

Erin Arndt
Rhode Island College
Project Goal Tutoring: Spring 2010

Child's Name: Brandon Ramiro Rodriguez Cante
Dates of Sessions: 3/3/2010 - 3/24/2010
Chronological Age: 14 years 11 months
Birth Date: April 12, 1995
School and Grade: 9th Grade @ Central Falls High School
Parent's Names: -----
Street Address: -----
City: Central Falls, RI
Home Telephone: -----

Introduction:

I had the pleasure of working with Brandon for 3 sessions during the spring semester of 2010. Brandon is a kind and respectful young man who is eager to please and who sincerely values his education. As I worked with Brandon it was easy to see that his family was the most important aspect of his life, especially his younger siblings, and that he had many goals and dreams in regards to his future.

Brandon loved to sit and chat. He was eager to share his likes and dislikes and would excitedly talk about things that were important to him such as his family, soccer, music groups, and cars.

In regards to Brandon as a reader and a student, he was more reluctant to share his thoughts on the subject. He had a hard time engaging in a conversation about favorite books or authors and was hesitant to share his reading habits or ideas.

However, while reading together he opened up a bit more about his thoughts on reading as things came up naturally. For instance, although he doesn't feel as though he can't handle the text in class, he is not a fan of reading aloud in front of his peers. He prefers to read non-fiction and would much rather engage in reading response activities such as creative open-ended projects rather than traditional question and short answer reading quizzes.

Parent Interview:

A parent interview was not conducted for the purposes of these tutoring sessions and/or subsequent case study report.

Testing Results:

A. Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System 2

I decided to give Brandon the Fountas and Pinnell Assessment (F & P) in order to establish an independent reading level for him. By establishing a reading level, I knew I would be able to better assess where Brandon was in relation to his grade level peers. I would also be able to make recommendations for Brandon and his teachers.

Brandon and I started off with the F & P level T. Level T is a mid-fifth grade level text and Brandon read the non-fiction version of the assessment. The title of our story was "Get a Horse" and it was based in 1904. During the story a young boy is conflicted between his grandfather's noisy new automobile and worrying about the fate of his trusty old horse. The text consisted of 215 words of which Brandon made 10 errors, giving him a 95% accuracy rate. Brandon's errors varied in nature, although they could be grouped into errors which changed the meaning and errors which did not. Some of his errors consisted of miscues in which a letter in the word was changed or added or a pronoun was confused. Other errors were more severe in nature as they changed much needed information for comprehension or ^{he} omitted it altogether. More surprising than the errors that Brandon made was that he rarely self-corrected and did not self-monitor while he was reading.

In regards to his comprehension, Brandon had adequate comprehension of the story. He had a clear understanding of who, what, where, and when the story took place. He had a little bit of difficulty recalling proper names but could easily describe the characters and their roles. He ^{he} knew all main events of the story but misunderstood the timeline of the story in regards to it taking place before cars were popular in most homes.



Brandon's fluency was a bit slow for his grade level, reading only 93 words per minute. A rate under 100 words per minute would, in most instances, represent an elementary aged student rather than a high school student.

Overall, Brandon had 95% accuracy, adequate comprehension, and fair fluency which would indicate that level T, mid-fifth grade text, is an appropriate independent reading level for him.

B. Elementary Reading Attitude Survey

I gave Brandon the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey so that I could quickly and easily get a clearer picture of how Brandon sees himself as a reader. The reading survey provided Brandon with 4 choices in which to respond and responses were represented with Garfield pictures that varied from "Very Happy" to "Very Upset". Unfortunately, Brandon did not feel "Very Happy" about any of the feeling questions regarding reading. Most questions, Brandon answered somewhere in the middle. He is a bit indifferent in regards to his reading and reading instruction. However, one of the questions asked him about his feelings toward reading aloud in class. He responded with "Very Upset." He choose not to elaborate on his response but he was adamant about his dislike toward reading in front of his peers.

C. Elementary Writing Attitude Survey

Much like the reading survey, I gave Brandon the Elementary Writing Attitude Survey and I was pleasantly surprised with his responses. Brandon feels much more favorably to writing than he does to reading. Not only did he not choose "Very Upset" for any of his answers, but he also choose "Very Happy" as 5 of his responses. Brandon would be quite happy to write poetry, write from personal experience, and write a story rather than complete traditional homework. He really liked the idea of writing in social studies, and even chatted about a writing assignment that he recently completed for social studies. For me, his most surprising response was that he would be "Very Happy" to have his peers read his written work. This was surprising to me because he had expressed how against reading in front of his peers he is, and it would seem that sharing your written work would be extremely personal. I can't help but applaud his courageousness and willingness to be so open with his peers.

