

Three observations of child development.

[Literature](#), [Play](#)



Three observations of child development. This is an assignment consisting of three observations pertaining to a child's development in three core areas, specifically, a young person's social, emotional and physical maturity. Firstly it contemplates the social development of a four year old boy in an educational nursery setting, via an observation utilizing the narrative technique. Secondly the intellectual (cognitive) development of a five year old girl is reflected upon in a home setting, using the sampling approach. Finally the physical maturity of a four year old boy is considered in a home setting, using the checklist method. These individual records highlight areas that are deemed to be pertinent to the applicable study, drawing conclusions and evaluating how the findings are relevant. These inferences are supported by appropriate theory, before conferring recommendations correlating to the observation, considering future needs/requirements.

Observation one: Social development. Name of observer: Lee Bogan. Name of child: O. Age of child: Four years, two months. Gender: Male. Time observation started: 9. 15. Time observation finished: 9. 45 Method: Narrative. Number of children: 5. Number of Adults: 2. Date: October 2009. Background: Child O is an only child from a single parent family and spends a lot of time with his mother and grandmother. He also suffers from a disorder which is supposed to infringe upon his social development. Aim: To observe a child aged four years two months playing outdoors in a nursery with other children, concentrating on and highlighting the preschooler's social development. Objective: To assess O's confidence in concordance with his ability to develop friendships and interact with peers. Setting: Educational nursery for children aged between three and four. There are places for thirty

children in a session, six of which are allocated to resource children who may or may not come from the local area. Brief description: O is outside playing with plastic crates and planks of wood. There are other children in the same vicinity also playing with the materials. Description: O is making a structure comprising of plastic crates and wooden planks. He asks another child for 'a hand'. This request is not acted upon. It becomes apparent that the edifice being constructed is a bridge when O discusses which way the bridge should face with the supervising adult, who offers him guidance and advice. O then exclaims he'll 'move this', picking up a plastic crate, followed by a plank of wood, creating a new fraction of the bridge. This is achieved devoid of any assistance from other children and with a small amount of structured direction from the attentive adult. Subsequently O directs another child who is holding a plank of wood, asserting 'put it here'. O then proceeds to move a plastic crate and wooden plank in order to adjoin it to a nearby slide that another child is utilizing. He reiterates 'give me a hand somebody, I need a hand'. This request is again to no avail. Hereafter O manipulates a cart/pram to reposition a plastic crate which he complements with a wooden plank, resulting in the formation of an extension to the bridge. Other children meanwhile are exploiting the sections of the bridge that have already been assembled. O gives the cart/ pram to another child. He is then asked to ring the bell to signify that it is time to tidy up. O smiles and walks over to where the bell is located. He elevates and rings the bell, smiling. The supervising adult recompenses this action/behaviour with the words 'well done'. Evaluation: O appears confident around his peers. He explicitly asks for assistance moving building materials on numerous occasions demonstrating

that he is not adverse to entering into communication and initiating social interaction with others. He fundamentally invites other children to interact with him, though the other children appear to either not have heard the requests made or chose to ignore them. Given the close proximity of the other children, the latter scenario appears to be most likely. That ascertained, it could be construed that child O was in fact a socially 'neglected' child amongst his peer group (Coie, Dodge & Coppotelli, 1982). This research describes socially 'neglected' children as children who are neither 'a liked nor disliked companion and appear almost invisible to their peers'. This implies that 'neglected' children are not being rejected by peers as they are not disliked; they are not recognised as being either socially favourable or unfavourable. Coie & Dodge (1983) actually stipulate that children who are disliked fall into the category of 'rejected' children and furthermore their research avers that it is far more advantageous to be 'neglected' as opposed to 'rejected'. This is asserted to be accurate as Cassidy & Asher (1992) and Crick & Ladd (1993) suggest that 'neglectees do not feel as lonely as rejectees'. Moreover, 'neglected' children are far more likely to 'attain a more favourable sociometric status' in comparison to 'rejected' children, should they enrol into a new play group (Coie & Dodge, 1983). O also appears to be confident when talking and interacting with the adult supervising the play area. When deciding which direction the bridge should rotate towards O listens to the adult and uses their advice to deduce an appropriate conclusion to the immediate problem, declaring, 'I'll move this'. It can be intimated from this that O is confident in his own decision making and not afraid to act upon his own rationale of situations. He

interacts well and shows purpose and persistence in his behaviour towards the task being undertaken. The way O interacts with other children during his play is perplexing. For the majority of the time he is engaged in his own solitary play, also referred to as 'non-social activity' (Parten, 1932). This would infer that child O was not succeeding in or attempting to develop friendships with others, however, it could be insinuated that this is not the case. Although he does spend a large majority of his time in what Parten (1932) depicts as either 'non-social' (solitary play) or 'parallel' (when children play side by side but interact little and do not try to influence the behaviour of others) play, O does display behaviour in the most advanced phase of Parten's (1932) stages of play; 'co-operative play'. 'Co-operative play' incorporates children collaborating to achieve shared goals (Parten, 1932). O asks for assistance on numerous occasions with the building of the bridge, as highlighted earlier, effectively inviting the other children to work with him to build the bridge. The other children appear to ignore him, isolating him from the rest of the group, but it could be reasoned that this is not a reflection of O's ability to initiate interaction and form friendships but rather a reflection of the way the rest of the group appear to perceive and ignore him. The same can be derived from the behaviour O displays when he gives the pram/cart to another child (sharing toys) and gets no feedback from the beneficiary by way of acknowledgment/thank you, or by the gesture of moving the bridge over to the slide; this could be perceived as an attempt to allow the other children to interact and socialise with him but they instead choose to ignore him, nevertheless exploiting and utilizing the apparatus he has just made accessible to them. O also gives direction to another child in

relation to where the plank of wood they are holding should be positioned. This again can be identified to be the more advanced stage of play in four year olds, according to Parten (1932), as it does not fall into the category of 'non-social' or 'parallel play' since it incorporates other children. Conclusion: O does display behaviour associated with the social developmental norms for four year olds stipulated by Riddall-Leech (2008) in demonstrating that he is 'confident' showing 'purpose and persistence' as well as showing willingness to 'develop friendships with peers'. He also shows signs of 'co-operative play' (Parten, 1932). However, it is apparent that his peers are not receptive to his attempts at initiating social interaction. From the information gathered it could be argued that this is due to the other children 'neglecting' (Coie & Dodge, 1983) O in favour of other more auspicious companions. The fact that O also mainly interacts with adults outside of the nursery setting as he is an only child from a single parent family, who spends most of his time with his mother and grandmother, may have an impact on the way he interacts and the language he uses. This may be 'alien' to other children who regularly socialise with both adults and children alike, isolating O from the other children, who could be unsure of how to socialise with him.

Recommendations: It could be deemed beneficial for O to socialise with another group of children as Coie & Dodge (1983) express that children 'neglected' by their companions can gain an improved 'sociometric' status and increased social acceptance within a group of new peers. This would not necessarily mean O leaving the nursery; on the contrary, this could be achieved via involvement in a club/social activity outside of the nursery. Some kind of social interaction with children outside of the nursery in any

situation could be perceived to be beneficial in helping O's social development.