THE LEVELS OF EMOTIONAL

AWARENESS SCALE FOR CHILDREN

(LEAS-C)

A supplement to the Levels of Emotional Awareness (LEAS) scoring manual

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The information which follows is intended as a supplement to the adult-based LEAS scoring manual. Parties interested in using the LEAS-C in their research will need to contact Dr. Richard Lane, lane@email.arizona.edu, for the complete scoring manual and glossary of emotion words.

Description of the LEAS-C

The Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale for Children is a self-report instrument, designed to assess emotional awareness in children. It is comprised of 12 scenarios, each involving 2 people; oneself and another person. Children are asked to respond by indicating how they might feel, and how they think the other person might feel, in each situation.

The scenarios are organised around four emotions: anger, fear, happiness and sadness. Each emotion is presented in three different scenarios in mixed order (e.g., sad, fear, anger, happy). Unlike other assessments of emotional functioning in children (Carroll & Steward, 1984; Donaldson & Westerman, 1986; Kovacs, 1983; Kusche, Beilke, & Greenberg, 1988), the specific emotions children report in their responses are not relevant to the scoring. The LEAS-C is viewed as a performance-based instrument with scoring based on the complexity of emotion words used and the extent to which these emotions can be differentiated from one another, *not* on whether the responses are "correct" (see Chapter 2 for more details). The measure is therefore robust to response biases evident in many other self-report measures, for example, when participant responses are motivated by extraneous factors such as the desire to please the researcher.

The LEAS-C is a quick and easy to use assessment tool for the classroom teacher, school counsellor or therapist. It is presented using a familiar storyline format, and is based on everyday social situations with which children readily identify.

Purpose

The LEAS-C provides information about the extent to which children are aware of emotions in themselves and in other people.

Why is this information important? This information is important because emotions provide us with crucial information, information that helps us to make sense of our own, and others, thoughts and behaviours. If we are not aware of this information, we may be less able to resolve our problems. For example, how can we resolve our anger effectively if we are not aware that we are angry?

Some children are competent at identifying the emotions they feel, and the emotions others feel. Other children are less able. Some children easily discriminate between their own, and other's feelings. Other children simply cannot make this discrimination and find it very difficult to articulate how anyone else feels (see Appendix for examples)

The LEAS-C also provides information about children's range of emotions. For example, some children will experience the same emotional response, e.g., anger or sadness, irrespective of the context. Other children will report a flexible range of emotional responses, each dependent on the given context. While not directly related to the scoring procedure, this information may be useful to the researcher (see Appendix for examples).

For the classroom teacher, an understanding of individual differences in emotional awareness provides valuable insight into children's social and emotional competence. This baseline information can then be used to guide curriculum focus and delivery. For the counsellor or therapist, the LEAS-C provides additional information about how the child is likely to emotionally experience the world around them.

CHAPTER 2
ADMINISTRATION AND SCORING

Administration

        The LEAS-C can be individually or group administered. Estimated time to complete the instrument is approximately 20 minutes. The LEAS-C can also be administered in an interview format (e.g., presented aurally) with individual children, where this method is judged more appropriate. This format is generally recommended for children 8 years of age or younger.

        Children are presented with 12 scenarios, each of which involves 2 people: themselves and another person. Following each scenario, two questions are posed: How would you feel? How would the other person feel? Children are required to generate their own response to these questions. Grammatical and / or spelling errors are expected to occur. They do not affect performance. It should be pointed out to children prior to completing the LEAS-C that spelling or grammatical errors are not important to their performance on this task.

        The scenarios are based on everyday social situations. Some of these are school-based while others are home oriented. When administering the LEAS-C, it is important to be sensitive to the differing home environments in which children may live. In the place of parental figures (mum or dad), children may substitute any adult figure with whom they live.

Scoring

        Scoring procedures for the LEAS-C are the same as those followed for the adult-based LEAS. For complete scoring details please contact Dr. Richard Lane, lane@email.arizona.edu. A glossary of words accompanies the scoring manual to aid in the scoring of emotion words. Below is a broad outline of the scoring procedures used.

