Collaborative Conversation – Example Secondary Assessment Report

The SLP and classroom teacher used classroom observations (Collaborative Conversation Focused Observation Form, the Collaborative Conversations Proficiency Scale and behavioral sampling techniques including Discourse Analysis to collect data on multiple occasions between (9/06/18 and 10/23/18). The purposes were to describe the student's conversational strengths and weaknesses, set appropriate conversational goals and identify supportive instructional strategies.

Strengths
The student actively participated in small group facilitated conversations about interesting grade level text. She initiated comments and specific questions, made relevant comments that promoted group idea building, and talked about the emotions of characters when prompted. She recalled facts and could sequentially order the actions using conversational language. If asked about emotions, she gave reasonable but simple answers. For example, during a conversation about the Very Best of Friends (Margaret Wild), she volunteered that “William (the cat) loved James” and helped him do his work on the farm. She noted they “worked in the fields, cleaned the barn and fed the cows.” The student’s conversational skills are emerging and strongest when recall, simple conversational language and polite interaction skills are required. (Focused Observation - Student (9/06/16); SLP Discourse Analysis, (10/04/16 and 10/18/16).

Conversational behaviors tended to cluster in the early developing stage on the Collaborative Conversation Proficiency Scale (Teacher: 9/20/18; SLP 10/06/18). The student proficiently exchanged ideas, showed interest in her partner, joined into an ongoing conversation, reacted emotionally using single words, talked about what the character might be feeling and monitored her own attempts to contribute. Teacher's and SLP's inter-rater reliability was strong. These findings were confirmed by an average score of 2.5 on the Secondary Collaborative Conversation Rubric (SLP 10/18/18).

Limitations
Data from the above referenced tools showed that the student attended to the facts and action in the story or article at a literal level of comprehension. Except for the identification of emotions using single low quality words (happy, mad and sad), she did not independently show evidence of inferential thinking. Her vocabulary and syntax were basic although she did try to use higher order words and sentence structure when heavily prompted. While she initiated in small group structures, the student did not speak in the larger classroom unless the teacher directly asked her question. She paused about 5 seconds before answering in one-two word literal comments. The student primarily uses a rote retell approach to engage in conversations.

Instructional Strategies that Promote Conversation
The student’s performance improved in small groups, with familiar partners, given facilitated instruction (shared reading, open questions, think alouds and in-the-moment scaffolds such as contrasting questions).

Conversational Goal Areas: Student will talk about what the characters think, read between the lines to make inferential comments and use more precise vocabulary to describe emotion.