

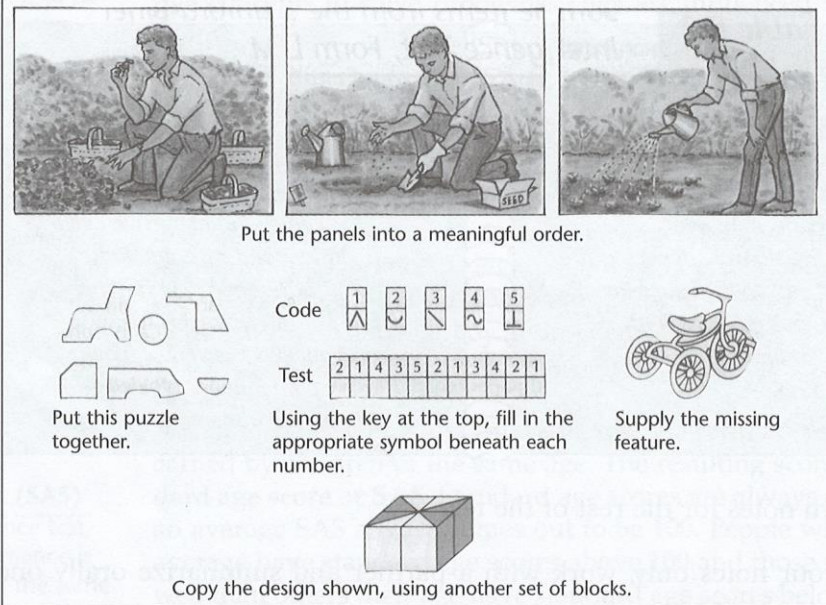
PREPARING TO READ

Building background knowledge on the topic

The more you know about a topic, the easier it is to process new information from a reading.

David Wechsler designed several intelligence tests that are widely used in the United States. Subtests in the Wechsler intelligence tests are divided into two categories, or scales: a *verbal scale* and a *performance scale*. Subtests belonging to the performance scale are particularly useful when testing children who have difficulty hearing, are not fluent in the tester's language, or have trouble following classroom directions.

The five test items in Figure C are examples of items from the five different performance subtests in the Wechsler tests. Read the description of the five performance subtests in Figure 5.3 in the text, then match each of the five test items below to one of the performance subtests.



Put the panels into a meaningful order.

Put this puzzle together.

Code

1	2	3	4	5
△	✓	∕	~	⊥

Test

2	1	4	3	5	2	1	3	4	2	1
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Using the key at the top, fill in the appropriate symbol beneath each number.

Supply the missing feature.

Copy the design shown, using another set of blocks.

Figure C Sample performance tasks on the Wechsler tests (from Wade and Tavis, 1989)

NOW READ

Now read the text "The Wechsler Intelligence Tests." When you finish, turn to the tasks on page 105.

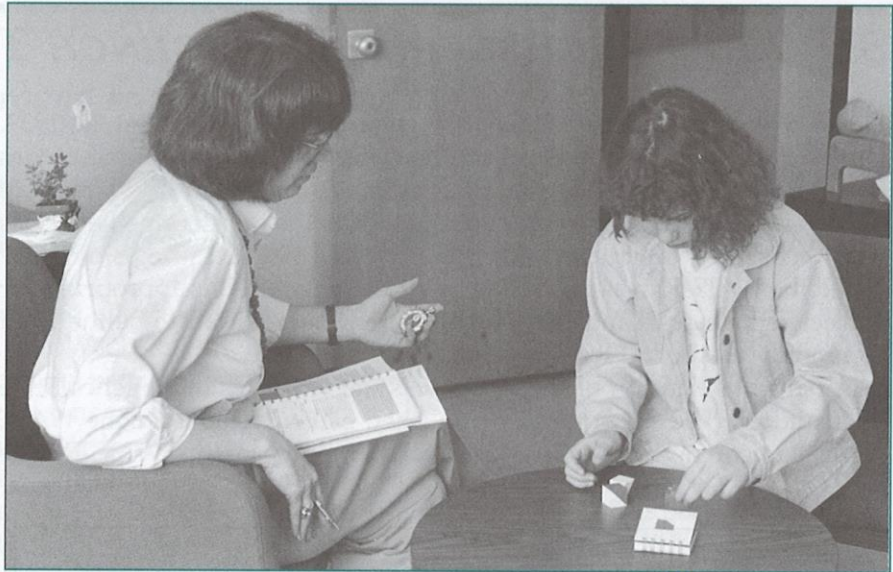
3 THE WECHSLER INTELLIGENCE TESTS

David Wechsler published his first general intelligence test in 1939. Unlike the version of the Stanford-Binet that existed at the time, it was designed for use with adult populations and to reduce the heavy reliance on verbal skills. With a major revision in 1955, the test became known as the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS). The latest revision (now called the WAIS-R) was published in 1981. The WAIS-R is appropriate for subjects between 16 and 74 years of age and is reported to be the most commonly used of all tests in clinical practice.