        Complexity of emotional awareness is assessed on 5 levels. A low awareness level 1 response may stress somatic features, e.g., "I would feel sick", or may directly state a lack of emotional response, e.g., "I would feel

nothing". A level 2 response may reflect action e.g., "I would feel like smashing the wall" or a more global generalised response e.g. "I would feel good". Level 3 responses reflect unidimensional emotions e.g., "I would feel sad". Level 4 and 5 responses reflect greater complexity in awareness with emotion blends evident e.g., "I would feel angry but maybe a little bit sad as well". Where there is no response or the response reflects cognition e.g. "I would feel like she did it deliberately", a score of 0 is given.

Three scores are allocated for each scenario: Self Awareness, Other Awareness and Total Awareness. The Total Awareness score is the higher of the Self and Other Awareness scores. Each scenario is rated on a 5-point scale. Ratings for each scenario are summed to give a maximum possible score out of 60.

Additional notes on scoring LEAS-C responses

Both the LEAS and the LEAS-C are self report performance assessments. In both tasks subjects are required to compose a written response to the two questions: "How would you feel?" "How would the other person feel?" In both tasks scoring is based on the complexity of emotion experiences described for self and other. Complexity refers to the emotion terms used in the descriptions and the extent to which these terms are integrated and differentiated from one another.

The language competency evident in the written responses of adults and children can be expected to differ. Competency may be reflected in such dimensions as sentence complexity and clarity, vocabulary and spelling accuracy. As a result of grammatical clumsiness and / or spelling error the written responses of some children may be less clear than would be normally encountered with adult written responses. This does not directly impact on the scoring of emotion terms. However some degree of interpretation may be required in comprehending written responses (see Appendix for examples).

Table 1: Percentile Ranks for Self, Other and Total LEAS-C scores: Males and Females (Bajgar, Deane, & Lane, 2004)

Percentile Rank	Self		Other		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
99	43	44	41	43	45	49
95	40	42	37	39	42	45
90	39	40	35	37	41	43
80	36	37	34	35	39	41
70	35	36	32	34	37	39
60	34	35	31	32	36	38
50	32	33	29	31	35	37
40	31	32	28	29	35	36
30	29	31	26	28	32	35
20	27	29	24	26	31	33
10	25	27	20	23	28	31
5	22	24	16	21	27	29
1	16	18	10	17	22	25

Total sample size n = 702; Males: n = 342, age range 9 – 13 years, M_{age} = 11.0; Females: n = 360, age range 9 – 13 years, M_{age} = 10.9)

CHAPTER 3

SCALE DEVELOPMENT AND PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES

Development of the LEAS-C

Below is an overview of the development of the LEAS-C. For a more detailed account of scale development, the reader is referred to Bajgar, Ciarrochi, Lane & Deane (submitted).

The LEAS-C was developed from the Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale for adults (Lane, Quinlan, Schwartz, & Walker, 1990). It was the aim of the authors to maintain where possible, the format and structure of the LEAS in the development of a children's emotional awareness scale.

Pilot study

A pool of 22 scenarios was initially generated. Of these, 9 were newly developed to reflect school / peer issues (e.g., an accident in the playground) while 13 were modified LEAS scenarios. A small pilot study (n=6) was run for the purposes of item selection. Average time to complete the 22 scenarios was 1 hour.

The number of LEAS-C scenarios was reduced from 22 to 12. Items retained in the LEAS-C were easily understood, and pulled for a variety of responses among participants. Items were excluded if they were poorly understood and / or were too similar to other items. Of the final 12 scenarios comprising the LEAS-C, 10 were modified LEAS items.

Research findings

An overview of the findings relating to LEAS-C studies is reported below.

