

*Therapy Material and Software Reviews / Évaluation des ressources  
informatiques et les matériaux thérapeutes*

**CaseFiles: Interactive Studies in  
Language Assessment (1996)**

Author: Linda J. Carpenter, PhD  
Publisher: Thinking Publications  
www.thinkingpublications.com  
Cost: \$65.00

Available from: Brijan Resources,  
822 Burton Loop NW, Edmonton AB  
T6R 2J2, (800) 567-1147

Reviewer: Gary Holdgrafer, Univer-  
sity of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta

**C**aseFiles is intended as a resource for instructors and their advanced students in communication disorders who are preparing for clinical practicum assessments. The author's teaching philosophy is that students need to interact with course content by applying it in situations that require critical clinical problem solving. *CaseFiles* was developed for that purpose in the context of the author's approach to assessing cognitive and communicative abilities of children and adolescents with suspected language disorders. *CaseFiles* consists of a six-chapter text and an accompanying interactive computer program with IBM and MAC versions. The text provides the conceptual base and philosophy for the approach to assessment which integrates several models that commonly guide assessment practices. A framework for assessment planning and interpretation of assessment results is illustrated by a decision tree. The assessment approach is very comprehensive. In particular, it includes assessment of target variables (hearing, cognition, language, speech, and extralinguistic) in both a child-based domain and in a setting-based domain. The latter is an innovative addition which requires the systematic evaluation of the effects of context when

planning the assessment. The author also presents a three-level model of basic, transitional, and higher-order language functioning which encourages a fine-grained analysis of task demands on children. Direct and indirect assessment techniques, as well as qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis, are also included. A sample case is used to demonstrate the approach and another case is provided for practice.

Appendices list tests and procedures that have been cited in *CaseFiles* and Appendix B includes a selected list of assessment procedures not directly cited.

The raw data for four cases is provided in the interactive computer program. The intention is for students to analyse and interpret performances that are given in order to arrive at diagnostic and prognostic statements as well as recommendations for intervention. The cases include a four-year-old preschool child with multicultural language issues, a five-year, nine-month-old boy with communication issues related to school entry, an 11-year, 8-month-old girl with language issues relevant to upper elementary school, and a 14-year, 10-month-old boy with adolescent language issues. There is a file drawer for each case that is organised into five sections. The Interview Plan section involves planning interviews with parent, teacher, and child. The Interview Outcomes section reconstructs actual interviews that are interactive and allows the student to select the appropriate interview questions to pursue. The Appraisal Plan section involves selection of domain, target variables, techniques, and methods for assessment. The Planning Worksheets section contains worksheets for interview and appraisal

plans. The Appraisal Outcomes section provides data from the actual assessments. Copies of interview plans, appraisal plans, and appraisal outcomes allow for comparison with actual outcomes. The scoring of the outcome data for each case is provided in the Instructors Supplement which also includes background information on each case and suggestions for classroom discussion. The program is easy to install and appears to be quite user-friendly. A *CaseFiles* Help section is automatically provided before starting the actual cases and is available for assistance throughout the program.

*CaseFiles* is a well written and comprehensive assessment approach with a practical problem-solving component that would be very useful for students learning to assess children with language disorders. The text and computer program will be of interest to faculty in speech-language pathology who teach child language assessment. The computer program is sufficiently flexible to allow variation in approaches to language assessment and does not require an instructor to adopt the specific model presented by the author.

**Daily Problem Solving Activities  
(1994)**

Authors: Andrew K. Gruen and Lynn  
S. Gruen

Publisher: Thinking Publications  
www.thinkingpublications.com

Available from: Brijan Resources,  
822 Burton Loop NW, Edmonton AB  
T6R 2J2, (800) 567-1147

Cost: \$57.00

Reviewer: Denise M. Alberts, MSc,  
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**D**aily Problem Solving Activities: Transitioning to Independence is the second book in the Functional Communication Series written by Andrew K. Gruen and Lynn S. Gruen. This workbook is designed to teach cognitive skills applicable to functional living and community reentry for individuals who have suffered traumatic brain injury. More specifically, it is a set of functional, short stories designed to facilitate basic cognitive-language abilities in individuals who require structured practice in reasoning, memory, judgement, organisation, and other cognitively based skills.

