The Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI):

A Brief Overview

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This document provides a brief overview of the WPPSI instrument for assessing the general intelligence (IQ) of children.[1]

The WPPSI test is designed for children aged 2 years 6 months to 7 years 3 months.   It can be used to generate multiple sorts of intelligence scores, e.g.

- Full IQ score

- Verbal IQ score

- Performance IQ score

- Processing Speed Quotient

- General Language Composite

The calculation of an IQ score for a child based on their test performance depends on their age.

The WPPSI consists of 14 subtests, to be detailed below, with concrete examples. Young children, in in the 2 years 6 months thru 3 years 11 months age band, are typically administered only five of the subtests:

- Receptive Vocabulary

- Block Design

- Information

- Object Assembly

- Picture Naming.

We may call these the Early Subtests.   The other subtests are:

- Vocabulary

- Picture Concepts

- Symbol Search

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[1] This document contains some cut and pasting from the Wikipedia article referenced at the end. But it's organized differently, and it contains some concrete examples illustrating the questions, which the Wikipedia article does not.

- Word Reasoning

- Coding

- Comprehension

- Picture Completion

- Similarities

The various quotient and Composite scores have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. Subtest scaled scores have a mean of 10 and a standard deviation of 3. For Quotient and Composite scores:

below 70 is Extremely Low,
70-79 is Borderline,
80-89 is Low Average,
90-109 is Average,
110-119 is High Average,
120-129 is Superior,
130+ is Very Superior.

The subtests are described in more detail as follows.

Block Design - while viewing a constructed model or a picture in a stimulus book, the child uses one- or two-color blocks to re-create the design within a specified time limit.

A typical, simple block design puzzle is as follows:
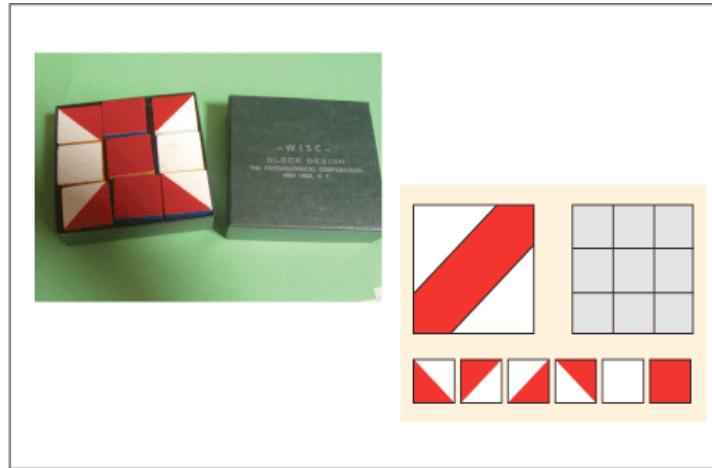
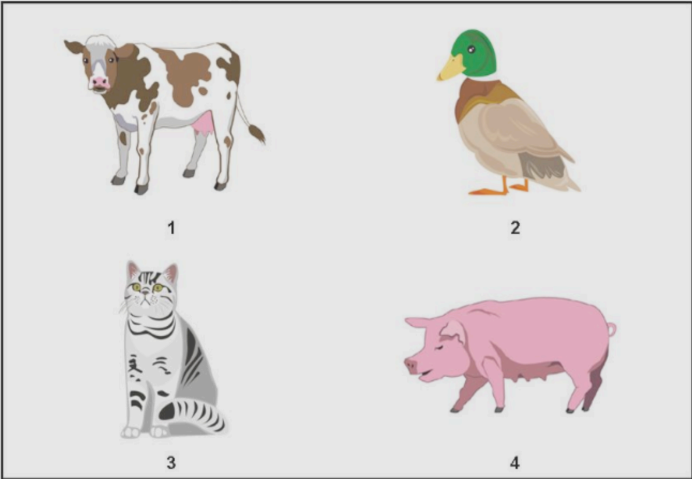

Here are some more examples:

Information - for Picture Items, the child responds to a question by choosing a picture from four response options. For Verbal Items, the child answers questions that address a broad range of general knowledge topics.

Questions here are not necessarily abstract in nature, nor interrogative in linguistic form. They may be concrete, involving situated understanding, such as "Show me your foot."

