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Section 1

Developmental Assessment

Mineral Point, Wisconsin is just a suburb of the capital Madison but out here in the country, you feel like you are miles away from the city. The citizens that live in Mineral Point are considered middle class Americans. This town prides itself on its historic landmarks and beautiful homes. Along with the beautiful homes there are also very old schools. The elementary school that they use replaces the original early 1900s schoolhouse that is now apartments. Mineral Point Elementary School prides itself on having the best special education program in the area. The school provides assistants to help out severely handicapped children, the special education teacher is one of the best in the area, and the special education room is equipped with the latest technology.

The child I choose to do my developmental assessment fake name is Mike. He has been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and possible Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD). From what I have gathered Mike had just moved here in November, he was immediately put into the special education room for most of the day, and since November others have been working with him to get him developmentally where he needs to be. Though Mike is in third grade the special education teacher considers him to be at a first grade level for most subjects. The special education teacher doesn't get discouraged by this; it has motivated him to even work harder with Mike. Some will say that the reason Mike is not where he needs to be developmentally is because of his home life. Mike has a twin sister that is excelling in her studies which

they aren't sure yet if this affects how Mike feels about his studies. His mom has been diagnosed for severe depression and Mike is often left to take care of himself. The father lives an hour away and has limited visitation rights. The professionals at the elementary school haven't been able to prove if his family life affects his performance in school but we can assume it is a great factor.

Physical Development

Appearance wise Mike looks like a normal third grader, except his clothes usually lack cleanliness. Any outsider would not be able to see what Mike struggles with. Though Mike is a little stocky he is at the right height and weight for the average third grader in his class. Mike has glasses to correct his farsightedness and greatly needs them.

After observing him in art class, I can conclude that Mike has developed an interest in drawing. It is very fascinating to observe him, because when he is drawing he is so dedicated to what he is doing that nothing around him will faze him. Compared to the other students in the class Mike is considered to have a first grade penmanship. He attends class with a teacher who solely helps Mike improve in his writing. Besides his writing abilities Mike is able to perform any other small motor task well. He can properly use scissors to cut out objects, he understands the process of how two colors mixed together can form another color, he can follow simple fine motor skills to complete a final product and many other fine motor skills.

From what I have observed Mike really enjoys recess. He loves the opportunity to run around outside with the other children. At first, the teachers assumed that he was lacking in physical abilities but as soon as it got warm in Platteville Mike showed just how he is at the right developmental age. Mike will throughout the day be looking

foreword to recess so he can play kickball. This is his favorite sport and after observing him play I can conclude he performs very well at it. Compared to the other children in his class Mike is physically at the right developmental level with his accuracy in running, skipping, hopping, jump roping, kicking, etc. The special education teacher tells me he enjoys recess so much because at home Mike doesn't have any friends near by, he usually spends his day playing video games.

Cognitive and Language Development

In order to truly understand Mike's developmental abilities one must observe him in the third grade classroom and the special education classroom. Mike's ADD is noticeable in both classrooms because of his inability to stay on task and he is always a little slower than other student's to complete an assignment. When Mike is in his third grade classroom he is very shy, that is why I wouldn't think Mike has ADHD. He is usually too scared to speak up in class for fear of having the wrong answer. While on the other hand in his special education classroom, he his very outspoken, always answering questions, and always actively involved. This is where one can observe his ADHD.

For almost all subjects Mike sees a different teacher who specializes in improving those subject areas. The only subject that he attends with the third grade teacher is science. Developmentally Mike understands science very well; the third grade teacher actually thinks this is one of his strong subjects. I observed his interest in science is like his interest in art. He is very passionate about science and loves to study the solar system. On the other hand, Mike compared to other students entered Mineral Point at a reading level of almost a first grader. He has shown much improvement in reading and writing since he has arrived, and now is almost at a reading and writing level of a second

grader. Along with reading and writing his math has also improved. In November he wasn't able to add two or more digit numbers together. Now he is attempting on accomplishing multiplication.