Observations During Reading Sessions:

Reading with Brandon was an absolute pleasure. He preferred to read to me rather than be read to and often read enthusiastically and with great intonation. We read parts of 2 books while we were together. At first we read an action / adventure novel, The Abduction (Kidnapped, Book 1), written by Gordon Korman. Although, we only read the first several chapters of this book, it provided me to some insight to Brandon as a reader. He has developed some great strategies to monitor his own comprehension. Most impressively he questions what he is reading. At one point he came to a part that referred to something that had already happened but that he was unclear about. He stopped reading, went back a few pages, reread, returned to where he had been, read again, and then discussed his findings. He also stopped and asked questions when a word was new or unfamiliar to him and was easily able to draw conclusions by associating the unknown words with words within his schema. Although, Brandon liked the book he was quick to realize that we would most likely not finish it in our allotted time. Together we also had discussed the complexity of the story line and he expressed concerns about returning to book on a weekly basis. He ultimately decided to abandon the book and browsed through other choices that I had with me.

We explored reading short stories and another novel, but he was most intrigued by Hate that Cat, by Sharon Creech. He had not read Love that Dog, the first book in the series, but something about Hate that Cat made him want to read it. Although we were unable to finish it, Brandon really loved the book. The entire story is written in poetry form and the speaker, Jack, is quite quirky and witty and just fun to read. As we read, Brandon found the writing style within the book fascinating. Several times he commented on the poetry format and the author's decision to use poetry to develop the story line. It was unlike anything he had seen. The story itself led to intriguing conversations about poetry and vocabulary specific to poetry, onomatopoeia, was one of our favorites! At times Brandon expected the poem to rhyme as he read and the author's style would confuse him. However, as teachable moments we were able to practice reading some sections a few times and he really got into the format. I think that if Brandon is given the opportunity he will either finish the book or choose another book written in a similar format.

The two texts that we read ^{from} were quite different but provided interesting opportunities to discuss vocabulary, plot, and author's purpose. While reading from both books, Brandon was an active participant who seemingly enjoyed reading and discussing literature.

Summary:

During the short time that I worked with Brandon I was impressed with his positive attitude toward school, his work ethic, and his overall respect and consideration of me, as his tutor, and his teachers. He is a fine young man who is willing to go above and beyond to be successful.

While reading with Brandon I realized that he has several strengths and strategies already in place as a reader. He monitors his comprehension while he is reading with an adult. He stops and asks for clarification and he was consistently an active participant in all comprehension discussions. Together we were able to make reasonable definitions for new words through examples or associations, we made connections, and we discussed author's purpose and character's feelings. During each of these conversations Brandon remained on task and engaged. He asked thoughtful questions and made predictions.

On the other hand, Brandon does not often self correct while reading. When given the F & P he only self corrected ^{one} time. Several other times he used nonsense words in place of real words and did not hesitate to continue reading. For example, he read 'rubbing' as 'reberring' and 'canvas' as 'carvas'. We went back after the testing session was done and I brought these words to his attention and we had the opportunity to talk about them. Together we were able to make meaning from the text using the appropriate words. I couldn't help but wonder how often he makes similar errors in his independent reading and how much comprehension is lost.

However, it is necessary to put all of Brandon's reading success during the tutoring sessions into perspective. The texts that we read for enjoyment as well as his tested F & P reading level are well below his actual grade level. He is reading independently at a beginning fifth grade level which I am sure makes the material that he is presented within his ninth grade classes difficult at best.

Also, noteworthy is Brandon's positive feelings towards writing. His writing attitude survey compared to his reading attitude survey showed that Brandon enjoys writing and wouldn't mind being given more opportunities to write throughout the day at school.

Recommendations

Recommendations for School:

1. First and foremost, Brandon's reading materials need to be considered. As a ninth grader, I am sure that some of his reading material is well above a fifth grade level. I am wondering if he is able to understand everything he is reading, and if accommodations are being made to support text which is difficult. Brandon may need alternative texts to access the information that he is responsible for or may need opportunities to work in small group settings. As Brandon reads, either independently or in small groups, it will be important for his teachers to check in with him frequently to monitor his comprehension and to help him clarify anything he is unsure of.

2. Brandon is a thoughtful reader who asks questions, easily participates in conversations about texts, and can make connections to what he is reading. Combining that with his positive attitude about writing, I believe that a dual entry notebook in which Brandon can exchange dialogue with a teacher, about what he is reading, would be beneficial. By using a notebook to gather his thoughts, questions, and connections, a teacher can monitor his comprehension while at the same time can keep him actively engaged in what he is reading. The teacher can, in turn, pose further questions, ask for clarification, or just share their own thoughts to help Brandon make meaning of assigned text.

