Case Examples

The following case examples demonstrate the use of the OPUS. The first case describes an individual who was administered the OPUS, and the second case describes an individual who was given both the CASL-2 and the OPUS. Note that the second case is quite lengthy because it includes interpretation of all CASL-2 subtests and indexes. Additionally, the scope of information goes beyond what would typically be included in an assessment report. Rather, this level of detail reflects the interpretation process and analysis that a clinician might go through in preparing the report.

Case Example 1: Kami

Kami is a 15-year, 5-month-old ninth-grade student at a public high school. She is being referred for reevaluation of her special education placement and her diagnosis of expressive-receptive language disorder. The purpose of the current assessment is to identify areas of strength and weakness, to help plan appropriate goals, and to update her Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals.

Background Information

Kami was diagnosed with expressive-receptive language disorder in third grade and deemed eligible for special education services at that time. She demonstrates deficits in both expressive and receptive language across all curriculum areas. According to teacher and parent comments that were corroborated by observation, Kami demonstrates difficulty in understanding verbal directions, expressing ideas verbally in class, and understanding complex written text. Kami currently attends regular education classes for most subjects and has 8 to 10 hours of pull-out language services per week.

Previous Test Results

Previous testing with the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children–Fourth Edition (WISC-IV) revealed that Kami has average overall intelligence (Full Scale IQ = 93), and therefore her cognitive abilities should not place a limitation on her listening comprehension potential. Testing with the Oral and Written Language Scales, Second Edition (OWLS™-II) revealed Listening Comprehension and Oral Expression scores in the Below Average range (LC = 79; OE = 81).

Current Testing

The purpose of the current assessment is to determine how Kami's listening comprehension compares with that of her same-age peers, and also to determine any areas of particular strength and weakness to help focus intervention. Throughout this assessment, she was observed to follow directions, perform to the best of her ability level, and complete all tasks posed by the examiner. Test results are considered to be a valid representation of Kami's speech and language skills at the time the OPUS was administered.

Kami was administered the OPUS because its content is consistent with the type of material she is expected to learn in her classes and it is therefore a good indicator of her potential for success in class. Kami's OPUS standard score was 82, which is in the Below Average range and corresponds to a percentile rank of 12, meaning that she performed better than 12% of the standardization sample (see Figure 3.1a). This score provides further evidence of her difficulties with listening comprehension.

Record Form
Ages 5–21

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OPUS™

Oral Passage Understanding Scale

Elizabeth Carrow-Woolfolk, PhD Amber Klein, PhD

Name/ID	Gender	Grade	
Kami	☐ Male ☒ Female	9th	
Dialect		Year	Month
	Date of testing	2014 16	8 15
School/Agency	Date of birth	2001	10
Public HS	Chronological age*	15	5
Examiner	*Use age in years and months only. Do not round up.		
Reason for assessment			
Re-evaluation			

SCORE SUMMARY

Total raw score Transfer Total raw score from last page in Item Set.	Item Set	Ages	Passages
16	☐ A	5–6	1–5
	☐ B	7–8	4–8
	☐ C	9–10	7–11
Ability score	☐ D	11–13	9–13
75	☒ E	14–16	11–15
	☐ F	17–21	13–17

OBSERVATIONS

Diagnosis: Expressive-receptive language disorder

Standard score ☒ Age ☐ Grade	Confidence interval ☐ 90% ☒ 95%	Percentile rank	Equivalent ☒ Test-age ☐ Grade	Descriptive range
82	70 – 94	12%	7-9 to 7-11	☐ Exceptional (above 130) ☐ Above Average (116–130) ☐ Average (85–115) ☒ Below Average (70–84) ☐ Deficient (below 70)

