Observation #1: Qualitative Observation

I observed a four and half year-old little boy named JM in his home on October 2, 2014, from 6:00-7:30 pm. JM has one brother, B, and his mother and father were present. I was interested in the progression of his fine motor and language skills. When I walked through the door to JM’s house, he rushed up to greet me. He excitedly jumped up and down, showing me his Star Wars Lego toys.

“Look, I put together this one all by myself- and this one, too!” He holds up three different Lego figurines that he created. His little two year-old brother, B, tries to take one from him. He places hand on his chest and shoves him back. “No, B! No!” He bends down in front of his crying brother on the floor and says, “They’re not yours!”

I pick up B and tell JM, “Aw! Look what you did to your brother! Poor B.” I offer B a little blue Thomas the Train car and push it around to interest him. JM ignores B and watches me push the train car, but he loses interest and goes back to his Lego toys. I ask him to “tell B you’re sorry,” and explain that JM’s a big boy and he should be gentle with his little brother. He says, “Sorry, B,” after some prompting and then we start to examine his toys.

The Legos that JM had put together are quite detailed, and I express surprise that he did all this by himself. He tries to tell me about the pictures that show him what to do, but he has trouble explaining what he means. He suddenly calls out for his mom and runs out to the kitchen to ask her to “put the pictures” on the TV. As he runs back into the living room, he trips over a puzzle on the floor and falls down. After a moment or two of examining his injuries (a toe and
his elbow), he rubs them, and bounces back to his feet. He comes sliding over to me, sits down next to me, and gathers up his Lego figurines.

Once the directions are on the TV, he carefully takes apart a blue, brown, and white figurine. Some of the little pieces are connected so tightly that he grunts and makes faces as he strains to pry them apart. Some pieces pop off easily and scatter on the hardwood floor. He tracks the pieces down almost every time- except for once when it flew under the train set and he couldn’t find it. I help him locate the little block, and he continues until he has all the pieces apart.

He patiently puts the pieces together- turning them this way and that way as he lines up the holes and nubs. He examines each shape and color to see if it matches the picture on the TV and carefully fits them together. In between putting them together, JM wanders up to the TV screen and studies the picture directions, and then he plops back down next to me and continues. He is very intense in his concentration, and when I ask him questions, he is not paying attention to me. Sometimes he answers, but mostly he ignores me or just nods. He will occasionally get his dad to stop playing his video game to come in and help him figure out a piece if he gets stuck. He tells me very matter-of-factly, “Daddy helps me.” For the most part, however, JM works at his own pace, using his own ingenuity. Other than the occasional comment about what he is building, or to ask for help, or to shoo away his little brother, JM is very quiet and focused as he lounges on the floor with all his little Lego pieces.

When JM’s mom offers him a snack, he just shakes his head. She gives him an apple juice box instead. At first he ignores it, but after about three or four minutes, he absently picks it
up to drink. He has to try twice to get the straw into his mouth because he doesn’t take his eyes off the figurine right away.

When he finally finishes assembling his creation, he jumps up to show me. He waves it in front of me, zooms it through the air, and cuddles it in his arms. A tiny piece drops off and bounces across the floor, and he dashes after it. He laughs as he replaces it.

He suddenly seems to notice that his mom has given B a snack, and he decides he wants cookies, too. He gives me the figurine and yells, “I want cookies, too, Mommy!” He drags out a chair from the dining room table and clambers up onto the seat. He kneels on the seat and leans his elbows up on the table while he pats his hand on the table as he waits. He asks me if he can come see my turtle, and where my two daughters are. He laughs and rolls the Oreos around his plate that his mom hands him. He uses his fingers to pry his cookies halves apart, and then scrapes the icing off with his teeth. He is more interested in crumbling the cookies parts, however than in eating them. His mom tries to get him to drink some milk, but he refuses by crossing his arms and turning his head to ignore her and the milk. She gives up and urges him to finish his cookies so he can get his bath.

