

## Abbreviated Instructions for Conducting the BIMS

**Intent:** To determine the individual's attention, orientation and ability to register and recall new information.

**Please note:** For more in-depth instructions for completing the BIMS, please refer to Chapter 3: MDS Items Section C: Cognitive Patterns.

### SHOULD THE BRIEF INTERVIEW FOR MENTAL STATUS BE CONDUCTED?

- The interview should be attempted if the individual is at least sometimes understood verbally or in writing, and if an interpreter is needed and one is available.
- The interview should not be attempted if the individual is rarely/never understood or an interpreter is needed but not available.

### BASIC INTERVIEW INSTRUCTIONS FOR BIMS:

1. Interview any individual not excluded as indicated above.
2. Conduct the interview in a private setting if at all possible.
3. Be sure the individual can hear you. An individual with a hearing impairment should be tested using their usual communication devices/techniques as applicable.
4. Sit so that the individual can see your face.
5. Give an introduction.  
Suggested language: *"I would like to ask you some questions. We ask everyone these same questions. This will help us to provide you with better recommendations. Some of the questions may seem very easy, while others may be more difficult."*
6. If the individual expresses concern that you are testing his or her memory, he or she may be more comfortable if you reply: *"We ask these questions of everyone so we can make sure that we can meet your needs."*

### Coding Tips:

- Nonsensical responses should be coded as zero.<sup>1</sup> A nonsensical response is any response that is unrelated, incomprehensible, or incoherent; and is not informative with respect to the item being rated.
- Refusal to answer a specific question is coded as "0."

### Use Code 99 if:

- the individual chooses not to participate, or
- 4 or more items were coded 0 because the individual chose not to answer or gave a nonsensical response.

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<sup>1</sup> Nonsensical response means any response that is unrelated, incomprehensible, or incoherent; it is not informative with respect to the item being rated.

## Repetition of Three Words

This section determines if the individual is able to actively engage in a verbal interaction. Inability to repeat three words on the first attempt may indicate a hearing impairment, a language barrier or inattention.

### Interview Instructions:

1. Say to the individual; *“I am going to say three words for you to remember. Please repeat the words after I have said all three.”*
2. Immediately after presenting the three words, say to the individual: *“Now tell me the three words.”*

### **Repetition of Three Words**

Ask the individual: *“I am going to say three words for you to remember. Please repeat the words after I have said all three. The words are: sock, blue and bed. Now tell me the three words.”*

#### **Number of words repeated after first attempt**

0. None
1. One
2. Two
3. Three

After the individual’s first attempt, repeat the words using cues (*“sock, something to wear; blue a color; bed, a piece of furniture”*). You may repeat the words up to two more times.

### Coding Instructions:

1. Record the maximum number of words that the individual correctly repeated on the first attempt. This will be any number between 0 and 3.
2. The words may be recalled in any order and in any context.

Important: After scoring, and in preparation for **Recall**, repeat the three words, this time using category cues: *“sock, something to wear; blue, a color; bed; a piece of furniture.”*<sup>2</sup> You may repeat these words and the corresponding cues up to two more times.

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<sup>2</sup> Category cue means a phrase that puts a word in context to help with learning and to serve as a hint that helps prompt the individual. For example, the category cue for sock is “something to wear.”

## Temporal Orientation (Orientation to Year, Month and Day)

Temporal orientation means the ability to place oneself in correct time.<sup>3</sup> For the BIMS, it is the ability to indicate the correct date in current surroundings.

### Interview Instructions:

1. Ask the individual each of the 3 questions separately.
2. Allow the individual up to 30 seconds for each answer and do not provide clues.
3. If the individual specifically asks for clues (e.g. “*is it bingo day?*”) respond by saying, “*I need to know if you can answer this question without any help from me.*”
4. In some cases, you may need to write the individual’s response in the margin and go back later to count how many years, months or days were missed. Do your best to keep focused on the interaction with the individual, not adding or subtracting.

<b>Temporal Orientation (orientation to year, month, and day)</b>
Ask the individual: “ <i>Please tell me what year it is right now.</i> ” <b>A. Able to report correct year</b> <b>0. Missed by more than 5 years or no answer.</b> <b>1. Missed by 2-5 years</b> <b>2. Missed by 1 year</b> <b>3. Correct</b>
Ask the individual: “ <i>What month are we in right now?</i> ” <b>B. Able to report correct month</b> <b>0. Missed by more than 1 month or no answer.</b> <b>1. Missed by 6 days to 1 month</b> <b>2. Accurate within 5 days.</b>
Ask the individual: “ <i>What day of the week is today?</i> ” <b>C. Able to report correct day of the week</b> <b>0. Incorrect or no answer</b> <b>2. Correct</b>

### Coding Instructions:

Code as indicated in the corresponding boxes.

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<sup>3</sup> Temporal orientation means the ability to place oneself in correct time. For the BIMS it is the ability to indicate the correct date in current surroundings.

## Recall

Individuals with cognitive impairment can be helped to recall if provided clues. Providing memory cues can help maximize the individual's function and decrease frustrations for those individuals who respond.

### Interview Instructions:

1. Ask the individual the following: "Let's get back to an earlier question. What were those three words that I asked you to repeat?"
2. Allow up to 5 seconds for spontaneous recall of each word.
3. For any word that is not correctly recalled after 5 seconds, provide a category cue (*something to wear, a color, a piece of furniture*). Give a cue for each word separately.
4. Category cues should be used only after the individual is unable to recall one or more of the three words.
5. Allow up to 5 seconds after category cueing for each missed word to be recalled.

<b>Recall</b>
Ask individual: "Let's go back to an earlier question: What were those three words that I asked you to repeat?" If unable to remember a word, give cue ( <i>something to wear; a color; a piece of furniture</i> ) for that word. <b>A. Able to recall "sock"</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>0. <b>No</b> – could not recall</li><li>1. <b>Yes, after cueing</b> ("<i>something to wear</i>")</li><li>2. <b>Yes, no cue required</b></li></ol>
<b>B. Able to recall "blue"</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>0. <b>No</b> – could not recall</li><li>1. <b>Yes, after cueing</b> ("<i>a color</i>")</li><li>2. <b>Yes, no cue required</b></li></ol>
<b>C. Able to recall "bed"</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>0. <b>No</b> – could not recall</li><li>1. <b>Yes, after cueing</b> ("<i>a piece of furniture</i>")</li><li>2. <b>Yes, no cue required</b></li></ol>

### Coding Instructions:

1. Code as indicated in the corresponding boxes.
2. If on the first try (without cueing), the individual names multiple items in a category, one of which is correct, they should be coded as correct for that item
3. If however, the interviewer gives the individual the cue and the individual then names multiple items in that category, the item is coded as "*could not recall*," even if the correct item was in the list.

## TOTAL SCORE

Enter the total score as a two-digit number. The total possible BIMS score ranges from 00 to 15.

- 13 – 15: cognitively intact
- 08 - 12: moderately impaired
- 00 – 07: severe impairment