<u>Validity study (Bajgar, Ciarrochi, Lane, & Deane, 2004)</u>

Fifty-one children (26 males, age 10-12 years, M_{age} = 10.3; 25 females, age 10-11 years, M_{age}= 10.3) from grades 5 and 6 participated. Construct validity was examined using two emotion knowledge tasks, Emotion Expressions (Izard, 1971) and Emotion Comprehension (Cermele, Ackerman, & Izard, 1995); a cognitive developmental measure, the Parental Descriptions Scale (PDS; Blatt, 1974); and two verbal tasks, the vocabulary subtest of the WISC-III and a verbal productivity (VP) score. Preliminary support for the validity of the LEAS-C was found (see Table 1). Contrary to expectations a relationship between the LEAS-C and the cognitive development PDS measure was not found. The somewhat restricted age range may have contributed to this. Further research examining the developmental properties of the LEAS-C is required.

Table 1: Correlations between the LEAS-C and related measures

LEAS-C	Express[a]	Compreh.[b]	Vocab [c]	VP	PDS[d] mother	PDS father
Self	-.03	.17	.17	.13	-.10	-.07
Other	.30*	.25 *	.19	.05	-.04	.04
Total	.15	.28 *	.31*	.30*	.02	.05

 * $p < .05$; 1 tailed; n = 51
[a] Emotion Expressions; [b] Emotion Comprehension; [c] Verbal subtest, WISC-III; [d] Verbal Productivity; [e] Parental Descriptions Scale.

<u>Gender effects in LEAS-C performance (Bajgar, Deane & Lane, 2004)</u>

Pooling data from 3 separate LEAS-C studies made it possible to examine gender effects in a large sample of 702 children from grades 5 and 6 (342 males, age 9 – 13 years, M_{age} = 11.0; 360 females, age 9 – 13 years, M_{age} = 10.9). Consistent with expectations, significant gender differences in LEAS-C scores were evident (see Table 2). Females achieved significantly higher emotional awareness scores compared to males. This pattern was consistent for awareness of self-emotions, and other-emotions.

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations for Self, Other and Total LEAS-C scores for Males and Females

LEAS-C scales	Males [a]		Females [b]		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t
Self	31.7	5.5	33.2	5.3	-3.53**
Other	28.4	6.3	30.6	5.6	-5.04**
Total	34.7	4.8	37.1	4.8	-6.82**

[a] n = 342, [b] n = 360; ** p < .01

The relationship between LEAS-C scores and children's self reports of LEAS-C difficulty ("How difficult did you find this task?") and task motivation ("How hard did you try at this task?"), were also examined. Reports of LEAS-C difficulty were significantly higher for females (see Table 3). Females also reported significantly higher motivation levels compared to males. Children's perceptions of LEAS-C difficulty were not significantly related to LEAS-C scores, for either males or females (see Table 4). Interestingly, gender differences in the relationship between motivation and LEAS-C scores did emerge. Task motivation was significantly related to LEAS-C scores for males, but not for females. In other words, males could achieve a higher LEAS-C score by trying harder. This relationship was not evident for females.

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations in Task Motivation and Task Difficulty for Males and Females

	Males		Females		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t
Difficulty [a]	3.75	2.13	4.29	2.10	-2.65*
Motivation [b]	7.58	2.52	8.70	1.65	-5.64**

[a] Males: n = 219, Females: n = 210; [b] Males: n = 242, Females: n = 226
* p < .05, ** p < .01

Table 4: Correlation between Task Difficulty, Task Motivation and Total LEAS-C scores for Males and Females

	Males LEAS-C	Females LEAS-C
Difficulty [a]	-.02	.04
Motivation [b]	.16*	-.002

[a] Males: n=217; Females: n=210; [b] Males: n=242; Females: n=226

Relationship between the LEAS-C and other emotion assessments (Bajgar & Deane, 2004b)

The relationship between the LEAS-C and a battery of emotion assessments was examined with 471 children from grades 5 and 6 (245 males, age 9-13 years, M_{age} = 11.1; 226 females, age 9-13 years, M_{age} = 11.0). Focus was given to children's reports of depression, anxiety and anger expression styles, and 12 discrete emotions. We examined the relationship between these variables separately for males and females. Emotional awareness was not significantly related to any of the emotion variables for females. For males, emotional awareness was significantly related to two anger expression styles, anger-suppression and anger-control, and to the positive emotions of joy and interest. Emotional awareness was significantly negatively related to depression, anger-out expression, and contempt. That is, lower levels of emotional awareness were associated with higher levels of depression, aggression and contempt among males (see Table 5 for more details)

