

# Observation of an infant, nicholas, 9 mos. old essay examples

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In this paper, we will cover an observation of an infant, named Nicholas, aged 9 months. We will examine his physical development, his cognitive development, and his language and social development. Observations will be marked by the letter “ O”, and reflections will be marked by the letter “ R”.

### **Description of the Infant:**

**O:** The infant is a male, aged 9 months. He is Caucasian. On this day, he has a few minor red rashes on his skin, particularly his face, which his mother says he gets frequently. He has significant hair, and it is a dark blonde color with red hints. It is straight. His eyes are darkish blue. He has four teeth, all mostly grown in (two front upper and two front lower). His legs, arms, fingers, toes and tummy all appear normal, though he is perhaps a bit chubby. His feet are exceptionally large for a baby of his size. The mother tells me he is already wearing age 12 months clothing, so he is apparently large for his age. He has a small birthmark on the back of his neck, consisting of a reddish patch.

### **R: Nicholas appears to be developing as normal.**

#### **II. Physical / Motor Development:**

**O:** Nicholas seems to have fairly good control of his upper body. He is constantly reaching for things, and usually succeeds in obtaining them. His grip is also quite strong. He is able to sit up on his own, and can lift himself up from a sitting position to a standing one if he has something to grab onto to aid in doing so. He can roll over on his own quite well. He is very mobile as well, and can crawl quickly and without assistance. He seems to have good hand-to-mouth coordination, frequently putting objects such as remote

controls in his mouth.

His control of his legs and feet is also fairly good, as he can stand on his own as long as he is holding onto something. When being held and wanting to be let down, he can push very strongly with his feet against the holder, making it uncomfortable for them to continue to hold him. When held in a standing position, he can make stepping movements, but has not yet grasped that he needs to be flat-footed (instead of on his tip-toes) in order to actually succeed in walking.

He seems to be able to combine bodily controls effectively, for example, using his arms to pull himself up and then relying on his feet to support him to a large extent while holding onto something. He also easily returns himself to a sitting position when done standing. He is very wiggly in general, both when being held and lying down when not tired. He crawls very effectively, and likes to crawl to the other side of the couch when set down on it. He uses both his arms and legs when crawling.

He is adept at perceiving all different kinds of sensations. Taste is particularly clear; when he does not like the taste of a food, he has a small tantrum. The same goes for texture- while he likes cheese-flavored puff balls, he will spit out small pieces of actual cheese, evidently because of the smooth texture. Smell could not be determined. He responds well to sound, and is generally always looking in the direction of audio stimuli. For example, when his mother is in the kitchen but talking to me, he usually looks at her when she is talking. He also responds quickly when his name is said, and if the name of another family member is said, he usually looks at them, not at the utterer.

### III. Cognitive / Language Development

O: I believe the child to be in the stage of coordination of reactions. He is clearly exploring his environment and gradually grasping cause-and-effect relationships more fully while gaining motor control.

The infant can speak a handful of words (Mama, Dada, Dee (the name of their dog), Hi, etc. Notably, he cannot pronounce the phonetically complicated name of his older brother or other close caregivers, and has not substituted any sounds he can make for them. He responds to voice in general by looking at the speaker, especially if his name has been said. He smiles or laughs when smiled at by the speaker. He cries when an object is taken away unless it is immediately substituted by something he also enjoys playing with. He frequently points while smiling and laughing, particularly when his older brother is playing with him.

His non-verbal gestures are generally open; he seems to be fairly relaxed. He often chases the dog and tries to pet it. When the dog is running around, he often follows it with his eyes, and frequently says its name. When upset, he makes fluid noises which sound like an attempt at speech (though not understandable).

R: Nicholas frequently imitates actions, such as peek-a-boo or sticking out his tongue when a tongue is stuck out at him. He is still in a single-word stage.

### IV. Social Development

O: Nicholas responds in a very friendly manner to familiar people, such as close family. He is apparently very bad with babysitters, though. He generally prefers to be around people rather than left alone, and his family in general is constantly spending time and direct attention on him when he is

awake. When spoken to, as noted, the infant normally looks directly at the speaker.

The primary caregiver, the child's mother, holds him frequently, usually with one arm on her hip. Now that he is 25 pounds, she notes that this is fatiguing, particularly because of prior back strain, but still prefers to hold him when she can. Nicholas is usually calmed by being held if having a tantrum. Usually, Nicholas is fine with wandering away from the caregiver, but should something happen to him that he considers traumatic while a short distance away, such as a small stumble, he will cry until he is held again. As long as nothing he considers traumatic happens while the caregiver is out of sight, he is generally fine on his own.

R: Signs of attachment to the caregiver include not wishing to be comforted by others, frequent crawling up to the mother and tugging on her leg in order to trigger her picking him up, and generally being happier when comforted by the mother than by anyone else. He is clearly very attached to her.

All in all, Nicholas seems content and at a normal, if not advanced, stage of development for his age. He is doing well in all three areas (physically, cognitively, and linguistically). He has a supportive family environment and exhibits characteristics typical of, if not above and beyond, his age.