

## The Defense Mechanism Manual

The Defense Mechanism Manual was developed to assess the use of three defenses—denial, projection, and identification—as revealed in stories told to standard TAT and CAT cards. Specific criteria have been developed for CAT Cards 3, 5, and 10, and for TAT Cards 1, 2, 3BM, 3GF, 4, 5, 6BM, 6GF, 7BM, 7GF, 8BM, 8GF, 10, 12F, 12MF, 13G, 13MF, 14, 15, 17BM, 18GF, 20, and the research Trapeze card.

The scoring for each defense is based on seven categories, each designed to reflect a different aspect of the defense. Each category may be scored as often as necessary, with the exception of a direct repetition in the story; in cases of repetition, the category is scored only once

Although examples are provided to aid in deciding whether a category should be scored or not, inevitably questions will arise. A thorough knowledge of the nature of the defense mechanisms will help in answering these questions. Beyond this, the general rule to be followed is, “When in doubt, leave it out.” That is, if there is a serious question about whether or not the story segment is an example of the defense, do not score it.

**DENIAL: SUMMARY OF SCORING CATEGORIES**

1. Omission
2. Misperception
3. Reversal
4. Statements of Negation
5. Denial of Reality
6. Overly Maximizing Positive, Minimizing Negative
7. Unexpected Goodness, Optimism, Positiveness, Gentleness

## DENIAL

### a. *Primitive Denial*

In the categories of primitive Denial, the story-teller assumes that the stimulus card is something, and the defense is seen in the avoidance or changing the nature of that thing.

#### 1. Omission of Major Characters of Objects

Failure to perceive salient stimuli that are perceived by nearly all one's peers. This applies only to the major or obvious objects. Omission of any of these objects from the story is scored, according to the following plan.

- CAT 3: pipe plus cane = 1  
mouse = 1  
lion = 1
- CAT 5: 2 out of 3; bed, forms in bed, crib = 1  
teddy bears = 1
- CAT 10: bathroom = 1  
adult dog = 1  
baby dog = 1
- TAT 1: boy = 1  
violin = 1
- TAT 2: girl in front = 1  
pregnant woman = 1 (pregnancy must be indicated)  
man (or, family, parents) = 1
- TAT 3BM: person = 1  
gun or knife = 1
- TAT 3GF: person = 1
- TAT 4: man = 1  
woman = 1
- TAT 5: woman = 1  
room = 1
- TAT 6BM: young man = 1  
older woman = 1
- TAT 6GF: man = 1  
woman = 1
- TAT 7BM: older man = 1  
younger man = 1
- TAT 7GF: young girl = 1  
woman = 1  
baby or doll = 1

TAT 8BM: gun = 1  
 knife = 1  
 standing young man = 1  
 prone man = 1

TAT 8GF: woman = 1

TAT 10: human figure 1 = 1  
 human figure 2 = 1

TAT 12F: young woman = 1  
 old woman = 1

TAT 12MF: standing man = 1  
 prone man = 1

TAT 13G: stairway = 1  
 female figure = 1

TAT 13MF: standing man = 1  
 prone woman = 1

TAT 14: standing man = 1  
 window = 1

TAT 15: man = 1  
 tombstones (graveyard) = 1

TAT 17BM: man = 1  
 rope = 1

TAT 18GF: woman above = 1  
 woman below = 1

TAT 20: man standing = 1  
 lamppost (light) = 1

Trapeze: man = 1  
 woman = 1  
 trapeze = 1

Do not score if reference to the function of a critical object is made. For example, the knife in TAT 8BM may be implied by the mention of an operation, or stabbing; the gun in TAT 8BM may be implied by shooting; the cane in CAT 3 may be implied by reference to lameness. On TAT 1, reference to the object, even if not named, is sufficient. (However, if it is named incorrectly, score under Denial(2). On TAT 7GF, reference to “holding something” is sufficient.

## 2. Misperception

This may come about because the perceptual process itself is distorted due to pathology, or because, in the case of a child or inexperienced person the name of the object is not known, and the individual defensively

calls it something it is not, rather than referring to it as a “thing” or an “object”, in which case no score is given. In this latter case, the point is whether, in a situation in which the individual does not have all the information needed, he is able to cope adaptively, or whether he must distort the situation to fit his inadequate knowledge.

Examples of adaptive coping are seen in the following two stories to TAT 1; in both cases, the child is uncertain about how to identify the violin:

“This person is thinking what to do, with something that is in front of him.  
He might use it for something, or something might happen. The thing that might happen is that he might think of something to do with the thing. (What happens?) He’s going to do something with it. He’s thinking what he will use it for, what it is supposed to be used for; on some kind of material, which is called paper.”

“That’s a little boy. He’s down on his work bench and he’s looking this over and he’s wondering what it is. And he’s wondering if he’ll ever find out. He can’t wait ‘till his father comes home so he can ask his father. And he’s kind of sitting there wondering when his father will come home.”

