

## **Learning Case Study Phase I**

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Grace is a 14-year old, 8<sup>th</sup> grade girl who has grown up in Bismarck, North Dakota since the age of 3. For a reference, Grace is shown in the left side of the picture in Appendix A. Grace is an extremely upbeat and social person, and described herself in the following five adjectives: outgoing, talkative, friendly, positive, and funny. Grace attended Liberty Elementary School, and currently attends Horizon Middle School with a population of nearly 1,100 students from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. At Horizon Middle School, Grace is a part of the basketball and volleyball teams and is also a member of the peer to peer program. Out of volleyball and basketball, basketball is Grace's favorite. She is a part of an AAU team that is constantly traveling in the wintertime.

Grace's family consists of her mom, dad, and two older sisters (19 & 24 years old) whom she is very close with. Grace lives with her mom, dad, and one older sister. Grace's oldest sister moved out of the house a number of years ago. Grace's mom works as a bank teller at Security First Bank of ND and Grace's dad works at Johnson Trailer Sales. Neither of Grace's parents attended college, but both encourage Grace to pursue a college education.

This paper will illustrate Grace's educational preferences, her microsystem, macrosystem, and a number of developmental factors/stages that Grace is currently within. By the end of this paper, readers should get a very thorough understanding of Grace, and also get a better idea of how to assist Grace in her learning.

## **Grace's Education**

### **Graces Educational Preferences**

This year at Horizon, Grace is enrolled in english, history, career education, ND studies, math, science, reading strategies, and servant leadership. Out of those eight courses, six are

mandatory, Grace was placed in one, and the last was an elective. Grace was placed in reading strategies because she struggles with reading. “I am not very good at reading and I do not enjoy it either, so I do not practice it to get any better at it. I usually am able to read, but I do not remember what I read,” Grace explained to me. However, Grace did enjoy reading the book “A Child Called It,” and told me she read the book in a little less than three days. So, there is opportunity for Grace’s reading if she is engaged with the content. Grace also is not a huge fan of history because she believes it is boring, and has had trouble understanding math in the past. She does not enjoy her current math teacher, which has her struggle more this year.

Grace enjoys and has found success in her Career Education course. “This class helps you figure out what you want to do I college, and is just fun. Also, the teacher is nice and understanding,” Grace told me. The practicality of the course has made the course extremely engaging for Grace. One part of this course that Grace enjoys is that she is able to work in groups. “I like working in groups a lot more than working alone. I can actually communicate and share my ideas. Working in a group also lets me move around, so it helps me get my work done,” Grace explains. Similar to working in groups, Grace enjoys studying aloud so she is able to verbally connect with the content.

### **Multiple Intelligence Theory**

According to what Grace explained to me about her educational preferences, I placed Grace as having strong verbal, bodily-kinesthetic, and interpersonal skills. I also placed Grace with having weaker mathematical and intrapersonal skills. Grace enjoys working with groups and sharing her ideas out loud, so her verbal skills are strong. Grace also enjoys moving around when studying or learning content and is extremely motivated in her athletics, so I believe she

possesses stronger bodily-kinesthetic skills. Lastly, Grace is more popular at school, has a lot of friends, and is very friendly and talkative which is why I believe she possesses strong interpersonal skills. However, Grace's math skills are weaker and she is in the identity versus identity confusion stage of Erikson's Stage of Human development meaning she is not completely self-aware, which I will mention in greater detail later in the paper, so I believe she possesses weaker mathematical and intrapersonal skills.

### **Sternberg's Triarchic Theory**

Sternberg's Triarchic Theory includes creative, practical, and analytical types of intelligence. I placed Grace in having a high creative intelligence and a lower analytical intelligence. Because Grace is already given herself possibilities of a future career, enjoys participating in a group where she is able to create, and has high social skills I believe Grace has a high creative intelligence. Because Grace struggles with exams math, I believe she has a lower analytical intelligence. With her creative intelligence and interpersonal skills, I think Grace could be a great future educator because of the need to be creative when creating lessons and with strategies with students.

### **Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory**

Regarding Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory, Grace's teachers should be scaffolding for Grace in both math and reading. Her zone of proximal development in both of these courses is lower to average of that of her classmates. In math class, Grace's teacher could use scaffolding strategies including asking probing questions, offering more opportunity for Grace to ask questions, tapping into Grace's prior knowledge, offering more turn and talks for students, and

teaching more vocabulary prior to lessons. In Grace's reading strategies class, her teacher could use strategies including offering reading strategies, offering pre-reading strategies, front-loading information, giving her articles of personal interest, having Grace circle unknown vocabulary while she is reading. There is major room for Grace's improvement in her reading strategies if Grace's teacher would engage Grace to a further extent.

### **Piagetian Stage of Cognitive Development**

Grace is in the fourth, or the Formal Operational Stage of Piagetian Stages of Cognitive Development. In this stage, individuals move beyond reasoning only about concrete experiences and think in more abstract, idealistic and logical ways. The reason I placed Grace in this stage is because she is an above average communicator, she spoke of imaging possibilities of what she would like as a career in the future, and she also spoke of being worried about what other peers at her school think of her outfits. From the outfit example, I think Grace is showing signs of egocentrism, which is a major tell-tale of this stage.

