Effective teachers understand typical trends in human growth and development as well as appreciate the unique characteristics of each of their students. The case study assignment offers you an opportunity to analyze the development of a child across multiple domains and demonstrate what you know about educating the whole child.

DEVELOPMENTAL CASE STUDIES

A) Directions
B) Case Study Questions
C) Case Studies (2)
D) Rubrics (2)

Directions

You will review two case studies, the first will focus on an elementary student and the second will focus on a middle-secondary student. Once you review the two case studies you will write an analysis and your recommendations. The written reports need to address the components as defined in the rubric that follows each case study.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Page limit - try to keep each analysis around 3-4 pages. If each analysis is less than two pages, you probably have not gone into enough detail.

2. Formatting - double space your paper; use twelve point font and one inch margins; staple your paper.


4. Please print a copy of your analysis papers to hand in (and make sure your name is on at least the first page).

Case Study Questions: Elementary Student

Review the case study and write an analysis based on:

1. What type of intelligence would you estimate that this student is strong in? What might the student’s intelligence profile look like?

2. How does the student in the case study demonstrate progress through Erikson’s stages of emotional/social development? At what stage of Erikson’s theory do you think the student is currently and what clues in the case study led you to this conclusion? Is this stage age appropriate? What environmental factors might need to be addressed to improve the emotional/social development of this student?

3. When considering cognitive development, what level of Piaget’s theory do you think the student is currently operating within? What information from the case study are you basing your conclusion on? Is this stage age
appropriate? What suggestions can you provide for the student’s home or school life that might demonstrate progress through this level of cognitive development? What recommendations can you offer that would help teachers and caregivers recognize what is (or is not) developmentally appropriate for this child?

4. Overall, what factors are supporting or hindering the student’s development? What changes to the environment would benefit the student? Support your recommendations with relevant theories and/or brain-based research, being sure to articulate your suggestions in a professional and respectful manner.

**Elementary Case Study: Understanding Sophie**

Sophie is a physically healthy 7-year-old girl. She lives with her two parents and her 10-year-old sister. She is close to her immediate family and her grandparents, who live across town. Her grandparents drop her off and pick her up from elementary school every day. She is in the 2nd grade. Sophie’s older sister is involved in after-school programs so they do not leave school together. Sophie goes to her grandparents’ house immediately after school (while her sister is at soccer, piano, Girl Scouts, Spanish, or art class), so most of Sophie’s social interactions with peers are limited to the weekend or at school.

Sophie’s grandmother tries to encourage Sophie to play the piano when she is with her - music is an important part of their family history. Every female in the family has played the piano as long as the family can remember. During the hour-long lessons, Sophie often whines about being there. Sophie doesn’t really seem to have an “ear for music” and does not show interest in playing, but her parents would like for her to play the piano like everyone else in the family.

Sophie’s parents consistently engage her in conversation. Since she was a newborn baby they have given her time to respond and included her in conversations at the dinner table. She has a very strong vocabulary and is a good conversationalist.

For the most part, her older sister is kind to Sophie and plays with her at home when they are both finished with their chores. She does get frustrated with Sophie at times because she only likes to play with her toys and the games that she likes, rather than doing what others might be interested in. Sophie’s sister quickly loses patience for this type of behavior. Also, Sophie has a tendency to change the rules mid-way through a game to benefit her, which tends to make her sister quite angry. Her parents are concerned because they try to teach Sophie about the feelings of other children, including her sister, but Sophie doesn’t seem to understand (or purposefully chooses to ignore the feelings of others - it is hard to tell).

Recently, Sophie was at a garage sale with her dad. She had $8 of her own money to spend and found a remote-control airplane that she really wanted. Her dad told her that $8 was far too much money to spend on a used toy and told her she was not allowed to buy it. Sophie pleaded with her dad, but he dug in his heels. It was silly for Sophie to spend all her money on one toy, he told her. Sophie got very upset and ran back to the car.

