

Individual Student
Case Study

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I. Typical Child Development

(3rd Grade/8 years Old)

Physical

- Gross and fine-motor skills have become much more sophisticated
- Growth in upper extremity (baseball, basketball) and lower-extremity (soccer) skills
- Growth in ability to finely coordinate independent movements of both the upper and lower extremities into a synchronous motion coupled with arm movements (ex: riding a two-wheel bicycle)

Source: Child Development Institute (<http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com>)

- Reaction time decreases, but child continues to be accident prone
- Boys are ahead of girls in gross motor skills, but behind in fine motor skills
- Well-established binocular vision and maturation of corpus callosum
- Growth rate at this stage is slower than during infancy and early childhood but steady.
- Weight ranges from about 40 pounds to 65 pounds. The normal rate of weight increase is 3 pounds to 6 pounds per year.
- Children's appetites fluctuate with activity
- Childhood diseases such as measles and chicken pox are likely to occur because of interaction with large numbers of peers on a daily basis
- Baby teeth continue to come out, and permanent ones come in
- Large muscles (arms and legs) are easier to control than small muscles (fingers)
- Need 10 hours to 12 hours of sleep each night
- Hand skills and eye-hand coordination needed for activities such as writing and shoe lacing continue to develop as children gain small motor skills.

Source: Department of Human Development and Family Studies, University of Missouri-Columbia

- Gain more confidence in physical skills, which causes the increased interest in sports

Source: National Association for the Education of Young Children

Social/Emotional

- Fears they are dumb, ugly, mean, and useless
- Competitive games and team projects attract them and make them nervous
- They search everything and everyone for signs that they are loved and accepted
- Common problems include hyperactivity, poor school performance, low self-esteem, aggression, defiance, stubbornness, troubled relationships with siblings, friends, and parents, and fearfulness

Source: Child Welfare Information Gateway

- Grow curious about people and how the world works
- Use words to express feelings and to cope
- Become more outgoing, play cooperatively

Source: National Association for the Education of Young Children

- More independence from parents and family
- Stronger sense of right and wrong
- Beginning awareness of the future and one's place in the world
- More attention to friendships and teamwork

Source: National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health

Erikson's Psychosocial Stage

Industry vs. Inferiority (Ages 7-12)

- Children at this age need to cope with new social and academic demands
- Success leads to a sense of competence, while failure results in feelings of inferiority

Piaget's Developmental Stages

Concrete Operations (Ages 7-11)

According to Jean Piaget, a child in this stage should poses the following characteristics:

- Rapid development of mental skills
- Greater ability to describe experiences and talk about thoughts and feelings
- Less focus on one's self and more concern for others
- Can comprehend multiple aspects of a problem while solving it
- Can understand and manipulate symbols related to concrete objects
- Are logical, even though they may still jump to crazy conclusions
- Should be able to reverse their thinking
- Are in the process of moving out of the egocentric stage, so they should understand that not everyone sees the world as they see it
- Should be able to tell if there is a difference in number, length, volume and substance when comparing two objects.

Academic Benchmarks

Mathematics:

- M3.A.1 Demonstrate an understanding of numbers, ways of representing numbers, relationships among numbers and number systems.
- M3.A.1.1 Apply place-value concepts and numeration to counting, ordering, grouping and equivalency.
 - M3.A.1.2 Use fractions to represent quantities as part of a whole or part of a set.
 - M3.A.1.3 Count, compare and make change using a collection of coins and one-dollar bills.
- M3.A.2 Understand the meanings of operations, use operations and understand how they relate to each other.
- M3.A.2.1 Understand various meanings of operations and the relationship between them.
- M3.A.3 Compute accurately and fluently and make reasonable estimates.
- M3.A.3.1 Solve problems using addition, subtraction and multiplication (straight computation and word problems).
 - M3.A.3.2 Use estimation skills to arrive at conclusions.
- M3.B.1 Demonstrate an understanding of measurable attributes of objects and figures, and the units, systems and processes of measurement.
- M3.B.1.1 Determine or calculate time and elapsed time.
 - M3.B.1.2 Use the attributes of length, area, volume and weight of objects.
- M3.B.2 Apply appropriate techniques, tools and formulas to determine measurements.
- M3.B.2.1 Determine the measurement of objects with non-standard and standard units.
 - M3.B.2.2 Estimate measurements of familiar objects.
- M3.C.1 Analyze characteristics and properties of two- and three- dimensional geometric shapes and demonstrate understanding of geometric relationships.
- M3.C.1.1 Identify and/or describe two- and three-dimensional objects.
 - M3.C.2.1 Apply the concepts of transformations and symmetry.
- M3.D.1 Demonstrate an understanding of patterns, relations and functions.
- M3.D.2 Represent and/or analyze mathematical situations using numbers, symbols, words, tables and/or graphs.
- M3.D.2.1 Create/model expressions, equations and inequalities to match a problem situation.
 - M3.D.2.2 Determine the missing number or symbol in a number sentence.
- M3.E.1 Formulate or answer questions that can be addressed with data and/or organize, display, interpret or analyze data.
- M3.E.1.1 Answer questions based on data shown on tables, charts, and bar graphs.
 - M3.E.1.2 Organize or display data using tables, charts, bar graphs.

