

Station Number

AFFIX CANDIDATE
LABEL HERE

CANDIDATE No:.....

Instructions for Candidates

Scenario

Sarah Blair is a 26-year-old mother with a 6 month old baby, presenting for the first time to psychiatric services. Her child is currently outside with her sister.

She has described hearing voices to her General Practitioner, who has asked you to assess her.

Instructions

Question her about hallucinatory experiences. **Do not** take a history of depressive symptoms. Restrict questioning about abnormal thoughts to those that will help you assess levels of risk.

You will be asked for your opinion on risk towards the end of the interview.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO HAND YOUR IDENTITY LABEL TO THE
EXAMINER**

Station Number

AFFIX CANDIDATE
LABEL HERE

Mental State Examination: Hallucinations

CANDIDATE No:.....

Instructions for Patients

Answer questions based on the following scenario.

Do not volunteer information unless asked.

This station tests the candidate's ability to take a history from a patient, and examine specific aspects of the mental state.

You are Sarah Blair, a 26-year-old mother, who gave birth 6 months ago. You have a son, Joseph.

Key Attributes

You are frightened, and apprehensive about being interviewed. You come across as being quite suspicious but anxious and upset. You are a little irritable at times, and may become angry if you feel that the candidate doesn't have much empathy.

Key Dialogue

For the last two weeks, you have been hearing a single female voice, mainly at night.

- It is heard outside of your head, as if it was coming from the walls
- It sounds very real and clear
- You do not recognise the voice
- The voice tells you that you are no good and deserve to die
- It does not refer to you in the third person; it does not comment on what you are doing
- The voice also commands you to harm your baby, as the baby would be better off dead. It tells you that you have been bad, that you are a bad mother, and that should kill yourself and your child

Mental State

- You have been finding it increasingly difficult to resist the voice and had thought about putting a pillow over your child's head. You would then climb into the bath holding your hairdryer, with the intention of killing yourself
- You have had no other odd experiences (no abnormal smells, sights, sensations, or tastes), but the voice has been terrifying you
- You have been unable to sleep; you haven't been eating; and you have lost some weight
- Your mood has been low for months, and has been getting worse in the last 2-3 weeks
- You feel guilty, and ashamed. You believe very strongly that you have done something bad (although you don't know what) and that you are undeserving of

treatment – the voice has been telling you this

- You truly believe that you should be allowed to die, but came along to the hospital to see if they would allow you to hand over your child

Specific questions that you should ask are:

1. *Will you take my baby? I can't look after him anymore.*
2. *What's wrong with me? I used to be okay.*
3. *Am I going mad? What is this voice that I hear?*
4. *Can I go home now?*

Station Number

AFFIX CANDIDATE
LABEL HERE

Mental State Examination: Hallucinations

CANDIDATE No:.....

Instructions for Examiners

REMEMBER TO ASK THE STUDENT FOR THEIR IDENTITY LABEL AND AFFIX IT TO THE TOP OF THE MARK SHEET.

This is a clinical case where the candidate must:

- a) Demonstrate their ability to set the patient at ease
- b) Proceed to ascertain the pertinent features of auditory hallucinations
- c) Consider auditory hallucinations in relationship to diagnosis and show that they can identify important facets for management
- d) Management issues would include **risk factors** and the meaning of the voices to the individual with a view to future psychological interventions
- e) Quickly assess, and come to a judgement about risk issues, both to the mother, and her child

It is not expected that the candidate give detailed descriptions of delusional symptoms or take a detailed history of depressive symptoms.

When the 6 ½ minute bell goes, you are to ask the candidate, “*Do you think that this woman is at high, medium, or low risk to herself or her child?*”

Station Number

Examiner's Name:

.....

AFFIX CANDIDATE
LABEL HERE

CANDIDATE No:.....

Mental State Examination: Hallucinations

Marking Sheet

Please circle the appropriate mark for each criterion. The standard expected is that of a psychiatric Senior House Officer.

Criterion	Performed competently	Performed, but not fully competent	Not performed		
Approach to the patient – Rapport, empathy, and style	2	1	0		
Characteristics of Auditory Hallucinations (one point for each, up to a maximum of 5):					
• Onset and duration of voices	1	½	0		
• Internal/ external space?	1	½	0		
• Real/ solid/ vivid? Part of their imagination?	1	½	0		
• In what modalities do hallucinations occur	1	½	0		
• Not open to conscious manipulation	1	½	0		
• 2 nd or 3 rd person	1	½	0		
• Number of voices? Gender of voices?	1	½	00		
Content (one point for each, up to a maximum of 2):					
• Content – good or bad?	1	½	0		
• Running commentary?	1	½	0		
• Thoughts spoken aloud?	1	½	0		
Other hallucinatory experiences?					
• Functional hallucinations	1	½	0		
• Reflex hallucinations	1	½	0		
Risk Issues:	2	1	0		
• Do the voices command patient?					
• Have they been able to resist, or do they feel compelled to act on them?					
• Delusions present?					
• Does candidate identify the patient as being high risk of harm to herself and her child					
Overall Approach to Task	4	3	2	1	0

Score (Max 20)

Overall Grading of station

Clear Pass

Borderline

Clear Fail