Relationship between the LEAS-C and social behaviour (Bajgar & Deane, 2004a)

The relationship between LEAS-C scores and peer nominations of like-most and like-least (Coie & Kupersmidt, 1983) and social behaviour were also examined in the above study. Interesting gender differences emerged in relation to peer like-most / like-least nominations. Emotional awareness was not significantly related to either like-most or like-least nominations among males. For females, emotional awareness was significantly related to like-

most nominations and significantly negatively related to like-least nominations. That is, higher like-most nominations were associated with higher levels of emotional awareness while lower levels of emotional awareness were associated with higher levels of like-least nominations. In relation to peer nominations of social behaviour, emotional awareness was significantly associated with cooperative behaviour among males, while lower emotional awareness was significantly related to higher levels of fighting and teasing. Higher levels of emotional awareness were associated with humour and cooperation among females (see Table 6).

Table 5: Relationship between Emotion variables and Total LEAS-C scores for Males and Females

Emotion variables	Males [a] LEAS-C	Females [b] LEAS-C
Depression [c]	-.17**	.09
Anxiety [d]	.01	.01
Anger expression [e]:		
out	-.21**	.09
suppression	.16*	.06
control	.25**	-.02
Discrete emotions [f]		
guilt	.03	.10
shy	.07	-.02
joy	.17*	.04
disgust	-.08	-.04
hostility	-.05	.10
shame	02	.004
sad	.09	.07
contempt	-.15*	-.02
interest	.16*	.02
surprise	.05	-.003
fear	.01	.01
anger	-.08	.07

Table 6: Relationship between Peer Nominations of Like-Most and Like-Least Nominations, Behaviour and Total LEAS-C scores for Males and Females

Peer Nominations	Males [a] LEAS-C	Females [b] LEAS-C
Like-Most	.04	.20**
Like-Least	-.05	-.14*
Afraid	-.05	-.09
Alone	-.06	-.11
Humour	.02	.16*
Cooperation	.17**	.24**
Fight	-.16*	-.07
Shy	-.01	-.10
Tease	-.16*	-.12
Worry	.03	.03

[a] n=245; [b] n=226; * p < .05, ** p < .01

Ongoing feedback

There is considerable interest in the development of the LEAS-C and we have fielded many enquiries from researchers considering using the measure in their studies. This has prompted the provision of this preliminary supplement. Researchers interested in using the LEAS-C are requested to make available to the first author a summary of their LEAS-C findings. This information will make a valuable contribution to the ongoing normative data pooling process. All feedback will be appropriately referenced and acknowledged.

Appendix

EXAMPLES OF SCORED SCENARIOS

SC. #	RESPONSE	S	O	T
1	I would feel like all the training was a wast of time. My friend would feel lucky.	0	2	2
	I would feel that in pain and discouraged. My firend would feel that there are more chaces of winning	3	0	3
	I would feel disaponted because I have trained for so long and I have just misted out. My friend would feel happy because they have won the race that they have tried for but opset because I did not finish and I twisted my ankle.	3	3	3
	I would feel sad and disapointed that I didn't finish. I would also feel happy for my friend, I think my friend would feel happy because he finished 1st and sad for me.	4	4	4
	I would feel disportand My friend would feel excited. I would feel mad. My friend would feel glad	4	4	5
2	I would feel like something really bad was going to happen to me. My mum would feel very worried about our house	1	3	3
	I would feel destroyed I would feel like crying. I think my mum would be in a state of shock, for my brother and sister and dad might have been inside	2	2	2
	I would feel sad because someones home might be on fire. I would think my mum the same way	3	3	3

