

EFF Assessment Task

Dear Pat: What Can I Do?

Characteristics of this Assessment Task

Action (Performance Goal)

Read and understand a letter to an advice columnist in a newspaper in order to answer questions related to the letter and offer some advice to the writer of the letter

Text Type

1-page written letter to a fictitious newspaper advice columnist; text contains narrative paragraphs and complex sentence structure

Content

Everyday vocabulary, some specialized vocabulary regarding family structures

Environment

Familiar, comfortable setting (such as classroom)

Estimated time to complete task

30 minutes

Materials

Letter to advice columnist – labeled “Dear Pat: What Can I Do?”

Student’s answer sheet– labeled “Answer Sheet 1”

Highlighters, pens/pencils, dictionaries

Knowledge and strategies that will be assessed

(proficient performance on this task will require fluent and independent use of the following knowledge and strategies)

- Recognizing some specialized words and abbreviations using word analysis, inference, context clues, or other tools (dictionary)
- Familiarity with everyday and some (relatively basic) specialized content knowledge and vocabulary
- Locating important information in text using a wide range of strategies (such as skimming, scanning, identifying key words, and using titles and graphics/pictures)
- Monitoring and enhancing comprehension using a wide range of strategies (such as posing and answering questions, trial and error, adjusting reading pace)
- Organizing information using some strategies (such as recall, restatement, simple sequencing, simple categorization)
- Recalling prior knowledge and combining it with new information

Additional knowledge and strategies that will affect performance

Familiarity with structure of informal letters, concept and function of “advice columnist,” and with making difficult decisions concerning family relationships

Evidence of learner performance that will be collected using this assessment task

Observations:

No written observations

Work Products:

1. Completed Question/Answer sheet form (Answer Sheet 1)

Step-by-step procedures for administration

This task may be administered to an individual or a group of learners. While there is no time limit to complete this task, it should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. You may repeat any of the steps as needed, but repetition must be in English and you must read the steps exactly as they are written in the scripts. You may also model any requirement of the task to help clarify, as needed.

Step 1. Explain the task requirements/expectations to the learners:

This task assesses how well you can read and understand a letter about family problems written to an advice columnist. You will be asked to show how well you understand this letter by answering some questions about it and giving the writer some advice.

Step 2. Pass out copies of “Dear Pat: What Can I Do?.” Hold up one copy and ask the learners to read the letter:

This is a letter written by a woman who calls herself “Jane.” It is written to an advice columnist who calls herself “Pat”. Please read this letter silently to yourself. You can use a dictionary if you find a word you don’t understand while you are reading. You can make notes or highlight on this page if it will help you.

Do you have any questions?

After answering student questions (or if there are none), say:

Please read the letter. When you are finished, please look up.

Step 3. Pass out copies of Answer Sheet 1. Ask the learners to answer the questions on the answer sheet based on the information they found in the reading:

Using the information you just read in Jane’s letter to Pat, write answers to the questions on Answer Sheet 1. Please note that the first page of the answer sheet requires you to fill in your answers on a chart; please write your answers in the boxes provided. On the other page of Answer Sheet 1, you may write short answers to the questions in the spaces provided. In some cases, there is more than one right answer to a question. You may refer to the letter “Dear Pat: What Can I Do?” while you answer these questions.

Do you have any questions?

After answering student questions (or if there are none), say:

Begin answering the questions. Please bring me your completed Answer Sheets and your copy of the letter when you have finished.

Step 4. Collect all task materials and record approximate time taken by each student to complete the task.