This workbook is intended to be used with young adults and adults in acute, postacute, and community reentry rehabilitation programs who have suffered traumatic brain injuries (e.g., closed head injuries, cerebrovascular accidents). It is most appropriate for those individuals at the later levels of the Rancho Los Amigos Levels of Cognitive Functioning Scale (i.e., Levels VI through VIII). It is also appropriate for young adults with learning disabilities, or individuals who require structured guidance in becoming more acquainted with "real life" experiences that occur during adolescence or adulthood. The authors suggest that this workbook will be of use to psychologists, psychiatrists, and other cognitive and behavioural therapists who work with patients with brain injuries at various levels of recovery.

The workbook consists of three parts: (a) theoretical background and instructional information, (b) narratives divided into five categories (Issues in Alcohol and Drug Use, Relationships and Intimacy, Managing Money and Finances, Community Survival, and Wonders of the Brain), and (c) appendices. The first section encompasses the theoretical underpinnings, a description of target populations, a statement of goals, standard procedures and instructions for use, documentation of progress/change, and orienta-

tion to the stories. The second section consists of several narratives. Each narrative is followed by yes/no questions, open-ended content questions, multiple choice questions, story retelling, and questions for thought and reflection. The four appendices contain an explanation of the Rancho Los Amigos Levels of Cognitive Functioning Scale, individual client summary sheets, an answer key, and suggested cross-references for the individual narratives.

The workbook is well organised. The cross-references provided in an appendix are a useful checklist that identify those cognitive-linguistic skills and "real life" experiences emphasised in the individual narratives. Two areas of strength are that the stories in each category contain functional and relevant issues and that the stories are organised from shorter to longer narratives allowing the clinician to measure cognitive-language abilities for increasingly lengthier material.

Although several cognitive-language skills are targeted in each narrative, there is no objective measure of change for each specific skill (e.g., memory, problem solving, awareness) beyond the number of items (i.e., multiple choice, yes/no questions) correct. Additionally, although five categories of story are included in the table of contents, it does not contain the titles and page numbers for each individual narrative, making it difficult to locate specific stories.

The authors recommend that Daily Problem Solving Activities be used with adolescent or young adult populations who have either sustained a head injury or who are likely to have difficulties making a transition to a semi-independent or independent lifestyle due to reduced cognitive-language abilities. This workbook can also be used in the treatment of reading and auditory comprehension deficits and for verbal and written expressive deficits.

### **The Reintegration Resource (1996)**

Publisher: Thinking Publications  
Available from: Brijan Resources,  
822 Burton Loop NW, Edmonton AB  
T6R 2J2, 800-567-1147

Cost: \$51.00

Reviewer: C. Fleck-Prediger, BSc,  
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Ponoka, Alberta

**T**he Reintegration Resource: Compensatory Bridges to Independence is a manual constructed by Donna Miazga, CCC-SLP. This manual is designed to educate survivors about the effects of brain injury and introduce resources for establishing external compensatory memory systems. Miazga specifies that the manual can be used with adolescents and adults in a wide range of settings and by various types of health care providers. The manual consists of three main sections: Brain Injury Educational Activities, Compensatory Memory Systems, and Appendices which provide reproducible forms, checklists, and assignments.

The Brain Injury Education Activities section contains components that address: awareness of impairments, cognition, self advocacy, reintegration issues, and stroke education. The manual also discusses how to form a support group and suggests potential educational topics.

The Compensatory Memory Systems component provides a Memory Performance Questionnaire which has the survivor and a family member rate the survivor's functional memory. The manual provides a list of assessment questions that assist in the selection of memory aids according to cognitive, language, physical, visual, reading, writing, psychosocial, and home/community parameters. Thereafter, the manual discusses general application strategies. It details the construction and methods of organising a notebook according to family/visitor communi-

cation, retrospective memory, home/community, and prospective memory needs.