Example Picture Item information questions are as follows:

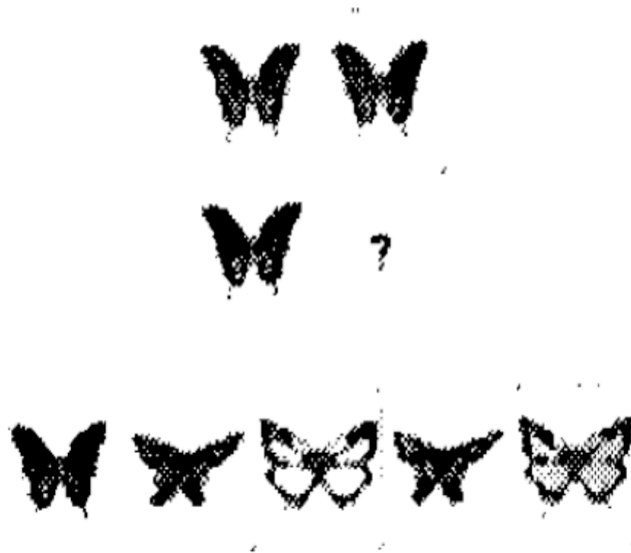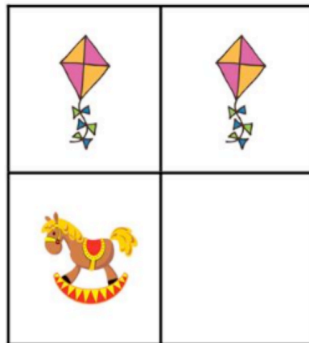Point to the one that has a curly tail.

Point to the one you read.

Matrix Reasoning - the child looks at an incomplete matrix and selects the missing portion from 4 or 5 response options. Example:
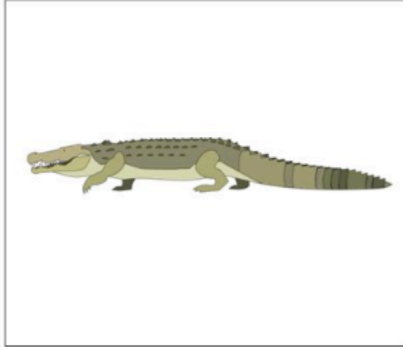

3

1	2	3	4

Vocabulary - for Picture Items, the child names pictures that are displayed in a stimulus book. For Verbal Items, the child gives definitions for words that the examiner reads aloud.
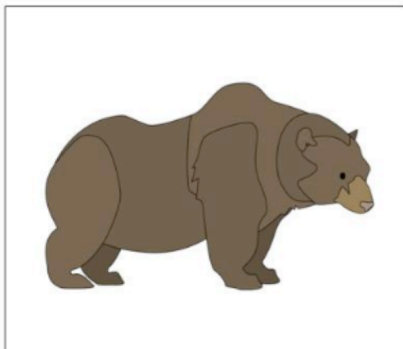
A Picture Vocabulary question:

| 1 | | 2 | |

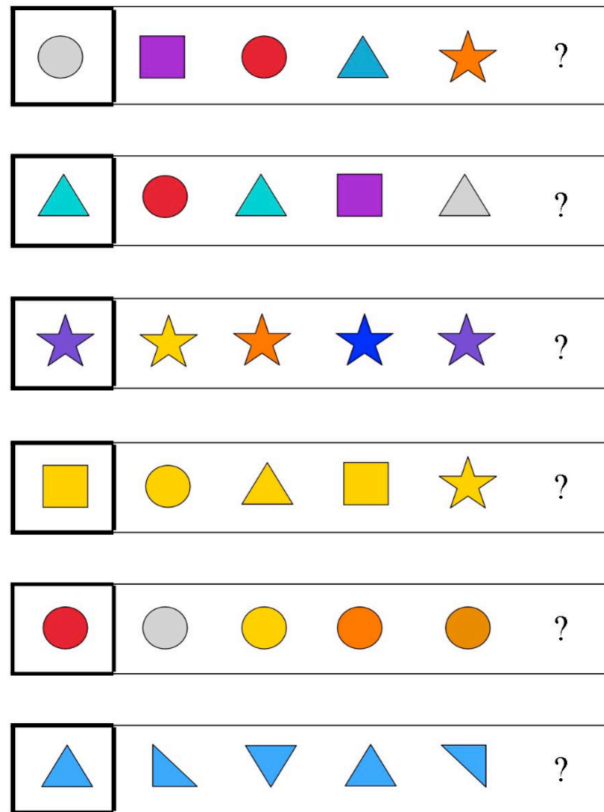| 3 | | 4 | |

| 5 | | 6 | |

Picture Concepts - the child is presented with two or three rows of pictures and chooses one picture from each row to form a group with a common characteristic. Examples:

1	2
3	4

Symbol Search - the child scans a search group and indicates whether a target symbol matches any of the symbols in the search group.

Word Reasoning- the child is asked to identify the common concept being described in a series of increasingly specific clues.