Reading:

R3.A.1 Understand fiction appropriate to grade level.

- R3.A.1.1 Identify and interpret the meaning of vocabulary.
- R3.A.1.2 Identify and apply word recognition skills.
- R3.A.1.3 Make inferences and draw conclusions based on text.
- R3.A.1.4 Identify and explain the main ideas and relevant details.
- R3.A.1.5 Summarize a fictional text as a whole.
- R3.A.1.6 Identify genre of text.

R3.A.2 Understand nonfiction appropriate to grade level.

- R3.A.2.1 Identify and interpret the meaning of vocabulary in nonfiction.
- R3.A.2.2 Identify and apply word recognition skills.
- R3.A.2.3 Make inferences and draw conclusions based on text.
- R3.A.2.4 Identify and explain main ideas and relevant details.
- R3.A.2.5 Summarize a nonfictional text as a whole.
- R3.A.2.6 Identify genre of text.

R3.B.1 Understand components within and between texts.

- R3.B.1.1 Identify, interpret, compare, and describe components of fiction and literary nonfiction.
- R3.B.1.2 Make connections between texts

R3.B.2 Understand literary devices in fictional and nonfictional text.

- R3.B.2.1 Identify and interpret figurative language in fiction and nonfiction.

R3.B.3 Understand concepts and organization of nonfictional text.

- R3.B.3.1 Differentiate fact from opinion in nonfictional text.
- R3.B.3.2 Distinguish between essential and nonessential information within text.
- R3.B.3.3 Identify, compare, explain, and interpret how text organization clarifies meaning of nonfictional text.

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education Website

II. Introductory Student Profile

Pseudonym: James Taylor

Grade: 3rd

Age: 8

Disability: Specific Learning Disability

Learning Difficulties

Written Expression Deficits:

- Difficulty expressing himself and putting his thoughts into words
- Has great distress when trying to generate ideas
- Struggles organizing words into meaningful thoughts
- Struggles to brainstorm topics and apply appropriate mechanical usage
- Struggles expressing his ideas and needs effectively
- Perplexed when writing words spontaneously or from dictation
- Difficulty with spelling, punctuation, and grammar
- Difficulties in planning and organization
- Poor paragraph organization
- Consistently makes writing mistakes even after several corrections
- Difficulty with oral reading
- Unorganized
- Incomplete work/ falls behind due to slow pace of writing and processing

Processing Deficits:

- Struggles with initiation contact with adults and peers
- Struggles with off-task behavior
- Difficulty remembering what was heard
- Difficult time processing and following through with directions both verbally and in written form
- Struggles with Fluency
- Struggles with attention to the task and focusing
- Problems in using a separate answer sheet. Loses place easily. Problems with reading. Reversing or misreading numbers of letters
- Mechanical problems in test taking. Difficulty copying from board or book. Spaces poorly. Poor written work. Unorganized.

Academic Needs

- Needs to further develop the writing structure by focusing on generating ideas, organization of thoughts and conventions of grammar (PA Standards 1.3.3.B., 1.4.3.A., 1.4.3.B & 1.5.3.C.)
 - Needs to further develop ability to process and create written response using reading open-ended questions that focus on identification of characters, setting, identifying of plot and retelling and summarizing a text (PA Standards 1.1.3.G., 1.3.3.B., 1.4.3.B., 1.5.3.F.)
 - Needs to improve reading fluency by increasing the number of words read per minute (PA Standard 1.1.3.H.)
 - Needs to apply various spelling strategies to support the correct spelling of words (PA Standard 1.5.3.F.)
- Needs to improve the application and completion of word problems by focusing on solving the problems and creating a written explanation (PA Standards 1.4.2.B., 2.5.3.A., 2.5.3.B.)

Strengths

- Very friendly student
- Upbeat and pleasant
- Wants to be successful in school
- Behaves appropriately and follows classroom and school rules
- Quiet and Shy
- Enjoys reading as a preferred activity
- Strive to receive positive reinforcement, both intrinsic and extrinsic
- Takes pleasure in completing tasks in school and then showing or demonstrating his knowledge
- Has many strengths in mathematics (apply operations, money concepts, place value, make change)
- Can solve problem, but has trouble explaining the steps
- Able to understand and apply vocabulary

Personal Interests

- Math is his favorite subject
- Hip Hop is his favorite Class
- Dogs
- Football
- Soccer
- Baseball
- Video Games

III. Student Observation

Whole Group Writing Lesson

To develop a deeper understanding of James as student, I observed him during an hour long writing lesson. The students were learning how to write an informational piece about a plant they had to create. He was well behaved, showed respect for his teacher and followed directions. However, at times he did become off-task and also progressively fell behind throughout the lesson. James has great difficulty with his processing, so it takes him a while to copy things from the SMART board to his writing journal. Often I will write the same information his teacher is modeling on a small dry erase board to set on his desk. This makes it easier for parts of the lesson where he has to directly copy information such as the table of contents. However, during my observation I did not do this and he was not able to keep up with the pace of his classmates. James also has great trouble with his written expression and generating ideas. So during the lesson when most of the class had already brainstormed their characteristics of their plant and begun constructing sentences, James was still having trouble writing ideas into his web. I also noticed James repeating aloud one or two phrases after his teacher during the lesson. I do not believe this was an example of misbehaving and I don't even think his teacher or classmates noticed it. I believe it is his way of processing certain words and information. There were a few times I caught him off-task, either daydreaming or fidgeting with his pencil and/or hands. He did not actively volunteer to answer questions, however he did respond to questions when asked. He was never disruptive or rude and I believe he was honestly trying to do his best work during the lesson. However, by the time writing class was over, he is far enough behind where I have to repeat the steps with him one-on-one.