3. During shared reading time with Brandon, I noticed that there were some words that he ~~just~~ didn't know. These came up in a few different scenarios. At times, he pronounced the word correctly, but had no idea what the word meant. Other times, he mispronounced the word. Then when I would ultimately give the word to him he would have only familiarization with the word, but no experience or meaning. When these unknown words would come up, Brandon worked hard at making meaning from the words. He would first indicate that the word was new for him. If I gave examples or demonstrated



the word he would participate in the conversation and we would discuss the word until we came up with a meaning or suitable association for the word in the context that it was presented. As we worked through several words I realized that Brandon has a great repertoire of vocabulary and verbal language, and therefore is able to 'own' new words quite easily with his ability to make those connections. Using this knowledge, I think that a vocabulary notebook in which he kept track of new or unfamiliar words that he comes across while reading would be helpful in most any class that he is in. He could jot down new words and he and the teacher could discuss the words periodically to check for understanding. If a notebook isn't possible an index card bookmark or post-its could also prove to be beneficial. The key will be developing the dialogue between Brandon and his teachers, and giving him a chance to present and discuss his 'tricky' words.

4. Brandon is a natural conversationalist and a joy to sit and chat with. A teacher-led book club in which classroom novels or even non-fiction pieces are discussed and reflected upon, among peers would be a great way to get Brandon engaged in reading. All of the students in the group would be able to share their responses, ask questions, share ideas, and evaluate the texts that are provided. In turn students' overall comprehension will build and Brandon, specifically, will be given an opportunity to practice his reading strategies and build his confidence as a reader.

5. Quite often, Brandon expressed his apprehension about reading aloud in class. He feels strongly against reading in front of his peers and although he is fairly fluent it is not something that he is comfortable with at all. He did, however, enjoy reading with me in a one-on-one situation. He often chooses to read rather than be read to and as he read I couldn't help but notice how he beamed when given praise. In an effort to build his confidence and to continue to practice his fluency and overall oral reading abilities, Brandon would benefit from opportunities to meet one-on-one or in a small group, with a teacher, to apply his oral reading strategies.

Recommendations for Home:

1. After chatting with Brandon it was apparent that he would be interested in having a variety of books to choose from at home. He would especially like to read more non-fiction, especially things related to history. Although, he is

not interested in receiving books as gifts, an introduction to the local library may satisfy his need for exploring books. It is my hope that he would find a genre or author that would really spark an interest and reading would become a recreational choice for Brandon rather than an assignment or chore.

2. Brandon's responsible nature and his strong desire to be a role model for his siblings makes him a natural choice for a tutor for his elementary school-aged brothers. If Brandon and his brothers set time aside each week to read together it would be beneficial for all involved. Although Brandon may need to speak to one of his teachers as to some of the best strategies to work with his brothers, I think that this activity is well within his reach. As he helps his brothers by listening to them read, reading to them, and helping them to make meaning out of what they are reading, he will be practicing the same skills that will, overtime, improve his own reading. Working with his brothers will also provide a non-threatening environment for him to practice reading aloud, a task that causes Brandon stress in school.

3. As a conscientious ninth grader and as someone who truly enjoys history and current events, it would be great if Brandon could read the newspaper a few times a week with another adult at home. He has great conversational skills and I can't help but believe that he would enjoy the opportunity to read the paper and participate in discussions about what has been read. The readability of most of the articles in the paper should be well within Brandon's reach and this could prove to be an activity which strengthens his reading due to practice and promotes recreational reading for Brandon *Div*,

4. I would also like to suggest that Brandon's parents set up a time to meet with his teachers at the high school and that Brandon is invited to attend as well. Although Brandon has set high goals for himself with the intention of playing soccer after high school, he realizes that this may or may not become a reality. He expressed an interest in higher education and thought he would like to further explore the sciences; at one time he even mentioned becoming a scientist. At this point it would be important for Brandon, his parents, and his teachers to discuss his future, including the direction he is headed and what he may or may not need to do, in regards to his education, in order to get there.

5. Brandon expresses some interest in writing and is an avid drawer. I would try to tap into that by introducing Brandon to graphic novels and letting him explore the genre on his own. Graphic novels have become more and more popular recently and some truly reach out to reluctant readers. I can't help but wonder if Brandon will find them not only engaging to read but inspirational to explore his own written and artistic ability.

