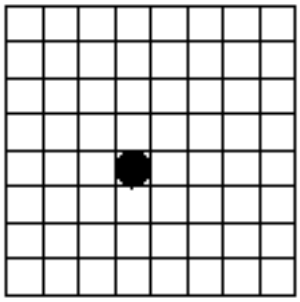
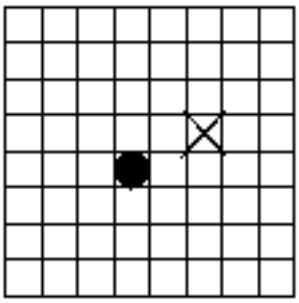
An Explanation of the Following Directions Test - Version 1

The test consists of two kinds of problems, which are actually quite similar. The first presents the child with a grid, one square of which has been blacked out, and asks the child to "move" within the grid. This tests whether children are able to turn directions they read into a plan of action, then to act on that plan. Here is an example.



- Start at the black dot.
- Go right 2.
- Go up 1.
- Where are you? Put an X in the block

The answer is:



The second type of question asks the students to answer questions about days of the month. They are provided with grid-type calendar. This is similar to the grid problem because it requires students to understand and follow directions.

September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

September _____ is exactly one week before September10.

The answer is to write 3 in the blank space.

These calendar and grid questions test a skill which children in the Fifth Dimension may be learning, namely, the ability to follow verbal directions. The following article reports that students who had extensive exposure to the Fifth Dimension scored higher on this test than students who had minimal exposure.

Mayer, R. E., Schustack, M. & Blanton, W. (1999, March-April). What do children learn from using computers in an informal collaborative setting? *Educational Technology, 39(2),* 27-31.