

# Ana Case Study

**Case Study: Ana**

**9th grade, Age 14**

## Background Information

Ana's mother, who became pregnant while in high school, is a single parent who completed her GED after Ana's birth. Her mother works full-time to support her and Ana. Ana's parents never married, and her biological father has very limited contact with her, nor does he offer much support. Her father also did not complete his high school degree. Ana has no siblings, but does have two male same-age cousins who also struggle with attending school. Her mother wants Ana to finish high school, as she wants more for her daughter and for her to be the first in the family to graduate high school.

## Medical Information

Ana had delayed physical growth from second grade to eighth grade. Her mother took her to a physician during that time and no medical problems were reported. She has received regular medical check-ups with no noted medical concerns and no significant medical history.

## School History

Ana entered kindergarten at age 5 after one year of preschool as a model student in the developmental preschool program at the neighborhood school. Her daycare was provided by her maternal grandmother prior to starting kindergarten. Ana has attended schools in her grandmother's neighborhood and has had no grade retentions.

## Attendance

Ana has missed an average of 10 days of school from Grades K through 7. She had 50 days of absence in Grade 8 and missed two weeks at the beginning of Grade 9. Ana has had no disciplinary referrals in any grades up to the present time.

## Grade 8 (last academic year)

Ana was absent at least 1 day per week starting mid-first quarter in the eighth grade. Her absences increased to two or more each week by winter break. Around this time, a pattern of tardiness to school in the morning also began. Ana's mother reported to the guidance counselor, “She’s refusing to get up in the mornings…lags in getting dressed…complains of tiredness and lethargy.” Ana then arranged to stay in the guidance office to complete work independently, two hours per day in the afternoon.

Soon she was absent as many days as she attended and by April, Ana rarely attended school at all.

## Grade 9 (current academic year)

Ana's physical growth seems to have stopped. At 5’1”, Ana is petite and smaller than most of her peers. She attended the first two days of classes, and then did not attend again for two weeks. She is interested in playing high school sports. She has trouble making friends and keeping connections with peers, but does like teachers and converses easily with them. She has no behavior problems or referrals. She does have trouble completing homework and keeping up with notes in classes and has failing grades in several classes.

## Testing and Evaluation

Ana was given both verbal (WISC) and non-verbal (UNIT) IQ testing. Both tests placed her in the average intelligence range with an IQ of 105.

## Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement

Ana was given the WJIII with the following results:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cluster** | **Score** |
| Broad Reading | 82 (low average range) |
| Broad Math | 99 ( average range) |
| Broad Written Language | 87 (low average range) |
| **Subtest Scores** |  |
| Letter-Word Identification | 85 |
| Reading Fluency | 81 |
| Passage Comprehension | 91 |
| Calculation | 93 |
| Math Fluency | 101 |
| Applied Problems | 104 |
| Spelling | 86 |
| Writing Fluency | 87 |
| Writing Samples | 98 |

## Classroom Teacher Input

Ana’s English language arts (ELA) teacher reports that Ana is able to write complete sentences, but is unable to complete a paragraph that follows the topic sentence. She often spells words incorrectly on her final draft. Additionally, she has difficulty sounding out words, which affects her reading fluency and her reading comprehension. Currently, Ana can independently read a seventh grade text with 80% comprehension. According to a reading inventory administered by her ELA teacher, Ana reads 40WPM correctly at a seventh grade level.

## Interventions Prior to Special Education Referral

* Attendance administrator has been initiating calls home every day Ana is absent
* 1-to-1 sessions have been scheduled weekly with guidance counselor, many of which she has missed due to absences.
* Special education teacher has begun building a consultation team to seek input for special education referral
* Several after school tutoring sessions have been scheduled, but Ana has only attended a few
* A truancy referral to Juvenile Court has been filed (following state-required legal process)
* ELA teacher provides small group instruction for reading and writing
* Several teachers are providing her extended time to complete tasks and assignments

## Reason for Referral

Ana has an escalating pattern of absenteeism, decreasing socialization with peers at school and in the community, has failing grades, and very low self-acceptance/self-concept.

**Interviews**

Guidance Counselor:

* Ana spontaneously smiles and converses with him; says she is comfortable in the guidance office
* Ana has told Guidance Counselor that she wants to be in school to please her mom and to participate in sports

Mother:

* + States that she is concerned about Ana’s health, and that is why she does not insist Ana go to school or leave the house when Ana says she does not feel good

Ana:

* + Says she thinks she is a “freak” – tiny, odd looking, biracial.
  + Says other kids make fun of her because she is so small
  + She tears up when she talks about herself; voice quivers
  + She acknowledges adults (smiles, “thank you”, responds to questions)
  + Says she likes adults, would rather talk with adults than peers
  + Asks questions, initiates comments with adults
  + Has a good vocabulary and speaks fluently
  + Says she wants to make her mother happy and proud of her, but does not think she can
  + Says she likes sports, but is “too small” to play them
  + Says she is “close” to mother and grandmother

**Community**

Ana says she does not spend time with friends or participate in school or community groups. She has had no law enforcement involvement and no court appearances, nor has she ever had any formal placements out of the home.