

# The Use of the *aSpan* Test as a Quick Indicator Of Test Anxiety<sup>1</sup>

Bruce L. Bachelder  
Bachelder & Bachelder  
Psychological & Educational Services

Morganton, NC

Over the years there have been occasional references to the memory span test as sensitive to anxiety states, but there is little systematic research on the applied use of a span test for assessing test anxiety. The *aSpan* test (Bachelder, unpublished) is a variation on the usual "memory" span test (using the staircase method). The *aSpan* test has proven useful in the writer's clinical work to screen for test anxiety. This poster session summarizes the initial steps taken toward a more objective study of this relationship between test anxiety and *aSpan* performance. The session describes and demonstrates the *aSpan* test and compares the normal scoring method with the scoring of anxiety indicators. Sample test protocols from anxious and non-anxious clients are available. A checksheet (in development) for anxious *aSpan* test behavior is available for discussion. In addition, controlled pilot data are expected to be available for assessing the rates of anxiety indicators among known test-anxious and non-test-anxious adults and children.

---

<sup>1</sup> In Mills, G.M., Al-Mateen, C.S., & Freeman, E.B. (1997). *Children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral disorders: Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Virginia Beach Conference*. Richmond, VA: Commonwealth Institute for Child and Family Studies, Medical College of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University.