

# Quarterly Newsletter

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## How to Teach the In-Between Skills

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There are many curricula out there for the core academic subjects to choose from. This doesn't always make it easy to find the right fit for each student, but when it comes to self-help skills or other skills that aren't specifically academic, it can be hard to find anything at all. Many of my students have needed extra support to learn skills such as waiting or safely expressing a need for a break. Fortunately, there are a few tools that can help teachers to quickly identify non-academic skill gaps and to generate clear IEP goals to get students on the right track.

Essential for Living (EFL) is a functional skills curriculum for children and adults with moderate to severe needs. This means this tool focuses on students who may not be well supported by other general curricular tools. EFL is broken into seven domains: Requests and Listener Responses, Names and Descriptions, Answers to Questions/Conversations, Daily Living Skills, Tolerating Skills, Problem Behaviors, and Tool Skills.

It focuses on ordering skills based on a priority of what is most important to health and safety, making it easier to generate an authentic plan for each student. Learning skills that matter the most for today's routines helps to make sure the learning is valuable and effective. For example, it is more essential to learn the skill of waiting before learning the skill of cooking your own meals.

In order to make navigating this curriculum simpler, there is a Quick Assessment tool that takes only about 20 minutes to complete. *See attached examples.* The curriculum also helps you to identify your student's communication profile and can guide you through the process of trying new methods of communication.

It is generally easy to get training for EFL since they offer online administration training. I found it helpful to complete the Quick Assessment on a few different students for practice and then focus on a specific skill set, such as responding. This skill sequence helps teams to identify what is motivating to students and to then build communication routines around them.

For more help or information on Essential for Living, you can visit their website [www.essentialforliving.com](http://www.essentialforliving.com) or contact me via email if you'd like to chat about this tool and see if it may be helpful to your students. [jbarrowman@sesa.org](mailto:jbarrowman@sesa.org)

# THE ESSENTIAL FOR LIVING QUICK ASSESSMENT (QA)

## An Abbreviated Form for The Essential Eight Skills and Problem Behavior

THE ESSENTIAL EIGHT SKILLS										Other Skills in the Quick Assessment										
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Spoken Words	Alternative Method of Speaking	Making Requests	Waiting	Accepting Removals, Making Transitions, Sharing, Taking Turns	Completing 10 Consecutive, Brief, Previously Acquired Tasks	Accepting 'No'	Following Directions: Health and Safety	Completing Daily Living Skills: Health and Safety	Tolerating Situations: Health and Safety	Matching	Imitation	Other Daily Living Skills	Tolerating Other Situations	Naming and Describing	Following Directions, Recognizing, Retrieving	Answering Questions	Problem Behavior			

**Spoken Words:** the extent to which a learner exhibits spontaneous, understandable spoken words and the conditions under which spoken-word repetitions occur

- 4 Exhibits many spontaneous, spoken words, nearly typical spoken-word interactions, and spoken-word repetitions when asked to do so, all of which are understandable **6. MS-Profile 1**
- 3 Exhibits a few spontaneous spoken words and spoken-word repetitions, both of which are understandable **6. MS-Profiles 2/3**
- 2 Exhibits occasional words or spoken-word repetitions, but neither are understandable **6. MS-Profiles 4/5**
- 1 Exhibits only noises and a few sounds **6. MS-Profile 6**

**Alternative Method of Speaking:** a method of speaking used by learners, who do not exhibit understandable spoken words or spoken-word repetitions

- 4 Has been using an effective, alternative method of speaking for more than 6 months
- 3 Has been using an effective, alternative method of speaking for 1-6 months
- 2 A new alternative method of speaking is being tested **6. MS-Tables 16 and 17**
- 1 Has no formal method of speaking or is using one or more ineffective methods **6. MS-AMS1-46**

### ----- THE ESSENTIAL EIGHT -----

**One. Making Requests** – the tendency to make requests for highly preferred items and activities

- 4 Makes requests for 10 or more preferred items or activities without prompts using an effective method of speaking **7a. Domain 1. R14, R17-21, R22-24, R27-28, R30-31**
- 3 Makes requests for 1-3 preferred items or activities with or without prompts **7a. Domain 1. R7-8**
- 2 Makes requests by leading others to items **7a. Domain 1. R1-5, R6, R7-8**
- 1 Makes requests by exhibiting problem behavior **7a. Domain 1. R1-5, R6, R7-8**

**Two. Waiting** – the tendency to wait when access to items or activities is delayed after a request

- 4 Waits for 20 minutes without complaints
- 3 Waits for 5 minutes without complaints **7a. Domain 1. R9**
- 2 Waits for 1 minute with complaints or other minor disruptions **7a. Domain 1. R9**
- 1 Exhibits problem behavior when access is delayed for a few seconds **7a. Domain 1. R9**

**Three. Accepting Removals, Making Transitions, Sharing, and Taking Turns** – the tendency to accept the removal of preferred items and activities by persons in authority or peers, to make transitions from preferred activities to non-preferred ones, and to share and take turns with preferred ones

- 4 Accepts the removal of items and activities, transitions, shares, and takes turns without complaints
- 3 Makes complaints when preferred items or activities are removed, during transitions, or during required sharing or taking turns, but only when motivating events are strong **7a. Domain 1. R10, R12-13**
- 2 Makes complaints when preferred items or activities are removed, during transitions, or during required sharing or taking turns **7a. Domain 1. R10, R12-13**
- 1 Exhibits problem behavior when preferred items or activities are removed, during transitions, or during required sharing or taking turns **7a. Domain 1. R10, R12-13**

QA

## ESSENTIAL FOR LIVING

### Favorite Items and Activities Data Recording Form

Learner: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

School, Home, Day Activity, or Residential Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Interests of the learner as indicated in an interview by persons who know the learner well...	Interests of the learner as indicated by learner...				
<b>R1:</b> Items and activities are ranked from most favorite to least favorite  All items and activities on this list go to <b>R2</b> or <b>R4</b>	<b>R2:</b> when items or activities are made available one at a time  All items and activities on the list or interests that are indicated go to <b>R3</b>	<b>R3:</b> when items or activities are given one at a time  When interest is indicated in four or more items or activities go to <b>R4</b>	<b>R4:</b> when items or activities are presented one at a time  When interest is indicated in four or more items or activities go to <b>R5</b> or <b>R7</b>	<b>R5:</b> when items or activities are presented two or more at a time  All interests that are indicated go to <b>R7</b>	
1-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
2-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
3-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
4-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
5-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
6-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
7-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
8-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
9-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
10-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
11-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
12-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
13-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
14-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
15-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
16-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
17-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
18-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
19-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
20-	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Items carried around by the learner or specific, repetitive behaviors the learner exhibits frequently:					
1-					
2-					