

Summary of the Levels and Modes of Performance of the Allen Cognitive Level Scale

Table Source: Adapted by Catherine A. Earhart, BA, OT Cert., OTR/L (2016, 2023) for educational purposes from *Occupational Therapy Treatment Goals for the Physically and Cognitively Disabled*. Allen, Earhart, & Blue (1992, pp. 85-102), AOTA Press; and workshop materials © Claudia Allen, MA, OTR, FAOTA (1996). Used with permission.

Mode	Description	Pays Attention to	Motor Behavior	Communication Behavior	Duration/Time
Level 1: Automatic Actions					
1.0	Withdrawing	Inborn sensory stimulus	Inborn withdrawal	Inborn non-verbal utterance	
1.2	Responding to strong sensory stimuli	Any 1 of 5 senses	Eyes, nose, mouth	Selective, non-verbal utterance	
1.4	Locating stimuli	Being fed, moving sensory stimuli	Turns head, tracks moving objects, chews, swallows	Non-verbal expression Grunts, grimaces, smiles	Flicker/few seconds
1.6	Rolling in bed	Moving trunk, limbs	Moves head, trunk, legs, arms Completes rolling over w/cue	Non-verbal expression Grunts, grimaces, smiles	Few seconds
1.8	Raising body part	Buttocks	Raises extremities, buttocks w/cue. Pivot transfer	Says "No." Increased response to loved one	Brief/inconsistent
Level 2: Postural Actions					
2.0	Overcoming gravity	Comfort of gross body movements	Sits	Says "Yes" or "No" Recognizes own name	Holds until tired
2.2	Standing and righting reactions	Security of gross body movements	Stands, righting reactions	Names parts of body when asked	Stands, sits w/cue
2.4	Walking	Freedom of movement Large objects, doors, walls	Walking, directs movements	Uses 1 word to communicate Repeats words	Walks until tired
2.6	Directed walking	Location of freedom of movement	Follows demonstrated gross motor actions; steps up, over	Sings Identifies location ("bed")	Walks until at destination
2.8	Using grab bars, railings	Balance	Holds tight to objects; hits, kicks at target	Uses short phrases, gestures Names target	Holds until postural stability is achieved
Level 3: Manual Actions					
3.0	Grasping objects	Handling material objects	Grasps, holds, throws objects	Uses nouns and verbs Names a few objects	Holds a few seconds Slow
3.2	Distinguishing objects	Moving objects back and forth	Uses associated actions on objects. Places randomly.	Uses short phrases Names objects, locations	Stops, starts actions on command
3.4	Sustaining actions on objects	Repeating a manual action	Repeats familiar actions Places objects in a row	Talks at others Names current actions	1 – 5 minutes
3.6	Noting effects of actions on objects	Immediate effects of own actions on objects	Repeats demonstrated effects Places objects on perimeter	Names shapes; states message of vital need	15 – 30 minutes
3.8	Using all objects	Effects of own actions on activity	Covers space, uses all objects Sequences familiar actions	Recognizes activity only when done	Up to time when all objects are used

Table: Summary of the Levels and Modes of Performance of the Allen Cognitive Level Scale, continued

Mode	Description	Pays Attention to	Motor Behavior	Communication Behavior	Duration/Time
Level 4: Goal-directed Actions					
4.0	Sequencing familiar steps	Activity to be done, objects within reach in front	Sequences familiar actions to complete routine activities	Asks for next step; no problem recognition	Length of activity Disoriented to date
4.2	Differentiating features	Features of objects that match: shape, color, length	Matches one striking feature to a sample at a time	Names features, sees visible problem. Asks for help	Up to 1 hour Asks for date
4.4	Completing goal	Pairs of striking features in front, to side within 36"	Matches pairs of striking features; copies samples	Asks for demonstration, exact supplies. Follows rules.	Routines, oriented to day/date/location
4.6	Personalizing activity	Personal preferences People, supplies in view	Scans for information Varies amount, pressure, depth	Asks for past supplies Comments on deviations	Change in routine Two concurrent schedules
4.8	Rote learning	Sequences of new steps All striking features of objects	Rotates, inspects objects on completion	Asks for verification of results Follows a list of instructions	Routines within a concurrent schedule
Level 5: Exploratory Actions					
5.0	Varying actions to improve effects	Details of variations of actions on objects	Initiates bilateral, fluid variations in actions to improve effects	Stops working to talk Expresses feelings, questions purpose of activity	Schedules episodic events inconsistently
5.2	Discriminating parts	Surface properties of objects: sheen, edge; sets of objects: kits, tools, styles	Improves surface and edge properties; alters posture to improve results	Talks and works Classifies objects, actions by use or concrete attributes	Uses time pieces, calendars, memory aids
5.4	Engaging in self-directed learning	Spatial properties: joints, part/whole, overlaps, $\leq \frac{1}{4}$ ", angles	Controls fine motor actions in small spaces; reorganizes work space, storage areas	Insists on own methods Considers explanations of potential secondary effects	Alters work pace to meet standard for short periods
5.6	Considering social standards	Social context: trends, fashion, holiday, values, social conventions, social groups, needs of others	Adjusts elements to create symmetry, harmony, balance Compares instructions Considers potential surface properties of objects	Discusses, compares primary and secondary effects before acting Forms bonds with others Conforms to social roles	Alters work pace to meet external standard on request
5.8	Consulting with Others	Possible chain of events with available objects Potential secondary effects	Considers potential spatial properties of objects	Seeks advice to avoid hazards Displays tact in interactions	Initiates work pace considering time, properties, effects
Level 6: Planned Actions					
6.0	Planning actions	Abstract/symbolic cues for objects, procedures, events, themes	Compares two hypothetical procedures before acting, pauses to think	Anticipates needs of others Reports functional limitations accurately	Future: unlimited