Transition

James was also well behaved while transitioning from class to lunch and recess. The students are expected to get their lunch and jackets and lineup in single file with absolutely no talking. If they do so, they each earn a "clip" for their group. Since James has the characteristic of being positively competitive, he followed directions so he could receive the reward. James showed a little more energy at this time but was still well behaved and followed directions. He did not speak, walked to lunch appropriately, and sat down with a classmate he is particularly good friends with.

Recess

During recess, James chose to play kickball. He was much more outgoing than he is in class and very involved in the game. He took initiative to go after the ball and I can tell he enjoyed himself. He was also respectful to the staff and other students and followed the rules of the game. He showed excellent sportsmanship and good athletic ability. He didn't directly interact with many of his peers but I think that was due to the nature of the game. When the whistle was blown, James lined up in the appropriate manner and returned to the classroom without any problems.

IV. IEP Summary

IEP Team

- 2 Guardians
- Pupil Service Coordinator
- Principal/LEA Representative
- Regular Education Teacher
- Resource Teacher

Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children Findings

Verbal Comprehension	32 nd Percentile (average range)
Perceptual Reasoning	66 th Percentile (average range)
Working Memory	21st Percentile (low average)
Processing Speed	21st Percentile (low average)

Full IQ

- 92 – Average Range

Weschler Individual Achievement Test

Word Reading	101
Reading Comprehension	94
Pseudoword Decoding	92
Math Reasoning	101
Numerical Operations	97
Written Expression	76
Below Average	

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills

- Reading Fluency – 54/ 4 Errors
- 26% Accuracy Rate for retelling

Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)

- Level of 24 – Middle of 2nd Grade

4Sight

Reading	46.67 (Basic)
Mathematics	45.24 (Basic)

Notes on Academic Achievement

- Enjoys reading as a preferred activity
- Struggles with Fluency and expression
- Struggles with spelling
- Struggles to brainstorm topics and apply appropriate mechanical usage
- Has many strengths in mathematics (apply operations, money concepts, place value, make change)
- Struggles with application of measurement and explaining word problem steps taken, but can solve problem

Function Performance

- Very friendly student
- Wants to be successful in school
- Behaves appropriately and follows classroom and school rules
- Quiet and Shy
- Struggles expressing his ideas and needs effectively
- Struggles with initiation contact with adults and peers
- Struggles with off-task behavior
- Struggles with attention to the task and focusing
- Difficult time processing and following through with directions both verbally and in written form

Parental Concerns

- Parents expressed their concern for James completing more complex math operations
- Concerned with his speech and language abilities and are contacting a Speech and Language Pathologist

Academic Strengths

- Acknowledges reading as a preferred activity (PA Standard 1.1.3)
- Able to generate topic related predictions based on text (PA Standard 1.1.3.D.)
- Able to understand and apply vocabulary (PA Standard 1.1.3.E)
- Retell story events in sequential order (PA Standard 1.1.3.G.)
- Create visualizations related to text events
- Identify and apply place value concepts (PA Standard 2.1.3.E)
- Make change through use of subtraction algorithms (PA Standards 2.1.3.E. and 2.2.3.B)
- Apply addition and subtraction to everyday situations with and without regrouping (PA Standard 2.2.3.B.)
- Connect mathematical operations to real life situations (PA standard 2.2.3.A. & 2.2.3.B)

Academic Needs

- Needs to further develop the writing structure by focusing on generating ideas, organization of thoughts and conventions of grammar (PA Standards 1.3.3.B., 1.4.3.A., 1.4.3.B & 1.5.3.C.)
- Needs to further develop ability to process and create written response using reading open-ended questions that focus on identification of characters, setting, identifying of plot and retelling and summarizing a text (PA Standards 1.1.3.G., 1.3.3.B., 1.4.3.B., 1.5.3.F.)
- Needs to improve reading fluency by increasing the number of words read per minute (PA Standard 1.1.3.H.)
- Needs to apply various spelling strategies to support the correct spelling of words (PA Standard 1.5.3.F.)
- Needs to improve the application and completion of word problems by focusing on solving the problems and creating a written explanation (PA Standards 1.4.2.B., 2.5.3.A., 2.5.3.B.)