***(a) Any unusual or distorted perception of a figure, object, or action in the picture which is without sufficient support for the observation, if and only if the projected image is NOT of ominous quality, in which case it would be scored under Projection***

“(TAT8BM) The man is tickling the man lying down;”

“(CAT3) He’s in a wheelchair”

“(TAT1) That’s a cross-bow;”

“(TAT17BM) That’s a statue climbing down a rope”;

“(TAT1) He’s eating;”

“(TAT17BM) Is that a picture of me?” (S<sub>1</sub> is 5 years old)

(TAT10) Perceiving both characters as “young”;

(TAT15) score “ghost” under Projection (2)

***(b) Perception of a figure as being of the opposite sex from that usually perceived***

“(TAT12M) The girl on the couch” [As of 2000, many see this figure as female. Thus, after this date, do not score “girl” as a Misperception]

(TAT10) Perceiving both characters as female, or both as male.

If the story-teller is an adult, score the following as Misperception:

(TAT 3BM) “The child on the floor”

(TAT14) “A child at the window”

Note: If the story-teller misperceives an object, and then corrects the misperception, score Denial(2). If, after the correction, he continues to use the misperception as the basis for the story, score also under Denial(5).

Do not score on TAT 1 if children call the violin a guitar, harp, or instrument.

Do not score if violin is called a “thing”, “object”, or “that”. Only score when violin is turned into something other than a musical instrument. Do not score if violin is referred to as “homework or a “project” unless it is clear that this means something other than a violin - e.g., a book, a boat, etc.

### 3. Reversal

The reversal may be either in terms of the usual perception of the card or in the story itself, especially when the reversal is normatively unusual.

**(a) *Transformations*** such as weakness into strength, fear into courage, passivity into activity, and vice versa.

“He had been king of the jungle, but now he was very old”;

“The mouse used to be afraid; then he grew up and fought the lion”;

“He used to be an excellent surgeon, but then he killed a man by mistake”;

Note: If the transformation involves a drastic change for the good, score under Denial(7).

**(b) *Score any figure who takes on qualities previously stated conversely*** in the story, including change of sex of figure.

“(TAT12M) The boy is in a coma and the man is hexing him. The boy will get the man in his power”;

“He’s dead, and he’ll come back to life.”

“(TAT17BM) I am in a big cave and I’m caught . And he’s half way up to the top (Here the S has changed the threatened “I” into “he”);

“He is an actress (S is 9 years old)”

A character first described as a Father becomes a Grandfather, or vice versa.

Reversal differs from Denial(4) and Denial(6) in that it involves both ends of a continuum (e.g., weak-strong), rather than just one end which is negated (e.g., weak-not weak: Denial 4) or overly stressed (Denial 6).

Reversal may be scored where one end of the continuum is implied but not explicitly stated (strength—weakness, implied by growing old).

Do not score “growing old” by itself.

Do not score if a character doesn’t know how to do something and then learns how.

Do not score if character was strong, became weak through tiredness, but in the end won, or was strong again; or if sad, but through doing something, becomes happy.

#### 4. Statements of Negation

Simply stating something in the negative (e.g., “He didn’t do it”) is not sufficient to be scored in this category.

Whether or not to score a negative statement depends on whether the negation is defensive. Sometimes this can be determined by the fact that the negative statement is unusual or unexpected (e.g., “He didn’t stuff peanuts up his nose”) - i.e., that no one would have expected this event to happen anyway, so why point out that it didn’t happen. At other times the defensive nature of the negation is more straightforward (e.g., “He didn’t get hurt”). Often, only the context will make it clear if the statement is defensive or not.

***(a) Score if a character “does not ...” any action, wish, or intention, which, if acknowledged, would cause displeasure, pain or humiliation.***

“He caught the mouse but did not kill him”;

“He never fell down from ropes”

***(b) Score also statements in which the story-teller negates or denies a fact or feeling.***

“He is going to go hunting and catch something. I don’t know what, though”

“I don’t know what that is (referring to whole card or part of card)”;

“At first I thought he was dead, but he isn’t;”

“No one is in that bed (CAT 5, referring to large bed)”

“I don’t know where he is going”.



***(c) References to doubt as to what the picture is or represents.***

“What is it? I don’t understand the picture”

should be scored here, and should be distinguished from references to difficulty in formulating a story

(“I can’t think of what to say”)

which is an example of Repression. The difference lies in the fact that Denial generally operates on a more concrete level, while Repression is seen in the person’s inability to think of something.

Do not score if “I don’t know” is used as a way to end a story, or is in response to a question by the examiner.

Do not score if a character wants to or tries to do something, but can’t or isn’t able to, or doesn’t know how to.

Do not score if a character doesn’t like something, or doesn’t want to do something that is neutral or pleasant in nature (e.g, do not score “He doesn’t want to practice the violin”)

Do not score “He doesn’t want to get hurt,” but do score “He doesn’t get hurt”

Do not score “He does not reveal it” (a secret, a clue) here; score under PRO 4)

Do not score, on TAT 17BM, “He’s got no clothes on”.

Do not score if subject asks, at the end of the story, if the story was “right” or “correct”.

## 5. Denial of Reality

This is an overlapping category with Denial (4)

***(a) The story-teller denies the reality of the story or situation by the use of phrases such as***

“It was just a dream”;

“It didn’t really happen”

“It was all make-believe”

“(TAT 8BM) That’s really a dummy; when they cut it, it was all red cotton”;

“They’re going to play (pretend) a fight”

“(TAT 3BM): describing the gun as cap pistol or water pistol

Describing the picture as part of a movie

Do not score TAT8BM if it is described as a dream, due to the nebulous atmosphere of the picture.

