

***What Head Start
Can Teach Us
About NCLB***

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Head Start



National Reporting System

Direct Child Assessment

Fall 2003

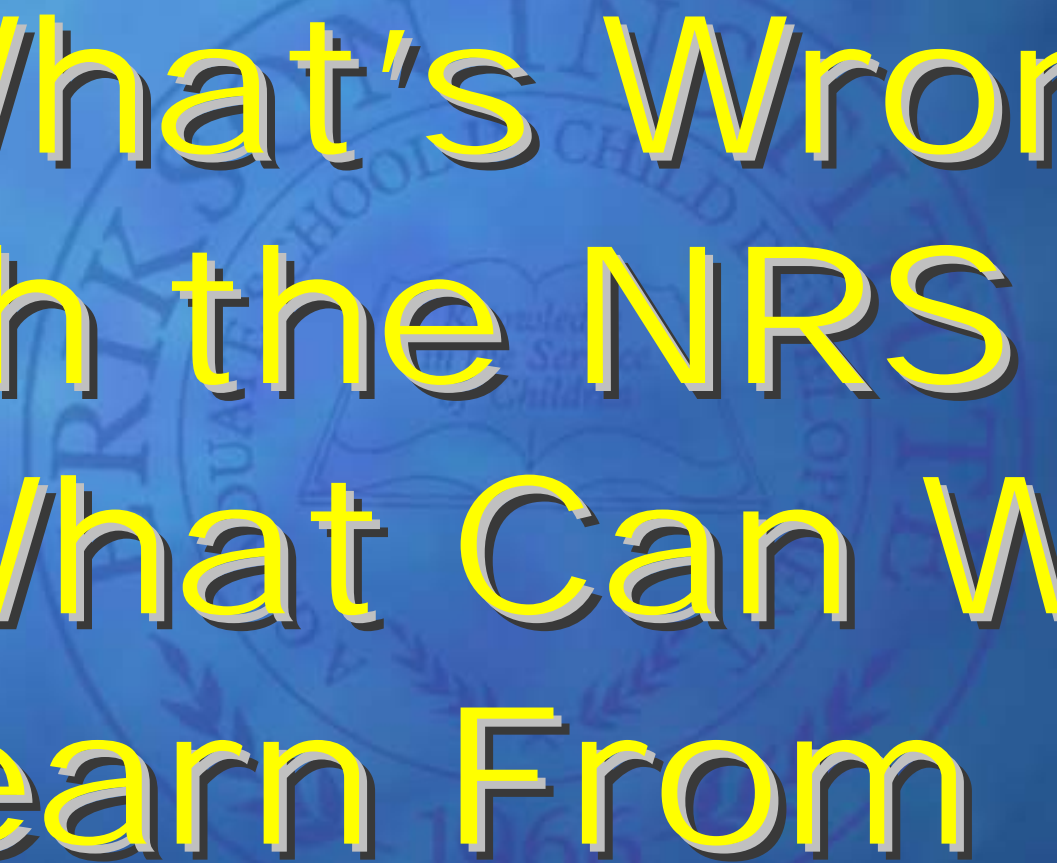
List of Sections

Warm Up

- A. PreLAS – Simon Says
- B. PreLAS – Art Show
- C. PPVT (Adapted)
- D. Letter Naming
- E. Early Math Skills

Purposes of the National Reporting System

- 1. Program self-improvement**
- 2. Targeting training and technical assistance**
- 3. Program monitoring and accountability**



What's Wrong
With the NRS and
What Can We
Learn From It?

Construct

Underrepresentation

The extent to which a test fails to capture important aspects of the construct it is intended to measure.

(AERA/APA/NCME, 1999)