Figure 3.1a. *Case Example 1: Kami's Score Summary*

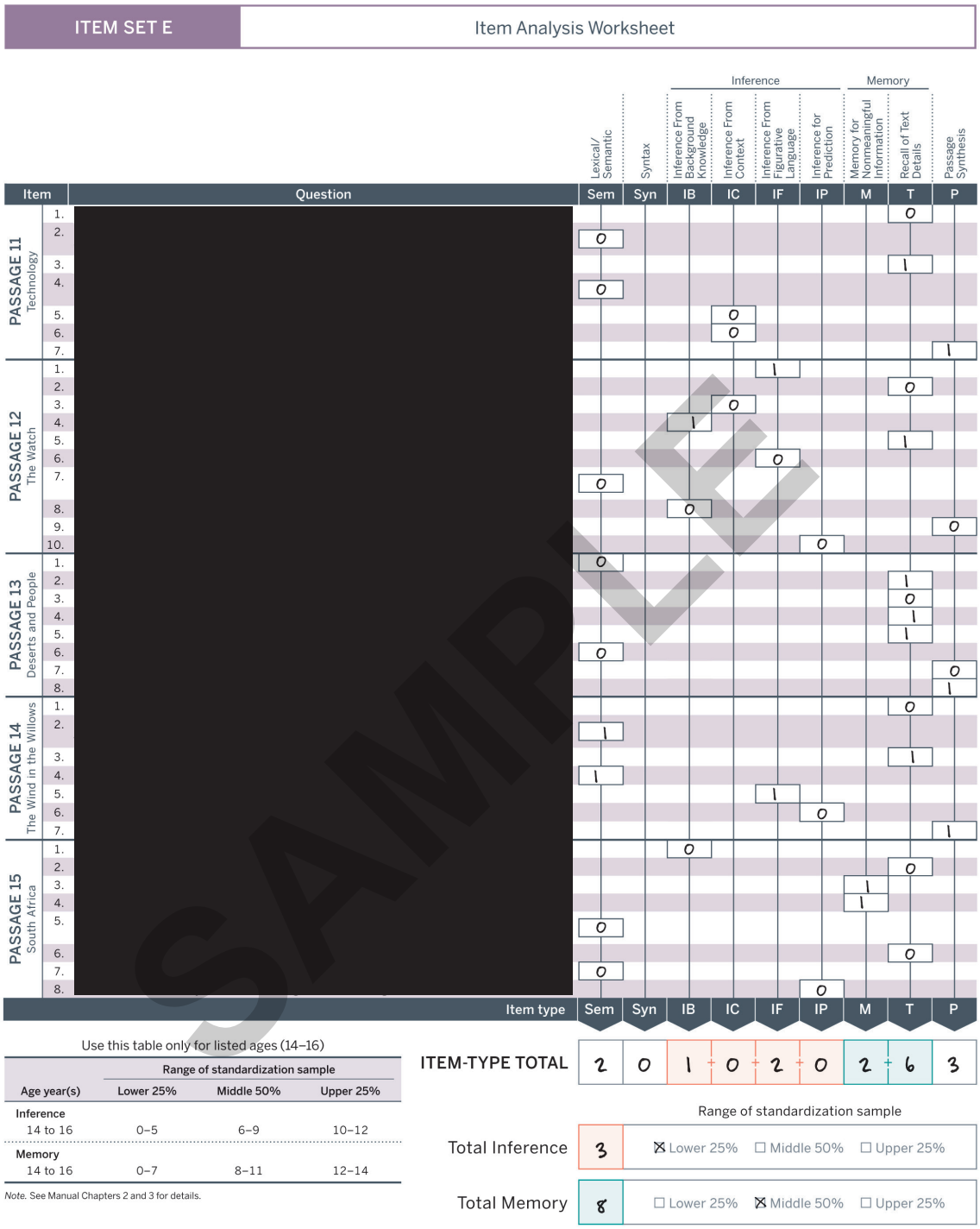

Figure 3.1b. *Case Example 1: Kami's Item Analysis Worksheet for Item Set E*

The two passages that appeared most difficult for Kami involved unfamiliar information and figurative language. She was more successful understanding the passages that presented information in a more literal way.

