

YOUTH SUCCESS MOVEMENT

Social-Emotional · Cognitive · Knowledge

Understanding Brain Skills

What cognitive skills are, why they matter,
and how the Gibson Test reveals the hidden
reasons your child may be struggling.

The Problem We Are Solving

70%

of US 4th graders
do NOT read
proficiently

84%

of Black 4th graders
do NOT read
proficiently

Most

struggling students
never find out
WHY they struggle

Most schools respond with more instruction. But what if the real problem is underneath — in how the brain processes information?

What Are Cognitive Skills?

The Engine Analogy

Academics (reading, math, writing) are what the car can do.

Cognitive skills are the engine that powers everything.

You can have a skilled driver on a great road — but if the engine isn't working, the car won't go far.

Cognitive Skills Are...

- ✓ The brain's processing tools for learning
- ✓ Not the same as intelligence
- ✓ Not about what you know — about HOW you process
- ✓ Trainable and improvable
- ✓ Measurable with the right tools

Weak cognitive skills make absorbing any lesson extremely difficult — regardless of teacher quality.

The Eight Foundational Cognitive Skills



Attention

Focusing on a task over time



Working Memory

The brain's mental workspace



Short-Term Memory

Holding info briefly



Long-Term Retrieval

Getting stored info back out



Auditory Processing

Interpreting sounds & phonemes



Visual Processing

Making meaning from visual input



Processing Speed

How fast the brain works



Logic & Reasoning

Thinking through new problems

Working Memory: The Mental Workspace



"The single most important cognitive predictor of academic achievement."

Reading

Holding earlier sentences in mind while reading new ones — enabling comprehension

Math

Keeping numbers and steps in mind while solving multi-step problems

Writing

Managing content, grammar, spelling, and organization all at once

Following Directions

Retaining a multi-step instruction while executing the first step

Research: Working memory at age 5 predicts academic achievement at age 11 better than IQ. (Alloway & Alloway, 2010)

Youth Success Movement | youthsuccessmovement.org

Auditory & Visual Processing: The Reading Foundation



Auditory Processing

How the brain interprets sounds

- Foundation of phonological awareness — the #1 predictor of early reading
- Enables distinguishing similar sounds: 'pin' vs. 'pen'
- Powers phonics decoding — even with good hearing
- Can be weak even when a child passes a standard hearing test
- Weakness often looks like 'just can't get phonics' — teacher frustration grows



Visual Processing

How the brain interprets visual input

- Letter and word recognition — the brain's visual pattern library
- Tracking lines of text without losing place
- Spatial reasoning — maps, diagrams, charts
- Can look like dyslexia even with perfect 20/20 vision
- Weakness shows up as letter reversals, losing place, slow reading

A New Standard of Care for Every Child



Vision Exam

Is my child's vision working?
Glasses or not?

✓ **Already standard**



Hearing Test

Is my child's hearing working?
Hearing aid or not?

✓ **Already standard**



Brain Skills Check-Up

Are cognitive skills strong?
Training needed or not?

⚠ **Should be standard**

Previously, cognitive assessment required a professional evaluation costing \$500–\$5,000.
The Gibson Test makes it accessible to every family.

The Gibson Test of Brain Skills

What It Is

- Validated, standardized online cognitive skills assessment
- Built in collaboration with LearningRx — used in 150+ clinical centers worldwide
- Online version uilt by Gary Smith, YSM Founder (named for Dr. Ken Gibson, LearningRx founder)
- Administered 92,000+ times — normed twice by independent experts
- Available in 20+ languages
- Takes approx. 45-60 minutes online
- Recommended for students in Grade 2 and above (age 7+)
- Results available immediately after completion

Cost Comparison

School Psych WJ-IV Eval	\$500–\$2,000
Private Neuro- psychologist	\$2,000– \$5,000
LearningRx Clinic Gibson	\$150–\$250
YSM Gibson Test	Low/No Cost

www.thegibsontest.com | Trusted by parents, educators, and clinicians worldwide

What the Gibson Test Measures

Skill Domain	CHC Theory Broad Ability	WJ-IV Parallel	Why It Matters for Learning
Working + Short-Term Memory	Gwm	WJ-IV Gwm Cluster	Mental workspace; holds & manipulates information
Long-Term Retrieval Storage & Retrieval Speed	Glr	WJ-IV Glr Cluster	Retrieving stored knowledge quickly and accurately
Processing Speed Cognitive Efficiency	Gs	WJ-IV Gs Cluster	Rate of simple cognitive operations
Auditory Processing Phonological Awareness	Ga	WJ-IV Ga Cluster	Interpreting and discriminating sounds of language
Visual Processing Spatial & Pattern Recognition	Gv	WJ-IV Gv Cluster	Making meaning from visual information
Attention Sustained Focus	Gwm/Gs	WJ-IV Gwm/Gs Cluster	Gatekeeper of all learning — focus over time
Logic & Reasoning Fluid Intelligence	Gf	WJ-IV Gf Cluster	Solving novel problems; thinking beyond memorized knowledge

How to Read the Results

Results are reported as percentile scores — showing how your child compares to same-age peers.

75th+

Strength — Above average for age

40–74th

Average — Within normal range

25–39th

Below Average — Worth watching — some impact likely

10–24th

Weak — Likely contributing to struggle — training recommended

Below 10th

Significant Gap — High priority — targeted cognitive training needed

Example: A 15th percentile score in Auditory Processing means 85% of same-age children scored higher. This would be flagged as a significant gap warranting targeted action.

What the Gibson Test Is — and Is Not

✓ The Gibson Test IS...

- ✓ A validated cognitive skills screening tool
- ✓ One step in a comprehensive, multi-factor diagnostic process
- ✓ Information that empowers families and guides targeted action
- ✓ Accessible, affordable, and online
- ✓ A baseline to measure training progress against

✗ The Gibson Test is NOT...

- ✗ A diagnosis of dyslexia, ADHD, or any learning disability
- ✗ A replacement for professional evaluation when needed
- ✗ A measure of intelligence or potential
- ✗ The whole picture on its own
- ✗ A label or limitation — skills can be trained

Where the Gibson Test Fits: The YSM Parent Journey



Why the Sequence Matters

1. By Step 8, we already know the child's homelife, trauma history, ADHD profile, mindset, and visual processing status.
2. The Gibson Test results are interpreted within that full context — not in isolation.
3. A child with a weak working memory score who is also sleep-deprived and experiencing food insecurity cannot be understood through cognitive data alone.
4. The YSM holds both the brain data and the human context simultaneously — because both matter.

What Happens If a Skill Gap Is Found?

The most important insight: A cognitive skill gap is not permanent. The brain is adaptable. Skills can be strengthened.



Step 1: Identify

Gibson Test pinpoints which specific skills are weak — giving families precise, actionable information for the first time.



Step 2: Plan

Family Ambassador synthesizes all 8 assessment areas into a prioritized, personalized action plan with realistic timelines.



Step 3: Train

BrainSkills online cognitive training — the same clinical model used in 150+ LearningRx centers — targets and strengthens the identified gaps.



Step 4: Track

Progress is monitored, results are measured, and the plan is updated as the child improves. Milestones are celebrated.

Your child's struggle is not the end of the story.

It is a signal. It can be understood. It can be addressed.



Take the Gibson Test — understand your child's brain skills profile



Connect with a Family Ambassador — guided support at every step



Join the Reading Success Initiative — free resources for your community



Build the Village — because every child deserves a community around them

youthsuccessmovement.org