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Guidance & Assessment

Developmental Assessment

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Many educators know that not every classroom is the same for each grade level. This is primarily because of the students that are in each classroom. During my pre-student teaching placement I followed an individual to each special area class and in the classroom in order to observe her abilities in each development area (physical, cognitive, language, emotional, and social). This individual is a fifth grader who just had her birthday while I was in the classroom so she is eleven years old. The personality of this individual can be described as bubbly, creative, artistic, outgoing, and energetic. She enjoyed being in school and would be ready to do her morning activities every day as she came in the classroom.

The classroom that this individual was in for the content subjects was student friendly and resembled a layout that the students were used to. When the teacher changed the arrangement of the students’ desks it was in a way that there was an area in the back of the classroom for the students to move around and to make accommodation for another student. The teacher had her own books for the students to read during free time along two of the walls and the books were organized by topic so that it was similar to the way the school library was organized.

The school climate was student orientated by using some of the student’s artwork in the stairways, having pictures of some performances done by the students on bulletin boards in the halls, and having two students from each grade starting in first grade being the ‘student of the week’. At the school teachers who taught the same grade communicated with each other regularly and did similar large lessons. For example, all of the fifth graders were working on writing an autobiography that they will use to create a book. All of the teachers had the same due dates for each part so that the students would be able to work together to put the finished projects together. The teachers also worked with other teachers from other grades in the school by having buddy systems.

For physical development with this individual she was at the level expected for a fifth grader. When it came time for gym class this individual was like a different person than she was in the classroom. The individual participated the entire time and worked hard to help her team complete the goal of the game that they were playing. From observing gym class she was able to run from line to line, bend down and touch the line, kick a ball, throw a ball, catch a ball, block a ball with her body, and run long distance which tested her small motor skills. During art class she was able to draw a design on the stamp piece, hold and use carving tools properly, roll paint using a hand roller, and press down to get the stamp print on a piece of paper which tested her small motor skills. This individual was at the same stage as the other fifth graders on large and small motor skills but her level of activity was higher than some of her classmates. During dodge ball she tried to hide behind the mats so that she wouldn’t get out at times but otherwise she was always participating. In the classroom this individual preferred the hands on and group activities over the worksheets and packets. It seemed that she was getting bored of always doing worksheets and packets every day but she seemed to enjoyed the lesson I taught since it included a small group discussion.

While observing I was able to note on this individual’s cognitive and language development since she was actively participating in class discussions of their assignments and interacting with other students. By participating in class discussions and interacting with others this individual demonstrated her cognitive abilities every day I was in the classroom. This individual would participate in the morning activity by making a correction in the sentence that was on the smart board, offer to read a short poem during their poetry unit, and provide an answer to any question the teacher asked.

During some of the times when the students were completing an assignment this individual had a couple ‘ah-ha’ moments when she remembered something they recently learned that helped answer a question; on the assignment. This is just one example of how this individual showed a sign of using memory in the classroom. She also knew how to spell all of her spelling words correctly each week during the pre-test. During the poetry unit the students were reading a short poem and then answer comprehension questions about the poem; this individual was able to answer all the questions on her own which tested her own comprehension of the poem.

This individual used a language that was appropriate when interacting with the teachers and the other students. She would use words and phrases that any teacher would prefer to hear from a student in fifth grade when interacting with the teachers. When interacting with other students this individual used different words and phrases than she used with the teachers. There were times when some of the phrases should have not been said in school, but since there were not any teachers around, the individual did not seem afraid to use those phrases. At times this individual would talk out of hand and interrupt what other students were saying or keep talking after being asked to stop talking since someone else was talking at that time. For the language pragmatics that this individual used it was an appropriate usage that a typical fifth grader would be using at school. She used the proper language when communicating and interacting with other students. This individual showed evidence of concrete operational thinking because she was able to develop a logical thought about an object or topic that they were learning and talking about in the classroom.

The emotional and social development of this individual was indentified while observed in the classroom. This individual showed self-concept by showing moments of emerging identity. There were days when the individual and other students were planning what they will include in their autobiography that they were starting to work on. At times this individual would think back and recall a memory from when she was a toddler and would laugh because of how she acted. This individual also showed self-esteem by showing moments of accomplishment and pride. When she was working on an assignment it took her a bit before realizing that there was a pattern to the answers and was able to complete the rest of the assignment without any assistance.

There were instances in the classroom where more than one student was talking at the same time or when there were students talking when the teacher was explaining an assignment. During these situations this individual was trying her best to not follow what the other students were doing and instead she continued to work on the assignment. But, there was a moment when this individual was talking while other students were talking in order to ask one of her classmates a question that she had on the assignment. This individual showed evidence of industry and initiative because she received praise and attention by performing numerous tasks. She also was able to deal with any new social and academic demands which lead to an improved sense of competence.

The individual observed is an eleven year old fifth grader that has a bubbly, outgoing, and creative personality. She would actively participate in group discussions and ask for assistance on an assignment if needed which showed that she cared about school and would do her best when it was needed. I think the future for this individual will be to include more hands on activities and group discussion which will help her communicate with other students. This will also keep her interested since these are some things I observed she preferred to do more than worksheets. I hope she continues to work hard in all of her classes and participate in all group activities presented to her. The individual observed has a bright future if she continues in the way she is now.