



# Strengths-Based Present Level of Performance

A strengths-based present level of performance is a road map for student support. It should describe the student's strengths, skills, and needs well enough so that a person who does not know the student can easily create a plan. Speaking with teachers to get their perspectives on strengths, classroom skill areas, and classroom requirements is imperative. Pulling in parent perspectives on their child's strengths can also illuminate a path forward.

Components of a strengths-based present level of performance should include:

1. Using positive, or neutral language to describe skills the student can do, make observations, and describe challenges or barriers the student has toward progress. 'Stevie has many interests and is easily drawn toward items that catch his eye', or 'approximately 50% of Oscar's handwritten work is a challenge to read by Oscar or others'.
2. Describing students' strengths such as 'fine motor skills have become a strength' 'determined to succeed, or doesn't give up', 'excellent attention span for completing tasks', or 'willing to try new activities'.
3. Including progress over time and which supports seemed to work best for the student using data collected and observations. 'When she was provided a visual schedule and sensory supports, Annika made excellent progress with her ability to attend to classroom activities.', or 'Princess went from being able to write 2 letters of her name to all of the letters of her first name and 3 of her last name.'
4. Including needs described in broad and narrow terms and the types of support needed. 'Needs to be able to participate in assigned written tasks and to increase the legibility of his work to 75% so he and others can read it', or 'needs to be able to participate in group story times, using environmental supports, for at least 5 minutes'.

## Examples

1. Juniper's strengths in the area of fine motor include her emerging visual motor skills and sequencing of tasks. Juniper easily joins and engages in fine motor activities. She can imitate the beginning lines needed for letter writing and may hum to herself as she completes or attempts fine motor tasks. Juniper can sustain her attention to tasks if she feels comfortable and is finding success, but when tasks become difficult for her, she may move away or toss the materials on the floor.

Juniper appears to have more success when there are just a few materials in front of her and when she is given short directions. She is able to imitate a vertical and horizontal line and approximate a circle.'She will snip paper with one hand operating the scissors on paper held by another person and the other hand on the table. She can follow a two-step direction when coloring and successfully place 4 of 6 pieces of a form board puzzle task with some verbal cueing.

Needs-Juniper needs to continue to increase her ability to copy lines and simple shapes including a circle, square, triangle, and the letters of her name. She needs to be able to cut out simple shapes such as a circle and squares and continue to improve her ability to follow simple directions to complete art projects.

2. Violet is an outgoing 6-year-old girl with cerebral palsy who has motor challenges affecting primarily the right side of her body. She is very enthusiastic about learning new things and a delight to work with. Violet has moved from not holding school tools to holding built-up crayons, markers, and other writing utensils in a right-handed barrel grasp. She appears to hold writing and other utensils in this manner due to increased muscle tone which also limits her ability to easily rotate her wrists and close her hands. When painting Violet uses down strokes with her paintbrush. When drawing a picture of herself, Violet is able to scribble on her paper using back-and-forth motions. Built-up utensils and support at her elbow have proven helpful to Violet as she paints or draws. Once verbal directions are given, Violet needs several seconds to process them before she takes action.

Needs- Violet needs adaptations to her school tools so she can participate in writing activities and create representational artwork like that of other children her own age and make down, up, and circular strokes with her paintbrush, and copy lines, circles, and simple figures.