Transition Services

- None

Participation in State & Local Assessments with the following Accommodations

- Separate testing room
- Small group testing
- Extended time
- Frequent breaks
- Directions read aloud
- Directions reworded
- Use of reading highlighter
- Scribe dictation for open-ended questions if needed
- Read questions and choices aloud to student to keep student on-task (math only)

Goals and Objectives

- Monthly Written Language writing prompts
 - Given a visual or written prompt, James will use a variety of graphic organizers to construct an informational, persuasive and narrative piece including one topic sentence, three details, and one conclusion sentence per paragraph with an 85% accuracy for 4 out of 5 opportunities
- Weekly Reading teacher-created assessments:
 - After reading a passage at his instructional level, James will be able to answer open-ended questions pertaining to characters, setting, plot, story retell, summary, and construct a written response using a one paragraph structure including one topic sentence, three details, and one conclusion sentence per paragraph with an 85% accuracy for 4 out of 5 opportunities
- Bi-Weekly Fluency Assessments:
 - Given a reading passage at his instructional level, James will increase his fluency by reading 100 WCPM with a 90% accuracy for 4 out of 5 opportunities
- Weekly Spelling Assessments:
 - Given a list of 12 grade level spelling words, James will implement various spelling strategies to correctly spell 11 out of 12 words with 100% accuracy.
- Weekly Mathematics teacher-Created Assessments:
 - Given a story problem at grade level, James will solve word problems by drawing a picture, applying mathematical operations and constructing a written explanation with 90% accuracy for 4 out of 5 opportunities.

Special Education/Related Services/Supplementary Aids & Services/Modifications

- Extended time to complete tests and projects
- Preferential seating
- Modified in-class assignments when needed
- Provide prepared notes ahead of time
- Reword, shorten, and repeat directions for clarity
- Keep directions clear and concise
- Chunk tasks to support task completion
- Provide visual aids to support understanding and task completion
- Social skills Groups

Support from School Personnel:

- Multidisciplinary Team
- Propel Staff
- Special Education Instructor
- Regular Education Teacher

Gifted

- None

Extended School Year

- Not eligible

Educational Placement

- James will participate in the regular education curriculum 100% of the time.
- James will participate with non-disabled peers throughout his school day 100% of the time.
- Itinerant Services: 20% or less of the school day
- 7 hours/7 hours in the regular classroom

V. Academic Information

(Samples of Student Work Follows)

Grades

First Trimester Final Grades	
Language Arts	B
Reading	B
Spelling	B
Mathematics	C
Social Studies	C
Science	B
Music	A
Art	A
Creative Arts	B
Excused Absences: 6	Unexcused Absences: 3
Tardy: 4	

Assessments

DRA	24 (Second Grade)
4Sight	Basic
Weschler Individual Achievement Test	Below Average (due to Written Expression)
Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children Findings	Low Average (Working Memory and Processing Speed)

Description of Performance

James' academic grades are only slightly below that of his peers. His grades in math and social studies were surprising to me because those are two subjects he has strengths in and enjoys. Music, art and creative arts are his favorite classes and according to his grades and teachers, he performs extremely well in them. The area of language arts is where James really struggles. James often falls behind in writing, reading and spelling. In fact, up until the last week of the trimester he had low C's because of his incomplete assignments. Due to his learning disability, I believe he sees writing as a chore and often becomes frustrated and tries to avoid it at all costs.

According to the assessment James' school uses to determine his reading level, the DRA, he is a grade level below where he should be. His written expression, working memory and processing speed are also below average for his age. According to the special education instructor, his performance in these areas are not drastically behind that of his peers and she is confident, now that he has an IEP, they will significantly improve by the end of the year.

As of this week, James is doing well in his second trimester, although somewhat behind. He has been absent and tardy a few times and works at a much slower pace than that of his peers. Consequently, he just finished typing his state report on West Virginia, while most of his classmates have finished the typing and creating a poster. His science notebook on sounds is also incomplete due to his processing difficulty in copying information from the SMART board to his notebook. James is, however, on schedule for graphing in Math groups. He is also performing well in his homogenous reading group. Additionally, James is current on his Hunter Book Challenge reading steps which are assigned nightly. According to his teachers, he is also performing very well in his music and zumba classes. His general education teacher understands he performs slower and expects he will have no problem catching up over the course of the semester.

James is a very bright individual; however, because of his discrepancy between his ability and his achievement he requires additional support to be able to display his capabilities. He often requires more time to complete the assignment and tests. His teacher also modifies the grading rubric for James occasionally. Highlighting directions, one-on-one support to help with his writing, and additional graphic organizers are also used to help James perform to his full capability. Once he receives the proper accommodations and modifications, James completes excellent work. I have seen completed projects, tests and assignments from James which show no signs of belonging to a student with a disability. This is a good indication that the efforts his teacher and special education instructor are making are in fact effective.

VI. Behavior Data

Target Behavior: Off Task

Time	Activity	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
8:00-8:40	Morning Routine	IIII	IIII	III
8:40-9:00	Morning Meeting	I		I
9:00-9:45	Core: Social Studies	II	II	III
9:45-10:35	Writing	IIII	II	IIII
10:35-11:30	Hip Hop/Art	I		
11:30-12:00	Lunch	N/A	N/A	N/A
12:00-12:20	Recess		I	
12:20-1:45	Math Groups	IIII	III	IIII
1:45-2:15	Whole Group Reading	II	I	II
2:15-3:15	Reading Groups	III	IIII	IIII
3:15-3:30	Pack up/Read Aloud			I

Analysis of Data

James is a very well behaved student. He is respectful in the classroom and does not create any problems. However, he does have the tendency to get off-task. I monitored James on three different days to gather the data regarding this particular behavior. The above scatterplot visually depicts the occurrences of his behavior of concern across his daily schedule. I chose this model to detect patterns of the behavior so perhaps his teacher and I could develop a solution. As I was tracking the occurrences I took notes on what he was doing instead. His off-task behavior was typically one of the following:

- Unengaged
- Daydreaming
- Watching other students
- Looking through notebook instead of writing homework
- Fidgeting with hands or materials

The off-task behavior typically lasted no longer than a few minutes. James would typically amend the behavior on his own and reengage in the task. Only a small percentage of the time does his teacher need to address him and when she does, he only needs a subtle cue to end the behavior. After analyzing the collected data, I determined the off-task behavior occurs most often when the students are working independently on assignments or tests. These are times when James is self-monitoring and does not have an external factor (i.e. the teacher) to keep him engaged and on-task.

