

STUDENT CASE STUDY PROJECT GUIDELINES

Purpose of the Assignment:

The purpose of this assignment is twofold: first, to provide you with the opportunity to do a focused analysis of one student using the management framework discussed in our seminars; and second, to provide you with practice in using data gathering strategies that will help you learn essential information necessary in order to teach students effectively. This is particularly important for the teacher working in a diverse classroom setting where students come from cultures and speak languages with which the teacher is unfamiliar and have contextual issues that must be considered in order to help them succeed. I hope that this case study work will challenge your assumptions/beliefs about the learners in your class, their needs and capabilities.

Literature Search: embed within Final Paper

*Read at least 3 refereed articles (beyond those assigned in class) that help you to develop a knowledge base related to the issues facing this student **Begin as soon as you have a some hypotheses regarding issues with which this child is coping. Find readings throughout the semester as it will help you on a day-to-day basis to work more effectively with this student.. Your completion of the literature search will be evidenced by your reference to readings within your final reflection paper.***

Activity #1: Description of student

Write-up a description of your case study child, using the following questions to guide you. Do not gather any data yet.

1. Describe the student's physical appearance.
2. Why did you choose this student as your case study? What behaviors does s/he exhibit that are of concern?
3. What do you think you know about this student?
4. What do you think his/her strengths are?
5. What do you think his/her weaknesses are?
6. How comfortable do you feel with this student? Why or why not?

Activity #2: Student Background

After gathering the information., answer the following questions:

1. You can find some of information in the student's cumulative record (if you are entitled to - if not, ask your cooperating teacher/Faculty Associate to do so, and give you information).
2. Some questions to consider:
 - a. Are there any health issues?
 - b. With whom does the child live?
 - c. Is the child new to the school? How long has the child gone to this school? Where was s/he before- in other words, what is the child's school history?
 - d. How long has the child lived in this area?
 - e. Have there been any traumatic incidents in the child's life of which you are aware?
 - f. Has the child ever been retained?
 - g. Has there ever been a Student Study Team meeting conducted? If so, what was the outcome? Does the child have an IEP? If so, what are the recommendations for supporting him/her?
3. If the child has been at this school one or more years, talk to as many previous teachers as possible about their assessment of him/her, and strategies they used with him/her.

Analyze the data: Was what you learned consistent or inconsistent with your initial impressions of this student? Why/why not? What 1-3 further questions do you have now?

Activity #3: Shadow Your Student inside/outside the classroom

Include: DAY; TIME OF DAY, SUBJECT AREAS, YOU ARE OBSERVING, NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS MADE) WATCH THE STUDENT DURING LITERACY AND ONE OF SUBJECT AREA.

Observe the following

1. With whom does s/he interact? What is the nature of the interaction?
2. In what classroom activities is s/he participating/not participating? What is s/he doing instead, if not attending?
3. What does the child do when on the playground? In what activities is s/he involved?
4. What does this child do in the classroom. Describe what s/he does at particular times, during different activities (reading, writing, math, etc.) and in different structures (individual time, small group work, large class instruction)
5. If your child goes out for some sort of instruction such as second language learning, follow him/her. If you are in a middle school, observe him/her in a different subject area with a different teacher.

Analyze the data: What did you learn about this child and how s/he functions in the classroom? When does he seem to do best? When does s/he have the most difficulty? Anything you notice that triggers certain behaviors – good or bad? How does the child behave on the playground? Is it consistent with their classroom behavior – explain?

Activity #4: Observe Student/Teacher Interaction (one hour's observation)

1. Observe for the following:

Look for the following: what interactions take place between the teacher and student? What is the student doing? What kind of questions does the teacher ask of the student and vice versa? Is the student engaged/on task and if so, when? When is s/he not engaged and what is s/he doing instead?

2. Keep a record of every five minutes of time for the hour.

Analyze the data:

1. What patterns, if any, do you notice?

2. What amount of time does the teacher spend interacting with the child?

3. What is the content of the interaction? For example, is it focused on behavior, explaining directions, expanding child's understanding of content, identifying child's work strengths/challenges?

Activity #5: Analyze student work samples

1. Pick 1-3 samples of student writing or math. With a partner, use a T-chart with "student strengths" and "student challenges" as the headings, to record information that your partner notes about the student's work.

2. Think about how you would talk with the student about his/her strengths/challenges

Activity #6: Student Conversation (2/10 Activity)

Plan to talk with your student for two minutes each day for 10 days. Learn about them – what are they thinking. Do they have pets? Do they do afterschool activities? Where would they most like to go in the world? (you'll come up with better questions)

Analyze the data: What did you learn about this student that you did not know before and/or what did you confirm about the student? Did you notice any changes in your relationship with this student or how they respond to you?

Extra Credit (Optional) Activity #7: Parent Teacher Conference or Student Study Team meeting. **Turn in whenever completed prior to submission of complete Case Study Project.** **Attend** either of these conferences.

Gather the data

- What do the parents see as their child's strengths and challenges?
- What excites their child?
- What frustrates their child?
- Joys they have in parenting/
- Challenges they have in parenting?
- Other information?

Analyze what you have learned in light of the information you have gathered about the student.

Final Case Study Paper:

This is where you put it all together...

You will turn in your project with the following items. Projects missing any of these items will lose points as appropriate.

- Notes taken during observations
- Final paper (see guidelines below)

You will share-out the results of your case study in class at our last session.

Paper should include the following:

- I. **Description of your student:** Give a detailed 1-2 paragraph summary description of this child (physical appearance, grade level, language, family context, age, issues, culture etc) and why you chose him/her.
- II. **Summarize the strengths this student possesses as well as the issues you have identified that affect this student's ability to succeed at school**
- III. **Analyze** the possible implications of what you have learned for working most effectively with this child. What preventive, supportive, corrective strategies have you tried in which domains of classroom management (covenant, content, conduct)? How did they work? What do you now think would be the most helpful accommodations or interventions to support this student given what you have learned through your data gathering? **Be sure to use evidence from the data you have gathered as well as information from what you read in the literature to support your analysis.**
- IV. **Reflection:** Discuss how your thinking about this student has evolved over the semester. Have your beliefs/assumptions about the child and what s/he can achieve, changed? If so, in what ways have they changed or remained constant? What have you learned by doing this case study that will affect how you behave/think as a teacher in the future

As you write your final case study reflection, think of the audience that will be reading it as the other professionals and possibly parents, who are interested in the welfare of the student. You want to be clear and organized in your thinking and in your writing. You want it to be evident to your audience what you now know about this student; which strategies seem to work and which ones have not worked; what questions still remain; and what literature helps to understand and/or respond to one or more of the issues facing your student. This is your opportunity to practice communicating as a professional to other professionals in the hopes of making a difference for your student. In fact, you may be able to share this summary with those at your school site, if appropriate.