A closer examination of her item-level performance revealed a relative strength in her ability to recall specific details from the passages (see Figure 3.1b). She was able to recall information that was a meaningful part of the story, as well as information such as names and places.

Kami demonstrated difficulty in her ability to infer meaning from the passage when something was not explicitly stated. She struggled to formulate responses that required interpretation, reasoning, and inference. This is consistent with her teachers' comments that she struggles much more with comprehension of abstract content.

Kami also scored lower on her knowledge of vocabulary (semantics). She was able to define some individual words; however, she had more difficulty providing a synonym for a given word. Such a task requires more cognitive processing than simply defining a word, and therefore is more complex.

After the OPUS administration was completed, Kami stated there were a few times when she could not remember something and wanted it repeated, but understood that repetition was not allowed. This is important information because teachers, parents, and other adults may need to repeat information or instructions to facilitate her comprehension. Her scores reflect the difficulty she experiences when additional assistance is not provided.

Based on the results of the OPUS, it is recommended that Kami retain her current educational supports, and that intervention focus on _____

_____

_____

Case Example 2: Aiden

Aiden is a 7-year, 7-month-old boy in first grade attending a public elementary school. He was referred for reevaluation of his speech and language skills in order to identify areas of strength and need, to help plan appropriate goals, and to update his intervention plan listed within his Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Background Information

Aiden was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder at the age of 2 and has qualified for special education services since the time of his diagnosis. Aiden's parents report that he had delays in his communication from an early age. Services to address Aiden's social and language delays began with private therapy at the age of 2 and continued at school, starting in kindergarten at age 6, with a twice-weekly small pull-out group for 30 minutes. His speech and language therapy focused on developing his skills in cooperative play, following one- and two-step directions, learning academic and pragmatic language, and answering questions verbally when asked. Currently, Aiden is able to function in a mainstream general education classroom with the assistance of a part-time aide, but he demonstrates considerable difficulty with the academic work.

Previous Test Results

To account for Aiden's language difficulties, Aiden was administered the Wechsler Nonverbal Scale of Ability (WNV), which revealed a Full Scale IQ of 103. This suggests that Aiden's nonverbal cognitive functioning is in the average range for children of his age, and his intelligence level is not the source of his language delays.

Current Testing

The purpose of the current assessment—administration of the Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language, Second Edition (CASL-2) and the OPUS—is to gain further information about Aiden's speech and language ability in order to identify areas of strength and need, as well as to help plan appropriate goals and intervention. During testing, Aiden appeared to concentrate on the questions and give his best effort in response to each item. The test results are considered to be a valid representation of Aiden's spoken language and listening skills at this time.

CASL-2 Tests

Aiden was administered all of the available CASL-2 tests for his age in order to track his development within the specific areas of spoken language, as well as to obtain all available index scores. The standard scores are reported on the completed Summary Profile Form as shown in Figure 3.2a. All scores are based on a standard scale with a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. Scores that are two standard deviations or greater below the mean (i.e., 70 or less) may indicate a problem because the individual's score falls in the extreme low end of the distribution; only about 2% of the population score in this range. Scores in this range represent areas of concern that should be addressed in intervention and goal planning. Aiden's performance on the CASL-2 tests is described in this section.

Receptive Language

At the test level, Aiden showed strengths in those CASL-2 tests that measure purely receptive language (auditory comprehension) or that require very little expressive language. Specifically:

Receptive Vocabulary Aiden scored in the Average range as compared to his peers, with a standard score of 94 on the Receptive Vocabulary test. This score corresponds to the 34th percentile, meaning that Aiden scored at or above 34% of the standardization sample. Receptive Vocabulary measures comprehension of the meaning of a spoken word, as shown by Aiden's selection of the picture that best matches a word spoken aloud by the examiner.