VII. Social Skills Information:

(Completed Checklist Follows)

Social Play and Emotional Development

Generally speaking, James' social play and emotional skills are characteristic for his age group. He is shy and not as outgoing as some students, but he generally interacts and plays with his peers appropriately. Occasionally, however, he can struggle responding to interactions with his peers. Because of his processing deficits, he is sometimes unsure how to respond or what to say. Also, James is more of a conformer rather than a leader. Once again his learning disability inhibits his ability to generate ideas and put them into words. He does not take the initiative to suggest play plans; instead, he follows the ideas of others.

Emotional Regulation

James' emotional regulations were a bit complicated to observe simply because he does not express himself, particularly when dealing with negative emotions. His special education instructor and I are unsure if James understands emotions because speaking about them and identifying them in himself is not something he does. Since I have been in his classroom, I have never observed James demonstrating affection towards peers, whereas I have seen his classmates hugging, for example. Additionally, James is rather monotone, and does not use tone in his voice when speaking hardly ever. On a positive note, because he is so reserved, James never demonstrates aggressive behavior towards himself or others.

James' self-regulation was even more difficult to track. Because he does not convey his feelings, I had no way to observe whether or not he was regulating them. His parents and the special education instructor would like to introduce expression and coping strategies and skills so James can begin to express himself and practice self-regulation. Although I have never observed it, James' mother has informed his special education instructor that he demonstrates intense fears at home such as worrying about something happening to her. Coping strategies would also be useful for James in that regard. I did however, observe James giving up when something is difficult, for example, a writing task. I believe he gets frustrated when he cannot put his thoughts into words and down onto paper and would rather stop all together than struggle through the task.

Group Skills

James' group skills are appropriate and typical for his development stage. James works well with his peers, and follows routines and directions. He is comfortable participating during group activities as long as he does not have to take initiative. The only area he struggles with is seeking assistance from adults and peers, stemming from his difficulty to express his thoughts, needs and wants.

Communication Skills

Communication skills for James are another area of priority for instruction. He rarely initiates conversations, questions or comments. When responding to "wh" questions, James often requires additional prompts or scaffolding. James would not be comfortable introducing himself to someone new. He also lacks strong eye contact. Often he looks around when talking to someone if he is uncomfortable. During my observation of James, I noticed he occasionally has inappropriate timing of interjection. I have observed him repeating words aloud during a lesson in his attempt to process them. Also, James occasionally does not know how to appropriately end a conversation. The special staff and James' parents are working to improve his communication skills. They are working on ways to help James express himself and hopefully build his self-confidence so he is more comfortable conversing with others.

VIII. Individual Instruction:

(Completed work from the lessons is attached)

Focus Area: Generating Ideas/Organizing Thoughts

When developing lessons for James I wanted to focus on an area that would be extremely valuable to him. In order to do so, I reviewed the goals of his IEP and then discussed the possibilities with the special education instructor. The special education instructor and I agreed that James has the most difficulty generating ideas and then organizing and communicating those thoughts. Providing instruction on these skills would be beneficial to James since the major source of his learning disability is due to his written expression and processing. I wanted to combine the two because James has only had an IEP for a few months now and we are unsure if the foundation of the problem is mentally developing the ideas, communicating those ideas, or the combination of both. Moreover, I had tight time constraints. James has the tendency to fall behind when completing assignments; he has also been absent and tardy more than normal this semester. Consequently, there were only certain times of the day, and for short intervals I could pull James from his regular class schedule. I thought lessons involving generating ideas and organizing them could be relatively short yet still effective. I developed a series of lessons that included different strategies and methods for James to brainstorm ideas followed by various activities and graphic organizers for him to then sort and communicate his thoughts. At the same time, I was very careful to integrate terms, methods, topics and graphic organizers from James' classes. I wanted him to be somewhat familiar with the lessons and have some prior knowledge so he would not feel overwhelmed. In retrospect, I am pleased with the outcome of the lessons.

Lesson #1

Objective:

- 1) James will be able to generate and write responses to open-ended questions about football.

Instruction/Tools/Materials:

I wanted to first lesson I did with James to be something he was both comfortable doing and would be interested in; hopefully setting a positive tone for the remainder of the lessons. I know he is extremely interested in football so I asked him to answer ten questions for me and write his responses. The questions were all about his personal opinions, thoughts, feelings and experiences with football so I knew it would be easier for him to generate ideas and respond to the questions. James and I sat side-by-side on the reading carpet (there is very limited space at the school). I read each question to him, and conducted the lesson in an informal conversation style. I told him to not worry about complete sentences or spelling. When I knew he was struggling to think of an answer, I would provide scaffolding by listing possible responses, giving him a verbal description to help him visualize his answer, or modeling what my answer would be if I was talking about volleyball.

