

Rationale for INTASC Standard #10

Exceptional Learner Case Study (Multi-grade Scenario)

This assignment was one that was completed during the fall of 2008 in an ED 396 exceptional learning class. For this assignment we were asked to read a case study in which a student had been previously in a special education setting as fulfillment of her IEP but had been evaluated and was determined to no longer be in need of special services. This student's seventh grade teacher was now asking that she be included in a resource setting due to the difficulties she was having in the general education classroom. In order to complete this case study I had to evaluate not only the student's school history but other family factors that may also contributed to the problems surrounding the student.

What I ultimately did as well was evaluate the relationships between the student, her teachers, and her family (Standard #10.) With this information I was able to get a sense of the factors that play a role in a student's education and how difficulties amongst various relationships between those involved can have an influence on the student (*Diagnosis.*) As you read through this assignment you will notice the questions that I was asked to answer as well as the standards and *Alverno Education Abilities* that were addressed. Below the assignment is a scanned copy of the feedback I received from my instructor in relation to the assignments criteria. In short I feel that this evidence shows that I am considerate of the many influences that impact a student and can affect their ability to effectively participate in a classroom. I also am concerned with determining the best approaches with regards to the student's education.

Resource: The following is information regarding the scenario and the book from which it came.

Dworkin, I. (2009). Should I take Juanita Pope?. In Hallahan, D., & Kauffman, J., & Pullen, P. (Ed.). *Cases for Reflection and Analysis for 11th Edition Exceptional Learners: An Introduction to Special Education* (pp. 1-8). United States of America: Pearson Education Inc.

Carrie Reno
Midterm

ED 396

Due 10/22/08

1. Create a chart noting Juanita’s growth and development in relation to strengths and areas of difficulty/needs in kindergarten, 1st grade, 5th grade, 6th grade, and 7th grade. (Diagnosis, Conceptualization) (WI T. Standard # 3)

Grade	Strengths	Areas of Difficulty/Needs	IQ	Placement
K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine-motor development • self-help • eagerness to try new things 	25% delay in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • daily living skills • cognition 	68	Muticategorical class with some mainstreaming
1st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “‘concrete & connecting’ levels in math” • successful in a ‘carefully controlled time period with extra attention” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shy & does not ask for help • did not do well with inferences 	85	Self contained LD class
5th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • route numerical reasoning • route auditory memory Progress shown in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working on her own • interpreting what 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • still shy • hesitant to form new friendships • relied on familiar friendships • needs a lot of structure and repetition • interacting in socially 	71	No special services, aptitude & achievement scores indicated significant progress. Recommended work given in small doses at her level of ability. assertiveness training

Grade	Strengths	Areas of difficulty/needs	IQ	Placement
6 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • she read • asking questions about expectations • agreed to tutoring with Isabelle • Asked Isabelle a valid question as to why she should continue tutoring when she was still making C's & D's • No other strengths noted 	<p>inappropriate ways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trouble sharing and contributing to small groups • problem solving • higher level thinking • needs extra time to formulate responses • trouble with newly introduced concepts • visual-motor • spatial orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor comprehension & basic skills (Isabelle stated her skills were comparable to students with mild intellectual & developmental disabilities) • inability to spell • disinterest/inability in challenges • poor coping skills • nonresponsive during activities • shuts down or cries when given constructive criticism (which allowed her a trip to 	IQ not mentioned	<p>Concrete material use with instruction & teach skills for learning new info</p> <p>General education classes and tutoring after school initially. Later went to Isabelle's classroom for science class.</p>

		the bathroom) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inability to organize materials needed for class 		
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2. Create another chart for 7th grade. Identify problems, strategies attempted and results. (Diagnosis, Conceptualization) (WI T. Standard # 9)

Problems	Strategies attempted	Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> poor basic skills in all areas unable to comprehend directions and concepts poor organizational skills poor peer interactions delayed response time poor academic & social skills poor work quality complained about having all Caucasian teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> placement in collaborative classes placement in extra “core” class re-evaluation complete with neurological Possible placement with Isabelle for African American influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> placement in collaborative classes deemed ineffective added core class placement in core class lead to reevaluation with neurological & reduce academic classes by one Juanita complained about all Caucasian teachers request of possible placement with Isabelle an African American