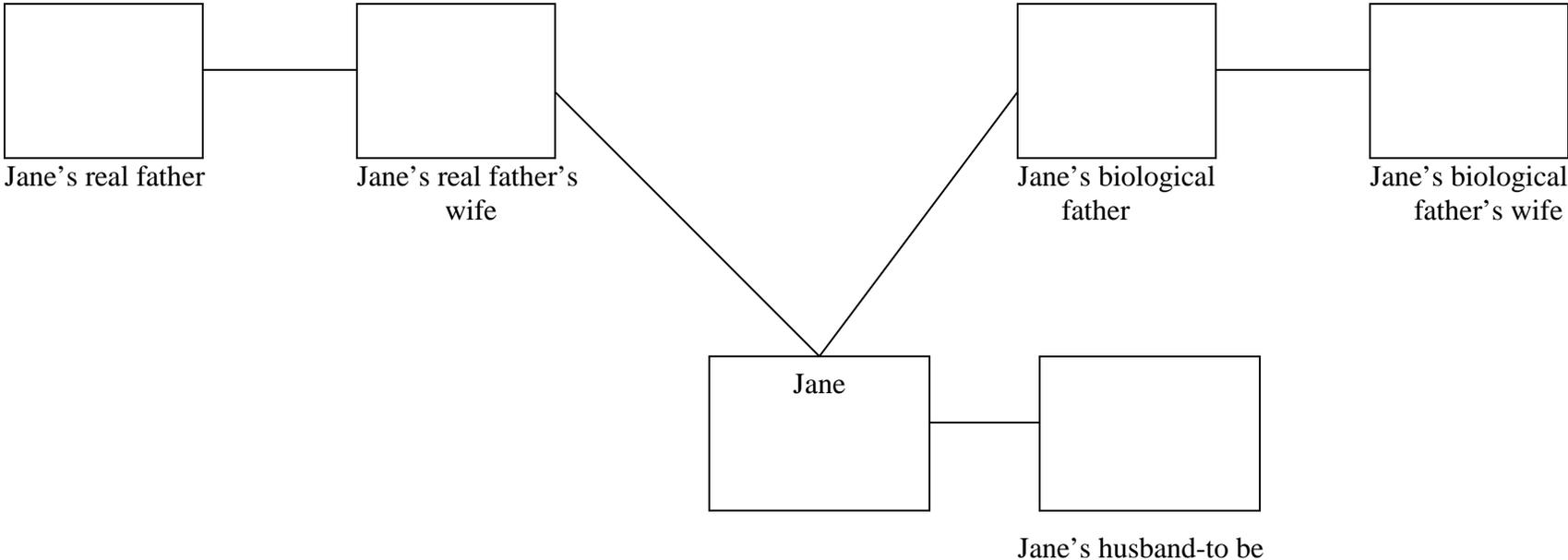
Name:

Answer Sheet 1

Directions:

Provide answers to the following questions using the information that you read in Jane's letter to Pat.

Fill in the names of Jane's family members in the chart below:



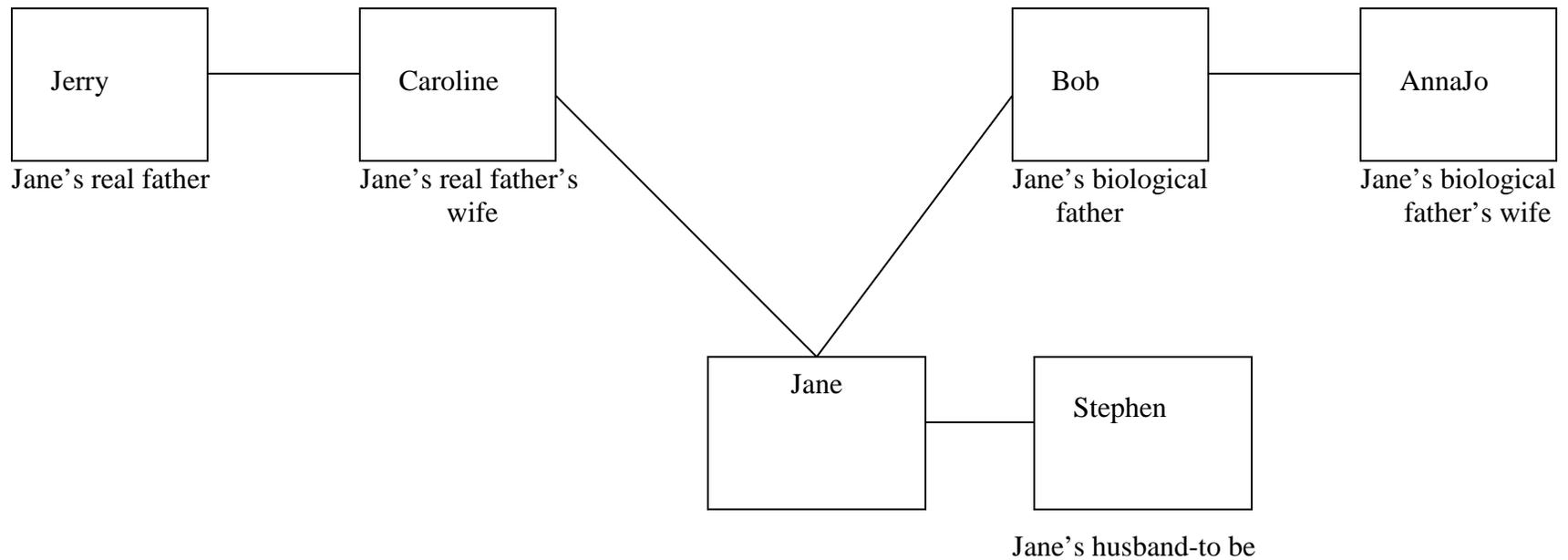
Name:

Answer Key for Answer Sheet 1, Page 1

Directions:

Provide answers to the following questions using the information that you read in Jane's letter to Pat.