***(b) Sleeping, daydreaming or fainting as a way of avoiding something unpleasant.***

***(c) References to avoiding looking at something that would be unpleasant to see, or hearing something that would be unpleasant to hear, or thinking something that would be unpleasant to think.***

“He’s walking away because he doesn’t want to see the operation”

***(d) Any perception, attribution, or implication which is blatantly false with regard to reality as generally defined or to reality as defined by the picture.***

“(CAT 10) The two dogs are playing checkers”;

“(CAT 10, referring to crib) Nothing is in here”;

“(CAT 10) He’s going to have puppies”

“The dog climbs up the rope”;

“(TAT15) He has come up out of his grave”

“(TAT17BM) A statue climbing a rope” (score also under Denial(2) for misperception of figure in the picture. The score under Denial(5) is for a statue doing something which statues can not do in reality.

Note: If the perception is not false so much as being unusual or distorted, including seeing the picture as being of the opposite sex from the usual

perception, score under Denial(2).

Do not score running away from or avoiding ‘society’ here; score under Identification(3).

### **B. Pollyannish Denial**

Pollyannish denial belongs to a later period of development than primitive denial, and may involve a rather saccharine, “life is beautiful” attitude. It is often characterized by a note of unfounded optimism.

### **6. Overly Maximizing the Positive or Minimizing the Negative**

Any gross exaggeration or underestimation of a character’s qualities, potency, size, power, beauty, or possessions.

“(CAT3) A small lion”;

“An old lion (weakness implied)”;

“The most beautiful in the world”;

“The biggest in the world” (referring to person, animal, or parts of these);

“The eagle picks up the lion”;

Note: If the exaggerated quality involves a reversal of the character’s usual nature, score under Denial(3).

Do not score exaggeration of physical objects (e.g., “the highest mountain”; “he fell thousands of feet”)

### **7. Unexpected Goodness, Optimism, Positiveness, Gentleness**

**(a) Unexpected goodness.** This is a difficult category to score and should be scored only when beyond doubt. It is often seen in instances of revenge, when the revenge is built up to, but never consummated when the opportunity arises. Building up to a theme of harm and then concluding without justification that all is well is scored here. Also when a character “takes his lumps” or punishment or bad luck completely in stride when all previous indications were of an avenging “righteous indignation” attitude.

“The lion chases the mouse for many hours; he finally catches him, but then he lets him go”;

“He has always failed, but he knows that he will be successful in the end.”

**(b) *Any sort of drastic change of heart for the good.***

“He is a murderer who goes around killing people. But then he decides to become a doctor and saves many lives”.

**(c) *Also scored here are references to natural beauty, wonder, awesomeness.***

“He realized the beauty and magnificence of the forest”

“She contemplated the wonder of the universe”.

“(TAT1) He found peace with his violin”

“(TAT14) He finds enlightenment”

**(d) *Nonchalance in the face of danger.***

**(e) *Acceptance of one’s (negative) fate or loss, with the justification of not really wanting it anyway; a “sour grapes” attitude.***

“He learns to make the best out of what he’s got.”

Note: If the change for the good involves a moralistic turn, score under Identification(7).

Do not score “they lived happily ever after” or similar cliches if used at the end of a story.

**PROJECTION: SUMMARY OF SCORING CATEGORIES**

1. Attribution of Aggressive or Hostile Feeling, Emotions, or Intentions to a Character, or Other Feelings, Emotions, or Intentions that are Normatively Unusual.
2. Additions of Ominous People, Ghosts, Animals, Objects or Qualities.
3. Magical or Circumstantial Thinking
4. Concern for Protection from External Threat
5. Apprehensiveness of Death, Injury, or Assault
6. Themes of Pursuit, Entrapment, and Escape
7. Bizarre or Very Unusual Story or Theme

## PROJECTION

### 1. Attribution of Aggression or Hostile Feelings, Emotions, or Intentions to a character, or of any other feelings, emotions or intentions that are normatively unusual.

This category may be scored either when such emotions are attributed by the story-teller to a character in the story, or when one character attributes them to another character, but only if such attribution is without sufficient reason. References to a character's face or eyes looking a certain way (e.g., anguished, puzzled, etc.) or to body "position" or "posture" are scored here.

"He killed her because he hated her" (with no explanation of the reason for his hatred) [Score twice, once under PRO(5)];

"(CAT3) This is a mean lion"

"I think he dislikes me" (unexplained);

"(CAT3) The Lion growls too much";

"(CAT3, mouse speaking) I think that lion is thinking about getting after me";

"His parents don't care, even if he's sick" (This is a borderline case, but is scored because it is implied that the parents, through neglect, are mean to the child);

"(TAT1) He is looking at it with contempt" (This is also somewhat borderline but is scored here because contempt includes hostility towards the object of contempt);

"(TAT17BM) He had to find his girl friend or they would kill her (unexplained)"

TAT17BM) Maybe he's angry (unexplained)";

"(TAT17BM) "Probably that look on his face is a signal of some kind";

"(TAT17BM) His features become distorted and take on the look of an animal as it hides from a hunter";

"(TAT17BM) His look is that of frustration and great emotion (scored once)";

"(TAT17BM) He has a mean personality; he is a murderer (scored twice)";

"(TAT17BM) He was in the shower ...a fire... he feels embarrassed [due to nakedness]";

"(TAT1) He's looking at it in a mad way (unexplained);

"He's contemplating suicide";

"(TAT4): They're kissing"

Note: Score aggressive or hostile actions under PRO(5).

