

Justin Dyer

Child Observation

Today, July 9, 2022, I am observing a thirteen-year-old boy from Moundville, Alabama. He is the son of a farmer and stay at home mom. A typical summer day for him includes, waking up, going to work with his dad, coming home, eating dinner then repeating. His father is a veteran who is rough, hard-working, and loving towards his family. His mother is affectionate, kind, and a really good cook. The boy attends a small school in Moundville called Hale Conty Middle School where he plays football and baseball for the school's team. With the entire school having a population of 283, it is not hard for one to know everyone in the school. Growing up on a farm in Moundville is not out of the ordinary, farming is a common occupation in Moundville. Today, I will discuss my observations of the boy, his naturalistic characteristics, his informal attributes, and his impression on his parents.

During my naturalistic observation, I observed the boy outside with two of his friends at his dad's farm. I observed for roughly an hour, not engaging with the boys, but observing his interactions with them. As he was playing, climbing trees, and throwing rocks, the boys decided it was time to go fishing. The boys fished for around thirty minutes and were very successful. The boy in which I was observing caught the most out of the group. After the boys were done fishing, they went inside for lunch. While I observed the boy and his interactions with his peers as they were playing, I noticed that he was not the group's "leader", at least at first. He tended to follow the other boys and do what they say, rather than making decisions on his own. I was curious if this was because of him doing what he was told at home, or it being because of a lack of self-confidence. I believe this question of mine was answered when the boys went fishing. The boy then picked up more of a leadership role in the group. It appeared that he knew the most about the concept and details of fishing than the other boys did. He would put the lures

on their lines and help and encourage them to catch the fish. I believe that his confidence in fishing was immensely greater than that of playing around in the yard. This is the reason I believe he took more of a leadership role in the group fishing, rather than while playing random games in the yard.

After the boy's friends left, I played video games with him for about half an hour. I chose video games because it can display a lot of personality traits about the boy in just one setting. While playing the games, I tried to begin conversations with him. During these conversations, I asked him challenging questions and tried to get a sense of where he is at in his life. There was a moment in the game where he had a decision to make. He had to decide to help me or continue the mission. I did not want to think about the ethics or encourage him in any direction. His choice was to continue the mission. I do not think this is a direct representation of his personality on empathy. I believe he debated the decision and weighed out the pros and cons of each decision. I believe in this moment I saw his stage in moral development. He was very competitive during the game which showed his personality. In his room, there was baseball memorabilia and posters throughout. He seemed to keep his room relatively neat.

On interviewing the boy's parents, I interviewed them over lunch that his mother cooked and it was amazing! The overall atmosphere of this interview could not have been much better. The mother was the most interactive, but both the parents were open to conversation and answered all my questions. They are regular church members of a local Baptist church. They seemed to be very family oriented. They strive to eat a meal as a family every day and interact with local family members such as cousins, uncles and aunts, and grandparents. They enjoyed to brag about their child, as most parents would. The thing that stood out to me most was the proudness of the boy's work ethic and athleticism. They state that he loves to play sports and wants to play after high school and hopefully through college. The boy does well in school with having majority all A's in a semester sometimes a B. They are confident and not concerned with the boy's abilities. He stays out of

trouble, as far as they know. I believe the interview was overall beneficial to my study. I feel as if I have a good understanding of the boy's lifestyle and character.

I believe the boy is well above the average level of development for his age group. His moral development stood out to me while playing the video game. I was not able to get a good sense of the faith development of the boy; however, it was nice to see his family encouraging Christian beliefs and people in the boy's life.