SECTION IV - Assessment #4

Revised - Fall 2009

Rhode Island College

Pre-Practicum Case Study Report
Scoring Guide

Name Erin Arndt

Date 5/10/10

Element	Unacceptable - 1	Acceptable - 2	Exemplary - 3	Score
<p>IRA Standard 3.1</p> <p>Compare and contrast, use, interpret and recommend a wide range of assessment tools and practices. Assessments may range from standardized tests to informal assessments and also include technology-based assessments. They demonstrate appropriate use of assessments in their practice, and they can train classroom teachers to administer and interpret these assessments.</p>	<p>Does not adequately demonstrate the ability to select and administer appropriate formal and informal assessments (including technology-based assessments) and educate teachers in their use.</p>	<p>Adequately demonstrates the ability to select and administer appropriate formal and informal assessments (including technology-based assessments) and educate teachers in their use.</p>	<p>Adequately demonstrates, at an advanced, exemplary level, the ability to select and administer appropriate formal and informal assessments (including technology-based assessments) and educate teachers in their use.</p>	3
<p>IRA Standard 3.2</p>	<p>Does not demonstrate</p>	<p>Demonstrates adequate</p>	<p>Demonstrates, at an</p>	

<p>Support the classroom teacher in the assessment of individual students. They extend the assessment to further determine proficiencies and difficulties for appropriate services.</p>	<p>adequate ability to compare, contrast, and analyze assessment information and is unable to provide support to classroom teachers.</p>	<p>ability to compare, contrast, and analyze assessment information and prescribe appropriate services. The candidate can also support classroom teachers with recommendations and teaching suggestions.</p>	<p>advanced, exemplary level, the ability to compare, contrast, and analyze assessment information and prescribe appropriate services. The candidate demonstrates the ability to offer clear and concise recommendations for classroom teachers.</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>IRA Standard 3.3 Assist the classroom teacher in using assessments to plan instruction for all students. They use in-depth assessment information to plan individual instruction for struggling readers. They collaborate with other educational professionals to implement appropriate reading instruction for individual students. They collect, analyze, and use schoolwide</p>	<p>Does not demonstrate adequate ability to assist classroom teachers and other professionals in the implementation of in-depth assessment data.</p>	<p>Demonstrates adequate ability to assist classroom teachers and other professionals in the implementation of in-depth assessment data.</p>	<p>Demonstrates exemplary ability to assist classroom teachers and other professionals in the implementation of in-depth assessment data.</p>	<p>3</p>

<p>assessment data to implement and revise school reading programs.</p>	<p>IRA Standard 3.4</p> <p>Communicate assessment information to various audiences for both accountability and instructional purposes (policy makers, public officials, community members, clinical specialists, school psychologists, social workers, classroom teachers, and parents.</p>	<p>Does not adequately demonstrate ability to communicate assessment data to a wide audience of professionals. The candidate is unable to synthesize diagnostic data for other educational professionals.</p>	<p>Adequately demonstrates ability to communicate assessment data to a wide audience of professionals. The candidate can synthesize diagnostic data and prescribe appropriate instructional strategies.</p>	<p>Demonstrates an exemplary ability to communicate assessment data to a wide audience of professionals. The candidate demonstrates and exemplary ability to synthesize diagnostic data and offer detailed, focused instructional strategies for other professionals and caregivers.</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>IRA Standard 4.1</p> <p>Assist the classroom teacher and paraprofessional in selecting materials that match the reading levels, interests, and cultural and linguistic background of students.</p>	<p>Does not adequately assist classroom teachers and paraprofessionals in selecting appropriate reading level materials keeping in mind the interests, cultural, and linguistic background of the students.</p>	<p>Adequately assists classroom teachers and paraprofessionals in selecting appropriate reading level materials keeping in mind the interests, cultural, and linguistic background of the students.</p>	<p>Assists classroom teachers and paraprofessionals, in an exemplary fashion, in the selecting appropriate reading level materials keeping in mind the interests, cultural, and linguistic background of the students. Demonstrates an in-depth understanding of</p>	<p>3</p>	

Clear, concise, error-free written work	Unclear writing style that is disorganized and contains numerous errors or conventions	Clear writing style that is organized and contains a limited number of errors or conventions	cultural and linguistic instructional implications.		
			Exemplary writing style that is organized and contains a limited number of errors or conventions		2
			Total Score		

Overall Performance Assessment: _____ ≤ 5 _____ 6-12 _____ 17 13-18

Unacceptable REVISION PASS **Exemplary** PASS A

Recommendation: REVISION PASS
 Faculty member signature(s) Robert J. Rude

*Thorough report. lots of good information.
 In area to work on would be a more formal writing style. Well work on that this summer.*