Do not score TAT 17BM for simple mention of fright, tenseness, or tiredness.

Do not score TAT 4 for woman pleading with man.

Do not score depression or thought of suicide on TAT 13MF; if suicide is actually carried out on card other than TAT 13MF, score PRO(5).

Do not score TAT 3BM or 3GF for simple mention of sadness, upset or depression, or crying, if reason is given.

Do not score TAT 6GF for mention of woman looking surprised, startled.

## **2. Addition of Ominous People, Ghosts, Animals, Objects or Qualities.**

**(a) *This category is scored only if the details added to the situation are of an ominous or potentially threatening nature.***

“(CAT3) He got an axe and killed him”;

“(CAT3) They said if he wasn’t good they’d put him in front of alligators”

“(CAT5) He was afraid to go to sleep because he heard scary noises ... then a robber came (score both for noises and for robber) (score fear of sleep under PRO5);

“(CAT5) There are bees outside the window”

“(TAT1) That’s a dangerous toy”

“(TAT 3BM) being in “jail”

“(TAT10) Mention of war, “going to war”.

(TAT15) “ghost”

“(TAT17BM) There are warriors coming”;

“(TAT17BM) The guards are trying to get him (This is a borderline case; do not score for mention of guards alone; score only if the guards are clearly threatening; if guards are pursuing, score under PRO(6) only);”

“(TAT17BM) The soldiers throw spears (score only once for the spears;

the

soldiers alone are not necessarily ominous)”;

“fire”

Do not score TAT 17BM for mention of prison, dungeon, cave, guards alone,

prisoner, or pursuers (the latter is scored under PRO(6)).

**(b) *Score especially the addition of blood, mention of serious and***

***uncommon illnesses, including mental illness, comas, and nightmares.***

“(TAT8BM) This guy got badly hit by malaria;”

“(TAT12M) He finds out that the boy is in a coma”;

“(TAT8BM) He has these horrible nightmares”.

***(c) Also, score here references to people, animals or objects being decrepit, falling apart, deteriorating or ‘shabby’.***

“(CAT5) This crib looks like it’s going to fall over”;

“(CAT5) It must have been an old crib that they sent away to a place to get fixed up”

“(CAT5) The lamp looks like it’s all cracked”;

“(TAT1) He’s sad because one of his strings are broke;

“He found his violin all over the floor all broken”;

“He grew up in a broken home”

Note: In TAT1, score for violin being broken only if the implication is that someone not in the picture (unknown or disliked) breaks it, or if it was broken before the story begins (i.e., was ‘inherently’ damaged).

Do not score if a friend or parent breaks it.

Note: If the same addition is called two different things, score only once (e.g., “a bat or a black widow”; “a thorn, not a hornet”)

Do not score the addition of a bullet in TAT8BM.

Do not score TAT 17BM, rope breaking while climbing, unless prior mention is made of the rope being inadequate to support weight.

Do not score “falling apart” if this is due to some other event specified in the story, such as an explosion, fire, earthquake, etc., which are themselves scored.

Do not score “sick” or “really sick” on TAT12M.

Do not score hearing a noise on TAT5.

Do not score “grave” on TAT 15





### 3. Magical, Autistic, or Circumstantial Thinking

**(a) Any use of magic or magical powers, including hypnosis or other unusual powers or control of one character over another; this also includes animals banding together to accomplish some herculean task.**

“He was thinking that he had a magic bird that followed him and saved him”;

“The boy died and the parents got a dog, and every night they could hear the boy talking to him”;

“He was putting spells all over the man”;

“This hypnotist turned him into a little green thing”.

**(b) Animism: attribution of human thoughts or emotions to objects other than animals and people** (not applicable to the ‘teddy bears’ of CAT5).

“Canes talking”;

“Rifles feeling sorry”;

“(TAT1) The project has a problem”;

“(TAT1) An idiotic violin”;

“(TAT17BM) The rope tried to overpower him”.

**(c) Circumstantial reasoning that may have a paranoid flavor; hyperalert search for flaws and misleading cues (implies a mistrust of others); efforts to find hidden or obscure meanings; criticism of the way in which the pictures are drawn (implied is that this makes the task more difficult).**

“(TAT17BM)...A bobcat jumped at him. Because this is out in the woods

and the door was open”;

“(TAT17BM) It must have been a murder he committed, because he isn’t carrying any valuables or money”;

“There’s probably a trick to this”;

“Is the rope supposed to suggest a hanging?”.