Sentence Comprehension On a second comprehension test, Aiden received a standard score of 101 on Sentence Comprehension, which corresponds to a percentile rank of 53, meaning that Aiden scored at or above 53% of the standardization sample. Sentence Comprehension measures understanding of the meaning of sentences, as demonstrated by his ability to select the picture that best matches a sentence spoken aloud by the examiner.

Meaning from Context Aiden scored in the Average range with a standard score of 92 on Meaning from Context, corresponding to the 30th percentile, meaning that Aiden scored at or above 30% of the standardization sample. Meaning from Context measures his ability to state the definition of an unknown word after hearing the word used in a sentence. Although not purely receptive due to the expressive component of giving the response, Meaning from Context taps many of the receptive language skills. Aiden's Average score suggests that he can use the linguistic context of a sentence to deduce the meaning of an unknown word.

These results suggest that when receptive language is tested, Aiden demonstrates basic word knowledge and syntactic knowledge for word order, and can generalize his knowledge to understand unfamiliar words when given in context, particularly with pictures.

Expressive Language

Aiden showed weaknesses in both Antonyms and Expressive Vocabulary, two tests that require expressive language skills and place a high demand on memory and word recall.

Antonyms Aiden scored in the Deficient range with a standard score of 69 on the test of Antonyms, corresponding to the 2nd percentile, meaning that Aiden scored at or above only 2% of his same-age peers in the standardization sample.

Antonyms measures his knowledge of words with opposite meanings, by having Aiden state the opposite of a single word spoken aloud by the examiner.

Expressive Vocabulary On Expressive Vocabulary, Aiden received a standard score of 66, which corresponds to the 1st percentile, meaning that Aiden scored at or above only 1% of his same-age peers in the standardization sample. Expressive Vocabulary measures Aiden's ability to express the word that best completes a sentence that is spoken aloud by the examiner.

It is important to recognize that the target correct word, in both Antonyms and Expressive Vocabulary, must correspond exactly (have specific features of meaning) to the stimulus. Many words can be similar or different, but usually only one word can exactly fit the specifications. In this case, it may be that Aiden does not know the target correct word, but it is also possible that he cannot recall the word that is an exact opposite or cannot complete a sentence with a word that conveys the meaning derived exactly from the context of the sentence. Aiden's performance on Antonyms and Expressive Vocabulary may arise from (1) a general lack of word knowledge, (2) a lack of knowledge of specific features of the word needed, and/or (3) an inability to recall and generate the word that fits the item.

In summary, Aiden's Antonyms and Expressive Vocabulary scores are greater than two standard deviations below the mean, suggesting that these are two areas where Aiden performs significantly below his peers.

For the remaining tests, Aiden's standard scores were all in the Below Average range. This suggests he is also below the level of his peers in the areas of recognizing words with similar meanings (Synonyms), expressing specific syntactic and morphological knowledge (Sentence Expression and Grammatical Morphemes), identifying syntax errors (Grammaticality Judgment), understanding indirect requests, figurative language, and sarcasm (Nonliteral Language), applying knowledge from prior experiences and background knowledge to infer meaning (Inference), and expressing himself within the expectations of a given social situation (Pragmatic Language).

To account for measurement error included in all tests, the confidence intervals represent the range of scores that would include Aiden's true score. For the tests of Synonyms, Antonyms, Expressive Vocabulary, and Grammatical Morphemes, the 95% confidence intervals include values greater than two standard deviations below the mean, meaning a score of 70 or less. These represent areas of need as well, suggesting that Aiden has a deficit in specific word knowledge and likely has not mastered the ability to understand all features of a word. Aiden also displays a lack of morphological knowledge and the rules governing their expression, which may be related to poor reasoning skills.