Sophie adores school this year. The class is doing many outdoor science projects and they get to move around a lot (Sophie told her mom that she liked her new teacher because doesn’t make her sit too much and she LOVES to go outside). One of the science projects they did last week was with water. They built a tunnel out of sand to show how water flows after making some predictions about what would happen. Sophie’s teacher has told her parents that, generally speaking, Sophie tends to develop a better understanding of concepts when things are hands-on and she talk to others about what she knows. She is a very curious student and gets along well with others. Her teacher also commented that she has a low level of self-determination and this seems to be pervasive throughout the school day, but especially evident at recess.
Sophie’s parents have noticed that she has a tendency to look to adults for what to do next rather than make decisions on her own. For example, when she is bored, which is most of the time that she is forced to be indoors, she would never think to instigate an activity on her own.

Sophie’s parents put her to bed around 8:00 every night after a bedtime routine that consists of a bath, brushing teeth, and reading books. Typically, Sophie does not fall asleep until 10 or 11pm though. Her parents allow her to keep her bedside lamp on due to her fear of the dark. According to Sophie, her toys come alive when the lights go out and this idea is very frightening to her. Keeping the light on seemed like a good way to solve the problem, but it also appears to be interfering with her ability to fall asleep at a reasonable hour.

All-in-all, Sophie is growing up in a loving environment and is well cared for. She, like any child, has her own strengths and weaknesses. Given what you know about human growth and development across multiple domains (cognitive, social-emotional, physical, moral) as well as how people think and learn, what is your analysis of Sophie? What suggestions do you have that might aid in her development? How are these suggestions supported by developmental theory and what you know about the brain?
## Developmental Analysis Rubric – Assessment ED 241 – Elementary Case Study

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<td><strong>Physical Development</strong>  (focus on brain development)</td>
<td>Exhibits a lack of progress in the ability to consider physical development.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a limited understanding of what would be considered appropriate physical development. Is unable to accurately identify appropriate physical development.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a basic understanding of physical development, and is able to articulate the level of physical development of a child using a sample physical development resource.</td>
<td>Accurately analyzes the physical development of a child by identifying examples in the case study that support their conclusions. Uses key terms to frame the development of the child’s physical development.</td>
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<td><strong>Gardner</strong> (Intelligence)</td>
<td>Exhibits a lack of progress in Understanding Gardner’s theory of Multiple Intelligences. Demonstrates a basic understanding of Gardner’s theory.</td>
<td>Is able to accurately identify pertinent intelligences with some accuracy.</td>
<td>Is able to identify intelligences that are present and articulate those intelligences by using examples within the case study. Demonstrates a basic understanding of Gardner’s theory.</td>
<td>Identifies intelligences that a child is gravitating towards and struggling with by analyzing information and synthesizing that information by using a range of examples to support their conclusions. Uses key terms and the broader framework of Gardner as additional documentation.</td>
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<td>Is unable to identify environmental factors from the case study that supports the appropriate development of a child.</td>
<td>Successfully identifies environmental factors from the case study that supports the appropriate development of a child.</td>
<td>Identifies environmental factors that support the appropriate development of a child and supports conclusions by tying factors to developmental milestones.</td>
<td>Analyzes environmental factors that support the appropriate development of a child, supports conclusions by tying factors to developmental milestones, and further articulates supportive environmental factors by integrating relevant theories of development and related information.</td>
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Case Study Questions: Middle-Secondary Student

Review the case study and write an analysis based on:

1. What type of intelligence would you estimate that this student is strong in? What might the student’s intelligence profile look like?

2. How does the student in the case study demonstrate progress through Erikson’s stages of emotional/social development? At what stage of Erikson’s theory do you think the student is currently and what clues in the case study led you to this conclusion? Is this stage age appropriate? What environmental factors might need to be addressed to improve the emotional/social development of this student?

3. When considering cognitive development, what level of Piaget’s theory do you think the student is currently operating within? What information from the case study are you basing your conclusion on? Is this stage age appropriate? What suggestions can you provide for the student’s home or school life that might demonstrate progress through this level of cognitive development?

