



in the next few weeks.

Each day Mrs. Ashland enters her classroom excited to make a difference in the lives of her 15 students. She has grown to know her students very well and knows their strengths and individual areas of need. We will meet and learn more about six of Mrs. Ashland's students

Johnny



Johnny is an independent 4-year-old boy. Mrs. Ashland's class is the first opportunity Johnny has had to attend school. As a result, he has some difficulty following the classroom routines such as sharing and following directions. When Johnny is not at school, he usually rides his tricycle or bounces his basketball in his backyard.

During outside play, Mrs. Ashland noticed that Johnny is advanced when it comes to his gross motor skills and can easily run, throw, skip, hop, and climb. Mrs. Ashland also noticed that during center time Johnny frequently avoids the art center. When she observed Johnny in the art center, Mrs. Ashland noticed that he had some trouble with his fine motor skills such as cutting, tracing, coloring, and holding markers. Mrs. Ashland wondered if this is why he avoids that center.

Johnny does communicate well with his peers and he has a rich vocabulary for a child his age. Mrs. Ashland attributes this to his love of stories. Johnny frequently raises his hand to answer questions during circle time and beams with pride when he is praised for his answers by Mrs. Ashland.

Johnny does well socially, but when given the choice to play with classmates or to play alone, he almost always chooses to play by himself. At the beginning of the school year, when Mrs. Ashland asked Johnny what he likes to do, he told her, "I like to play by myself a lot because my parents are usually busy working." Mrs. Ashland encourages Johnny to play collaboratively with his peers, but once she engages with other children, he quickly switches to an independent activity. Johnny does care about his peers. For example, if Johnny sees one of his classmates crying, he will bring them a tissue.

Maya



Maya is 4 years old and one of the most curious students in Mrs. Ashland's class this year. Maya recently moved to the United States from Mexico and is eager to learn as much as she can about her new environment. Maya is drawn to books with numbers and loves to draw.

During the first few weeks of the school year, Mrs. Ashland was able to observe that Maya is developing her fine and gross motor skills by practicing her cutting, tracing letters, jumping, running, and climbing. In fact, Mrs. Ashland has noted that Maya gravitates toward independent activities.

Maya speaks in short, two- to three-word phrases, and often struggles to communicate her needs. Despite these challenges, Maya does not become frustrated; instead, she either draws a picture or takes Mrs. Ashland's hand and shows her what she can't say. Often, Mrs. Ashland hears Maya say a new word that she couldn't say the day before!

Socially, Maya struggles to interact with her peers due to her limited proficiency in English. Maya usually engages in independent or parallel play. Recently, Mrs. Ashland has noticed Maya starting to walk up to other students in the class during playtime and believes that she will soon start to participate in cooperative play.

Jane



Jane is a bubbly and happy 4-year-old. Jane has always had positive experiences in Mrs. Ashland's class. Jane's mother has told Mrs. Ashland that she often finds Jane playing school with her dolls at home. Jane's after school activities include ballet and soccer at a local community center.

Jane has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that contains goals for fine motor skills. Specifically, the goals in her IEP focus on using an appropriate grasp with a pencil and copying simple shapes. The occupational therapist comes to Mrs. Ashland's classroom once a week to work with Jane on these goals. Jane's gross motor skills are advanced. During outside play, Jane can often be found jumping rope.

Along with having IEP goals for fine motor skills, Jane's IEP contains language goals. Jane uses two- to three-word phrases for communicating with both Mrs. Ashland and her peers. The speech language pathologist visits Jane twice a month and provides Mrs. Ashland with strategies for helping Jane to improve her communication abilities. Mrs. Ashland also encourages Jane to play with friends to provide her with authentic opportunities to use language.

Jane seeks out opportunities to interact with her peers whenever possible. During center time, she chooses activities that she can do with a partner. When a new student joins the classroom, Jane is the first one to smile and invite her new classmate to play.

Caleb



Caleb is an almost 5-year-old in Mrs. Ashland's class. He loves cars, animals, television shows about superheroes, macaroni and cheese, and playing soccer. His favorite movie is *Cars*. Caleb has a fun loving, energetic, and silly personality. Caleb doesn't like it when he is told he can't do something and usually pouts when this happens.