Miazga attempts to address areas that are commonly overlooked in rehabilitation, namely education and memory compensation. The education section provides valuable ideas for professionals beginning an education or support group for survivors and/or their families. However, the manual is obviously not intended for sale in Canada, as much of the information (e.g., TBI Act, Brain Injury Association Information, list of suppliers) is specific to the United States. If similar information were to be offered to Canadians, the therapist would have to collect the relevant information.

With regards to the memory compensation section, I am encouraged that the author focuses primarily on compensation for memory deficits versus memory retraining. However, practising clinicians would have benefited from more in-depth information on how to teach clients to use active listening skills, functional note taking, etc., in order to foster the successful use of a compensatory memory system.

The author has devised some quality checklists, logs, and forms. She also proposes completion of a functional assessment which is a vital part of determining the utility of a memory aid. Though she briefly describes the motor, cognitive, perceptual, and language factors influencing memory aid selection, Miazga does not relate the complexity of assessing these skills or how to use the results to develop a suitable memory aid. The Memory Performance Questionnaire is simply an index of the person's awareness and insight into his/her memory impairment, so I am pleased that Miazga includes a version of the questionnaire for families to complete.

My primary concern is the potential to misuse such "ready made" resources. In my experience "quick fix", template type journals are rarely suc-

cessful. Binder size journals that contain reams of information are typically either lost, disorganised, or under-used. These journals are hard to maintain and become so convoluted that finding specific information is often impossible. In my experience, the most successful journals are small enough to be tucked into a purse, pocket, or accessible pack. Journals should start off with the basics: a calendar, a daily schedule, and a note-taking component. These basic components give the person the structure they require to plan, organise, and review their day. I am leery of systems that become too complicated when they are meant to be used with people who often have multi-faceted deficits. Additional components, such as maps, budget sheets, and address pages, can be incorporated after the core system is established and is well used. This is not to suggest that *The Reintegration Resource* is completely impractical. There is utility in certain aspects of the material, however, I caution therapists against prefabricated systems. Indeed, the author states that notebooks must be individualised, including only the components vital to their daily functioning.

Miazga suggests a "Monday Morning Notebook Review" at which time the users are challenged to answer specific questions regarding their week in order to assess memory notebook use. This is a good idea, but the accuracy of the information needs to be confirmed by a family member or caregiver. Further, after the Monday review, what is done with the past week's information? Unfortunately, Miazga does not detail the process for transferring important information from calendars to daily schedules and does not suggest a method for storing accumulated information.

In summary, some of the information and resources contained within *The Reintegration Resource: Compensatory Bridges to Independence* are useful to working clinicians. I am

concerned that the author suggests that the manual could be used by people who are not critical consumers (e.g., nurses). The memory compensation module is not a system unto itself and professionals need to be aware that programs must be specifically tailored, trained in functional settings, monitored, and reevaluated.

### **SRA Photo Library (1997)**

Publisher: McGraw-Hill Ryerson  
www.mcgrawhill.ca

800-565-5758, fax 800-463-5885  
Cost: Photo Library Collection A, B, or C \$152.25; Macintosh complete collection with CD-ROM \$630.90; Windows complete collection with CD-ROM \$540.75; Photo Library Collection A, B, & C (without CD ROM) \$448.50 each; CD-ROM only (Macintosh or Windows) \$160.60; Institutional discounts are available  
Reviewers: Denise McVicar, Jocelyn Barden, and Mark Morris, Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre, Ottawa Ontario

**T**he SRA Photo Library contains three collections of photo cards, tab divider cards, a Teacher's Idea Book, a Sorting Mat, a Map of the World, and a Photo Library CD-ROM. The intended audiences are preschool, elementary, bilingual, and ESL classrooms. In addition, it would be very useful with an adult speech/language clinical caseload. The 630 sturdy photograph cards are divided into the following categories (and number of photos in each category): Collection A: Animals (80), Colours and Shapes (33), Earth (36), Human Body (35), Plants (26); Collection B: Clothing (28), Food (70), Recreation (36), School (41), Toys (35); Collection C: Equipment (57), Home (32), Occupations (45), Structures (52), Transportation (24).