#### 4. Concern for Protection Against External Threat

***(a) Include here evidence for fear of external threat of physical assault or injury and the need for protection against that threat, as seen in the erection of walls (real or imaginary), use of masks, disguises, shields, armor, locking of doors or windows, or creation of other protective barriers.***

“(CAT3) The mouse is really worried that the lion will bring the cats in and they’ll chase the mice (This overlaps with PRO6, but is scored here because the emphasis is on the worry)”;

“The king kicks him out but he puts on a disguise and gets back in again”;

***(b) Also included here are references to suspiciousness, to people or animals hiding or “lying in wait”, concern about being “taken by surprise”, spying on others, keeping a lookout, anticipation of kidnap that does not occur, or a feeling that “others are against you”(stated explicitly).***

“(CAT5) There’s a great big man who is under those covers”;

“(CAT5) The mother and the father are hiding in the bed,”

“(CAT5) There’s a crib and no one is there and they wouldn’t know if anyone stole them”;

“(TAT17BM) He has witnessed a crime and is being hunted by the killer”

“(TAT5) “The mother sneaked downstairs and peeks in”

Concern that someone is trying to pin a crime or other offense on oneself;  
Blackmailing

***(c) References to having seen something one shouldn’t have seen, or having heard something one wasn’t supposed to hear, or that will get one into trouble, and the necessity for hiding this; hiding incriminating evidence; protective hiding of oneself or one’s property; fear of being seen.***

“(TAT17BM) He was captured because he knew too much about something, possibly murder (score once for captured [PRO6], and

once

for knowing)”;

“(TAT17BM) He’s breaking out of prison ... he’s looking around to see if anyone sees him (score once for escape [PRO6] and once for fear of being seen)”.

***(d) Responses indicating a defensive need for self-justification on the part of the story-teller (i.e., not in response to a question from the examiner).***

“(TAT8BM) I say it is a gun because it looks like one we had at home”;

“Although this is just a first reaction, he looks like he is escaping”.

## 5. Apprehensiveness of Death, Injury, or Assault

This is an overlapping category with PRO(4)

***(a) The difference is that in PRO(5) the death, physical attack or injury actually occurs or has occurred, whereas in PRO(4) the emphasis on the need for protection against threat. Unexplained or unjustified punishment is scored here, as is completed suicide.***

“(CAT10) The doggie got run over”;

“It looks like his father has just died”;

“(CAT5) Once there was a baby, and he had no mommy. His mommy died”;

“He fell off and broke his leg”;

“His son died”;

“He shoots himself”;

“He looks like he just had a fight before”;

“He poisoned all the bloodhounds”;

“He murdered her”;

“He gets eaten by the alligators”;

“He got slapped around”.

“His pet dog (cat, horse, etc.) was injured (died)”

The following are borderline cases but are scored here because injury is suggested as resulting from the fall. (Do not score a “fall” by itself.)

“The man’s going to fall. On his head”;

“The rope is going to fall.. It ends with his body down on the floor”.

***(b) Score here also fear of going to sleep.***

“At night he was afraid to go to sleep”.

If character is described as dead, and in addition the cause of death (e.g., being stabbed, shot) is described, score once for death and again for means of assault. If both the assault (e.g., being stabbed, shot) and the presence of the weapon (knife, gun) are described, score PRO 5 for the assault and PRO 2 for the weapon.

Do not score justified punishment by authority or parents. Score under Identification(3).

Do not score if hero aggresses against someone else for justified self-protection or for vindication.

Do not score on CAT 3 if the conflict is between the lion and the mouse.

Do not score “death” on TAT 15; do score if a particular person has died – e.g., son, father.

Do not score on TAT 8BM, or 13MF if the assaulted character was shot or otherwise hurt by any character in the picture; also, do not score if the attack against a non-present character is in retaliation for some previous physical attack by that character.

Do not score illness, injury or death of the prone figure on TAT 12M unless the standing character is about to or has physically attacked the prone character. This limitation does not apply to the standing character.

Do not score “spanking” on CAT 10.

Do not score “suicide” on TAT 13MF.

Do score TAT 8BM if prone character shot himself.

Do score TAT 8BM if patient dies, or if characters are trying to murder, or are “experimenting” on prone figure.

## 6. Themes of Pursuit, Entrapment, and Escape

***(a) Included here are themes involving one character pursuing another; also score any mention of one character trapping another, kidnap or unjustified being put in jail or prison which actually occurs.***

“(CAT10) The dogs are going to chase the kitty; and the kitty is chasing the mousey”;

“(CAT5) The little bears are going to be taken”;

“He’s escaping; he’s running, the police are chasing him”(score twice)

“He gets trapped in the cave and can’t get out”;

“TAT3GF) Being held for ransom”

***(b) Also included are themes of escape. The escape must be from a physical imprisonment or physical danger, or threat thereof (i.e., not symbolic). “Running away” when there is no pursuer is scored only if it is due to anticipation of pain or punishment, where the anticipation is not justified by the story.***

“(TAT17BM) He escaped from the tower and left the country”;

“(TAT17BM) There was a fire and he’s escaping out the window (score twice, once for escape and once for fire [PRO2]”;

Note: The category may be scored twice: once for pursuit-entrapment, once for escape.

Note: If “being put in jail” is accompanied by a sense of righteousness or moral justification—i.e., if the story-teller is identifying with the authority who puts the character in jail, or if jail is the justified outcome of criminal activity, score under Identification(7).