Simple examples would be:

"Tell me what I'm thinking of. This is an animal that goes 'woof.' What is it?"

"Tell me what I'm thinking of.

1. This has a long handle…

2. and is used with water to clean the floor.

Coding - the child copies symbols that are paired with simple geometric shapes. Using a key, the child draws each symbol in its corresponding shape.

Comprehension - the child answers questions based on his or her understanding of general principles and social situations.

For example:

- Why do people brush their teeth?
- Why can birds fly, but cats can't?

Picture Completion - the child views a picture and then points to or names the important missing part.

For instance, a picture might show a person without a foot. Or, it might show a soccer game, complete with all the players, but with no ball.


Similarities - the child is read an incomplete sentence containing two concepts that share a common characteristic. The child is asked to complete the sentence by providing a response that reflects the shared characteristic.
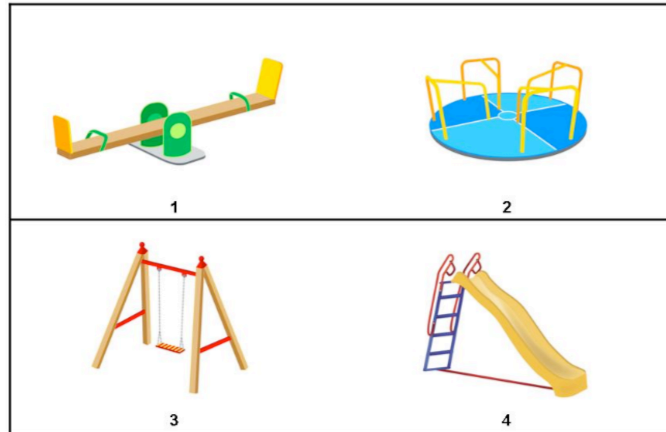
Examples:

- In what way are red and blue alike?
- Cats and dogs both have _____

Receptive Vocabulary - the child looks at a group of four pictures and points to the one the examiner names aloud.
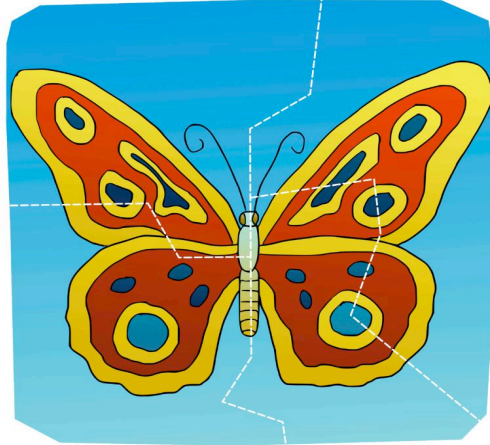
Point to the star.
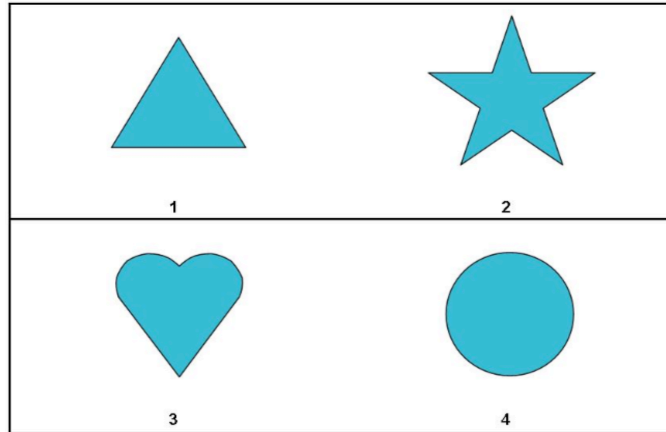
Point to the swing

Object Assembly - the child is presented with the pieces of a puzzle in a standard arrangement and fits the pieces together to form a meaningful whole within 90 seconds.   Typical instances involve four different pieces to fit together.

Example:

Picture Naming - the child names pictures that are displayed in a stimulus book.

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References

A reasonable summary of the WPPSI is given on the Wikipedia page:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wechsler_Intelligence_Scale_for_Children

Concrete examples of test questions are somewhat hard to come by, as they are kept secret in order to prevent parents from coaching their kids on the specifics of the test.   But I found some online at

http://www.unm.edu/~jcosbey/Pages/567L/Report2/WISCIVppt.pdf

A book on using test is Essentials of WPPSI-III Assessment by Lichtenberger and Kaufmann:

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0471288950/

800 practice test questions are available for purchase via the "WPPSI Test Tutor Kit",

http://www.the-test-tutor.com/wppsiworkbook.html

Note that if a child is tutored using this kit, then their test scores are likely to overestimate their "actual IQ" significantly.