Reflection/Progress:

I wanted to conduct this lesson first because it was relatively informal and also very practicable. James only struggled on a few questions and required minimal probing. Also, it allowed me to get to know James a little better. I have been working with him prior to this; however it was typically with a specific assignment regarding subject content. This lesson brought out a different side of James. He showed more excitement than normal and was much more verbal throughout the lesson. Additionally, I was able to assess his capabilities for generating ideas outside of school subjects. Although I was already aware of it, this lesson also demonstrated his pace and performance of writing as well as spelling and phonemic awareness. I also noticed that James would typically respond with one word answers unless I would verbally guide him through constructing a longer response or a complete sentence.

Lesson #2

Objective:

- 1) When prompted with a series of topics, James will be able to generate three relating ideas.
- 2) When given a prompt about a place, James will be able to generate two examples.

Instruction/Tools/Materials:

For the next lesson, I wanted to teach James that he can use certain strategies when he is struggling to develop and express his ideas. I chose using questions because I know he has used the strategy for

comprehension in reading groups. I had him trace his hand and construct the 5 Ws Hand graphic organizer. We then went over it together and I gave examples of each type of question. Next, I used the “terrific topic” graphic organizer which was given to me by his teacher when we were discussing the area I was going to focus my lessons on. I introduced it by reading the directions and then summarizing them in my own words the purpose of a paragraph. This activated James’ prior knowledge because they have been working with writing paragraphs all year. Next, I guided him through filling out the graphic organizer. I began modeling the strategy by asking questions about the topics he was relating ideas to. For example: **What** do fish do? or **Who** do you watch your favorite movies with? After I did the first few topics I asked James to ask himself questions using the 5 Ws and then answer his own question to generate the new idea. We started on another worksheet concentrating on “where” questions, however we ran out of time and did not get to do much with it.

Reflection/Progress:

This was a quick lesson I did with James when he was tardy one day, in fact we did not get the opportunity to finish it. James struggled a bit more with this strategy than I expected. When we were creating the 5 Ws graphic organizer he could only think of 3 of the 5 question words. Then when completing the “terrific topic” working sheet, he had trouble coming up any ideas at all for the first topic. Once I started asking questions, however, he was able to brainstorm related ideas, but stuck to a similar pattern of answers such as football and baseball until I would scaffold him towards a different type of response. When I asked him to generate questions about the topics, he typically stuck with the most simple “what” questions.

Lesson #3

Objective:

- 1) When given a picture, James will be able to describe what is happening and be able to respond to opinion and prediction questions.
-

Instruction/Tools/Materials:

I wanted to focus the third lesson on a visual strategy since the first two were focused on using questions. Sticking with his preferred theme of football, I brought in a series of football picture books. I allowed James to browse through them and choose a picture that really grabbed his attention. To model the activity, I chose a picture that captured my attention and explained to him why I chose the picture. Next, we filled out a picture prompt graphic organizer. It focused on who is in the picture, what are the characters doing, and where is the setting of the picture.

Reflection/Progress:

I could tell James enjoyed looking through the picture books; he was smiling and making comments as we browsed through them. He chose a picture of Ben Roethlisberger getting ready to throw the ball. He did very well identifying the who, what and where of the picture. I could tell the visual prompt made generating responses much easier for him. There was a significant decrease in the amount of time it would take him to generate a thought compared to the previous lesson. I was also pleasantly surprised with his responses to the opinion and prediction responses. He described the character as feeling nervous which I thought was a more profound answer than he could have given. He was also able to generate two possible predictions of what would happen next in the picture; throwing the ball or getting tackled. I believe the combination of the visual aid and a topic of interest accommodated his needs nicely.

Lesson #4

Objectives:

- 1) When given a picture, James will be able to identify six nouns.
 - 2) James will be able to generate adjectives.
 - 3) James will be able to write three sentences using the kernel sentence framework with an article, adjective and verb.
 - 4) James will be able to edit his sentences by using CHOPS.
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Instruction/Tools/Materials:

I wanted to do another lesson using a picture since he responded so well to the previous lesson. Once again I allowed him to choose a picture from the football books. Next, I introduced the “Kernel Sentence: Getting Started” organizer. This is also a worksheet James is familiar with and uses with the special education instructor. First, James identified six nouns in the picture. Next, he circled the three he liked best. Before completing the kernel sentence with an adjective graphic organizer, I wanted to focus on generating adjectives

to help him understand how to better describe and express his ideas. Additionally, the week before during morning meeting, the entire class struggled coming up with an adjective that begun with the first letting of their name; so I thought this would be good practice for him in general. We then filled out the alphabet organizer together. First I asked if he could think of any on his own; then, to scaffold him, I read the “Words are CATegorical” adjective books. As we read, he stopped me as he saw or thought of an adjective to write in the graphic organizer. Next, we begun the “Kernel Sentence Framework: Expanded with an Adjective” graphic organizer. James listed his nouns and chose the article he wanted to use. Next, using the alphabet organizer James chose adjectives to describe the nouns. Finally, he completed the sentence with the verb. The final part of this lesson was for James to CHOPS his work. This is an editing strategy he uses regularly in class, however I created a visual checklist for him to use when completing it.

