Introduction

The *Workbook of Activities for Language and Cognition 6 (WALC 6)* was developed to provide a comprehensive series of tasks and functional carryover activities allowing for integration of language and cognitive skills for neurologically-impaired adolescents and adults with diverse levels of functioning.

The activities in the following sections can be adapted for clients with a variety of functioning skill levels.

- **Temporal Orientation**

Clients with neurological impairments often exhibit difficulty planning their days, understanding how long it takes to do something, using a calendar, and planning a schedule. The tasks in this section focus on recognizing, understanding, and using time concepts for everyday activities.

- **Spatial Orientation**

Clients with damage to the non-dominant hemisphere can demonstrate decreased ability to localize objects in space and show diminished capacity to determine spatial orientation. This section includes tasks structured to target spatial awareness and visual awareness. These tasks can also be used to integrate memory, problem solving, verbal naming, and following written and oral directions.

- **Nonverbal Communication**

The tasks in this section focus on developing strategies to facilitate nonverbal expressive communication for those clients who have lost the ability to produce speech or verbalize in a meaningful and effective manner. Specific gesture and pantomime exercises are included as well as activities for functional carryover and expansion of these skills.

- **Oral Motor**

This section is designed for those clients who demonstrate dysarthria (a weakness or incoordination of the speech muscles) or verbal apraxia (an impairment in the sequencing of speech sounds). Specific oral-motor exercises are included, along with sound specific exercises, ranging from the single word level through the sentence level.

- **Verbal Expression**

Verbal expression encompasses content (vocabulary concepts), form (how words are formed and linked into phrases/sentences), and use (what the speaker wants to get from using language). Many of the tasks in this section can be used two ways: you can either focus on one target area at a time (e.g., speech intelligibility or word finding) or you can integrate skills to focus on a number of target areas within the same task (e.g., speech intelligibility and word finding or speech intelligibility, word finding, and expressing emotions). The tasks are broken down to target a wide range of skill levels, ranging from the single word level through the structured and unstructured conversation levels.

- **Auditory Comprehension**

Following neurological trauma, clients will often show deficits in understanding spoken language. The tasks in this section cover a wide and diverse range of receptive abilities, and provide for flexibility by using a continuum of skill levels. Exercises progress from single word comprehension and discrimination to comprehending and recalling multiple paragraph information. Attention and concentration, memory, reasoning, problem solving, and deduction can also be integrated in many of these exercises.

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- **Reading Comprehension**

Clients may have problems reading due to comprehension impairments, visual deficits, or both. It is important to determine which deficit is affecting a client's ability to read, and to target tasks accordingly. Tasks cover the isolated letter level all the way through the paragraph and functional reading level, with an incremented progression of reading comprehension and visual field awareness skills. These tasks can also be used to integrate cognitive skills, including attention, concentration, and memory.

- **Written Expression**

When evaluating a client's ability to use written language, think about the underlying causes of the deficit. Impairments in vision, motor control, auditory and reading comprehension, and cognition can each play a role in a client's ability to write. Tasks may be broken down to more simplified levels in order to meet each client's individual needs and to allow for individual impairments.

For Auditory Comprehension and Reading Comprehension, you can vary the method of response based on the client's level of functioning (e.g., client points to or circles the target letter; client verbalizes, uses eye blinks, or makes another physical signal to indicate identification of the target letter as you point to it).

I recommend that you take a close look at the "Suggested target areas" within each section, and to always consider which target areas might be integrated to maximize the functionality of each task. In addition, I strongly encourage you to look at the "Functional Carryover Activity" sections throughout *WALC 6*, as I feel that making therapy individualized, functional, motivating, and meaningful is paramount to each client's potential and success.

It is my hope that you find the tasks in this book to be practical and effective. I also hope that the tasks stimulate the development of your own ideas for functional carryover activities to meet each of your client's individual needs.

Although many clients are diagnosed with the same "textbook" communication deficit, I urge you to remember that each client is unique and speech-language therapy should be adapted to meet each one's individuality. It was the unique qualities of my clients that prompted me to write *WALC 6*, and to them I am thankful and honored to have experienced speech, language, and cognitive rehabilitation with them.

Leslie