

Rhode Island College
Case Study Report – Project Goal

Student's Name: Luis Hernandez

Dates of Testing and Tutoring: 02/11/09, 02/25/09, 03/04/09, 03/18/09, 03/25/09

Chronological Age: 11 years and 4 months

Birth Date: October 7, 1997

School and Grade Last Attended: Calcutt Middle School/Grade 6

Parent's/Caregiver's Name: Magnolia Delsas and Carlos Hernandez

Street Address: 90 Hendricks St.

City: Central Falls State: RI Zip: 02863

Introduction:

Luis is a wonderful, polite boy in sixth grade at Calcutt Middle School in Central Falls, Rhode Island. He is the middle child of three and lives with his parents and sisters. His older sister has moved out and lives on her own. He can speak both Spanish and English fluently. Spanish is the primary language spoken at home. Luis enjoys karate class and is two points away from his black belt. He also plays soccer both indoor and outdoor. He talked a lot about his family in El Salvadore.

Luis is interested in nonfiction reading and if he has a choice would like to read nonfiction and write about nonfiction especially Egypt and Greece. His favorite author is C.S. Lewis and his favorite book by Lewis is "The Magicians Nephew." He is eager to learn. He talks about having a very busy schedule. For example on Wednesday's he has school, tutoring at RIC, soccer and then karate. Both his mom and dad seem to be very involved in his life.

Testing Results:

Interest Inventories

The Garfield Elementary Reading Attitude Survey was administered to Luis to determine what attitude he had towards reading. The survey contains twenty simple to answer questions about reading. Each question is followed by four pictures of Garfield that show different levels of emotion. After reading each question you are to circle the picture that best describes how you feel. Luis received a total score of 32(57th percentile rank) for recreational reading and a total score of 24(43rd percentile rank) for academic reading. The difference shows a more positive feeling toward recreational reading.

The Student Reading Survey consisted of twelve easy to answer questions pertaining to reading. Luis said that his mom taught him how to read. His favorite author is C. S. Lewis and his favorite book was, "The Magician 's Nephew" Luis said that he liked reading and has read many books during the past year. He loves the library and goes there twice a week. Luis said that he really does not watch TV since he is busy with school, soccer and karate.

The Student Writing Survey consisted of six easy to answer questions pertaining to writing. Luis said he does not consider himself a writer. His mom taught him to write. When I asked Luis how people learn to write he said, "First they learn letters and sounds then they put the letters together to form words." When asked the question, When do people write? Luis said, "People write when they do homework, write letters, when they fill out forms and for an interview." Luis also said, "A good writer needs to practice writing and needs to read more to become a good writer." Luis writes about things he has done and places he has been. His favorite topics to write about are the earth, history, travel and space. He usually writes in his room or at the library.

The Student Interest Inventory asked twelve questions pertaining to the different things you may be interested in. Luis has many interests including playing soccer and karate. If he was given the opportunity to do anything he wanted he would like to fly a plane and be able to parachute out of it. His favorite subjects are Math, History and Science. His least favorite subject is English and Language Arts. When asked if he had a favorite television shows he said that he enjoyed watching Family Guy, American Dad and Futurama.

Based on all of the interest inventories it is clear that Luis has a great love for reading. He mentioned that he would prefer reading for enjoyment than for an assignment in school. He also visits the library on a regular basis and has conversations at home about the books that he has read. Luis does not like writing as much as reading because he does not feel that he is a good writer. However he would like to improve his writing. He knows that practicing writing and reading will help him become a better writer. Luis is a hard worker and is very driven. When meeting with Luis for tutoring he told me that his schedule is very busy. He plays soccer and takes karate almost every day. He has soccer practice or a game every day and after soccer he goes to karate and then home to do homework. Luis considers school as important as the athletics that he does. Overall he shows that he is organized when it comes to his schedule and he is driven to do the best that he can do.

Reading

Luis completed both formal and informal reading assessments. To determine his reading level the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System was administered. This System contains materials and procedures for both observing and assessing the reading levels and behaviors of students in grades three through eight. This type of assessment not only determines the reading level but also the accuracy rate, reading rate(words read per minute), fluency, key understandings of the text such as within, beyond and about the text. Also there is a writing portion where the student writes and draws to further express their understanding of the text. The level at which Luis can

read with understanding and ease, without assistance—his independent reading level—is sixth grade. The instructional reading level—the level at which Luis can read with understanding with the teacher’s assistance—is seventh grade. His frustration reading level—the level at which Luis is unable to function adequately because the reading material is too hard—is eighth grade. At the sixth grade reading level when it comes to fluency Luis is able to read in three- or four-word phrase groups with some smooth, expressive interpretation. He uses appropriate stress and rate with some slowdowns. He tends to slow down occasionally for problem solving but becomes more fluent on easier stretches of the text. His reading rate is one hundred and sixteen words per minute. This is within the acceptable range for sixth grade readers. Luis will increase his reading rate by continuing to read at his independent level (V) text. When it comes to key understandings within the text Luis is able to gain the literal meaning of the text through solving the words, monitoring his own understanding and accuracy while searching for and using information. He is able to remember information in order to summarize text, and adjust for purpose and type of text. When it comes to key understandings beyond the text, Luis is able to make predictions, connections with prior knowledge, personal experience, and other texts. He is able to infer what is implied but not stated and synthesizing new information by changing his own ideas. When it comes to key understandings about the text Luis runs into some trouble. He has difficulty thinking about the literary elements of the text, recognizing elements of the writer’s craft and thinking critically about the text. Luis also has difficulty when it comes to writing about the text. He is able to provide evidence that he understands the literal meaning within the text but is unable to grasp the author’s message beyond the text.