Reflection/Progress:

James once again enjoyed searching through the books. He chose a picture of two boys playing catch with a football. He was able to quickly identify nouns in the picture and choose three of his favorite. Generating the adjectives proved to be much more difficult for James. He couldn’t create any on his own but was able to recognize them in the books. I knew he was having fun completing this part of the lesson as if it was a game to fill in all the letters! When we went back to the kernel sentence, James was able to quickly pick an adjective to match his noun and then complete the sentence with the verb, once again impressing me. James also completed CHOPS with little struggle. He did refer to the checklist I provided him and I believe this was a nice modification to the lesson.

Lesson #5

Objective:

- 1) After reading a story, James will be able to respond to a written prompt by generating his own ideas and organizing those thoughts.
 - 2) James will be able to respond to a written prompt by writing a paragraph with a topic sentence, three details and a conclusion.
 - 3) James will be able to edit his work using CHOPS.
 - 4) James will be able to publish his work by creating a final draft with a picture.
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Instruction/Tools/Materials:

For the next lesson, instead of just using pictures from a book, I wanted to use the story as well. I knew he liked the movie *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs* so I thought that would be a fun book to use. We read the story together and he seemed extremely engaged. Afterwards, I asked him to develop a paragraph about what types of meals he would want to rain from the sky. I thought it worked well because the breakfast, lunch and dinner could be the three details of the paragraph. We used an organizer that required James to list adjectives that describe food, and then list different types of foods. Next James chose three foods and appropriate adjectives to create complete sentences. Finally, he created a topic sentence and conclusion. The plan was to then have him CHOPS and publish his work, however, because of time constraints, we did not get to this part of the lesson.

Reflection/Progress:

Once again, James struggled some with creating adjectives but with the help of my scaffolding, he was able to come up with some good ones. Together, we went back and looked through the pictures of *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*. Then the pictures would spark ideas for James. He generated the ideas for types of food with no problem. He then used the graphic organizer to pick a food, match an adjective to it, and make a complete sentence. I was impressed with how well he did writing the rough draft for the paragraph. He quickly identified the three details of the paragraph and only needed minimal scaffolding to create the topic and conclusion sentences.

Lesson #6

Objective:

- 1) After reading a story, James will be able to generate connections to his personal experiences and other sources.
 - 2) After reading a story, James will be able brainstorm ideas for writing about his own imaginary friend.
 - 3) James will be able to write a paragraph about an imaginary friend with a topic sentence, three details and a conclusion.
 - 4) James will be able to edit his work using CHOPS.
 - 5) James will be able to create a final draft of a paragraph about the imaginary friend he created.
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Instruction/Tools/Materials:

Since the previous lesson seemed to be effective, I wanted to stick with similar strategies. I used the picture book, *Ted* by Tony DiTerlizzi. It's a fun book about a boy who has an imaginary friend who helps him get into some trouble. I chose it because it has great illustrations, thematic content and is also funny. I also wanted to incorporate a bit of reading fluency and comprehension into this lesson. I gave James a reading helper given to me by his special education instructor to help him read. We took turns reading the pages and James was to notify me when he had a connection to make to the text. This is a strategy he practices during reading groups so I only had to briefly recap the instructions. I modeled the task by creating my personal connection to what we read on the first page. James then filled out a graphic organizer when he made his connection. After reading the story, I asked James to brainstorm activities he does every day at his house that he could do with an imaginary friend. Next, James created ideas for an imaginary friend. Once again the plan was to then have him write a paragraph and edit and publish it, however because he is behind in certain subjects I thought it was a good idea to have him focus on his school work.

Reflection/Progress:

James did struggle some with fluency. He needed help pronouncing words, read with hardly any expression and used inappropriate phrases and pauses. Reading fluency is an area I would like to instruct with James during my student teaching. However, James did rather well making a personal connection and filling out the graphic organizer. He gave two great examples of connections and was even able to generate connections with other people and another book he is reading. James did need some guidance when brainstorming ideas for a story about his own imaginary friend. I used questions, such as do you have any chores, or what do you do when you get home from school, to help him develop ideas. During this lesson I really notice James' tendency to stick to ideas he is familiar with. For example when creating the imaginary friend he used: his favorite color, made him the same size as himself, and stuck with football for the amazing feature, instead of being a little more creative.

Lesson #7

Objective:

- 1) James will be able to generate a topic and brainstorm ideas relating to the topic.
 - 2) James will be able to write a paragraph with a topic sentence, three details and a conclusion.
 - 3) James will be able to edit his work using CHOPS.
 - 4) James will be able to publish his work by creating a final draft with a picture.
-

Instruction/Tools/Materials:

For the final lesson I asked James to pick any topic he wanted so he could create a published paragraph about it. Not surprisingly, he chose football. I then had him use a web to generate ideas relating to the topic. I modeled this by filling out a web on volleyball. Next, he picked three of his favorite details and created complete sentences with them. He then used the paragraph graphic organizer to create a rough draft and then used CHOPS to edit his work using the checklist I created. Finally, James created a final draft and drew a picture to go along with his paragraph.

