Introduction

The purpose of this workbook is to provide forms, instructions, and other materials to supplement *Academic Skills Problems, Fifth Edition: Direct Assessment and Intervention*. The workbook offers elaboration and detail of material covered in the text and also provides additional forms to supplement those in the text. Some forms in the text are duplicated in the workbook for ease in copying; users of the manual are granted permission from the publisher to copy and modify these forms for their personal use. Although the workbook can certainly be used on its own, its purpose is to complement, rather than stand independent from, the text.

The workbook also offers opportunities for learning, practicing, and mastering many of the skills discussed in the text. For example, a complete manual related to the use of the Behavioral Observation of Students in Schools (BOSS) and BOSS Modified observation codes are provided. Full definitions of the BOSS and BOSS Modified behavioral categories, as well as instructions for collecting information, scoring the observations, and interpreting the data, are given. Also included are forms for completing teacher and student interviews, along with a useful checklist for obtaining teacher reports for academic behavior.

With the continued implementation of multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) as a framework for delivering needed services to all students, especially at the elementary level, resources are provided that support the processes of assessment and data-based decision making. In particular, forms useful for organizing data from universal screening and from progress monitoring, and forms that document team decision making related to instructional decisions, are all provided.

In the area of conducting the direct assessment of academic skills, the workbook offers additional instructions and practice exercises in the assessment process. In particular, detailed explanations of using such measures as *digits correct per minute* and *correct letter sequences* to score math and spelling are provided. The workbook also offers a description of and exercises in how to graph data, make data-based decisions, collect local norms, and other tasks related to a direct assessment of academic skills.
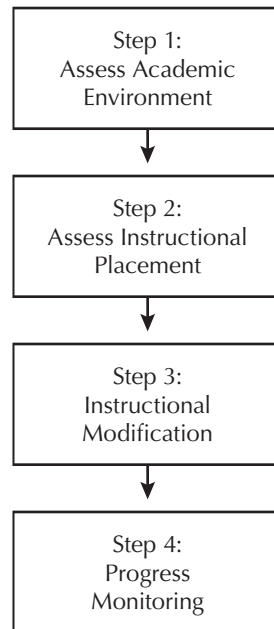
FIGURE 1. Integrated model of curriculum-based assessment. Adapted from Shapiro (1990, p. 334). Copyright © National Association of School Psychologists, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Taylor & Francis Ltd, *http://www.tandfonline.com* on behalf of National Association of School Psychologists, Inc.

The workbook follows the model of assessment described in the *Academic Skills Problems* text and depicted in Figure 1. The first section, corresponding to Step 1 of the assessment process—assessing the academic environment (see Figure 2)—provides materials for interviewing teachers and students, conducting direct observations, and using informant report data (a teacher rating scale). The next section, corresponding to Step 2 of the process—directly assessing instructional placement—provides information related to the processes involved in the direct
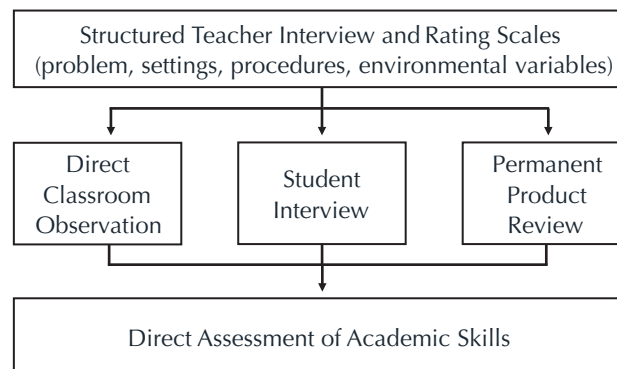
FIGURE 2. Flowchart of procedures for assessing academic skills.

assessment of academic skills (in particular, details about the assessment of reading, math, spelling, and written language). This section contains information on both the use of short- and long-term data collection procedures.

The next section of the workbook, corresponding to Step 3 of the process, offers details on the use of two powerful instructional interventions: the *incremental rehearsal* technique and *cover–copy–compare*. The fourth section, corresponding to Step 4—progress monitoring—provides additional examples on the graphic display of data, offers practice in making different kinds of decisions based on progress monitoring data, and explains how to collect local norms that can be used for goal setting. This final section offers materials for supporting MTSS implementation and response-to-intervention decisions, with particular attention to data-based decision-making components.

Throughout, readers will find detailed "how to" explanations offered in a step-by-step fashion. Practice exercises are also provided, and readers are encouraged to develop their own exercises modeled on those in the workbook.

Teacher Interview

The assessment process begins with the teacher interview. Several forms are provided to facilitate the interview. The Teacher Interview Form (Form 1), which is also printed in *Academic Skills Problems, Fifth Edition*, suggests the specific questions and domains that should be addressed for each academic area when interviewing teachers. It is designed to be completed during a face-to-face meeting with a teacher. The key objectives of the interview are to gather information on the nature and extent of the student's academic difficulties, which will help the evaluator focus subsequent assessment activities, and to understand the interventions that have already been tried or are currently in place. In addition, understanding the "big picture" of skill development in reading, mathematics, and writing is helpful for fully understanding the student's problem from the teacher's perspective. Across academic areas, the form provides a basis for better understanding the nature and scope of the student's difficulties. Form 2, which provides a list of elementary math computational objectives, can be used with Form 1 for students with mathematics difficulties.

Given the significant presence of MTSS models in schools, it is important to understand the nature of the model, how specific components of the model are structured by the school, the nature of the assessment processes in place, and the way in which data-based decision making is conducted. The Teacher Interview Form (Form 1) asks for this information. Some teachers may not be the best source of all this information. It is suggested that users of the interview form consider asking for this information from relevant school personnel (e.g., principals, instructional specialists, school psychologists, lead teachers). The inclusion of a section of the interview form devoted to MTSS is provided for academic skills, with an additional question regarding whether a model for behavior is in place.

Readers are reminded that the teacher interview is the starting point of an academic assessment and is not intended to be an exhaustive source of information. Users of the Teacher Interview Form are encouraged to omit questions that the teacher already addressed or skip sections that are not relevant to the referred

student. The teacher interview should be brief (ideally, under 15 minutes) to respect the teacher's time. The most valuable information for understanding the student's academic difficulties and what to do about them will come through the direct assessment and intervention activities in subsequent steps. The teacher interview helps the evaluator determine the next steps in the assessment process, such as when to observe the student and what academic skills to assess directly. Any additional information needed from the teacher can be obtained after the interview.

Interviews with teachers should also obtain general information about how they manage instruction and the classroom environment as well as the nature of the strategies already attempted to remediate the problem behavior of the student. Included in the interview is information about the success or failure of these strategies. In addition to, or instead of using The Teacher Interview Form, some evaluators may prefer to be guided by more general questions, which are provided in Form 3. This format specifically asks questions around instructional practices, curriculum, assessment, and management. Typically, the interview is conducted following an observation of the teacher teaching the student of interest. The questions in Form 3 are useful to guide this type of interview that follows a direct observation.