

Moreland University  
Teaching Certification Program  
Module 8

# Student Case Study

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# Background

Student Pseudonym: Jack

Student Age: 3 years, 2 months

Student Nationality: Chinese

Socio-economic status: Family well off.

(This is the same for all students at the school. We are a high fee-paying school.)

Context: Jack is in my class – Nursery (aged 3 – 4) Grade Level - in an aged 2 – 6 kindergarten in Wuxi, China.

*The class are now in their second year in the kindergarten. There were some changes with students entering and leaving the class for this year, but many of the group have been the same. Jack has been in the class since early last year.*

*I only joined the class this academic year, taking over from another international teacher. We have a homeroom teacher team of three teacher – myself and two local Chinese teachers. We are with students all day and all responsible for all area of care and development. As international teacher, I do have lead responsibility for development of English as a second language.*

# The Difficulties Being Faced

Jack is **much younger** than other students in the class. With a September 2020 birth date, he is technically a few weeks too young to be in the class.

The challenge for him is enhanced by the fact that many of the other 14 students are very old for the grade level. Four are born in September 2019 and several others before Christmas 2019. Hence, he is a year, or almost a year younger than the majority of classmates. At age 3 – 4, this can make a big difference.

# The Difficulties Being Faced

*His development is hence behind that of his classmates.*

- It is more difficult for him to sit well, focus and keep his hands and feet to himself. He will often distract others during circle time and class time.
- Life skills and looking after himself.
- Conducting himself in routines, for example lining up and moving appropriately around school is more difficult for him.
- He has spent less time building relationships with classmates and will bond more easily with teachers and other adults.
- Issues with inappropriate conduct or behaviour or disagreement with other students will take more time to address with him.  
(However, he is able to understand with the support.)

# The Difficulties Being Faced

- Motor skill development and use of resources.

For example, other students in the class may now be more sophisticated with their artwork, constructions and other creative works, he is still in a stage of exploring materials rather than using them for creation.

- Language skills in first language, Chinese.

His English language skills – second language – are actually very strong. One of the strongest in the class.

(His parents speak English and previous international teacher spent a lot of time with him.)

# Analysis – *Possible Reasons for the Difficulties*

The age difference is a key.

However, other possible contributing factors are as follows:

- Possible less attention and support from his parents than other students (although not in a serious or neglectful way).

He has two brothers, an older brother in G1 and a baby brother, a few months old. Parents are very busy. Often, they are very late to pick him up for example.

- Seen as and treated like “a baby” by other students in the class.

Also, by many others around the school, including teachers and logistics staff.

# Previous Interventions and Possible Effects

- Differentiation of goals and expectations within all class activities.

We do this as far as we can with all students, with the focus on personalised learning. We will continue to do so.

This has been effective at allowing us to see individual progress more carefully.

- Previously, teachers have given him a lot of personal and one on one attention.

However, this has possibly been too much and had negative consequences, in that he expects a lot of attention.

# Previous Interventions and Possible Effects

- **Speaking to parents about extra support and attention**, most specifically with picking him up on time from school.

However, this resulted in no change.

- At the beginning of this school year, it was noted that he could move down to join the class in the year group below (the new aged 2 – 3-year-old class).



# Possible Progress of Late?

Even over only the two months of this semester, he has made great progress.

- **Beginning to develop friendships** with others and to **play and work with them**.
- **Helping others** independently.
- **Begun to build and draw with purpose** – made a hamburger and a phone out of construction materials last week.
- **More focused** in class and **conducts himself better**.

## The Question

What else can we do to support Jack in his personalised development, without giving him too much attention at the expense of the other students in the class?

Thank you!