3. Identify typical social, emotional, and behavioral characteristics of a 7th grader.
 How does Juanita compare to her peers? Similarities/differences. Create a chart. (Conceptualization, Diagnosis) (WI T Standard #2)

S = Similarity D = Difference	Age Thirteen Norms Yardsticks pp. 147 - 160	Juanita
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S Close friendships are important • S enjoys solitary activities • likes to be alone at home • girls are more interested in older boys • does not do well in cooperative groups as 12's or older teens • highly critical of teachers • wants to know "why" when learning • often mean to each other • S often quieter than 12's or 14's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S tends to depend on familiar friendships • S poor peer interactions • D poor social coping skills
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S feelings easily hurt • S mean = scared • S touchy; flaring anger • worries about school work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S cries in response to criticism • S teachers indicate touchy with feedback
Behavioral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S rudeness • S minimal feedback • S tentative approach to difficult tasks (not risk takers) • S challenges authority • S neatness with personal appearance, not with personal environment • S withdrawn & sensitive nature protects their developing self-concept & intellectual ideas that remain not fully formed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S I get the sense the teachers feel she is rude or disrespectful • S she gives minimal feedback if any • S definitely not a risk taker & takes time to formulate a response • (S to an extent) poor organizational skills • S seems to have a low self image

4. Discuss how you think and know (per case study info) Juanita's home life impacted her education. (Conceptualization, Diagnosis) (WI T. Standard #2, 3)

A child's home life has a huge impact on their education. The early childhood years, birth through preschool, can have a significant effect on a child's future development. In addition it is in the early years when a child begins to learn important life skills like trust. It would seem to me that Juanita may very well have not been able to establish a trusting relationship with her mother or any other adults because of her being shifted around in her personal and academic life. Many of her issues may stem from this fact. She may not feel secure around adults and therefore interprets any constructive criticism or reprimand as a personal attack. This could explain why she responds with inappropriate behaviors like shutting down and crying. Her heightened emotional state could hamper her ability to comprehend and interpret new information because she has a tremendous focus on how that information is being given rather than on the information that has been presented. There also seems to be some indication that the general education teachers are not considering this as a possible reason for her struggles.

This is an interesting case however because many of the issues noted by the teachers in the seventh grade are common to thirteen year olds. If Juanita was 6 year 9 months entering Kindergarten then she would be about 13 years and 9 months at the time her seventh grade team met. She would be a thirteen year old in a class most likely of twelve year olds. This would further segregate her as many of the other students would be twelve. There are two particular differences between thirteen's and twelve's mentioned in the chart under section 3. Thirteen year olds are often more quiet than 12's and they do not do as well in cooperative groups. This may also contribute to her poor peer interactions.

If I were to recommend a course of action, I would recommend a training session for the teachers on how to help Juanita develop trust with adults. This would include training on how the teachers can present information to Juanita in a way that will help her build herself image. I also feel that the teachers need to be providing more developmentally appropriate work for Juanita. This may be another area in which collaboration and training would be beneficial. Additionally, Juanita would need some training on developing trust and taking constructive criticism. She also is in need of help building skills to work in a group. The class can also be trained to help with this area, much as Peter's class was taught to help him in the film we watched in class. I think that many of Juanita's issues could be effectively addressed in this way. Juanita's mention of only having white teachers already would indicate she may be feeling segregated. By constructively working with the teachers, with Juanita, and with her classmates, they can all potentially benefit from the experience.

- 5. Respond to each of Isabelle's 5 questions in the last paragraph by *fully developing your thoughts*. (Conceptualization) (WI T. Standard #4, 7, 9, 10)
Write out each question before responding.**

1. In reference to Isabella being asked once again to help solve the problem with Juanita: Were they just feeding my ego, or was it a genuine belief that I could make a difference?

I believe that this issue is twofold, I do have suspicions as Isabella has that Juanita's teachers are not considering the transitional state that Juanita is in. I also feel that they may have some bias based on information that they had received from Juanita's previous teachers. It is very likely that the teachers are not providing Juanita with enough opportunities to build her image of self by giving her work that is developmentally appropriate for her specifically. I also know that these

teachers have other students to worry about and may not know where to start in regards to providing the best opportunities for Juanita. I also think that Isabella's frustrations with the fact that the general education teachers seem to be relying too heavily on her to provide for Juanita may be clouding her ability to see training and skill building collaboration as a potential solution. In short I feel that the teachers do genuinely need the assistance that Isabella can provide however it needs to be made very clear who would be responsible for Juanita and when. Isabella may also need to consult with another outside source to provide neutral training opportunities.

