

# Understanding the Different Types of Assessments

## A Resource Document



Children with disabilities will be evaluated or assessed throughout their early and school years. These may include, but are not limited to, evaluations for:

- ✓ Eligibility for early intervention services,
- ✓ Eligibility for special education and related services,
- ✓ Determining medical or therapy needs,
- ✓ Assessing academic and functional strengths and weaknesses and,
- ✓ Evaluating transition to adulthood needs in employment, education, and independent living.

Assessments can be informal, like classroom observations, or formal, like completion of a written, oral, or online instrument. Some screening evaluations are universal, i.e., they are given to all students; some are specific to students with a suspected or identified disability.

The list below briefly describes some of the more **common assessments** your child may receive. Depending on the results of an assessment, a student may be found eligible for certain services and supports, and a plan will be developed to determine what services are needed, who will deliver them, for how long, and where.

TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS	
Academic Achievement Tests	Evaluates a student’s performance in reading, math, and other school subjects. Virginia’s Standards of Learning (SOLs) are academic achievement tests.
Adaptive Behavior Scale	Assesses skills in daily living, community participation, social abilities, motor abilities and communication.
Assistive Technology (AT) Assessment	Identifies technology devices and services that will improve student functioning by looking at the student, the task, and the environment.
Developmental Assessment	Assesses cognitive, perceptual, motor, and social functioning strengths and weaknesses in infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who are or may be experiencing delays.
Educational Assessment	Determines a student’s specific learning strengths and needs and whether they are eligible for special education and related services.
Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)	A data-based process that determines the possible causes of a challenging behavior that is affecting the student’s learning and/or that of their peers. An FBA is done over a period of time in different settings.
Functional Vision Assessment	Determine strengths and weaknesses in a student’s use of their vision and the impact on educational performance. Completed by a teacher endorsed in the area of vision impairment.

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Growth Assessments	Fall and mid-year assessments given to students in grades 3 thru 8 on reading and math SOL curriculum to determine progress made in those areas.
Hearing Screening	This screening determines hearing acuity. This is a required evaluation for all initial referrals for students suspected of a disability.
Medical Report	Rules out or identifies medical problems related to the suspected or identified disability. Completed by a licensed physician.
Occupational Therapy (OT) Assessment	Evaluates gross motor, fine motor, visual perceptual, handwriting, daily living, and sensory processing skills to help students effectively participate in the classroom and school environment.
Physical Therapy (PT) Assessment	Evaluates functional mobility, movement, and motor performance of a student to help them access and participate in the classroom and school environment.
Psychological Assessment	Determines strengths and weaknesses in areas that may include social, motor, emotional, adaptive, and intellectual ability (may include IQ testing).
Sociocultural Assessment	Examines social, developmental, adaptive and health history information and their possible impact on learning.
Speech-Language Assessment	Determines whether the student has a communication disorder by assessing their current level of functioning in voice, fluency, articulation and/or language or other modes of communication.
Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP)	Evaluates the achievement of students with significant cognitive disabilities who do not participate in the SOLs but are taught a modified curriculum based on SOL content.
Vocational Evaluation	Evaluates current and future employability by identifying career interests, work aptitudes and skills, and training needs.
Vocational Situational Assessment	Gathers information about a student's work-related behaviors and skills through an assessment that takes place in a real work environment.

**PEATC's mission focuses on building positive futures for Virginia's children by working collaboratively with families, schools, and communities to improve opportunities for excellence in education and success in school and community life.**



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