SC. #	RESPONSE	S	O	T
	I would feel sad and helpless and would hope noone was in there. I think my mum would feel the same	4	4	4
	I would feel that our house had burnt down. I would feel unsure about what has happened. My dad would feel worried and sad	0	4	4
3	Well, first I would feel upset because she changed her mind but then I would save up some more money or I would by something else. My friend wouldn't feel upset because she had already spent her money	2	2	2
	I would feel very peed off. My friend I don't know	3	1	3
	I would feel very ashamed of him because I was saving up for 6 years. My friend would fee ashamed of himself	3	3	3
	I would feel disappointed and angry. My friend would feel ashamed	4	3	4
	I would feel really angry and heart . My friend would feel really gilty and sorry that he spent it	4	4	5
4	I would feel like he sudenly became a nice person. He would feel like he just did a really good thing	0	0	0
	I would feel that it would be nice for a change. I think feel bad of what I did in the past	0	2	2
	I would feel happy and the outhe person wounted to be my friend	3	3	3
	I'd feel surprised happy and I've made a friend. I think they'd feel sorry	4	3	4

SC. #	RESPONSE	S	O	T
	I would feel shocked but relieved he does not still dislike me. I think this person would be scared but happy he said that	3	4	4
5	My dad would feel sad because the dog was a very good dog and he did not desver to die	0	3	3
	You would feel very bad because it is a family member. Same with your dad	2	2	2
	I would feel I have just lost a best friend and be angry. I think dad would feel sad that I had lost him	3	3	3
	I would feel very very sad because I would not get to play with it. Dad would feel very sad because he love the dog	3	4	4
	I would feel really sad and engry at the driver if I were the dad I would feel worred that she was sad and sad about the dog	4	4	5
6	I would feel like getting an ice pad and helping the other person. They would feel like we were both really clumsy	2	0	2
	I would fee annoyed because I did not no where I was going. I feel that I should not of fun very fast	3	0	3
	Me and the other kid would feel heat and dirty	1	1	1
	I would feel sad and sorry for the other kid. They would feel the same	4	4	4

SC. #	RESPONSE	S	O	T
	I'd feel hurt but not angry with this person because I'd been running around too. I think my friend would feel the same	3	3	3
7	I would feel like I should have brushed my teeth more often than I did. The dentist would feel like I didn't brush my teeth enough	0	0	0
	Alright because I like the dentist. I don't know how the dentist would feel	3	1	3
	I would feel alright because we had it done before. He would feel good	2	2	2
	The dentist would feel sorry for me and I would feel not very happy	3	3	3
	I would feel embarassed and frightened. The dentist would feel pretty good because he will get more money	4	2	4
8	I would feel like she was picking on me. She would feel like I wasn't trying my best	0	0	0
	I would try to do my best so it can be acceptable. The teacher might feel good to do it	0	2	2
	She would feel that it could be beter so she would feel mad. I would feel very sad but I would fines it off	3	3	3
	I would feel upset. My teacher would feel worried and sad	2	4	4
	I would feel anoid with the teacher and mself. The teacher would feel proud for telling me with confidence	4	3	4

SC. #	RESPONSE	S	O	T
	I would feel anoid with the teacher and mself. The teacher would feel proud for telling me with confidence	4	3	4
9	I would feel that it would be good having a rich friend. I would feel that he would tell everyone about that I'm rich	0	0	0
	I would feel gelis. I don't know about my friend	3	1	3
	I would feel really upset because he was keeping a secret behind your back. He would feel really bad because he shouldn't have done it behind your back	2	2	2
	I would feel surprised and embarassed. My friend would feel nervous	4	3	4
	I would feel happy because he had trust in me, but I would deferently felt jealous. I think he would be happy I did not want money but friendship	4	4	5
10	I would feel like they were going to pick the other person. They would probably to	0	0	0
	I would feel very upset if I was or wouldn't. If I did get piked I wouldn't play I would go and play with the other kid. The kid would feel very upset	2	2	2
	I would feel sad and heart but I would give the place to the other person	4	0	4
	I would hope to be picked and sad for the other kid. The other kid would feel the same	4	4	4
	I would feel like kown one likes me. I would feel bad and sad. The other kid would feel the same bad and sad and like not one like him	4	4	4