Construct

Underrepresentation

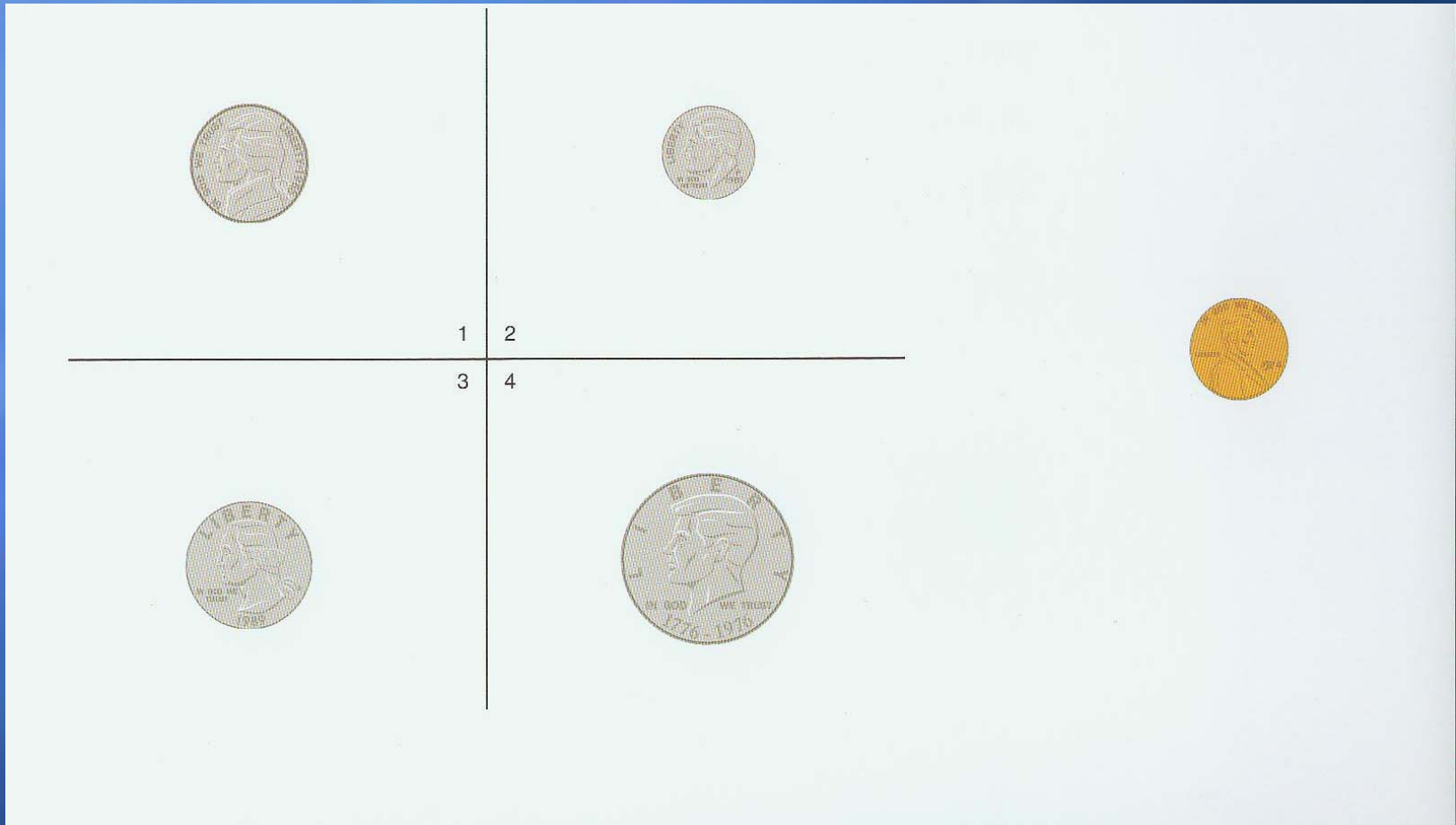
Compared to the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework:

- **The NRS contains only 4 of 9 Language Development indicators, 3 of 22 Literacy indicators, and 8 of 15 math indicators.**
- **Overall, for just these three domains, the NRS covers only 15 of 46 indicators— 33% of the total.**

Construct-Irrelevant Variance

The extent to which test scores are influenced by factors that are irrelevant to the constructs the test is intended to measure.

(AERA/APA/NCME, 1999)



“Which one of these coins is smaller in size than the penny?”

Other Problems With The NRS

- **Weak validity data**
- **Measurement-Driven Instruction**
- **Test Administration**
- **Inadequate Spanish version and minimal adaptation for children with special needs**

United States Government Accountability Office
Report to Congressional Requesters

GAO

May 2005

HEAD START

Further Development
Could Allow Results
of New Test to Be
Used for Decision
Making



GAO
Accountability * Integrity * Reliability

GAO-05-343

GAO Report (May 2005)

What the GAO Found

“The Head Start Bureau has not shown that the NRS ... results are valid measures of the learning that takes place [in Head Start].”

The NRS Experience

- Only 40% of the children were eager to go with the tester in the spring
- Almost half of the testers reported difficult behaviors persisting from the fall
- One-quarter of the testers said that test procedures were unnatural
- Half of the teacher-testers reported children not doing as well as expected, especially on letter-naming and vocabulary

.....
(Original Signature of Member)

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, to expand access, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. KILDEE (for himself, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, and Mr. CASTLE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, to expand access, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the "Improving Head Start
5 Act of 2007".

6 **SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.**

7 Section 636 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831)
8 is amended to read as follows:

“(5) **SUSPENDED IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL REPORTING SYSTEM.**—The Secretary shall

“(A) suspend implementation and terminate further development and use of the National Reporting System; and

“(6) SPECIAL RULE.—The use of assessment items and data on any assessment authorized under this subchapter by an agent or agents of the Federal Government to provide rewards or sanctions for individual children or teachers is prohibited. The Secretary shall not use the results of a single assessment as the sole or primary method for assessing program effectiveness or making grantee funding determinations at the national, regional, or local level.

***High stakes
testing does not
promote learning
in early childhood***

“The National Reporting System is a key process in establishing a practical quality assurance system for Head Start.”

Craig Ramey, Chair, NRS Technical Work Group

“What we are trying to bring to Head Start is not different from what you encounter when you buy a car.....”

Craig Ramey, Chair, NRS Technical Work Group

**“If schools were
factories, America
would have solved the
education problem a
century ago.”**

-- Malcolm Gladwell, *The New Yorker*

What Can the NRS Teach Us About NCLB?

- 1. High-stakes tests bring out the worst in everyone.**
- 2. Tests used for high-stakes change what is taught.**
- 3. High-stakes tests consume a huge amount of resources.**
- 4. Most high-stakes tests are misleading in content and in conclusions.**
- 5. High-stakes tests are used as proxies for teacher quality and child learning.**

**Understanding
the child within
context is key to
understanding the
child**

