



CAPD Test

A simulation of what it feels like to have Central Auditory Processing Disorder

© 2002 Teresa Kellerman

CAPD is a processing disorder that is characterized by difficulty processing incoming information that is heard, not hearing all the information, not picking out the important parts of the information, not filtering the data properly, inability to store information in the short-term memory properly, and inability to retrieve it later.

Ask for five volunteers to be “students” with CAPD. They can be seated in chairs at the front of “class.” You assume the role of teacher. Pass out a sealed envelope to each volunteer. Nothing on the inside. On the outside there are 9 blank lines like this:

Pass out pencils to the volunteers. These pencils have been sharpened, but the tip is snapped but left intact. When the pencils are used, the lead will break instantly.

Tell them, **This is a timed test. Just follow the simple directions to write the letters in the blank spaces. Start now.**

Write down the letters of the word that means “Old Glory.” (Pencils snap, “students” complain. You reprimand them for not being prepared for class, and go right on to the next question, while they scrounge in their purse for a pen.)

Write down the abbreviation for the United States.

Write down the name of the first color in the spectrum of visible light. (Blank stares.) **You should know this – it was covered in science class last semester. Here’s a hint: It has the longest wavelength and the shortest frequency. Does that help?** (Not really, but if they have common sense, they will write down “RED” because there are only 3 spaces left.)

Now subtract the 18th letter of the alphabet. Then take out the letters in the word “GLUE.”

Tick, Tick, Tick, Tick, Tick. Time’s up! Test is over. Who got the right answer? (Most are still trying to figure out that the 18th letter is “R”)

Many will say “FAS” but **the correct answer is FASD, the abbreviation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder..**

Tell them, **This is the kind of frustration that students with FASD feel every day in school. Their frustration is seen as stubbornness, laziness, behavior problems, not caring, not trying hard enough. Then they either become aggressive or withdraw.**

Now open your envelope and you will find a list of services that are available for persons with FASD who have an IQ of 70 and over. (Nothing is in the envelopes. They get it and laugh.) **Only 25% of children with FASD qualify for services, and then, more often than not, the services are inadequate, and in some cases detrimental rather than helpful.**