

## Shadowing Assignment

### Observation Notes

**Who:** Westley Lopez Vasquez, Kindergartner

**When:** Thursday 09/04/2024: 8:00 am-1:00 pm

**Where:** Classroom, Newport Heights Elementary School

**Curriculum area or domain:** Phonics (ABC Bootcamp), Alphabet Song, Writing, Writing Worksheet, Color Words (Site Word Practice), Centers

- Wesley Lopez Vasquez has a background of being diagnosed at preschool with IEP/ Autism
- Westley Lopez Vasquez walked into the classroom, sat quietly on his circle spot
- Mrs. Messner took attendance and Westley raised his hand and said, “Hear” when she called his name
- Mrs. Messner then sang the Pledge of Allegiance and he followed directions and sang the whole pledge
- After the pledge, Mrs. Messner went over playground rules and Westley sat quietly
- Mrs. Messner answered the classroom phone and Westley sat quietly while being crisscrossed and hands in his lap
- **Phonics:** Mrs. Messner gave directions to think about words that start with K.
- Mrs. Messner asked the students to raise their hands with a word that starts with K
- Westley raised his hand quietly but didn’t get called on, Westley kept raising his hand for other chances to say a word that started with K

- Westley blurted out when Mrs. Messner was drawing out the pictures for the letter K, he told Mrs. Messner that her drawings were really good, Mrs. Wessner was drawing a girl Westley said it looked like a reindeer
- Westley got called on to say a K word and he said the word Cameron
- Mrs. Messner said a word that started with K and she did Kindergarten and then asked the students to count the word, Westley counted all the letters in Kindergarten
- **Alphabet Song:** Mrs. Messner went through the alphabet A-Z. For every letter, Westley sounded out the song and did the movements. He was engaged and paying attention. He looked at Mrs. Messner and I and made sure to do the right movements.
- **Writing:** Mrs. Messner put on the video how to draw a K. Westley blurted out “K is a hard word”. After the video, Mrs. Messner drew out the letter K and showed the class how to draw the letter K. After they practiced on whiteboards. Westley told me he drew two K’s and showed me his board. Westley drew his K’s quietly. Then he blurted out again “I’m almost done”. Mrs. Messner then told them to circle their best K and hold up their boards. Westley followed directions. Then Westley blurted out” Mrs. Messner you forgot to pass out the socks”. The students use socks to erase. Mrs. Messner answered the phone again and Westley sat quietly and didn’t talk to any of the boys that sat by him. Then Mrs. Messner showed how to do lowercase k’s. Westley drew his lowercase’s. His lowercase k’s were good and he followed directions. Mrs. Messner told them to do two more k’s. Westley did a lot of k’s.
- **Writing Worksheet:** Mrs. Messner passed out a K worksheet for the students to write and practice uppercase and lowercase K. Westley did the worksheet quietly. When he finished he raised his hand. Mrs. Messner came and checked his worksheet. Westley did

all lowercase K on the front and back side of the worksheet. He didn't do an uppercase K on the front page. He had to redo his work. When Mrs. Messner told them to stop and clean up he didn't put his hands on his head. He kept coloring. He was last to get on the carpet.

- **After recess:** Westley walked in quietly and sat on his dot spot. He sat criss-crossed and waited for Mrs. Messner's instructions.
- **Color Words:** Mrs. Messner played coloring videos that helped the students spell out the color words and use hand motions. Westley was engaged in all the coloring videos. There was the red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple song. He was engaged in all the videos. He used his hands for the motions and spelled out the coloring words out loud. He was watching the videos the whole time and was staying engaged throughout.
- **Centers:** I worked with Westley at centers. He was given a calendar and was told to color it red, green, red, and green. He didn't color the pattern and finished early. He didn't color in the lines. He also colored many green squares over and over again.
- **Lunch:** Westley hit a banana and it fell on the floor. The lunch proctors told him to move table spots and he didn't want to move and refused to listen. Mrs. Messner then asked to talk to Westley at the end of lunch and he refused to talk to her.
- **After lunch:** Westley walked into the classroom quietly and sat quietly at his dot spot. He then waited till Mrs. Messner got inside to give directions.