A natural extension of the WAIS was the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC), originally published eleven years after the WAIS. After a major revision in 1974, it became known as the WISC-R. The

Verbal Scale	
Information	(29 items) Questions designed to tap one's general knowledge about a variety of topics dealing with one's culture, e.g., "Who wrote Huckleberry Finn?" or "How many nickels in a quarter?"
Digit span	(7 series) Subject is read a series of 3 to 9 digits and is asked to repeat them; then a different series is to be repeated in reverse order.
Comprehension	(16 items) A test of judgement, common sense, and practical knowledge, e.g., "Why is it good to have prisons?"
Similarities	(14 pairs) Subject must indicate the way(s) in which two things are alike, e.g., "In what way are an apple and a potato alike?"
Vocabulary	(35 words) Subject must provide an acceptable definition for a series of words.
Arithmetic	(14 problems) Math problems must be solved without the use of paper and pencil, e.g., "How far will a bird travel in 90 minutes if it flies at the rate of 10 miles per hour?"
Performance scale	
Picture completion	(20 pictures) Subject must identify or name the missing part or object in a drawing, e.g., a truck with only three wheels.
Picture arrangement	(10 series) A series of cartoonlike pictures must be arranged in an order so that they tell a story.
Block design	(9 items) Using blocks whose sides are either all red, all white, or diagonally red and white, subject must copy a designed picture or pattern shown on a card.
Object assembly	(4 objects) Free-form jigsaw puzzles must be put together to form familiar objects.
Digit symbol	In a key, each of nine digits is paired with a simple symbol. Given a random series of digits, the subject must provide the paired symbol within a time limit.

Figure 5.3 The subtests of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Revised (WAIS-R)



A child attempts one of the performance tests in the WISC-R.

WISC-R is appropriate for testing children between the ages of 6 and 17 (there is some overlap with the WAIS). A third test in the Wechsler series is designed for younger children between the ages of 4 and 6 1/2. It is called the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence, or WPPSI. It was first published in 1967 (and is under revision). There are some subtle differences among the three Wechsler tests, but each is based on the same general logic. Therefore, we will consider only one, the WAIS-R, in any detail.

The WAIS-R is made up of eleven subtests, or scales. The subtests of the WAIS-R are arranged by the type of ability or skill being tested. The subtests are organized into two categories. Six subtests define the *verbal scale*, and five subtests constitute a *performance scale*. Figure 5.3 lists the different subtests of the WAIS-R and describes some of the sorts of items found on each. With each of the Wechsler tests, we can compute three scores: a verbal score, a performance score, and a total (or full-scale) score. As with the Stanford-Binet, the total score can be taken as an approximation of *g*, or general intellectual ability.

To administer the WAIS-R, you present each of the eleven subtests to your subject. The items within each subtest are arranged in order of difficulty. You start with relatively easy items – those you are confident that your examinee will respond to correctly – and then you progress to more difficult ones. You stop administering any one subtest when your subject fails a specified number of items in a row. You alternate between verbal and performance subtests. The whole process takes up to an hour and a half.

g-score

a measure of one's overall, general intellectual abilities, commonly thought of as IQ

AFTER YOU READ

Task 1 Reading for detail

Decide if the following statements are true (T) or false (F), according to this text.

- _____ 1 The 1939 Stanford-Binet test was designed for children.
- _____ 2 The WAIS-R test is a widely used intelligence test.
- _____ 3 The WISC was published in 1966.
- _____ 4 To test a 4-year-old child, you would use the WISC-R.
- _____ 5 The three tests – the WAIS-R, the WISC-R, and the WPPSI – are designed very differently.
- _____ 6 The WAIS-R has eleven subtests, which belong to two main categories.
- _____ 7 While taking the WAIS-R, subjects are given the most difficult items on each subtest first.
- _____ 8 Subjects take all the verbal subtests first and then all the performance subtests.

Task 2 Applying what you read: Designing a test

1► Look back at Figure 5.3 in the text and read the descriptions and examples given for each of the six subtests in the verbal scale. Working in groups, design several test items of your own for each of these subtests, using the guidelines below. You will also need to work out a scoring system for your test.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 1 Information | Think of a few general knowledge questions for which people from any culture should know the answers. |
| 2 Digit span | Have subjects repeat one or two sets of digits. Have subjects also repeat one or two sets of digits in reverse order. |
| 3 Comprehension | Think of a question similar to the one in the example. Give subjects a time limit for answering, for example, one minute. Give different scores depending on how good you think the answer is. |
| 4 Similarities | Think of two things to compare. Give subjects a time limit for answering, for example, 30 seconds. The more points of comparison the subject thinks of, the higher the score. |
| 5 Vocabulary | Think of a short list of words for subjects to define. Make some of the words fairly common and some less common. Decide what is needed for a complete definition. The more complete the subject's definition, the higher the score. Give a time limit. |
| 6 Arithmetic | Think of two problems similar to the one in the example. Decide on an appropriate time limit. Remember these are to be done in the subject's head, not on paper. |

2► When your test is complete, pair up with a student from a different group and administer your tests to each other.

