Cheat Sheet

1. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Fourth Edition (PPVT-4)
2. This test assesses receptive vocabulary.
3. This test can be used for individuals aged 2 years 6 months through 90 years of age and older.
4. Basals and Ceilings-Each Item Set includes 12 items. The basal is established when the examinee make one or no errors within a set. If the examinee makes more than one error in the first set, then go back a set until a basal is established. Once you established a basal continue on with the test. A ceiling is established when the examinee makes 8 or more errors within one set. When this happens, you stop testing.
5. Administering the test- Start by showing the examinee the Training Items to get them familiar with what he/she will be tested on. Once the examinee is comfortable, you can get started. The test is very simple. Start by the set that corresponds to the examinee’s chronological age. You say the word and ask the examinee to show you the picture that shows the meaning of that word.

Below is an example of how to record and score responses. Numbers 37-39 are correct. Number 40 is incorrect so you circle the response that was given and mark the E to show it’s an error. By Number 43, the examinee said “I don’t know”, so that is marked down as well as marking the E. If the examinee gives one response and then quickly changes his/her mind, record the final response. Allow 10 seconds for the examinee to respond. After 10 seconds you can prompt them just to guess or give any answer, but so not help them find the correct answer as that will distort the test results.



1. Once the scores are recorded, if the examinee received a standard score that is less than two standard deviations below the mean, then that is an indication that this individual needs to work on his/her receptive vocabulary.
2. Pros- It’s very easy to administer, it’s easy to score, it can be used for a wide range of ages, it’s untimed so the client isn’t pressured, it usually take no more than 10-15 minutes to administer and 3 minutes to score, it’s norm referenced, and there is no reading, writing, or speaking required.

Cons- It’s not free, recording sheets are expensive, the individual has a 25% chance to guess correctly, some of the items on the test are ambiguous even for professionals, and it is only available in and English version.

1. The PPVT-4 is co-normed with the Expressive Vocabulary Test Second Edition (EVT-2) to provide an assessment of expressive vocabulary as well.