“Being put in jail”, “convicted of a crime” is scored under PRO only when the character has not committed a crime, but is put there because of the jealousy, fear, or whim of someone else—i.e., only when the incarceration is not (legally) justified. Political and war imprisonment are scored under PRO(6).

Note: If the character is already in jail or prison at the beginning of the story, score under PRO only if it is made clear that this is not due to criminal activity. If it is due to criminal activity, score under Identification(7).

If it is not clear why he is in prison, do not score.

Note. Score being chased, trapped or caught by police under Identification(7).

Do not score trapping unless one character traps another (e.g., do not score being trapped in a well, unless one character put another there).

Do not score escape if character is being rescued (by hero), where the emphasis is on the rescue rather than on the escape.

Do not score escape if it is only mentioned at the end of the story, or after the examiner’s inquiry, unless the need for escape has been implied throughout.

Do not score escape, when the hero is escaping from “society” or “the world” around him [score this under Identification(3)]

Do not score running away from home; this may qualify for scoring under Identification(3).

Do not score on CAT3 if the conflict is between the lion and the mouse. If the mouse is injured, score under PRO(5).



## 7. Bizarre or Very Unusual Story or Theme

This category depends heavily on the subjective judgment of the scorer, who must determine the limits of bizarreness.

**(a) *Negative themes that occur very rarely, especially if they have a peculiar twist.***

“(TAT8BM) He goes outside and get glass in his heel and the doctor pulls and puts pins in...”;

“(CAT3) He’s going to eat the whole house because no one’s there”;

“(TAT1) This is a saw ...he sawed his desk in half”.

**(b) *Also included here are instances of unusual punishment, including unusual self-punishment.***

“(TAT8BM) He’s thinking what’s going to happen to him when he’s really old, and like he’s done something bad, and he’s going to get zapped (chuckle)”;

“(CAT3) He ate a big piece of wood and got all bloated and blew up (This would also be scored under PRO7a)”;

“(TAT17BM) He is tortured”.

Do not score as unusual punishment spanking alone, unless it continues for a very long time.

**IDENTIFICATION: SUMMARY OF SCORING CATEGORIES**

1. Emulation of Skills
2. Emulation of Characteristics
3. Regulation of Motives or Behavior
4. Self-esteem through Affiliation
5. Work: Delay of Gratification
6. Role Differentiation
7. Moralism

## IDENTIFICATION

### 1. Emulation of Skills

***(a) References to one character imitating, taking over, or otherwise acquiring a skill or talent of another character, or trying or wishing to do so.***

This is often seen in a younger character emulating an older one.

“(TAT1) He picked up the violin and thought, ‘Maybe if I could be as great as my father’”;

“(TAT1) The little boy is wondering what this is, if he’ll ever find out; he wants to ask his father ... waiting until his father comes home..then he finds out.” (This is a borderline case, but is scored here because the boy acquires his father’s knowledge.)

“(TAT1) He wants to do it because he saw other people do it”;

“(TAT1) He was looking at this violin of his father’s, he really did want to play it...he learned how to play it”;

“(TAT1) He wanted to play ...The man said he would teach him..after a while he got good...”;

“(TAT1) His father taught him how to do it”;

“(TAT1 ) He wants a teacher to teach him how”;

“(TAT1) He wants to do it like his teacher does”;

Do not score “it is his father’s violin and he is playing with it” (in the sense of fooling around with the violin).

Do not score if learning occurs only at the adult’s insistence; the character must want to learn.

### 2. Emulation of Characteristics

***(a) References to one character imitating, taking over, or otherwise acquiring a characteristic, quality or attitude of another character, or trying to do so.***

Examples of “identification with the aggressor” are scored here.

“(TAT17BM) Jack and the Beanstalk ... he wanted to be a giant”;

“(TAT17BM) He gave his Tarzan call [gives imitation] and Tarzan came and ...got the bad guy”;

***(b) References to one character being like another, the same as another, or, in an extreme case, merging with another.***

“He hoped he could be like his father” (in a general, non-specific way,

“(TAT1) He became Wagner”;

“(TAT17BM) He is trying to be Tarzan”;

“(TAT17BM) He gets the giant’s muscles and now he’s a giant”;

Do not score acquisition of another’s physical property (e.g., money, jewels).

### **3. Regulation of Motives or Behavior**

Keep in mind here that it is the story-teller who has internalized these regulatory mechanisms and is now attributing them to a character in the story.

***(a) References to demands, control, influence, guidance, or prohibitions of one character over another, or via societal mores; or the active rebelling against these (not in thought only, and not by passively doing nothing),*** including running away from the pressures of family or society. Include here being caught doing something one shouldn’t be doing.

“(TAT1) His mother didn’t hear him practicing so he had to start practicing again”;

“(TAT1) He didn’t want to take violin lessons ...so he threw it away and smashed it [the violin] all up”;

“He is going to ask his mother if he can go out and she is going to say no”;

“His mother made him take violin lessons, but he didn’t want to so he played hookey” (score twice, once for mother controlling him and once for rebellion);

“He asks his Dad if he can do it some other day”;

“He was told to play his violin but he doesn’t want to ..but he’ll get in trouble”;

“He’s a recognized criminal so he won’t have it too easy in the world outside” (borderline);

“(TAT1) The people who gave it to him said he had to find out what it was before he could play it”;

“(TAT17BM) The world around him is giving him these problems”.

