

Table 18-3. Detailed elements of the mental status examination (hierarchical format).

1. Overview:
 - Level of consciousness: coma to alert wakefulness (Glasgow Coma Scale; see Table 18-2).
 - General appearance: body habitus; hygiene; cosmesis; dress.
 - Attitude: degree of cooperation and effort.
 - Motor behavior.
2. Emotion:
 - Mood.
 - Affect.
 - Relation to content of thought.
3. Attention:
 - Attention span: digit span; number of trials required to learn 4 words.
 - Concentration and vigilance.
4. Orientation: for personal identity; place; time. *STM*
5. Memory:
 - Verbal memory: 4 unrelated words recalled after 5 minutes; recall of short story or paired words.
 - Visual memory: reproduction of figures; recall of where examiner "hides" object.
6. Speech and language:
 - Fluency: spontaneous speech; description of picture.
 - Comprehension: of spoken or written language; performing commands of various complexity; response to "yes/no" questions; pointing to described items.
 - Repetition: sentences of graded difficulty; isolated words; letters; numbers.
 - Naming: objects or parts of objects to visual confrontation (or on tactile presentation).
7. Constructional ability: reproducing figures from memory; copying figures; block or token constructions.
8. Calculations: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division; serial subtraction.
9. Thought:
 - Thought process: coherence; goal directedness; logicity.
 - Thought content: hallucinations; delusions; preoccupations.
 - Cognitive functions:
 - Judgment: practical judgment.
 - Abstraction: similarities and proverb interpretation.
 - Fund of knowledge: presidents; cultural events.
 - Insight: understanding nature of illness and possible personal role in initiation or exacerbation of illness.

