



Concepts about Print

Evaluation Form

Observing print concepts in
children with complex
communication needs



1. Administration guidelines

This assessment is part of a comprehensive assessment battery, specifically created to evaluate the emergent literacy skills of autistic children who have limited verbal communication skills (Clendon et al., 2021).

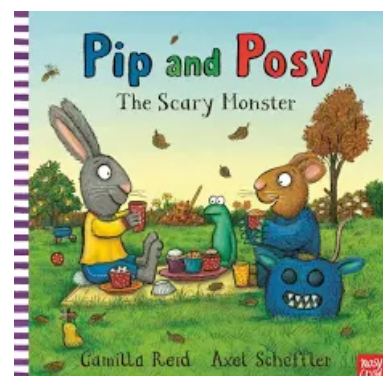
We created this assessment, based on *Concepts about Print* by Marie Clay (2000) and piloted it with 5 children, all of whom had been diagnosed with autism and intellectual disability.

When assessing print concepts, make sure the child has their augmentative and alternative communication system present. For a full assessment preparation checklist, please download our tutorial (Clendon et al., 2021) - the tutorial is open access and the link is in the reference list.


For this assessment, we selected *Pip and Posy, the Scary Monster*, a picture book most of the children were unfamiliar with. Of course, any picture book can be used - we only suggest you note if the child is familiar with the story book.

Aim: share the book with the child - aim for the session to last for at least 5 minutes - use a timer/stopwatch/clock. You may read the words on the page or share the story in your own words.

In the summary comments, please provide an accessible summary of the child's strengths and challenges. Don't forget to note how long the child was able to engage in the task. Together, these data will provide an indication on how to use shared book reading as an opportunity to engage the child in emergent literacy opportunities (see Clendon et al., 2014).





2. Pip and Posy: The scary Monster





COVER		
Item 1 	Test:	For orientation of book. Put the book in front of the child, upside down, back to front.
	Say:	<i>"Let's read a story".</i>
	Score:	1 point for the correct response. (i.e. child turns the book the right way up
Comments:		



*This book is called: Pip and Posy: The scary monster (point to the title of the book).
Look! Point to Pip, then point to Posy.*


Turn the pages until you get to the beginning of the story.


PAGES 1/2- rainy day		
Item 2 	Test:	Concept that print, not picture, carries the message.
	Say:	<i>Where do I start to read?</i>
	Read:	Text on page 2.
	Score:	1 point for print, 0 for picture.
Item 3 	Say:	<i>Now which way do I read?</i>
	Read:	Text on page 2.
	Score:	1 point for left to right directionality
Comments:		

Read the text on page 2 (It was a rainy day...) then move to page 3.


PAGES 3/4 + 5/6- make sure you test the following:		
Item 4 	Test:	Print concepts
	Say:	<i>Which page do I read first?</i>
	Score:	1 point if the child points to the left page.
Item 5 	Test:	Understanding of Nouns
	Say:	<i>Where is the (chair, flower, frog)</i>
	Score:	1 point correct pointing
Item 6 	Test:	Understanding of Verbs
	Read:	Page 5- 6
	Say:	<i>Who is baking?</i>
	Score:	1 point for correct pointing or naming of Posy
Item 7 	Test:	Can you turn the page?
	Say:	<i>Can you turn the page?</i>
	Score:	1 point if the child turns the page independently
Comments:		

PAGES 7/8		
Item 8 	Test:	Point to a word
	Say:	<i>Can you point to a word?</i>
	Score:	1 point for correct pointing
Item 9 	Test:	Point to a letter
	Say:	<i>Can you point to a letter?</i>
	Score:	1 point for correct pointing
Comments:		

PAGE 10		
Item 10 	Test:	Print concepts
	Say:	<i>Point to each word while I read. [read page 10 slowly but fluently] It was a big, furry hand</i>
	Score:	1 point if the child points to each word in the sentence while you read.
Comments:		

PAGE 14		
Item 11 	Test:	Understanding inferences
	Say:	<i>Why is Posy crying?</i>
	Score:	1 point for “she’s scared” or “there’s a monster”
Comments:		

Continue reading the story. On page 15 or 16, ask the child to read.

PAGE 15/16		
Item 12 	Test:	Can the child read the text?
	Say:	<i>Can you read this page? (Do not point)</i>
	Score:	1 point if the child accurately reads the words on the page.
Comments:		

For the remaining pages – read the text (make sure to point to the big bold letters on the final page).

Give the child ample opportunity to initiate, read, comment. So, follow the child’s lead to get a sense of engagement in story book reading

You may do this by asking some open-ended questions – for example:

1. What is he doing?
2. What will happen next?
3. Commenting – look at him, he is
4. Commenting – he is scary isn’t he...



When you have finished reading the book - go back to the title page:

Question	Answer
Who was the story about?	
What happened in the story?	
Do you like monsters?	
What was the story called?	

Child's name:

Date:

Summary comments:

5. References

Clay, M. M. (2000). Concepts about print: What have children learned about the way we print language? Heinemann.

Clendon, S., Erickson, K. A., van Rensburg, R., & Amm, J. (2014). Shared storybook reading: An authentic context for developing literacy, language, and communication skills. *SIG 12 Perspectives on Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 23(4), 182–191.

Clendon, S., Paynter, J., Walker, S., Bowen, R., & Westerveld, M. F. (2021). Emergent literacy assessment in children with autism spectrum disorder who have limited verbal communication skills: A tutorial. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 52(1), 165-180. https://pubs.asha.org/doi/full/10.1044/2020_LSHSS-20-00030



Re-created by M. Westerveld, 2026