



# PLS™-5 Screening Test *for* Early Childhood Educators



## *Jenny, age four years, five months*

Jenny is a sweet, engaging 4-year old enrolled in preschool for the first time. For the past four years, Jenny's mother worked from home, and was the primary caregiver for Jenny and her two older brothers. Three weeks ago, her mother began working full-time. Jenny has transitioned to the preschool setting well, making friends readily and enjoying the school structure. By the end of the day, Jenny is visibly tired and ready to go home.

Recently, Jenny's Pre-K teacher screened the children in her class for possible speech or language delays using the PLS-5 Screening Test for Early Childhood Educators.

She uses the screening to:

- obtain an idea about whether a child's speech and language skills are on-track;
- identify children who need additional support in the classroom to learn certain skills;
- and identify children who may need to be referred to a speech-language pathologist.

Jenny's screening was conducted late in the afternoon, right before children went home.



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# Jenny's Performance on the PLS™ -5 Screening Test for Early Childhood Educators

## Language Section

Jenny was able to do the following tasks:

**Language Task 2**— Understands pronouns (his, her, he, she, they)

**Language Task 4**—Uses possessives ('s or possessive pronoun)

Jenny was not able to do the following tasks:

**Language Task 1**—Understand sentences with descriptive phrases (one out of three items correct)

**Language Task 3**—Tells how an object is used (gave vague, incomplete responses)

**Language Task 5**—Answers questions about hypothetical events (provided related responses like "dirty" to "what would you do if you got food on your shirt?")

The pass criterion for the Language section of the screening is "Score of four or more items correct." Jenny earned a score of 2, so she did not pass the Language section of the screening.

## Articulation Section

In the Articulation section of the screening, Jenny made an error on six of the sounds that are tested, e.g., she said "ticken" for "chicken" and "wamp" for "lamp." Because she said four out of ten sounds correctly, Jenny did not meet the pass criteria of eight or more sounds correct in the Articulation section of the screening.

## Connected Speech Section

In this section of the screening, the teacher marked "You understand some of what the child says." Because the pass criterion is "You understand most of what the child says", Jenny did not pass the Connected Speech section of the screening.

## Social/Interpersonal Section

The teacher checked five of the communication behaviors described in the Social/Interpersonal section, such as "Greet you when you say 'hi'", "Asks questions," and "Speaks to other children." Jenny did not respond consistently to questions, often giving a response that was tangential or about something she prefers to talk about. However, with a pass criterion of four or more statements checked, Jenny (with five statements checked) passed this section of the screening.

## Stuttering Section

The teacher selected the description "Speaks as smoothly as peers." Because no atypical characteristics (such as "Frequently repeats part of a word" or "Pauses excessively when talking") were selected, Jenny met the pass criteria of "No atypical characteristics noted" in the Stuttering section of the screening.

## Voice Section

The teacher selected the description "Voice sounds like other children of the same age and sex." Because no atypical characteristics (such as "Voice sounds hoarse, rough, or breathy" or "Coughs or clears throat often"), Jenny met the pass criteria of "No atypical characteristics noted" in the Voice section of the screening.

## Screening Summary

Screening Summary		
Check only one box for each section. If the child does not meet the pass criteria, check "Refer for Additional Testing"		
Section	Pass	Refer for Additional Testing
Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Articulation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Connected Speech	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Social/Interpersonal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fluency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Screening Summary for Jenny, Age 4

Jenny did not pass the Language, Articulation, or Connected Speech screenings. Under ordinary circumstances, she would be referred to a speech-language pathologist for a comprehensive diagnostic assessment of speech and language skills. However, Jenny's teacher decided to re-administer the language part of the screening in the morning to see if the results would be different when Jenny was energetic and alert. On the second attempt, Jenny answered correctly during Language Task 3—Tells how an object is used, but with three Language items correct, she still did not pass the Language screening.

Jenny's teacher should discuss her findings and scores on the screening (including the original and re-screen results on the Language section) with the speech-language pathologist before referring Jenny for a diagnostic assessment.

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