CASL-2 Indexes

The CASL-2 index scores were calculated to document Aiden's progress. Aiden's General Language Ability Index score, which takes into account his overall oral language ability across all of the language structures and processes measured by the CASL-2, is considered Below Average with a standard score of 77, which is in the 6th percentile. Similarly, Aiden scored in the Below Average range with a standard score of 73 for the Lexical/Semantic Index (in the 4th percentile), 82 for the Syntactic Index (in the 12th percentile), and 83 for the Supralinguistic Index (in the 13th percentile). When comparing these standard scores for statistically significant differences, Aiden's Lexical/Semantic Index score is significantly lower than both the Syntactic and Supralinguistic Index scores. Further, the difference of 9 and 10 standard score points between these indexes occurred in 15% of the standardization population. This suggests that, although Aiden's overall ability is below that of his peers across all of the linguistic structures measured by the CASL-2, Aiden's Syntactic and Supralinguistic skills are stronger than his Lexical/Semantic skills. Additionally, there is

a statistically significant difference between Aiden's Receptive Language Index score, which is in the Average range with a standard score of 87, in the 19th percentile, and his Expressive Language Index score, which is in the Below Average range with a standard score of 72, in the 3rd percentile. The difference of 15 points between these two scores is unusual, occurring in only 1% to 5% of the standardization population.

CASL-2 Item Analysis

The Item Analysis worksheets reveal a pattern in which Aiden seemed to have success knowing words from everyday life, and more difficulty with those related to academic content. This may be because he hears more common vocabulary in casual conversations, everyday situations, and exposure to typical experiences within the community. This suggests that repeated exposure to more academic vocabulary may be helpful for Aiden, and broadening the contexts in which he hears and uses language would extend his oral language skills.

It should be noted that Aiden needed substantial processing time to respond to each test item. On several occasions he indicated that he knew the information but needed time to think about what was being asked. He also gave many responses that were close to correct, but were not precise, as shown by a greater number of Acceptable correct responses compared to Preferred correct responses. This suggests that Aiden may perform better on tasks demanding expressive language when given additional time and/or specific prompts to support this problem in recall, which is important information for his classroom teachers to implement during testing and timed assignments.

OPUS

In addition to the CASL-2, Aiden was administered the OPUS to compare his performance on the single integrated task of the OPUS versus the multiple specific tasks of the CASL-2. Aiden had a difficult time during this administration and was unable to answer several of the items. As shown in Figure 3.2b, his standard score was 72, at the low end of the Below Average range and corresponding to the 3rd percentile, meaning that 97% of the standardization sample scored higher than Aiden did. This score is consistent with his Expressive Language Index and Lexical/Semantic Index scores on the CASL-2.

On the OPUS, Aiden demonstrated difficulty on all item types. As shown in Figure 3.2c, he was unable to recall any of the names of people, which is a task that requires memory and phonemic ability. He also had difficulty inferring information not explicitly stated, defining words, and synthesizing the passages as a whole. He demonstrated the most success on items that required him to recall specific details from the passages, particularly when the required response was short.

Following the assessment, Aiden indicated he had difficulty understanding what the passages meant and couldn't remember things from the beginning of the passages. His experience of taking the test and the resulting score suggest that integrated listening comprehension is difficult for him, especially when there are heavy expressive and memory demands. The OPUS is designed to reflect the classroom context, and therefore lends support to his classroom difficulties.

Taken together, the results of the CASL-2 and the OPUS reveal that Aiden demonstrates

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Comprehensive Record Form
Ages 3–21

Summary Profile Form

CASL®-2

unlocking potential

Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language Second Edition

Elizabeth Carrow-Woolfolk, PhD

See CASL-2 Manual appendix for scoring tables.

