

## The Written Assessment of Simulated Encounters – School-Based Applications Scoring Guide

The Written Assessment of Simulated Encounters- School-based Applications (WASE-SBA) measures a person's ability to generate reflective responses, providing a kind of minimum assurance, but no guarantee that this person may actually use the same skill during conversations about change. Thus, the WASE-SBA may be best suited as a formative measure of reflective listening during the teaching and learning of MI and in simulated coaching situations.

The WASE has been modified from its original form to adapt the prompts to a school-based context, for use with school-based personnel<sup>12</sup>.

### Instructions

The WASE uses a series of paragraphs that simulate the communications from clients who express specific concerns. Directions for respondents are as follows: "The following six paragraphs are things that a teacher, parent, or adolescent might say to you. With each paragraph, imagine that someone you know is talking to you and explaining a problem that he or she is having and respond by writing a reflection. Reflections are statements that demonstrate the interventionist has not only heard but is attempting to understand what the client is communicating. Reflections can be simple in that they mirror or closely represent what has been said. Reflections can also be complex or expand on the meaning offered by the client.

### Prompts

*The following six paragraphs are things that a teacher, parent, or adolescent might say to you. With each paragraph, imagine that someone you know is talking to you and explaining a problem that he or she is having. You want to help by saying the right thing. Think about each paragraph. For each paragraph, write the next thing you might say if you wanted to be helpful, and reflective. **Write only one or two sentences for each situation.***

A twenty-nine-year-old female teacher, who is in her seventh year of teaching at your school, says: "Yesterday Bobby came to school, obviously agitated. When I asked him what was wrong, he would not look at me or respond. As the morning progressed his agitation got worse. When I asked him to participate in our group meeting, he yelled out and began to shove the other children. It got worse when I intervened, and he tried to hit me! I just don't know what to do!"

A fifty-five-year-old male teacher, who has worked for the school for 25 years says: Justine's mother can really make a person mad. She's always coming to school and bothering us or complaining about things that really never happened. It can take time away from the kids, but I've found that giving her a classroom responsibility – like recording homework or running a small discussion group – helps her stay appropriately engaged!"

A 16-year old who is having attendance problems, says: "Yeah. That's what I've been told, I'll be repeating a grade if I'm not careful. And there is no way that I want to do that – that would suck worse than dropping out."

A thirty-five-year-old mother says:<sup>[12]</sup> "My Maria is a good girl. She's never been in trouble, but I worry about her. Especially, when she is with her father (we are divorced) she does things that she knows I am not in favor of. She just had her ears pierced without asking me! I feel like her father is too easy on her, and now I'm "mean

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the Helpful Responses Questionnaire. Miller, W. R., Hedrick, K. E., & Orlofsky, D. (1991). The Helpful Responses Questionnaire: A procedure for measuring therapeutic empathy. *Journal Clinical Psychology*, 47, 444-448.

<sup>2</sup> Small, J.W., Lee, J., Frey, A.J., Seeley, J.R., & Walker, H.M. (2014). The development of instruments to measure motivational interviewing skill acquisition for school-based personnel. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*, 7, 240-254. Doi: 10.1080/1754730X.2014.949063

mommy!"

A nineteen-year old father says: "I really feel awful. Yesterday I yelled at Andy again. I just lose my temper and forget all about the right ways to discipline him. My own parents know I am struggling with him, and they sat me down to talk about it – it was very uncomfortable – but they've helped me see that I've got to change this, but I don't know how.

A 15-year-old says: "I guess, I mean all I've got to do is get through high school right? So...study, show up on time and stay all day. I mean this stuff is not that hard."

### **Scoring Guidelines**

All items are scored on a 4-point scale. Responses options are: 0 (*Beginning*), 1 (*Emerging*), 2 (*Basic*), and 3 (*Advanced*). For all skills, if the coder is uncertain, they should code down (i.e., assign the lower of the codes under consideration).

**Beginning.** *Beginning* reflections indicate the respondent did not use a reflection, or the reflection contains one or more utterances that meet the definition of MINA. Reflections that are suggestive of diagnosing (i.e., how or why it came to be) the problem represent a MINA (i.e., confrontation). Additionally, reflections that propose solutions related to the client's problem when they have not asked for it should be scored *Poor* because such reflections are MINAs (i.e., persuade).

**Emerging.** *Emerging* reflections contain elements that de-center the client or contain conversational inefficiencies. De-centering the client while using a reflection can take several forms, including beginning the reflection with "I," judging or evaluating, providing information about their own experience that may not be perceived by the client as relevant to their situation, and moving the conversation away from the client as the agent of behavior change (i.e., centering someone other than the client) when the client has already accepted, or is considering, agency. Conversational inefficiencies refer to unnecessary words or utterances (e.g., "so", "sounds like", "it seems", "you're saying", "you're thinking"). Additional sentences or phrases that detract from the focus of the reflection (e.g., "I understand", "I get it") are also considered linguistic inefficiencies. Hypotheticals ("might", "maybe", "it can be") are also conversational inefficiencies.

**Basic.** *Basic* reflections reflect the client's perspective unrelated to the target(s) of behavior change.

**Advanced:** *Advanced* reflections reflect the client's perspective related to the target(s) of behavior change.

### **Decision rules:**

- For responses containing skills that have not been prompted, score only the elicited skill.
- For responses containing more than one utterance of the elicited skill, record the lowest scored utterance.
- Punctuation is ignored.
- Responses in third person are not coded and left blank on the score sheet.