Reflection/Progress:

I wanted the final lesson I did with James to leave a positive impression with him. I hope to work a lot more with James next semester and want him to respond optimistically when he knows he will be working with me. I knew he would choose football as the topic and would have fun writing about it. He filled out the web quickly and only needed the help of my modeling a few times. He also wrote the three detail sentences, topic sentence and conclusion with considerable ease. I was happy with his final paragraph. He only had a few minutes to draw a picture which is why it was lacking in detail. I would have liked to have given him more time to be more creative with this part of the lesson but it was at the end of the day, on the last day I was observing.

I noticed with each lesson his construction of sentences became less difficult for him, which I was pleased to see. His ability to generate ideas depends greatly on the amount of interest he has in the topic as well as the amount of scaffolding he receives. After I conducted all the lessons, I showed the special education instructor James' work. I was glad that she was pleased with what James had done and commented that the additional one-on-one work I did with James during the lessons would be very beneficial to him. These instructions were a great assessment of what James is capable of, what he needs work with, and gave me ideas for what I can do when working with James throughout my student teaching.

IX. Collaboration

Collaboration was a principal factor in conducting this case study. Over the course of completing this assignment, I interacted the most with the Special Education Instructor, Val Sudar. Starting with our first discussion of this project, Val became a remarkable resource for me. She provided me with the necessary information I needed regarding James, including access to his IEP as well as her personal thoughts and observations of him. She thoroughly explained the assessments to me and how to interpret the results. Also, because she has had more time to observe James, we completed the social skills checklist together so it could be more accurate. She was also very helpful when I was brainstorming ideas for the individual lessons I created for James. She gave me her opinion on what she thought he needed most as well as tools and resource materials to accommodate and modify the lessons. She always welcomed my questions and was more than willing to explain things to me. We exchanged numerous discussions and emails throughout the completion of this assignment. I learned a great deal from her and was thankful to have her collaboration while completing this assignment.

James' regular education teacher, Courtney Rubino was also very cooperative. She gave me his grades and assessment data whenever I asked and was happy to answer any questions I had. Additionally, she was extremely understanding in regards to pulling James out of class for the instructional lessons. Together we decided on a schedule for me to administer the lessons so that James was not missing important information or falling too far behind in class.

I did not have any direct interaction with James' parents; however, after speaking with Mrs. Rubino and Ms. Sudar I know they are involved in the collaborative effort to better James' education. James is in a family of five brothers and sisters, three of whom have ADHD. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor do their best to correspond with the staff at Propel Montour for James' benefit, however, I know there have been times it has been difficult to reach them or schedule a meeting with them. Nevertheless, they are making an honest effort to help the staff provide the support for James he needs. For example, during morning routine, James will typically have his planner and reading steps signed by one of his parents. Also, occasionally Mrs. Rubino and James' parents will write notes to one another in his planner that also have to be signed.

This case study opened my eyes to the impact of collaboration. Without the assistance from the Propel staff, I feel this assignment would have been lacking in detail and accuracy. On account of a group effort, I was able to gather a deep understanding of James as well as the steps that are being taken to meet his needs. When collaboration is practiced it allows for different views and perspectives of James' situation. Certain aspects one person is unsure about; another may be able to help with. Collaboration also means more ideas and helping hands to assist James. The more one-on-one work James can receive the more progress he can make. I am confident that because of the positive partnership that James has supporting him, he is getting the best education possible.

X. Reflection

I truly indulged in conducting this case study. I found myself getting lost in my research, observations and instruction. I invested a lot of time and effort into learning about James and understanding him as a student. I am proud of my new found understanding and appreciation for students with disabilities and the process of meeting their needs. I have learned the intense demands and efforts that go into supporting a student's education. There is an indescribable amount of considerations when developing a plan to meet a student's needs such as; the characteristics of their disability; their strengths and weaknesses; accommodations and modifications to be made; different teaching strategies; and of course monitoring and ensuring progress. All these Jamesers - and then some - must be fully understood and applied to create the best learning experience for the child at hand.

Providing the individual instruction for James was a particularly rewarding part of this experience. I was someone uneasy at first when developing lessons for James because I wanted them to be effective and beneficial for him. However, after collaborating with the special education instructor and doing my own research, I am very happy with the outcome. I thought they were successful in that he was able to work his way through the lessons with noticeable improvements along the way. I was impressed with the work he produced from the lessons.

I have learned a lot about James and really enjoyed working with him. The lessons provided me with some foundation of what James is currently capable of and what he needs more work on. I look forward to working with him more during my student teaching and hope I can be a great contribution to the team that is working so hard to satisfy his needs. I believe, the additional support; one-on-one instruction; and interventions I could provide would be extremely beneficial to James. He is a brilliant boy and as long as he gets the support he needs, I know he can be very successful academically; and I would be honored to be a part of the process.

Completing this case study was a perfect opportunity to assess what I have learned. I found myself using information from all of my academic courses; my observation experience; and additional independent research. Upon reflection of completing this case study I feel as though I have learned a great deal over the course of the semester. I see myself using this learning experience throughout the rest of my teaching career. I now know how to study a student with a disability; learn what their strengths and needs are; develop ways to meet their needs; and ultimately give them the best education possible. I realize I still have a lot to learn regarding students with disabilities; however, this case study was a monumental step in becoming the effective prestigious and influential teacher I am striving to become.