Another formal assessment was the Basics First Reading Comprehension focusing on drawing conclusions, critical thinking, recalling facts, details, inference, grammar, following directions, and vocabulary. Luis read the story “The Mystery of the Mary Celeste” and answered question in the follow-up skills test. He did well when it came to drawing conclusions. When asked what he thought happened to the ship in the story he gave an answer using good higher level thinking. His answer showed his ability to draw conclusions easily. His critical thinking answer could have been expanded. Rather than add to his answer he said, “And stuff like that.” It may have been that at this point he was getting tired because this answer did not correlate with the other more elaborate answers that he had given. Luis works slowly when answering questions. He also left a few of the answers blank. He did not answer the question about what he thought of the story. When I asked him why he said he did not know what to write. Luis had trouble with the vocabulary portion of the skills test. He was able to re-visit the text to use context clues for meaning of the words but was not able to figure out the meanings.

Luis completed an informal assessment known as a think-aloud. He would read and listen to a story each week. Luis was asked to read a portion of the story and stop to verbalize what he was thinking about. He was asked to make connections with the text either to the world, to himself or too another text. Luis enjoyed this and made many connections. Luis’s ability to use these strategies indicates a high level of understanding when it comes to his reading ability.

Luis also liked to talk about books that he had read in the past. He was asked to verbally

compare characters in one book to other characters and also talk about things that he liked or disliked about the story or things he liked or disliked about the author. Luis was able to talk in great detail about the characters and things he liked and disliked about the stories. When it came to talking about the author Luis had difficulty explaining why the author wrote a certain way or why he portrayed a character in a certain way. Luis worked on some strategies that helped him critically think about the way the author wrote and why he wrote that way. Luis was also asked to read short stories below his reading level and verbally identify the message the author was trying to get across to the reader. After reading these short stories Luis was asked to verbally explain how the author got the message across to the reader. He continued to have trouble when it came to critically thinking about the text.

Word Study

Luis was administered the sixth grade word list. The list contains one hundred words that students should know by the end of sixth grade. Luis knew all of the one hundred words without hesitation.

The Words Their Way Qualitative Spelling Inventory was administered to Luis. This inventory assesses the word knowledge. The words are arranged in order of difficulty. The word is read to the student, a sentence is read containing the word, and the word is repeated. The assessment is stopped when the student has spelled no words or has missed three out of five words. The purpose of this type of assessment is to examine the types of errors made by the student as well as to understand the skill of the student by examining the correctly spelled words. Luis was first administered the Upper-Level Spelling Inventory. This proved to be too difficult for Luis because as the words became more difficult he misspelled three out of the five words. Luis was then administered the Elementary Spelling Inventory which he did considerably better on only misspelling four of the twenty five words. The Words Their Way Elementary Spelling Inventory Feature Guide showed the spelling stages of the words Luis misspelled and offered the features that should be focused on. Based on the words that Luis misspelled the features that should be focused on to help Luis in the derivational relations spelling stage were bases or root words and harder suffixes. In the syllables and affixes spelling stage the syllable junctures and unaccented final syllables should be focused on. In the within word pattern spelling stage the other vowels and inflected endings should be focused on. Luis sorted words to explore the endings and to be able to predict which of the endings a word is likely to use. Luis played other word games that helped him identify vowel sounds and inflected endings. He also was given a number of words that contained base or root words and was asked to identify the base or root word. Luis also worked with words containing both prefixes and suffixes.

Writing

During the first week of tutoring, Luis said that he really enjoyed learning about Egypt

and Greece and new a lot about both. He asked if he could write a story about Egypt and Greece. At the end of each tutoring session Luis would add a bit more to his story. He would read it aloud and correct any grammatical or syntactical errors with help from his tutor. Luis, for the most part, needed help with word choice and meaning. Each week as he worked with various word features identified through "Words Their Way" he gained a better understanding when it came to word choice and meaning. Luis was asked to read and write about what he read each week. In his writing survey Luis had stated that he did not like to write. This was evident each week when it came time to write about what he had read. Luis could orally summarize, explain character development, cause and effect and answer various question using well developed language and vocabulary. Luis became frustrated because he could not write his response or answer to a question as well as he could orally explain it. This was because Luis's written vocabulary development needed work. Luis needs to continue to work with vocabulary development skills and he needs to be encouraged to transfer his oral knowledge to his writing.