### **Grace's Microsystem**

#### **Grace's Family Involvement**

Grace's family is extremely involved with her school and sports life. "My mom helps me study and also with my school work if I need. She also pushes and reminds me to go to school on my C-days (Fridays) if I am not doing well in my classes. My dad takes me to the YMCA once a weekend to shoot around. Both my parents are very involved with my sports," Grace explained to me. Grace also plays on an AAU basketball team that travels consistently in the wintertime. Her parents offer a great balance and support in Grace's microsystem.

### **Grace's Friends**

Grace's extremely personable personality leads to her having several different friends at school. She explained that some of her friends are from sports, but there are also a number that do not play sports. Grace exemplified appreciating when friends are loyal and caring towards her. "I like when I am able to talk to my friends by myself around them," Grace explained to me when I asked her what she liked about her friends. Grace also explained to me that her friend groups are more inclusive than others at Horizon. "No, my friend group is not like that (cliquey). There are other groups who wouldn't let other people join them, but my friends are not like that," Grace said. Regarding what Grace likes to do with her friends, she told me that they generally hangout at each other's houses.

### **Grace's Peers**

Grace explained that some of her peers are starting to get significant others. Grace seemed a little questionable about whether she would be ready to have a significant other or not. "Yes, people in my grade are starting to date, but I don't really want a boyfriend. I would want to wait until high school when we can drive, hangout, and last longer. If I could drive now than I would maybe have a boyfriend." Because of her feelings, this is fitting for being in the identity versus identity confusion.

### **Kohlberg's Theory**

Kohlberg's Theory represents the moral stage an individual is in. Grace is in stage three of Kohlberg's Theory, Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships, and Interpersonal Conformity. In this stage, individuals value trust, caring, and loyalty to others as a basis of moral

judgements. The reason I placed Grace in this stage is because she talked about being more likely to take risks if her friends were doing the activities, talked highly of her mom's opinion about her going to C-days at school if Grace was struggling, and she appreciates her friend that are, "nice and have a good sense of humor."

### **Grace's Macrosystem**

#### **Grace's Cultural Exposure**

Grace has a moderate level of cultural exposure, mostly due to travel from sports and her social media use. "I have traveled a lot around the United States. I have been to Minnesota, Tennessee, Colorado, South Dakota, Washington, and a few more states. My family also took a trip to a resort in Cancun, Mexico for a vacation," Grace told me. Grace also as a Snapchat, Instagram, Tik Tok, Facebook, and VSCO. She told me that although some of her peers do not have phones, all of her friends have phones. Travel from sports and social media is where the extent of Grace's cultural exposure ends.

### **Grace's Development**

#### **Grace's Decision Making**

Grace expressed her decision making as impulsive rather than thoughtful. "I would say I am more of a person who would just do something and not even think about it, but I am not really sure why." She also explained that she would be more prone to do something if her friends would do it. "One time in 6th grade when Zoie's (Grace's friend) mom was in a store, I got in the driver's seat and put the car into drive and ran into a van in front of us." However, Grace made a point to say that because she got in trouble, she would never make that mistake again.

### **Grace's Self Image**

Grace explained feelings of being self-conscious at school and sports. "Sometimes I am hesitant to wear an outfit to school because I am not sure if other people will think it looks good. If I do wear it, I wonder if other people are talking about it. In volleyball I was worried about what other people thought of me too because I wasn't the best player and it was my first year. I thought people were judging me." These type of behaviors express emotions of egocentrism.

### **Erikson's Stage of Human Development**

Erikson's Stages of Human Development unfold as people go through their life. Grace is in Erikson's fifth psychosocial stage, identity versus identity confusion. In this stage, adolescents are trying to "find themselves" and figure out where they want to be and who they want to be. Grace is in this stage because she does not understand a majority of intrapersonal aspects about herself, she is confused about her feelings about the desire to be in a relationship, and the fact that she has an idea what she wants to do after high school, but no concrete plan. While Grace is in this developmental stage, she needs to be allowed to explore different paths to attain a healthy identity.

### **Grace's Memory**

Regarding Grace's memory, I tested her on her some long-term and short-term memory questions. When I asked Grace what the first question was in the interview she had no idea. However, when I asked her something she learned in class that day, she was able to remember something from an english class. When I asked Grace a story she remembers as a kid, it took her awhile to remember something. "Oh, I remember one! When I was first learning to ride my bike,



I was riding by a big hill by Furniture Row and I flipped over my bike because I hit a rock and got hurt really bad,” Grace explained. So, she was able to remember a story that had an emotional connection to her.

### **Grace’s Future Plans**

Grace explained to me that she had some ideas for a potential future career. “I would like to be a teacher one day when I grow up because I like to work with kids and communicate out loud. I also could see myself being a personal trainer because I like working out and health is important to me,” said Grace. I thought this was interesting, but also more than likely could be influenced by Grace’s career development class.

Appendix A