2. Would I once again “save the day” for these regular education teachers, who considered my opinion only when it was time to remove bodies from their classes?

This question is stated in a very negative way. I understand that Isabella is also sharing her frustrations with the situation. The way that this question is worded gives me the sense that there is the potential that Isabella may see this latest request as a chance to prove a point to the teachers rather than a chance to help Juanita. I think she would be better served if Isabella and the regular teachers could set aside their differences, perhaps involve a higher authority, and really work to help Juanita and determine the source of her struggles.

3. Shouldn't these teachers be held accountable for nurturing Juanita's academic development?

Yes they should and establishing a plan in which the teachers are retrained and evaluated on their abilities to provide for Juanita would be a potential solution to the problem and the frustration that Isabella is feeling.

4. Couldn't they utilize some of the energy being used to get Juanita out of their classroom to modify her classroom assignments?

I do not think that the teacher's true intention is to get Juanita out of the class. I also do not think that they are aware of what effect modifying Juanita's instruction would have for her. At the end of page three Isabella also mentions that the teachers felt that modifications would detract from the intention of the project. If this is the case, then the teachers do not have a good grasp of how projects also need to be developed around the skills and abilities of the students and their needs for instruction. This again would indicate to me the need for retraining.

5. Or, should I put these personal feelings aside and put Juanita first?

It seems to me that Isabella's feelings are valid. I don't think this situation would be helped any further by her taking on additional responsibility with Juanita. The teachers do need to become more involved with the process as well and everyone involved needs to have a clear understanding of each other's role, Juanita's role, and the expectations of everyone involved. Only when this happens, can Juanita be truly placed first.

6. In what ways does Juanita fit the definition of children “at risk”? What characteristics does she manifest? (Conceptualization, Diagnosis) (WI T. Standard #3)

Our textbook states that there is no definitive definition of “at risk” however it does state that it “...generally refers to students who perform or behave poorly in school and appear likely to fail or fall far short of their potential.” (pg. 18.) Juanita is at risk in that she had a disadvantage by starting school later than most students. She is also struggling with social and peer interactions and has an overall poor performance in academics. These factors alone make me concerned for Juanita and I they continue can contribute to potential failures.

7. To what extent do you see evidence that the requirements of IDEA were being met by Juanita’s school system throughout the case study? (Refer to specific elements of the law in Chapter 1). (Conceptualization, Diagnosis) (WI T. Standard #1, 10)

On page 29 of the textbook there is a Focus on Concepts box which states the Major Provisions of Idea. I see evidence that *identification* efforts were made for Juanita. On page one of the case study it describes Juanita’s kindergarten year which includes evidence found by the eligibility committee of Juanita’s needs. The services given to Juanita were provided by the school without cost to Juanita’s grandmother. Juanita’s grandmother was informed about the school’s intention to have Isabella tutor her so it is likely that they also informed her about the placement process as well. Juanita’s placements seem to be based on her needs that were determined by the committees. I am concerned about the lack of transitional provisions made for Juanita. There also seems to be discrimination coming into play on the teacher’s part but that was addressed when the sixth grade teachers were told she was

ineligible for special education services (pg. 3 of case study.) I'm also a little concerned that confidentiality may have been compromised when the previous teachers spoke to the teachers she would have the next year. I also have made the point that the teachers in this situation need to have training. In addition I am wondering how the school Administrator was involved in this situation.

8. Provide examples of teacher collaboration *throughout* the study. (Conceptualization) (WI T. Standard #7, 10)

The first page describes the collaboration between the kindergarten teacher and the eligibility committee. The second page describes her placement during first grade as well as a fifth grade re-evaluation. In both these instances collaboration would have occurred (provided they were following standard IEP procedures.) Page three indicates that the sixth grade teachers consulted with Isabella and continues to the next page to describe their consultations regarding Juanita. Page four also describes how Isabella worked with the guidance counselor to provide tutoring opportunities for Juanita. On page seven Isabella states "...the sixth grade had already warned the seventh grade teams about Juanita Pope." This in many ways can be seen as a negative form of collaboration. Finally the case study description ends with another collaboration team meeting to discuss the concerns and issues surrounding Juanita Pope.