Name/ID	
Aiden	
Gender	**Age**
☒ Male ☐ Female	7 Years 7 Months
Grade	**Dialect**
1ST	
School/Agency	
Grove Elementary School	
Examiner	
Mr. Duncan	
Reason for assessment	
reevalnation	

CASL-2 Index Summary

CASL-2 indexes	Standard score ☒ Age ☐ Grade	Confidence interval ☐ 90% ☒ 95%	% rank	Descriptive range
General Language Ability Index (GLAI)	77	75-79	6	Below Average
Receptive Language Index (RLI)	87	82-92	19	Average
Expressive Language Index (ELI)	72	68-76	3	Below Average
Lexical/Semantic Index (LSI)	73	69-77	4	Below Average
Syntactic Index (SI)	82	78-86	12	Below Average
Supralinguistic Index (SPI)	83	80-86	13	Below Average

CASL-2 Test Performance Summary

CASL-2 tests	Standard score ☒ Age ☐ Grade	Confidence interval ☐ 90% ☒ 95%	% rank	Descriptive range
Receptive Vocabulary (RV)	94	87-101	34	Average
Antonyms (ANT)	69	62-76	2	Deficient
Synonyms (SYN)	76	69-83	5	Below Average
Expressive Vocabulary (EV)	66	59-73	1	Deficient
Idiomatic Language (IL)				
Sentence Expression (SE)	82	74-90	12	Below Average
Grammatical Morphemes (GM)	71	63-79	3	Below Average
Sentence Comprehension (SC)	101	96-106	53	Average
Grammaticality Judgment (GJ)	83	80-86	13	Below Average
Nonliteral Language (NL)	79	75-83	8	Below Average
Meaning from Context (MC)	92	84-100	30	Average
Inference (INF)	82	79-85	12	Below Average
Double Meaning (DM)				
Pragmatic Language (PL)	81	78-84	10	Below Average

Score Comparisons of CASL-2 Indexes

CASL-2 index scores compared		Difference in standard scores	Significant difference	Percentage of sample with this difference
LSI	SI	9	☒ Yes ☐ No	15%
LSI	SPI	10	☒ Yes ☐ No	15%
RLI	ELI	15	☒ Yes ☐ No	1%-5%
			☐ Yes ☐ No	
			☐ Yes ☐ No	
			☐ Yes ☐ No	
			☐ Yes ☐ No	

Score Comparisons of CASL-2 Tests

CASL-2 test scores compared		Difference in standard scores	Significant difference	Percentage of sample with this difference
			☐ Yes ☐ No	
			☐ Yes ☐ No	
			☐ Yes ☐ No	
			☐ Yes ☐ No	
			☐ Yes ☐ No	
			☐ Yes ☐ No	
			☐ Yes ☐ No	

Figure 3.2a. *Case Example 2: Aiden's CASL-2 Summary Profile Form*

Record Form
Ages 5–21

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OPUS™

Oral Passage Understanding Scale

Elizabeth Carrow-Woolfolk, PhD Amber Klein, PhD

Name/ID	Gender	Grade
Aiden	☒ Male ☐ Female	1st

Dialect		Year	Month
	Date of testing	2017 16	4 16
School/Agency	Date of birth	2009	9
Examiner	Chronological age*	7	7

*Use age in years and months only. Do not round up.

Reason for assessment: plan language goals

SCORE SUMMARY

Total raw score Transfer Total raw score from last page in Item Set.	Item Set	Ages	Passages
15	☐ A	5–6	1–5
	☒ B	7–8	4–8
	☐ C	9–10	7–11
	☐ D	11–13	9–13
Ability score	☐ E	14–16	11–15
51	☐ F	17–21	13–17

OBSERVATIONS

Diagnosis: Autism spectrum disorder

Standard score ☒ Age ☐ Grade	Confidence interval ☐ 90% ☒ 95%	Percentile rank	Equivalent ☒ Test-age ☐ Grade	Descriptive range
72	63 – 81	3%	5-0 to 5-2	☐ Exceptional (above 130) ☐ Above Average (116–130) ☐ Average (85–115) ☒ Below Average (70–84) ☐ Deficient (below 70)

