

Draw-A-Person Test Encyclopedia Article

Draw-A-Person Test

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Contents

Draw-A-Person Test Encyclopedia Article.....	1
Contents.....	2
Draw-A-Person Test.....	3

Draw-A-Person Test

Used to measure nonverbal intelligence or to screen for emotional or behavioral disorders.

Based on children's drawings of human figures, this test can be used with two different scoring systems for different purposes. One measures nonverbal **intelligence** while the other screens for emotional or behavioral disorders. Drawings obtained from a child during a single administration may be used with both systems. During the testing session, which can be completed in 15 minutes, the child is asked to draw three figures—a man, a woman, and him- or herself. Draw a Person:QSS (Quantitative Scoring System) assesses intellectual ability by analyzing 14 different aspects of the drawings, such as specific body parts and clothing, for various criteria, including presence or absence, detail, and proportion. In all, there are 64 scoring items for each drawing. A separate standard score is recorded for each one, and a total score for all three. The use of a nonverbal, nonthreatening task to evaluate intelligence is intended to eliminate possible sources of bias by reducing variables like primary language, verbal skills, communication disabilities, and sensitivity to working under pressure. However, test results can be influenced by previous drawing experience, a factor that may account for the tendency of middle-class children to score higher on this test than lower-class children, who often have fewer opportunities to draw. Draw a Person:SPED (Screening Procedure for Emotional Disturbance) uses the test's figure drawings as a means of identifying emotional problems. The scoring system is composed of two types of criteria. For the first type, eight dimensions of each drawing are evaluated against norms for the child's age group. For the second type, 47 different items are considered for each drawing.

For Further Study

Books

Chandler, Louis A., and Virginia J. Johnson. *Using Projective Techniques with Children: A Guide to Clinical Assessment*. Springfield, IL: C.C. Thomas, 1991.

Mortensen, Karen Vibeke. *Form and Content in Children's Human Figure Drawings: Development, Sex Differences, and Body Experience*. New York: New York University Press, 1991.

Wortham, Sue Clark. *Tests and Measurement in Early Childhood Education*. Columbus: Merrill Publishing Co., 1990.