SC. #	RESPONSE	S	O	T
11	I would take more chips and the outhe chid would not no	0	0	0
	I would feel not really bad. Friend would feel bad and give you more chips	2	2	2
	I would feel sad because that he is not sharing equaly. My friend might like the other people better than me	3	3	3
	I would feel left out and my friend would feel happy and sad	2	4	4
	A bit angry and jelious. My friend would feel sorry that they weren't giving the chips evenly	4	3	4
12	I would feel uncofterbel because I would be a little shy. So would my friend	2	2	2
	I would feel gratefull. My friend would feel good about himself.	3	2	3
	I would feel happy that they are back. My friend would feel good to see me	3	2	3
	I would feel realy realy happy and excited to see my friend. My friend would probably feel the same way	4	4	4
	I would feel happy and hope she had a good trip. She would feel happy to see me and sad her holiday has finished	4	4	5

Specific examples of child response styles

<u>Subject demonstrating negative affective bias in responses</u>

1. I would feel unhappy and my friend would feel happy because he won the race
2. I would feel furious and my mum would feel angry and sad
3. I would feel angry and my friend would be angry with me for being angry with them
4. I would feel angry because they can't be forgiven by me because I hate them
5. I would feel angry and my dad would feel sad
6. I would feel sorry and they would be angry
7. I would feel extremely angry. He wouldn't care
8. I would feel I need to improve but I'd wish they wouldn't rub it in. The teacher would feel worry
9. I would feel ok and tell her that I like her the way that she is. She would feel happy I told her that. I would keep it secret if she wanted.
10. I would probably be not picked so I would feel angry. They would feel happy I wasn't picked
11. I would feel OK because I don't eat much anyway. She wouldn't mind
12. I would feel happy that she came back to see me and she would feel happy

<u>Examples of unclear sentence structure and / or spelling error</u>

- I would feel like that fried would have felt so good but she/he didn't even help me get up I would feel like I could not trust that friend anymore they just wanted to win. (Self = 3, Other = 3, Total = 3)
- I would feel like well I have lost everything and I had no were to go but my mum would feel worst like something or someone had died. (Self = 0, Other = 2, Total = 2)
- I would feel that I was being left out a try to egnor that person but I would feel very sad about her and she would not feel a thing. (Self = 3, Other = 1, Total = 3)

- I would feel know that he said that to me I would feel very upset she is my friend I don't want her money. She would feel preety bad but she was the on thinking that no me. I would be hurt. (Self = 4, Other = 2, Total = 4)

Low scoring responses

- I would feel nothing. He went now hes back and normal things well happen again
- Well id just improve my work as the teacher said
- It was both our faults so I would just walk away
- Well that's life bad things happen I wouldent cry over a little thing like that
- I think there would be nothing to feel about
- I would feel as if my home would not be the same as it was. My mum would feel the spirit if everyone was safe
- I would feel as if my dog was still in my heart. My dad would feel as if he should not had told us.
- I would feel as if it was my fault. She would feel as if it was her fault
- I would need a reason why to see how I feel
- Me: get lost. Person: please let me such up to you
- Me: please choose me. Them: please choose me

High scoring responses

- I would feel angre anoyed and hurt. My friend would feel emdaresed and angre I think
- I would feel mixed feelings happy and angre. They would feel hopefull or emdarsed or nasty I think
- I would feel happy and annoyed at the same time. The person would feel worried and would hope I will forgive him
- I would feel very sad but very happy for my friend. My friend would feel very happy and proud for herself

- I would feel very proud that she could trust me and tense because I might reveal the truth. He might feel very stressed that I might tell the truth but relieved it has gone out.
- I would feel very nervous and full of fear. My mum would feel hurt, discouraged, helpless and scared.
- I would feel betrayed and hurt because I trusted my friend. My friend might feel hurt because she hurt me or she might feel happy with what she bought

Acknowledgements

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