The front of each card has a beautiful 15 x 20 cm photograph. The



choice of pictures is adequate and representative for clinical and classroom use. The majority of photos are clear with simple backgrounds. The reviewers felt that a small percentage of the pictures (especially in the Recreation category) were too cluttered and dark for very young children or individuals with visual impairments. On the back of each card, the photograph is identified with a pronunciation production guide in English, Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Sign Language. A limitation for the Canadian consumer is that there is no French translation provided. Also the "sign language" is actually fingerspelling, not Signing Exact English or the traditional American Sign Language used in the deaf and hearing-impaired community. An informative paragraph defining the word to be used for discussion and oral language practice is provided on the back of every card. This information is thorough, clear, and written at about a grade four reading level.

On the whole the photos are appropriate for a Canadian audience, although some American bias was noted (e.g., for "astronaut" the definition included the requirement to be an American citizen). On the back of some of the cards there is a world map for locating the country of origin for the specific animal or place. The information provided on each card is an excellent resource for school-aged children; however, the reviewers felt it could be distracting for younger children when playing games with the cards face down.

The cards are very nicely organised in alphabetical order, with the tab dividers listing items in each category and providing possible discussion questions. Each photo has a colour-

coded border for easy sorting by category. This is an excellent idea for storage purposes; however, if the activity involves matching items from the same category, a child could match by colour, not category. Each collection of cards is contained in a separate cardboard box. The boxes are not sturdy and would need reinforcing to prevent tearing at the corners.

The Teacher's Idea Book is included with each collection. It includes ESL ideas, oral language ideas, cross-curricular ideas, and related activities and discussion questions for each category. The hundreds of ideas could be used in language groups, individual therapy sessions, and in the classroom. The reviewers felt the ideas were specific enough to be used by speech-language pathologists, special education teachers, and regular classroom teachers. Support staff could also use this resource with some supervision and direction. The ESL section includes suggestions for working with ESL students and a pronunciation guide for asking ten questions in each language about the pictures. It also describes the background and history of each of the immigrant groups in the United States. Parts of this section are not applicable to the Canadian consumer. The Oral Language ideas section is particularly well presented. It includes specific ideas for vocabulary development and encouraging communication and expression and is arranged in a developmental hierarchy. Ideas include naming, labeling, comparing, describing, categorising, identifying an object's use, and asking questions. The Cross-curricular section includes ideas to interrelate different areas of study: health, language arts, math, science, and social studies. The Sorting Mat, used

for sorting, classifying, and graphing, and the Map of the World, a large colourful reference for locating many of the items on the Photo cards, could be useful in many of the activities recommended in the Teacher's Idea Book. However, they are constructed of paper, so it is suggested that they be reinforced with MacTac or laminated to ensure lasting wear.

A demo of the CD-ROM, (available in both Macintosh and Windows versions) was also reviewed. It was thought to be an excellent addition to this set of materials. It included outstanding interactive activities using all the pictures from the Photo Library. It featured the following sections: categories, flash cards, game time, map time, index-cross reference and dictionary. Some positive features noted in this resource were picture enlarging, voice output for all activities, motivating rewards and feedback for children, highlighted words with a large dictionary of definitions and sound effects for photos. In the flash card section, the student or teacher can flash some or all of the words in a category on the screen at a specified rate (from 2 to 10 seconds). This activity would not only be useful for vocabulary development but as a word retrieval activity. The CD-ROM could easily be used in the classroom, for home programming, and/or independent study. Unfortunately, there is no manual for the CD-ROM. The reviewers thought a manual would have been helpful for exploring the features of the software. Overall, the CD-ROM is a worthwhile consideration if purchasing the complete SRA Photo Library kit. The reviewers recommend the SRA Photo Library as an excellent general resource for vocabulary development in speech/language clinics, resource rooms, and classrooms.