Essentials
of Assessment
Report Writing
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Alan S. Kaufman
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Report Writing
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Essentials of Assessment Report Writing
by Elizabeth O. Lichtenberger, Nancy Mather, Nadeen L. Kaufman, and Alan S. Kaufman
To Julie . . .
Your passion for books and writing inspires me to keep writing.
Your love of being a grandmother inspires me to be a good mother.
Thank you for providing such loving inspiration.

E. O. L.

To Michael for listening and loving . . .
To Ben and Dan and the joy and purpose you bring to my life . . .
To the late Dr. Samuel Kirk, who taught me the importance of linking assessment results to practical interventions.

N. M.

To Mom and Dad—Hannah and Seymour Bengels—who have the courage to make it look easy to grow old. We love you both and appreciate your lifelong support of us as professionals and at your children.

N. L. K. and A. S. K.
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In the Essentials of Psychological Assessment series, we have attempted to provide the reader with books that will deliver key practical information in the most efficient and accessible style. The series features instruments in a variety of domains, such as cognition, personality, education, and neuropsychology. For the experienced clinician, books in the series will offer a concise yet thorough way to master utilization of the continuously evolving supply of new and revised instruments, as well as a convenient method for keeping up-to-date on the tried-and-true measures. The novice will find here a prioritized assembly of all the information and techniques that must be at one’s fingertips to begin the complicated process of individual psychological diagnosis.

Wherever feasible, visual shortcuts to highlight key points are utilized alongside systematic, step-by-step guidelines. Chapters are focused and succinct. Topics are targeted for an easy understanding of the essentials of administration, scoring, interpretation, and clinical application. Theory and research are continually woven into the fabric of each book but always to enhance clinical inference, never to sidetrack or overwhelm. We have long been advocates of what has been called intelligent testing—the notion that a profile of test scores is meaningless unless it is brought to life by the clinical observations and astute detective work of knowledgeable examiners. Test profiles must be used to make a difference in the child’s or adult’s life, or why bother to test? We want this series to help our readers become the best intelligent testers they can be.

In Essentials of Assessment Report Writing, the authors provide readers with succinct, straightforward methods for writing case reports from beginning to end. Assessment reports are written in a variety of settings, and this book is designed to help a broad spectrum of clinicians, including school psychologists, clinical psychologists, neuropsychologists, forensic psychologists, diagnosticians, and speech/language pathologists. The basic guidelines and writing principles highlighted here
will guide readers through writing each of the critical components of a report: reason for referral and background information, appearance and behavioral observations, test results and interpretation, summary and diagnostic impressions, and recommendations.

Alan S. Kaufman, PhD, and Nadeen L. Kaufman, EdD, Series Editors
Yale University School of Medicine
One

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Comprehensive written reports are the summation and culmination of most psychological and psycho-educational evaluations. These reports summarize the data from test administration, integrate relevant qualitative information, and directly address the posed concerns. Because these documents inform decision making and remain for years in academic, as well as medical and psychological records, they must be well written. When well written, assessment reports can enhance treatment, guide and inform instruction, and provide critical information to the referral source and others. The findings and observations are presented clearly so that they are understandable to parents, teachers, clients, and other professionals. In contrast, when poorly written, assessment reports may be incomprehensible to parents and teachers and the recommendations impossible or unrealistic to implement (Salend & Salend, 1985). Because the results from a report can affect decisions and influence decision making for years beyond the initial evaluation, the creation of assessment reports requires special attention and care.

The purpose of this book is to review the essential elements and structure of well-written psychological and psycho-educational reports. This book is designed for novice report writers, students and interns in training, and professionals who are required to read and understand reports prepared by others. The book is also intended for professionals in the field who desire to improve their skills in preparing and writing assessment reports. As Salend and Salend (1985) asked: “What if professionals were given a letter grade on the educational assessment reports they write? Would you get an ‘A’ or an ‘F’ or merely an average ‘C’? Yet we all recognize the importance of these reports which contain data used to formulate IEP goals and subsequent programming” (p. 277).

This text is designed to cover all aspects of preparing a written report as well as to provide illustrative samples of clear, informative reports. This first chapter provides an overview of the purposes of report writing as well as a brief discussion of the major sections of a report. The second chapter reviews many technical aspects of writing.