

Name: Joyce Chen

Age: 5 year 8 month

Gender: Female

Race: Chinese

Date of birth: 20 June 2003

The child I worked with is Joyce who is 5 year 8 month old girl and in the kindergarten class. Joyce is a Singaporean Chinese who speaks mostly English both in school and at home, while she uses Chinese only during her Chinese classes and when communicating with her grandparents who brought her up between the age of 0 – 3. Joyce began attending classes at the kindergarten at the age of 3.

Prior to entering school, Joyce's primary languages were both Chinese and English. She learnt Chinese language from her maternal grandparents while being exposed the English language by her parents. Apart from speaking both Chinese and English, Joyce can also converse in simple Hokkien (dialect) which she sometimes does with her paternal grandparents whom she met weekly.

Joyce is a generally confident English writer who can write in short sentences regarding things of her interest. Joyce adds in punctuation marks to her sentences only when reminded and organizes her writing in lines with spacing in between the words. Joyce is also capable of spelling most high frequency words correctly and is still coping with letter and word reversals, "ta" as "at" (Appendix 1) and "crda" as "crab" (Appendix 1c). Joyce is at the letter-name spelling stage whereby she uses most beginning and ending consonants (Appendix 1). Joyce is also capable of creating prints that are readable and tell ideas. Joyce enjoys sharing her writing with her family and has a designated wall at home to paste her work, giving her a sense of achievement (Appendix 4).

As a reader, Joyce demonstrates the enthusiasm and curiosity to read. She displays the ability to show that the text goes from left to right and could distinguish between lower case and

upper case (Appendix 3a). From my observation and conversation with Joyce, it appears that she makes use of the pictures in the book as clues to decode unfamiliar words (Appendix 2). She also understands the difference between a letter and a word and read a few familiar words on sight. Through my conversation with Joyce, I also realize that she has the tendency of rereading a book several times and show the desire to become a fluent reader. Joyce shares that her mother takes parts in many of her reading experiences and brings her to the library regularly, once a month, which expose her to a wider variety of reading materials (Appendix 4).

As Joyce has lesser experiences with Chinese language as she grows up, she has difficulty reading Chinese books independently. Her mother helps by reading these books to her and the Chinese teachers in school also introduce Chinese storybooks to the children. Similar to her writing experiences, Joyce enjoys sharing her books with her family members. Her mother listens to Joyce as she shares about a book she has finished reading and allows Joyce to read to her younger brother.

### **Hypothesis**

In general, Joyce is at the letter-name spelling stage whereby she listens to familiar letters and sounds and demonstrates more capability in identifying beginning sound of a word. Joyce also has a fairly well concept of print as she is able to identify front of the book, the direction of reading, the return sweep, and letters in a word (Appendix 3a). However, Joyce needs to learn about the use of punctuation marks such as full stop, comma and question marks as she usually leave them out of her sentences and is not able to provide reasons for using them in a sentence. From her letter identification score sheet, we can see that Joyce still confuses “s” with “x” and could not recognize “l” in the small letter form.

From the running record and after categorizing some of the errors, it is easily noticeable that Joyce makes most of her mistakes due to the visual information of the words and pays little attention to whether the word makes sense in the context (Appendix 2). It is also noted that Joyce is capable of verbalizing the strategies she uses to decode some of the unfamiliar words by saying that she looks at the pictures and try to sound out the letters in the word which suggest that she is trying to seek meaning from the text (based on an informal conversation). Many of the words which Joyce had difficulties in verbalizing from the books are past tense such as “went”, “saw”, “ran”, “heard” and “watched”. Thus, Joyce may not have the opportunities to learn about past tense and is an area which teacher can look into. From the conversation with Joyce (Appendix 4), it appears that Joyce has the lack of exposure to other genres of books except for fairytales which is an area which teachers can improve on.

In conclusion, Joyce enjoys writing about things that she is familiar and interested in and with support from her friends; Joyce is capable of forming sentences that are legible. Joyce’s reading experiences have also been enriched by her family members that motivate her to become a fluent reader.

# Appendices