Figure 3.2b. *Case Example 2: Aiden's OPUS Score Summary*

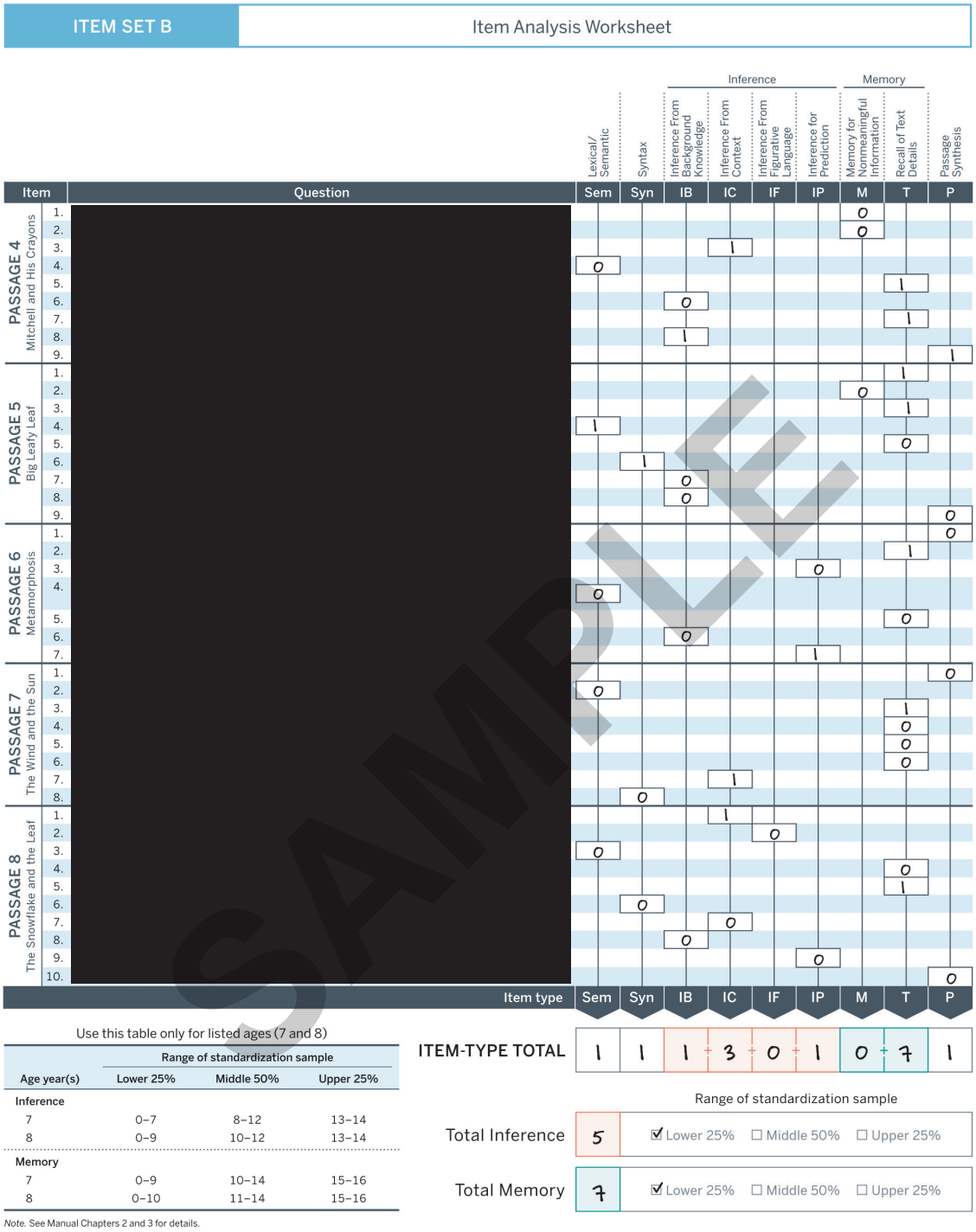

Figure 3.2c. *Case Example 2: Aiden's OPUS Item Analysis Worksheet for Item Set B*