“(TAT17BM) Someone dared (challenged) him to climb the rope”.

“(TAT5) “There is a cat on the piano. She will chase it off”.

Do not score if child does something that parent doesn’t like.

Do not score if one character tries to influence another but is unsuccessful.

Do not score boss firing worker, crook blackmailing, or threatening to blackmail someone else.

***(b) Indication of self-criticism, or self-reflection either on the part of the story-teller or of a character in the story.***

“It isn’t a very good story”;

“The mouse built a trap, but he thought it wasn’t very good”;

“He feels guilty for what he did”;

Feeling ashamed, embarrassed, self-conscious

“(TAT1) He’s not very good... he’s flunking it...he’s really mad because he wanted to be a really good one”;

“(TAT17BM) He’s feeling he should have concentrated more”;

“(TAT1) He started to play it, but it sounded funny, it didn’t work.

“He’s feeling that he is stupid”;

“He decided ‘I’m not a very good violin player’”;

“(TAT17BM) He climbed up a vine...gets in trouble...and thinks ‘I shouldn’t have climbed up this time. Next time, maybe, not this time’”;

“(TAT17BM) He looks around in fear, but realizes that he does have the strength to continue”;

“(TAT4) He confessed something that he’d done that wasn’t quite right”

***(c) References to justified punishment by parents, guardians, or older family member as a way of controlling or regulating a character’s behavior.***

“His father sent him to his room because he was bad”

“His mother gets mad and he gets spanked”;

“He breaks it and his father says ‘you’re never going to get a new thing again...’”;

“(TAT1) The father is furious ...the boy is having to buy another string to replace the old one”;

Note: Score 3(a) only once, even if two different people (e.g., parent and teacher) are applying the same kind of control or pressure.

Note: Control through hypnotism or magic is scored under PRO(3)

Note: Unjustified punishment is scored under PRO(5)

Do not score escape from physical danger, or if the demands are of an ominous nature, or suggest an ominous outcome; instead, score PRO(6)

Do not score if child “has to practice” but it is not stated why this is – e.g., it is not stated that parents, teacher insist he practice.

Do not score child begging parents for something, or hero requesting help, freedom, or one character comforting another.

Do not score being “sorry” about something, unless it is elaborated.

Do not score being “fired” unless this is elaborated (e.g., a discussion of who fired him).

Do not score justified punishment by authority that occurs as the outcome of the story; score under Identification(7) Moralistic outcome.

Do not score ‘being put in jail’ here; if being in jail is justified, score under Identification(7); otherwise, it may be scored under PRO(6)

Do not score ‘spanking’ on CAT 10.

Do not score TAT 4 if the female is trying to prevent the man from leaving, or doing something.

#### **4. Self-Esteem through Affiliation**

***(a) Success or satisfaction which comes about through association with someone else (not parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, police), or the expressed need for this kind of affiliation.***

“He was happy that he had a friend”;

“He gave his Tarzan call and Tarzan came and got the bad guy (age 6)”

“He realizes that he and his classmate are in exactly the same situation ....they become very close and comfort themselves with the situation”

“He must escape and help save his people. The people are very happy they were very poor and now they are rich (age 5)”;

“He’s lonely and needs to be with a family”;

“He was caught because a trusted friend turned him in” (implied here is the need for a good friend)”

“Has he the courage to master it? Interest must be backed”

“He is adopted and lives with a nice family”

“His brother was killed he was the only source of pleasure”

Note: Adoption by a foster family, if pleasant, is scored here.

***(b) Being part of a special group from which some special pleasure or help derives .***

“(TAT17BM) He is part of the English navy ... he escapes the French ...he is picked up by an English ship”;  
 “(TAT17BM) The slave is going down a rope to a fake well. It’s part of the underground railroad to help him escape to Canada”;  
 “(TAT17BM) The sailor and his crew win the battle in a great defeat”;  
 “(TAT17BM) The people are citizens of the U.S...they have all had hard lives. Now they are almost at the end of their climb to greatness”;  
 “(TAT17BM) This man has every desire to be free. He lives in a community of similar people”.

Note: On the Trapeze picture, score if a point is made of how trusting the two characters are; do not score if it is stated that they need to trust each other, or they must trust each other.

Do not score: “friends” giving help, “friends” rescuing, or the need for rescue.

Do not score: Giving help or comfort on TAT10.

Do not score comforting, consoling or feeling better from having been comforted on TAT3, TAT4 or TAT10, unless this is amplified, e.g., “It’s their care for each other that will get them through”

## **5. Work; Delay of Gratification**

***(a) References to a character working, or the implication that a character is about to work or has been working, where this is not clearly suggested by the picture.*** Working at homework, or references to extensive practicing, or studying very hard, are scored here.

“(TAT1) I have to keep on practicing and I have to do my homework from school. This is just fouling up my time” (score once for practicing, once for homework);  
 “(TAT1) He has a whole bunch of homework to do, and to practice on the violin” (score twice);  
 “He has to study really hard”;  
 “He practiced all his life”;

the “He is working”;  
“(TAT17BM) His muscles are straining and hurting, but he must go on”;  
Score for animal practicing, working, if the story teller seems to identify with  
animal. This is most likely to occur in children’s stories.