**Observation/ Interpretation Essay**

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## **Introduction**

I spent half of the day observing Westley Lopez Vasquez, a kindergarten student with an IEP, in Mrs. Messner's kindergarten class at Newport Heights Elementary School. I noticed his learning style, social-emotional growth, and unique characteristics through his interactions with both Mrs. Messner and his peers. When there were multiple academic settings, Westley answered questions and participated in class activities. His assignment responses highlighted the learning obstacles that he faces on a regular basis. This half-day assessment helped me, as a student teacher, gain an understanding of Westley Lopez Vasquez as a student by emphasizing his important behaviors and demonstrating connections to possible exceptions that might have had an impact on his interactions with others and in the classroom. Behaviors that I believed were related to Westley's exceptionalities were that he got distracted easily when finishing his work, had difficulty with letters and sounds, had problems with making eye contact, lacked attention when it was time to move on to the next thing which all suggest a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

## **Academic Performance, Behaviors, and the Potential for Exceptions**

Westley displayed a number of signs that may indicate that he has autism spectrum disorder (ASD). His actions and performance demonstrated a variable attention span, trouble understanding the material, and trouble with transitions. Throughout the day, Westley would finish his work quickly and incorrectly, get easily sidetracked after finishing it, and interrupt when Mrs. Messner was teaching mid-lesson. Westley's behaviors occurred during phonics-focused sessions and worksheet assignments, among other things. Every day during the phonics lesson, students would finish a writing worksheet that helps them practice the letter they are studying that day. With the worksheet, students may put what they've learned into practice and

try writing a letter. Westley got his worksheet and rushed to finish. His attention span was short and he had a hard time wanting to do the worksheet slower and more accurately. When Westley raised his hand and said he finished Mrs. Messner went over to him. She noticed he had done the worksheet wrong. On the front of the worksheet, they were to practice drawing big K and on the back to practice drawing little k. Westley was the last person to complete the writing worksheet which underscored his difficulties and suggested that he might have trouble understanding the directions, having a hard time paying attention and focusing, and might have a sensory overload. Westley may have speech and language disorders that could be called expressive or receptive language disorders. This is evident in his struggles with understanding and using phonics effectively. He found it difficult during phonics when coming up with words that started with the letter k. He said, "Cameron starts with a k". He thought the c in Cameron started with a k. He pronounced the word incorrectly which had a similar sound. These patterns can also point to phonemic awareness issues and or letter-sound correspondence. Letter-sound correspondence is addressed in IEP because the student might have a hard time understanding the relationship between letter and their sounds which is common in early literacy development.

### **Communication and Social-Emotional Behavior Patterns**

Through many peer interactions, Westley has exhibited a desire to interact with his classmates despite the challenges he faces when experiencing his studies. Westley showed his need to feel included and heard. Westley talked with his table partners and would blurt out while Mrs. Messner was teaching. He wanted to share personal stories or what he thought the answer was. He looked comfortable in the classroom environment. He openly shared stories and talked freely about his life and his thinking process when it came to learning. Westley was able to ask

questions and show he was interested in what was being taught. One example was when Mrs. Messner went to draw a girl Westley blurted out and said, "That looks like a reindeer".

On the other hand, Westley's difficulties with academics sometimes affected the way he interacted with his peers and his teacher. For example, at lunch, Westley was sitting at the lunch table and eating his lunch. He hit another kid's banana and it fell on the floor. The lunch proctor watched Westley do it confronted him about the situation and asked him to move table spots. Westley refused to move and refused to listen to the proctor. After lunch, the proctor told Mrs. Messner. Mrs. Messner tried to talk to Westley about what happened at lunch. Westley refused to talk to her. He then ended up listening to her and he had a hard time making eye contact with Mrs. Messner. He also got emotional when talking with the teacher. Westley may have limited verbal skills. Westley refused to talk to Mrs. Messner could be due to limited verbal skills or feeling overwhelmed and unable to articulate his feelings or actions. He also might have social-emotional behavior because he might not fully understand social rules about personal belonging and might act impulsively.

### **Conclusion**

Research indicates that Westley faces difficulties related to his attention and learning problems, which show in his writing and phonics. His capacity to maintain concentration and pay attention to the work is being hindered by these obstacles. Learning letter sounds and phonic principles might be hindered by attention and focus issues. Due to his difficulties with phonics and the alphabet, Westley is also affected by behavior and emotional factors like impatience and anxiety, which might hinder his ability to learn. Westley does, however, possess some social skills and a conducive learning atmosphere. Westley shows that he is in an emotionally supportive classroom by participating in class and raising his hand regularly. Based on my

observations, I believe Westley might benefit from assistance and interventions in the classroom. Individualized education catered to Westley's needs and learning style the best. If Westley had greater visual support, he could also develop further. Schedules and visual aids can improve his comprehension and consistency. Additionally, it appeared that Westley might gain from positive behavior supports, such as techniques for encouraging positive behavior and emotional control. This observation was crucial in my student teaching experience in making observations that I could see about a student's struggles, strengths, and overall personality. I got insight as a student teacher in understanding this child's unique needs and strengths. This observation has allowed me to think about how to create a supportive and effective learning environment for this student and all students. Most of Westley's behaviors were related to his exceptionalities and did receive support from the teacher in specific areas that Westley found hard to complete.