He argues, “No! I don’t want to bath! B want a bath!” He slides off his chair, under the table, closes his eyes and covers his ears with his fists. His mom laughs and says in a very bright voice, “Hey, JM, remember the new starfish, … and octopus, … and sand shark that grandmom gave you? I bet they would like a bath. Do you want to help them get a bath and swim with them?”

At first JM is hesitant, but after she pulls them out of the closet, he cooperates with getting his hands and face wiped. He then demands to carry them to the bathtub by himself.
His mom breaks his focus on the bath toys and reminds him to say, “Please.” Then she urges him to say “Good night” to me. He is still fiddling with the toys, but he comes over and gives me a quick hug and kiss, then hurries upstairs to the bathroom with the sea creatures clutched tightly in his hands.

I gather up my notebook, pen, and backpack, say good-bye, and head home.

The strengths that I feel that JM exhibited were excellent fine motor skills evidenced by his ability to manipulate small Legos skillfully; good gross motor skills shown in JM’s continued running, jumping and climbing; expressive language and communication skills causing him to be able to communicate and use full sentences fairly well; and great problem solving skills in which he had the ability to look and study the directions and Lego parts with little distraction.

The weaknesses that I discovered in my observation of JM were that he tends to be impulsive as he yells, runs, jumps, and bounces often; plays poorly or roughly with his little brother because he knocks him down for touching his toys and yells in his face; depends on his parents to dress and undress him rather than attempting to try it himself; and consumes high sugared snacks in place of nutritious ones that would better enhance, improve, or stabilize his growth, energy-level, and future good health.
Minor College  
ED 104—Child Development, 0-9 years

Anecdotal Notes Form

Use this form to help you record anecdotal notes at your location. You will be conducting 3 observations for a minimum of 5 hours of total observation, and at least one observation must use the anecdotal record method. You may observe your individual subjects alone, in small groups. You may observe in any location under the time of day, and you may either be in the action or removed from the action. Remember to record only factual information, not your opinions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Time:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JM's home</td>
<td>October 8, 2014</td>
<td>6:00-7:30 pm</td>
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Subject of observation: JM, a four-year-old little boy

Question I am Trying to Answer:
Are his fine motor and language skills progressing?

Anecdotal Notes:

When I walk through the door, JM's house, he rushes to greet me. He excitedly jumps up and down, showing me his Star Wars Lego toys. "Look, I put together this one all by myself—and this one, too!" he holds up three different Lego structures that he created. His little two-year-old brother tries to take some from him and he pleads his hand on his chest and shows him back. "No, B! No!" He bends down in front of his crying brother and says, "They're not yours!"

I pick up B and tell JM, "Au! Look what you did to your brother! Poor B!" I offer B a little blue Thomas the Train car and push forward to interest him. JM grabs B and watches me. When I push the train car, he smiles and goes back to his Lego toys. I ask him, "Why B, you're crying," and explain that it's a big boy and he should be gentle with his little brother. He says, "Sorry, B," after some prompting and then we start examining his toys.

The Legos that JM put together are quite detailed, and I express surprise that he did all this by himself. He helps to tell me about the pictures that show him what to do, but he has trouble explaining what he means. He suddenly calls out for his mom and runs out to the kitchen to ask her to put the pictures on the tv. As he runs back into the living room he trips over a pillow on the floor and falls again. After a moment or two to examine his leg and elbow, he rubs it and stands back up. He goes and sits down next to his brother and watches his Lego figures.

Kim's directions are on the TV, be careful to look at the blue, brown, and white figures. Some of the Legos are connected so tightly that it is hard to undo and makes back as he struggles to put them apart. He needs help as he stands on the hardwood floor. He makes me laugh when he paints the pictures all over the floor. And he can't find it. I help him locate it and he continues until...

Observation and Reflective Rubric:
He made up the pass. He patiently put the pieces together, fit them this way and that way as he

He perfectly put the most together; caring them this way and that way as he

lines up the holes and makes it exactly, exactly, exactly as he looks at it...

He made up the pass...