***(b) References to delay (e.g., waiting, biding one's time, planning ahead) in order to attain some future gratification.***

A recognition that success will not be immediate.

“He wants to learn it, but not too fast, not in one day”;

“He’s looking at a violin ... later, about four months later he can play one chord on it ...then 12 months later he can play 19 chords, no, he can play beginners ..two years later he can play it very well”;

“(TAT1) He’s looking at it...after a few years he was able to play one”;

“(TAT17BM) First he was planning his rhythm [his moves] or what he’s going to do when he gets up there ...”;

“(TAT1) It’s a car track and he’s been trying to make this for about two weeks”;

“(TAT1) He didn’t know how to play it ... he waited and waited for someone to come and help him ... his next door neighbor [finally] came and taught him”;

The following two examples of ‘waiting’ are borderline cases.

“He is thinking maybe he can play it. And he cares to do it when he grows up”;

“He is going to try to become a violinist in the next years to come”.

Do not score references to exercising (unqualified) or to being tired from athletic endeavors, or working (unqualified) on TAT2.

Do not score references to a character thinking about the fact that he should do some work, but he doesn’t do it.

Do not score “in the future he did it” unless the need for delay and/or work is clearly mentioned.

Do not score being trapped somewhere for a period of time before being freed.

## **6. Role Differentiation**

***(a) Mention of characters in specific adult roles***, other than mother or father or other relatives (e.g., husband, wife, teacher, sailor, married couple, farmer, priest, soldier, scientist, rock-and-roll player, fiancé, ‘professional’, king, princess, manual laborer, gymnast (but not ‘trapeze-man’)).

Also included here are specific historical characters.

Note: Capitalization may help differentiate, e.g, mountain climber (someone climbing mountains) from Mountain Climber (a profession).

Do not score “girlfriend”, “boyfriend”.

Do not score mention of mythical or comic book roles here (e.g., giant, Tarzan).

Do not score a role indicated only by the addition of \_\_\_ man or \_\_\_ woman to a noun or adjective (e.g., trapezeman, violinman, strongman) unless this is the commonly accepted term to designate that role (e.g., mailman, businessman, fireman).

Do not score references to ominous roles (e.g., hypnotist); these should be scored under PRO(2)

Do not score “doctor” or “surgeon” on TAT 8BM.

Do not score violinist, musician, music teacher, etc., on TAT 1.

Do not score “farmer” on TAT2.

Do not score “acrobats” or “trapeze artists” on Trapeze picture.

Do not score references to law enforcement officers in action here; score under Identification(7).

Do not score “king” on CAT 1.

Do not score “guards”, “keepers”, “soldiers”, “police” on TAT17BM.

Do not score “husband”, “wife”, “married couple”, “bride” or “prostitute” on  
TAT 2, TAT4, TAT13MF, or Trapeze picture.

Do not score apostrophized terms – e.g., soldier’s cemetery (TAT15). The term must refer to a character, not to their possessions.

## 7. Moralism

**(a) Stories that include a moralistic outcome**, in which good conquers evil, wrongdoing is punished (by other than parents), goodness begets goodness, justice triumphs, a (moral) lesson is learned, etc.

“(TAT17BM) Prisoner breaks out ... starts to run ... Then he thought sooner or later the police will find him. So he decided it would just be better to go back, so he went back”;

“He escaped from the army ... he was a prisoner [of war] ... they chased him ... He lived to tell everybody”;

“He’s been in prison [but] he’s innocent ... He finally proves that he didn’t do it ... he captures whoever did it”;

“He was in jail for speeding ... he’s escaping, gonna kill himself for escaping”;

“Climbed the rope, saw a lion .. he was scared ‘I’ll never do it again’”;

“(TAT17BM) He is probably going to fall because he is a criminal”;

“He’s thinking about his homework, wondering what happen if he doesn’t get it done ... he’s just sitting there, when he walks home slowly he doesn’t do it. When he gets to school [next day] he won’t have it done and then he’ll have twice as much to do.” (This is a borderline case, but is scored because the implication is that he is worse off for having not done what he was supposed to do.)

“Confessing” re: a crime or moral transgression

**(b) Justified punishment administered by teacher, judge, policeman, or other authority figure (excluding parents or guardians).**

Included here are stories in which someone breaks (or has broken) the law, is apprehended, and put in jail. Usually, this will occur near the end of the story. If a character is in jail at the beginning of the story, score only if it is explained that he is in jail for having committed a crime.

“(TAT17BM) He robbed a bank ... the police will get him ... he will be in jail”;

Note: If being put in jail, prison, etc., is not justified (e.g., due to jealousy, fear, or whim) score under PRO(6).

Note: Score being chased, trapped or caught by police under Identification(7).

Note: Unjustified punishment, or extremely cruel or unusual punishment is scored under PRO(6) or PRO(7).

Do not score if punishment is given by parents or guardian; instead, score Identification(3).

Do not score “revenge” if this involves criminal or aggressive acts by the person carrying out the revenge.

Do not score “she calls the police”. Score “police” under Identification 6.