Fill in the names of Jane's family members in the chart below:



Answer Key for Answer Sheet 1, Page 2

1. Name the two groups who do not know that Jane's step-father adopted her:

a. Stephen's parents

b. Bob's family

2. List the names of all the people who know about Jane's parents' divorce:

Jane, Jerry, Caroline, Stephen, Bob, & AnnaJo

3. Why will Stephen's parents be unhappy?

They do not believe in divorce.

4. Why doesn't Jane want to elope?

She's always wanted a beautiful wedding.

5. Who does Jane want to walk her down the aisle?

Jerry

6. If you were Pat, what advice would you give to Jane, based on your own knowledge and experience as well as what you read in Jane's letter?

7. Why would you give Jane this particular advice?

Answers will vary. A proficient answer will give appropriate advice to Jane based on information provided in the letter and from learner's knowledge and experience as evidenced by their explanation in Question 7.

Example:

Q6: Jane and Stephen should tell everyone the truth and invite them all to the wedding.

Q7: I think it is bad to begin a marriage with lies. If they tell the truth, everyone can talk about it and decide for themselves if they want to attend the wedding.

Directions: This is a letter written by a woman who calls herself “Jane.” It is written to an advice columnist who calls herself “Pat”. Please read this letter silently to yourself. You can use a dictionary if you find a word you don’t understand while you are reading. You can make notes or highlight on this page if it will help you. When you are finished reading, look up.

Dear Pat: What Can I Do?

Dear Pat:

I am getting married to Stephen in 4 months and I have a real big problem. Let me give you some background. My parents, Caroline and Bob, are divorced and both have remarried. When I was 12, my stepfather, Jerry, adopted me, so he is now my “real” dad. My biological father, Bob, has only told his wife, AnnaJo, about me being adopted. His family does not know. My husband-to-be, Stephen, comes from a very strict family who do not believe in divorce. Stephen knows my situation, but we never told his parents about it. Bob heard about our upcoming marriage, so he expects to be invited along with his entire family. Pat, I don’t want to elope because I have always dreamed of having a beautiful wedding. How can I invite Bob and his family to our wedding? Bob wants to pretend that he is still my father so his family won’t find out. Stephen’s parents will be very unhappy if they know my parents are divorced. They could even walk out of the wedding. And I want my father, Jerry, to walk me down the aisle. What should I do?

Jane in Pittsburgh

Scoring Rubric for “Dear Pat: What can I do?” (Level 4)

Student Name:

Unable to Score	Beginning	Proficient	Advanced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with everyday words and specialized content and vocabulary needs improvement; correctly names 3 or fewer of the 5 family members on the chart on Answer Sheet 1 • Demonstrates a limited ability to locate information by being able to correctly answer 2 or fewer of the first 5 short-answer questions on Answer Sheet 1 • Answer to questions 6 and 7 do not indicate the effective application of prior knowledge; little to no introduction of information not in the reading with application of new knowledge from the reading • Has some difficulty completing the reading task without direction or support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows sufficient familiarity with everyday words and some specialized content and vocabulary by correctly naming 4 of the 5 family members on the chart on Answer Sheet 1 • Demonstrates sufficient ability to locate information by correctly answering 3 of the first 5 short-answer questions on Answer Sheet 1 • Answer to questions 6 and 7 reveal some ability to recall prior knowledge and combine it with new information to appropriately answer question; introduces information not from the reading and uses new information from reading appropriately with few major errors • Completes reading task with little apparent difficulty, needing little direction or support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows strong familiarity with everyday words and specialized content and vocabulary by correctly naming all 5 family members on the chart on Answer Sheet 1 • Demonstrates a very good ability to locate information by correctly answering 4 or more of the short-answer questions on Answer Sheet 1 • Strong, effective use of prior knowledge to answer questions 6 and 7; introduces information not from the reading and uses new information from reading to provide a reasonable explanation to answers to these questions with few minor errors • Completes reading task without hesitation, direction, or support