



7 Tips for Establishing Rapport during Screening

Children are generally slow to warm up to and cooperate with an unfamiliar person. They may refuse to answer questions, attempt to leave the screening area, become tearful, grab for test materials, or play with toys they brought with them. The following suggestions may help make the assessment process comfortable, enjoyable, and even fun for both you and the child.



1 Engage with the caregiver first.

If a caregiver is present, engage the caregiver first. Ask the caregiver how the child will be most comfortable during the screening. This helps put both the caregiver and the child at ease.



2 Create a welcoming environment.

Thank the child for participating before beginning the assessment. Explain that you will be presenting several different kinds of games and tasks. Ask the child to do the best they can.



3 Use clear and pleasant requests.

Statements like, “Come with me. We are going to draw and play with some shapes,” work well to guide adherence to the screening. Avoid asking the child whether they would like to participate since a refusal can be challenging.



4 Set time expectations.

To help the child understand how long the assessment session will be, you may wish to have the child turn the dial of a timer to a predetermined point. Explain to the child that when the timer goes off, there will be time to play.



5 Be flexible.

Offer choices if the child refuses to participate in the assessment process. For example, say, “Would you like to play with blocks or draw some shapes first?” Switch to another task if the child refuses to engage in a particular assessment in the screen. After the child feels more secure, return to the earlier assessment.



6 Reduce distractions.

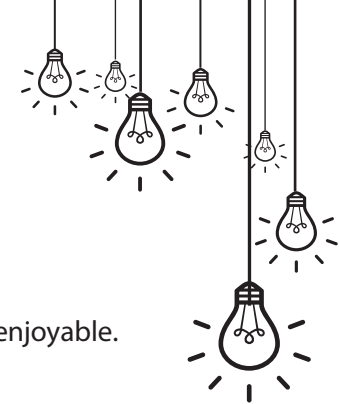
If the child has difficulty focusing on a single item on a child page, cover the other items with blank sheets of paper.



7 Incorporate “wiggle breaks.”

Because it is unlikely that young children can remain seated throughout screening, “wiggle breaks” should be interspersed among assessment items. It is acceptable to move to the floor, back to the chair, and even under the table!

Now you're ready to screen!



10 Tips for Planning Successful Screenings

It is important to plan ahead for screening. Proper planning can save time and make the screening process more effective, valid, and enjoyable.



Practice.

Practice ensures a smooth flow to screening each child. Become familiar with the directions and scoring procedures so you can focus all your attention on the child.



Consider external factors.

Factors such as illness and mood can contribute to a child's performance, so use your best judgment as to whether the child should be screened on a particular day and consider rescheduling if necessary.



Eliminate distractions.

Choose a screening environment that will be free of background noises and disturbances, and remove any materials that may distract the child. Make sure there is enough seating and the space is well lit.



Use the available free tools.

Determining a child's rounded chronological age by hand is time consuming and prone to error, especially if you are screening a number of children. With the BRIGANCE free chronological age calculator, simply enter the child's birth date and date of screening, and you're done! Find it in [BRIGANCE Free Tools](#).



Communicate with caregivers.

Support from caregivers can help make the screening process much smoother. Inform caregivers of when their child will be screened so they can ensure their child gets a good night's sleep, eats breakfast, and comes to school prepared.



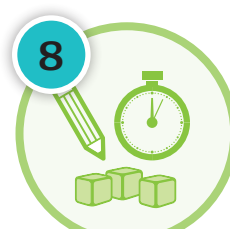
Select the correct materials.

After determining the child's chronological age, make sure you have the correct Screens III manual(s) and Data Sheet(s) for all children you will be screening. Use the chart on the [following page](#) to help.



Screen in the mornings.

Screenings that occur earlier in the day typically yield more accurate results. Young children require more rest than adults, and screening in the morning reduces the chance that the child will be tired.






Organize additional materials.

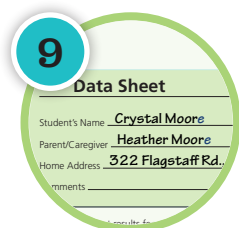
Gathering all required materials before screening will reduce the possibility of having to interrupt the screening. Use the chart on the [following page](#) to help you get organized.



Materials Needed for Screening

Chronological Age	0–11 mos.	12–23 mos.	2 yrs. 0 mos.– 2 yrs. 11 mos.	3 yrs. 0 mos.– 3 yrs. 11 mos.	4 yrs. 0 mos.– 4 yrs. 11 mos.	5 yrs. 0 mos.– 5 yrs. 11 mos.*	6 yrs. 0 mos.– 6 yrs. 11 mos.	
Manual								
Pages	1–18	19–39	40–54	1–16	17–35	36–58	1–23	24–41
Data Sheet	<div>I</div> Infant	<div>T</div> Toddler	<div>2</div> Two-Year-Old	<div>3</div> Three-Year-Old	<div>4</div> Four-Year-Old	<div>5</div> Five-Year-Old	<div>K</div> Kindergarten	<div>1</div> First Grade
Additional Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Screens III Accessories Kit• A timer or a watch with a second hand• Blank sheets of paper to cover distracting items			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A pencil for the child• The blocks and shapes that came with the Screens III• A timer or a watch with a second hand• A copy of each child page to record the child’s written/drawn responses• Blank sheets of paper to cover distracting items				

*You may use EITHER the 3–5 years Screen OR the K & 1 Screen for children of this age.



Record the student's personal data before the screening.

Filling in information such as the child's name, caregivers' names, address, age, and screening date on the child's Data Sheet before actually sitting down with the child allows you to focus your attention during the session on observing the child and effectively administering the assessments.



Identify necessary accommodations.

Criterion-referenced assessments are designed to be flexible, allowing for individual differences. Consider accommodations if you feel the student will not perform well due to difficulty in understanding directions, speech problems, language differences or difficulties, visual problems, or other exceptionalities. Make adjustments in the sequencing of skills or in the screening procedures to accommodate the needs of the child.

Now you're ready to screen!



5 Tips for Remaining Objective During Screening

Extra assistance given to a child during screening may influence the child's performance and could invalidate the results. Prompting, giving unnecessary encouragement, or providing unscripted demonstrations can mask the child's actual strengths and needs, making it challenging to detect a child's delayed or advanced development.



Reduce test anxiety.

Some children feel anxious when they see an examiner recording performance, so you may wish to keep the Data Sheet out of the child's view. Perhaps rest it on your lap with a clipboard or on a chair next to you so the table blocks the child's view of it.



Avoid telling the child specifics about their performance.

Use verbal reinforcement and show interest and enthusiasm in the child's effort (e.g., "Okay!" or "Thank you!"), but DO NOT indicate whether the child's response was correct or incorrect. Be careful not to show feelings of disappointment when the child gives an incorrect response or feelings of satisfaction when the child is doing well.



Do not give the child reminders.

It can be tempting for an examiner or teacher to provide reminders as a form of encouragement, such as "You know this. We did it yesterday." Reminders may cause the child to give a response that is not representative of their true knowledge or abilities, potentially invalidating the child's screening results.



Reinforce effort throughout the screening.

You may wish to give the child a sticker between assessments to show your appreciation for his or her effort. However, remember to reward the child's effort, not the child's success on screening tasks.



Avoid gazing at the correct choice.

Occasionally, a child is alert to where the examiner is looking and will use this as a cue when responding. If the child gives a correct response based on where the examiner is looking, performance may be inflated.

Now you're ready to screen!