Mrs. Ashland has observed Caleb doing well with many gross motor and self-help skills that include running, going up and down stairs, jumping, hopping, getting himself dressed, and using the restroom on his own. Although Caleb has mastered many self-help and gross motor skills, Mrs. Ashland has noticed during daily observations that Caleb could improve some of his fine motor skills such as cutting with scissors and tracing.

Caleb communicates well with his peers and enjoys listening to stories. When talking with Mrs. Ashland, he uses sentences of varied length and has a strong expressive and receptive vocabulary. Caleb enjoys playing games like Memory and Candy Land, using his strong memory skills and the beginnings of understanding numbers. He participates interactively in circle time and is able to answer questions. , Caleb is able to stay engaged in learning and has shown development in all pre-academic skills.

Caleb also does well socially. Mrs. Ashland has observed Caleb expressing a wide range of emotions, which include happiness, sadness, confusion, and frightfulness. Through classroom observations,

Mrs. Ashland has noticed that Caleb has self-confidence and that he likes to try new things. Caleb's actions suggest that he feels safe and comfortable in new environments. When a new student joins the class, Mrs. Ashland has Caleb show them around. Caleb does not have trouble making friends with peers, but seems to avoid certain children in the class. During the day, Caleb engages in collaborative play, parallel play, and independent play with little direction.

Kayla



Kayla turned 4 years old just before the school year started, making her the youngest child in Mrs. Ashland's class. Kayla enjoys playing dress up, looking at books, dictating stories, and art. Even though Kayla has had mostly positive experiences at school, she cries frequently and often tells Mrs. Ashland that she is sad.

When it comes to fine and gross motor skills, Kayla is meeting all of her developmental milestones. Mrs. Ashland has observed Kayla in the art centers and has seen firsthand how well she can cut, color, trace, and draw. When outside, Kayla smiles as she runs, climbs, and rides a tricycle.

Kayla's communication skills are within normal limits for 4-year-olds. She frequently spends her time in the writing center drawing elaborate pictures. When Mrs. Ashland has Kayla dictate the story to her, Kayla uses vocabulary that is advanced for her age. When Kayla doesn't understand the directions she has been given, she asks Mrs. Ashland to explain to her how to complete the activity or task.

Kayla struggles socially with her classmates. Mrs. Ashland believes that part of this is related to Kayla's crying for extended periods of time in the class. When her peers show empathy toward her, she often puts her head in her lap and continues to cry. Kayla also gets frustrated easily. For example, if Kayla is transitioning from playing a game to cleaning up, she will become frustrated when she can't get all of the pieces to fit in the box. When she finally gets the pieces to fit the box, the box will have smashed and torn corners. Mrs. Ashland worries that Kayla's crying and tantrums have made the other children in the class avoid playing with her.

Jack



Jack is a 4-year-old who likes to tell the other children in the class what to do. Mrs. Ashland has tried to build a relationship with Jack by learning about his interests. Mrs. Ashland has discovered that Jack loves dogs, football, candy, and watching the Disney Channel. As a result of her efforts to get to know him, Jack enjoys sharing about his hobbies with Mrs. Ashland.

Throughout the day, Jack demonstrates mastery of his fine and gross motor skills by eating with utensils, walking, coloring, dressing, playing ball, and climbing on playground equipment. Jack enjoys playing ball and climbing so much that Mrs. Ashland has to frequently remind him that he can only do these activities during outside play time. Jack's usual response to Mrs. Ashland's reminders is that he is allowed to play ball and climb on the furniture inside at his house.

Jack frequently shares his thoughts or feelings about something, which demonstrates his strong verbal skills. Although Jack is capable of following multi-step directions, Mrs. Ashland has documented that

ECE430 Week Two Case Study

Focus: Students

he often chooses not to follow them. Throughout the day, Jack engages in conversations with his classmates while participating in various activities in the different centers in the classroom.

When it comes to his social skills, Jack struggles to get along with his peers. At the start of center time, Jack announces, "I'm the leader" to his classmates. If one of his peers lets them know that they are the special helper of the week at that center, Jack will yell at him/her and say that he is the boss. In some instances, Jack has even pushed his classmates when they have told him he is not in charge of them.