4. Overall, how do you think the student is developing in a moral and ethic sense? Utilize Kohlberg’s theory of moral and ethical development to gauge where you believe the student is currently functioning and provide examples from the case study that back up your conclusion. Is this student at the appropriate level of moral and ethical development? How will this student’s current level of moral and ethical development help or hinder their success in home, school, or social worlds?

5. What factors are supporting or hindering the student’s development? What changes to the environment would benefit the student? Support your recommendations with relevant theories and/or brain-based research, being sure to articulate your suggestions in a professional and respectful manner.

Middle-Secondary Student Case Study: Meet Aaron

Aaron is 15 years-old and lives with his mother. He is an only child. Aaron has a good relationship with both of his parents but his parents rarely interact with each other since they divorced two years ago. His father is a math teacher and his mother is a nurse at the local hospital. Aaron’s mother is known as a friendly and community-oriented individual. Just last week, Aaron’s mother worked with the local bank president to establish a community trust to help cover the cost of emergency surgeries for children whose families are unable to cover the cost of hospital stays, surgery, and recovery. This project made for several months of long days and busy nights, but Aaron understood that it was for a good cause. Plus, he understands that if his mother didn’t work, their family would struggle financially. When asked about his family life, Aaron said:

“...I love my parents. During the week, we do what normal families do — homework, work, track practice, violin lessons. On the weekends I catch up on homework, practice violin, and make dinner. I don’t see my parents much but they are good people.”

A month ago, Aaron took on a job as a babysitter for the neighbor kids. He watches the kids on Monday, Wednesday and Friday after he finishes track practice until the kids’ dad comes home around 7pm. When Aaron gets to his own home, he eats, practices violin, and goes to bed. He wakes up at 5am to do his homework. Aaron struggles with certain subjects, so homework usually takes a while. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Aaron volunteers at the hospital where mom works until 10pm. He loves interacting with the kids in the pediatric unit. He reads them stories and plays with them. The fact that the
kids are sick and that he has experienced a couple deaths of kids he had grown attached to really weighs on his heart and mind. Sometimes he spends all night writing in his journal about his thoughts.

Recently, Aaron wrote about a family that he had grown close to who had to make a difficult decision. He overheard the parents talking about how they had lied to their insurance company in order to get the insurance company to cover a surgical procedure that isn’t typically covered, but that they felt was necessary. Aaron had a hard time with this because lying is wrong. He decided to keep the families secret though because he didn’t feel that it was his business, but he wrote in his journal about how the family should have followed the rules even though it meant paying for the treatment. His mother was seeking out ways to help families in this sort of situation and it is a complex issue, but it is undoubtedly never ok to lie.

Aaron is a fairly good student; he works hard to get mostly B’s. He has figured out what each of his teachers wants, and he does his best to what they want. Most of his teachers would say that he is a committed student, but takes few risks, and seldom challenges himself to higher levels of learning. He is the quiet kid whose work always falls within the “norm” and because of this he is never any trouble, but is often overlooked. Aaron’s favorite teacher is his English teacher, Mrs. Veltman. When he is in English class, he seems to open up and is much more engaged in class. Mrs. Veltman has made quite an impact on Aaron. It is his only class where Aaron feels comfortable to socialize with peers and talk on a personal level with his teacher. Mrs. Veltman has commented that Aaron is a very talented writer, but he needs a lot of encouragement to break away from traditional approaches to written expression.

Aaron’s mother is concerned about him for several reasons. Aaron and his best friend used to be thick as thieves, but now they don’t hang out at all anymore. Aaron insists that they have not had any type of falling out; after all, it is not in his disposition to argue or fight with anyone. It’s just that there isn’t time for impromptu get-togethers anymore. Aaron’s mom doesn’t understand why Aaron appears apathetic about the loss of this friendship.

When asked to replay some mental images of Aaron over the past week, Aaron’s mom thought of him heading to track practice, babysitting the neighbor kids, playing violin, getting snacks at 3am, doing his homework, and volunteering at the hospital. When asked to describe Aaron’s personality, she said “He has the constitution of an old man. He is kind-hearted, but he doesn’t really act like a kid.”
## Developmental Analysis Rubric – Assessment ED 241 – Middle-Secondary Case Study

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