This brings me to my next point, that Mike compared to a Concrete Operational Thinker is considered almost where he needs to be for his age. Again he has shown great improvement even since I have been there in February. A task of a concrete operational thinker is that they are able to use logic to solve problems. I think this is why Mike struggles with multiplication because multiplication has no concrete way of solving it, it is more of memorization. Though Mike struggles with thinking logically he understands the concept of reversibility. With multiplication, for example, Mike understands that three times four is the same thing as four times three.

A final point of Mike's developmental assessment is his language. Like I mentioned earlier in order to truly understand where Mike is at, one must observe him in both classrooms. In the regular classroom Mike has difficulty with language pragmatics. To his other peers he is usually not able to communicate what he wants. When he tries to communicate with them, his message usually becomes interpreted the wrong way and he has trouble getting his point across. This could be a mixture of the fact that the students haven't been around Mike often and vice versa. It is also because of his ADD and ADHD that he is usually a step behind the other students so that he is not sure what the topic is that they are talking about anyways. The complete opposite of this is in his special education room. When I observed him in the beginning of the semester, Mike was shy in this class. Now he has shown me that he understands the class discussion, and

is able to get involved in it by communicating his thoughts and ideas with both his peers and teachers.

Emotional and Social Development

Out of all the developmental skills that Mike possesses I believe that the emotional and social level he is currently at, is what I observe most. In the beginning of the semester Mike was still trying to get used to his new school and hadn't made many friends. Two months later, Mike has developed friends mainly with the children in the special education room. He has a great bond with these children because he can relate to them the most. There have been incidents on the playground where the other students make fun of Mike. I think this is so sad for the reason that the true motive of why they do it is because they don't understand about Mike's behavioral disabilities. Since these students don't seem to comprehend it, he seeks friendship in those that do. It is good to see that Mike has developed a bond with those certain friends, because he enjoys school so much more when he has something to look forward to everyday.

Besides his friends, I observed Mike developing a strong relationship with his teachers. I believe Mike is seeking that adult attention and that is why he really enjoys the time with his teachers and is so close with them. Compared to the other students in his grade Mike doesn't get in any more trouble than them. The only thing he struggles with because of his ADD and ADHD is staying on task. This leads to some punishment since the teachers can sometimes not get him to sit still or stop talking. The teachers are very understanding of this of course, and when he is behaving inappropriately punishment is usually not necessary. Talking to him one on one solves almost all the problems the teachers might be dealing with him at the time.

Throughout the semester I have enjoyed working with Mike a lot. Mike is a very outgoing, talkative, and is a creative boy. I have also observed Mike's drive to complete something many times. When he sets his mind to something he is gets very excited about the task before him and is determined to complete it to the best of his ability. This drive I feel is such an important quality that Mike possesses. Erickson's stage consists of many developmental levels that a human goes through. Mike should be well developed at initiative versus guilt and just developing in industry versus inferiority. He has shown me his ability to initiate tasks by leading his special education classroom in discussions, and solving problems on the smart board many times. I have also observed Mike improving on his sense of self-worth which is considered industry versus inferiority. In the beginning of the semester, Mike saw himself as unable to do many tasks, now he is trying out new skills to see what he is good at. He understanding that he is good at anything he puts his mind.

In summary, when Mike first attended Mineral Point Elementary School he was developmentally behind his classmates. Thanks to the teachers realizing that every student can learn they have helped him improve greatly. I believe Mike will continue to improve physically, cognitively, and socially/emotionally throughout elementary school because of the one on one time he is receiving. Piaget and Erickson's theories have both elaborated this idea, for the reason that there is no set age that he is suppose to be developmentally at in their theories, it is more of a range. Mike fits into the low level range and the teachers strive to bring him up with his classmates at the high level range. I have great faith that Mike will continue to improve and be able to achieve whatever he sets out to accomplish in the future.