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Cohort A

Reading Case Study

Part I: Student Profile

Background Information

Wallace is seven-year-old second grade at College Park Elementary in Costa Mesa, California. Wallace speaks both English and Spanish at home. Wallace was in another school in California before coming to College Park, where he seems to not feel comfortable yet. Wallace loves to read at home, but mostly by himself because his big brother does not play or spends time with him. His favorite toy or a treasure is Lego sets. He loves to build and construct blocks or Legos when he is at home. He lives with mother and a big brother, but mother is always busy working and big brother plays video games, which Wallace is not interested at all.

Wallace’s teacher describes him as timid, quite, and sometimes shy student Mrs. Guy, his current 2nd grade teacher, reported that Wallace had some trouble decoding sight words in the beginning of the year. He was not reading at his level (2nd grade) and seemed to struggle with writing complete sentences and spelling some of the vowel and double vowel sounds like long ‘o’ or ‘ou’ on the test. His teacher suggested that Wallace needs to read sight words and short and long vowel sounds constantly at home, so he can improve his weaknesses. Unfortunately, Mrs. Guy does not have any information of Wallace’s previous documentations or assessments that he have done in another school.

In the classroom, Wallace sits very front of the row because he sometimes has a hard time focusing during instruction. Sometimes he will sing or hum while the teacher is teaching. Other times, he stands up and twists his body from left to right expressing that he can’t focus. Another day, Wallace talked himself and laughed while he was playing with his two pencils without the teacher noticing his behavior. Some of these behaviors are noticeable that Wallace does not focus during instructional time or maybe he is not engaged enough to focus on the material.

In the beginning of the year, Wallace missed many spelling words on the spelling test. Mrs. Guy commented on his spelling test saying that he needs to work on short e, o, and u sound. However, after two weeks later, he passed the spelling test (which was tested on short vowel sounds) and he only missed 2 words. Mrs. Guy said that it was not normal for Wallace to pass the test since his reading level was at the “benchmark.”

Wallace’s reading level assessment was done with CORE Reading Assessment. First, he was intensive in STAR reading (Instructional Reading Level) . Then he did MASI-R Oral Reading Fluency Measures and he got 46 wcpm when the target was at 51. So he did CORE Vocabulary Screening and he got 24 vocabularies correct, which is the benchmark.

According to Wallace, he said he went to visit his family in Mexico during this summer. So he did not get any exposure of reading summer books as many students would do. Wallace was chosen for this case study because he is one of the lowest readers in the class; Mrs. Guy observed that Wallace has difficulty in processing things quickly and giving accurate answers during instructional time. Additionally, Wallace often thinks hard in his head before he speaks. However, when we talked about science or Lego sets he started to talk really fast in incomplete sentences.

I also observed Wallace during a quite reading time. The other students were reading out loud or not reading, but Wallace was reading a book using his finger as a pointer. Then he tried to read aloud the words. When the teacher wanted students to read in a quiet voice, Wallace started to pronounce the word or shape the words with his mouth quietly. Moreover, during math time, Wallace reads the directions on his math journal to solve the problem. He tries to read the word “Direction” then he started to read rest of the sentences pretty fast and then solved the problems. It seems like he knows some of the words in the math journal (since the directions in math journal are mostly the same) but not the word—directions. Since not many writing or reading time is going on in our classroom, it is hard to see if Wallace knows how to write a sentence with all the punctuation and capitalizations.

When I administered the interest/attitude survey, he was very cooperative and calm. He waited for me to ask him more questions about him and his interest. Wallace said that he loves to read at home alone. He reads any books by himself and reads them aloud. Although he has a TV at his home, he said his big brother always plays video games using the TV so he can’t really get to watch it. He said his favorite subjects at school are science. He expressed sad feelings about why Mrs. Guy is not going over with science, but he started to talk about animals and different kind of insects to me. He told me that he loves sea animals and how they are huge sometimes. His favorite sport is soccer because he loves to kick a ball and he says he feels energetic when he kicks the ball. When I asked him what your favorite animal is, he said black panthers. He loves panthers because they are special so he has many books about panthers at home. Wallace thinks that a good reader should read a lot and like a book.

Wallace lives with a big brother and mother. His big brother goes to the same school as him, but they don’t seem to interact a lot at recess or lunch. He says that he speaks Spanish fluently and his brother and mother speak Spanish at home. He said he sometimes speaks English to his brother, but brother speaks Spanish back to him. Since the family qualifies for free lunch, Wallace comes school for breakfast sometimes. Since Wallace’s mother reported English as their home language, Wallace does not have English Language Development support and resources at school. However, since most of the students in College Park Elementary are English language learners, it seems like they don’t have enough support to help with ELL students. So even though Wallace reported as Spanish as their home language, it looks like they would have gotten the same support as right now. Wallace’s mother is not supportive to Wallace. She did not show up at back to school night because she had work. Mrs. Guy tried to reach her number, but she barely picks her calls and answers them back. Sometimes she comes to school in the early mornings, but Mrs. Guy could not talk to her since she is not fluent in English.

College Park Elementary is a Title I school and it is not that diverse school. 76% of the school population is Hispanic, 17% White Americans, 3% Asian, 2% African Americans, and 2 Hawaiians. Overall there are 597 students in grades K-6. Their API score is 774 and the score changed from 2012 to 2013 +11. API statewide Rank in 2012 was 3 out of 10. 79% of the students are eligible for free or reduced- price lunch program and there are 63% of English language learners in the school. Most popular language that is used in this school is Spanish.