Self Assessment

1. What components of this assessment were you comfortable responding to? Why?

I was comfortable with all the sections with the exception of number 2. Number 2 was hard for me because I do not feel comfortable comparing students to norms. I understand why it is important and I feel that with more practice this skill will become second nature. The other components were a comparison of Juanita to her previous skills and abilities and not to the abilities of the average student.

2. As you have become more aware in your various education courses of the many diverse factors students bring to the educational setting, *how have you seen yourself develop in perceiving and understanding those diversities (e.g. learning styles, race, culture, multiple intelligences, physical/intellectual/emotional/social differences) while becoming a better problem solver in meeting their needs?*

I think that I have been developing my ability to see the big picture and the interrelations amongst diversities that work together in a given situation. Questions four and five in particular are good examples of my development. I have also used my prior experiences as a military daughter (who lived in many different areas including Panama) as a way to connect to students. I have found that when I show a genuine interest in the students, they are more likely to share information about themselves which encourages community in the classroom environment. By knowing more about the students and establishing a connection/trust, it is more likely that I will recognize and be able to provide for their needs.

3. As you think about your future educational development, *identify 3-4 goals that you would like to pursue during the next year in perceiving and accommodating students' needs.*

I would like to become better at comparing student's performance/attributes to expected norms to better plan for their needs. I would also like to become more aware of Latin American cultures and the differences amongst particular social groups within the culture. I will be taking AH 353 Latin American Studies next semester to address this goal. It is very likely that I will be working with students with Latin American backgrounds and there are many differences amongst the groups that I feel could be important when addressing students who may have additional needs. I am also particularly interested in learning more about effective inclusive methods. I have been doing independent research on the subject and plan to form a research question for ED 492 that will address a particular facet of this larger issue.

Mid Term Criteria

No Evidence	Minimal Evidence	Sufficient Evidence	Extensive Evidence
		Recognizes key components of prior student performance including strengths, needs, and placement. Evidence:	<i>You identify specific grades Juanita attended in elementary school along with key information needed to understand her educational history. You identify her IQ, type of placement, and details of strengths, areas of need at each of these points.</i>
		Recognizes the relationship among problems, strategies, and results. Evidence: <i>You note in her case history some problems she encountered and strategies attempted by her teachers and their results.</i>	Provides details to support explicit relationships among the variables
		Identifies typical characteristics of an age group and case study student. Evidence: <i>You identify specific and detailed social, emotional, behavioral and academic characteristics of a 12-13 year old. An appropriate correlation and comparison to J.</i>	Provides detail in comparing the case study to the norms.
		Makes logical judgments about the impact of microcultures on a student's performance. Evidence	<i>Provides extensive rationales in making judgments. You note how Juanita's caretakers and their behaviors and attitudes might have or actually did influence her educational experiences.</i>
		Reflects on the complexity of teacher roles. Evidence:	Cites a variety of issues in discussing the teachers' roles. <i>You note how her Juanita's general education teacher has handled J's situation and the concerns and dilemmas of the special education teacher. You note how J. responds and the issues of professionalism surrounding teachers' decisions/behaviors.</i>
		Makes a rational judgment of a student's manifestations of a possible disability. Evidence:	<i>Relates detailed characteristics of a discrete disability to significant case study student characteristics including inferred characteristics.</i>
	<i>You do not identify specific features of IDEA.</i>	Makes a logical determination of placement based on legislative features. Evidence: <i>You cite features of IDEA such as LRE, FAPE, identification and transition.</i>	Provides a detailed relational analysis of several elements of the provisions of a law.
	<i>You focus solely on 7th grade collaboration.</i>	Recognizes examples of teacher collaboration. Evidence: <i>You note several examples of collaboration between the GET in Kindergarten, 6th and Isabelle in 7th grade.</i>	
		Articulates an awareness of growth and development in problem solving and sets appropriate goals. Evidence: <i>Appropriate goals identified.</i>	Supports awareness through explicit examples from various program experiences. Goals correlate with the analysis.

Name Carrie Reno

Overall Performance:

 Minimal Evidence Sufficient Evidence X Extensive Evidence

A comprehensive response to the elements of this case study. Well done.