Summary

Luis is a very polite and nice boy with a burning desire to learn. He enjoys school and is very motivated and driven when it comes to learning. His interests are school, soccer and karate.

Luis's current reading level is a sixth-grade independent level. He has many strengths when it comes to reading. He is able to use many strategies to help himself comprehend what he is reading. These strategies include backtracking and rereading when meaning is not clear, using context clues to figure out words, self-questioning, predicting and confirming predictions, locating the main idea and making connections.

Although Luis has many strengths when it comes to reading there are also areas that he needs to work on. He needs to build up his vocabulary in order to further develop his ability to comprehend text. Luis's weak vocabulary skills deplete his ability to understand text at a higher level or to understand material that is unfamiliar to him. His weak ability to critically think about the text when it comes to the literary elements and recognizing elements of the writer's craft(what message is the author trying to get across to the reader) are preventing him from gaining a full understanding of the text that he is reading.

When Luis was administered the sixth grade word list it was evident that he had no problem at all completing the list without any errors. However when administered the "Words Their Way" spelling inventory Luis struggled with some of the words. He is currently at the early to middle of the syllables and affixes stage of spelling. Both his reading and writing would benefit from further instruction in this area. Luis enjoyed the word sorts and games that he took part in during tutoring and should be given the

opportunity to continue using them.

Luis should continue to use word sorts and games to improve his word knowledge. Luis should also write more. Even though he dislikes writing, he needs to practice writing with focus and detail. He showed more drive and motivation toward the story he was writing about Egypt and Greece, something he enjoyed writing about, than writing responses to and answering questions about text that he had read.

Recommendations: School and home

School

1. Luis will benefit greatly from instruction: within word patterns, pertaining to other vowels and inflected endings, syllables and affixes, pertaining to syllable junctures and unaccented final syllables and derivational relations, pertaining to harder suffixes and bases or roots. Luis enjoyed word sorts and games. Further instruction in these areas will allow him to decipher and understand words more easily.
2. Luis mentioned that he did not like writing. However, he should be encouraged to write in a journal daily. It is important for him to write about things that interest him as well as to brainstorm and talk about writing ideas and pieces with peers. Orally Luis responds beautifully to text. His oral vocabulary and responses to what he reads are at a much higher level than his written responses.
3. Luis should also receive instruction when it comes to comprehension of the text. Luis needs to read lower level text and practice deciphering the message that the author is trying to portray to the reader. Luis also should receive instruction in thinking critically about the text. When he is reading a more difficult text it may be helpful to him to break the text apart. He should critically think about smaller parts and discuss the smaller parts in detail and then bringing the understanding of the smaller parts together for an overall understanding of the entire text.
4. In order to increase Luis's reading level he should be given time to read at his independent level (V) daily. It has been proven that, if given time daily to read at their independent level, students will improve fluency and comprehension skills. Luis should be given the opportunity to choose the type of books that he wants to read. The classroom teacher should hold informal conversations about books that Luis is reading and Luis should be allowed to visit the library on a regular basis to take out books of interest.
5. Luis should be allowed to talk to other classmates either in groups or partners about

what is being read. Time for reflecting on a book with a group or partner will help Luis develop higher level thinking when it comes to critically thinking about the text. As Luis becomes more proficient with recognizing the elements of the writer's craft he should be given the opportunity to lead group discussions. Research has shown that ninety percent of what someone teaches to someone else is retained.

6. Luis should be allowed to express his knowledge and understanding of the text in a variety of different ways. If he chooses he should be able to act out a part of the book, draw, or create a musical piece to show his comprehension and understanding as well as write or orally speak about the book. This will allow him to tap into the multiple intelligences within him to express what he knows.

Home

1. To help Luis improve his writing ability, a summer journal containing events from the day or every other day would be beneficial. During his tutoring sessions it was evident that Luis liked to write about things that he was interested in. A summer journal is a place that he could write about daily events as well as things that he enjoys writing about.
2. Luis enjoyed the word sorts and word games that he played during his tutoring sessions. Attached is a list of words that you could use to play prefix and suffix games. Also attached is another word sort game that you can play.
3. Luis mentioned that he enjoys going to the library. Being able to go to the library each week will allow Luis the opportunity to take out various books and materials that he is interested in reading. Luis expressed an interest in non-fiction books, anything about Egypt and Greece and the author C. S. Lewis. He also has a love for soccer and karate. He would be able to have access to all of the above mentioned plus much more high-interest material at the library.
4. Luis should be reading daily. Thirty minutes of reading time per day is sufficient. The longer he reads the better reader he will become. He would benefit greatly from reading and discussing such things as newspaper articles, magazine articles and books.
5. Allow Luis to read aloud to you. Encourage him to predict what he thinks will happen next by using clues from the story and what he already knows. Ask him to visualize what is going on in the story by making a "movie" of the events from the story in his mind. Question him about the characters, about what is happening in the story, the problem and how the problem is being solved. Attached is a list of additional tips for helping Luis read.

Child's Tutor _____

Date _____

Louise Bello

Case Study Report – Project Goal

To: Dr. Rude

From: Louise Bello

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