

Case Study Report

Prepared by Esteban Gerena-Marcano

Espy 3303 Child and Adolescent Development

Angelo State University

Fall 2025

Introduction:

Children are beings that can be big reminders of how you used to be, always making people feel nostalgic thinking of how they used to be. Coincidentally Christian did just that, the child I had the opportunity to observe for this case study. He's the youngest child of 4 which is something I relate to heavily, and not just that he has an oldest brother aged 22, an older sister aged 21 and another older brother 14. Surprisingly these age differences are almost exactly the age gaps I have between my own siblings. Christian is 13 and in eighth grade. His family is a middle-class family, with a married father and mother, his oldest brother still home as he works for his father, his sister at college, and his other brother only a grade above him, his house is very full of life which was obvious when I was there.

Physical Development:

The average height for a 13-year-old boy is around 5'1 and the average weight is between 75-120lbs, Christian is 5'4 and 105lbs, so based on physical development he's around the average of what someone his age would be. According to the study done by the Child development institute children around his age should be developing interests in more specific motor skills, engage in organized sports, have refined writing, and try new food, while also having favorites. When I was observing Christian, I had asked him if he was doing any organized sports, to which he responded that he was playing little league baseball and enjoyed it. I also asked if he enjoyed riding his bike, to which he responded yes, I asked if he wanted to go on a ride. While doing so I noticed little struggle on his end, so he's developed the necessary motor skills to ride a bike with little to no difficulty. Within the same visit we also tested his handwriting to see if he's refined it, which he's done a good job of doing as his writing is very neat and legible, in honesty it may even look better than mine. Lastly, I asked if he has any favorite foods, he said enchiladas. Trying new foods is a little more difficult to gauge as it really

is dependent on whoever cooks dinner for him, so I wasn't able to confirm that. Other than that bump in the road, Christian is in the proper stage of physical development for someone of his age.

Cognitive Development:

I expected Christian to be in the fourth stage of Piaget's four stages, so in order to test this I asked Christian hypothetical questions. Those being, "What would you do if you found a \$20 on the floor", "What would you do if you lost a limb", and "What would you do if you had to move suddenly". In response to these questions Christian had responded using deductive reasoning to most questions and abstract thinking, by understanding the 20 dollars being tied more to a moral standpoint and that it wasn't tied to anything physical other than morality he had decided it best to look for who the 20 belonged to. In response to the question about the loss of a limb he understood that if it were something out of his control then all he could do is accept the loss and continue with life, while hoping for the best. Finally, in response to having to move suddenly he had the same idea, if he cannot do anything to change the outcome then he would accept it. By asking Christian these questions I was able to determine that he is in the stage I had originally thought. In order to test Vygotsky's theory I had given him a small worksheet that had asked him to provide the state capitals. While I observed from afar I noticed that he did use private speech, but it seemed more to continue his train of thought on state capitals. He did not need any aid and completed the worksheet by himself, so I was unable to practice the use of scaffolding. This shows me that he is cognitively where he needs to be, if not slightly ahead.

Emotional development:

Emotionally I expected Christian to be in the second stage of Moral development. In order to find out where he stood I asked him some questions about how he would react to being

asked to do something, of course if it were any adult he would agree to aid them without any problem. If it were one of his peers he answered that he would probably help as he doesn't want to be rude. I then asked if he ever breaks rules and gets in trouble at school, he stated that he doesn't as he doesn't want to get in trouble and if he breaks rules then those are the consequences. I asked if he ever disagreed with the rules set in place and he said, "not really, they make sense." These responses show that he is in the second stage of development, and is on track to reach the third stage soon.

Linguistic development:

Linguistically Christian seems to be within expectations for a thirteen year old boy, he's able to easily understand different usages of language such as sarcasm and metaphors. Also by being able to answer the questions asked in previous segments with thoughtful responses shows that he is well within his age group's developmental stage linguistically. He also showed the ability to understand and follow complex instructions based on the worksheet I had given him, while also understanding the vocabulary I had used while speaking with him.

Social development:

I expected Christian to be at stage five of Erikson's stages of development 'Identity vs Role Confusion'. There are only really so many ways to test this, so to do so I had to ask questions about his relationships with his friends and family, questions to test his decision making, and questions about how he viewed his future, what his plans were. He talked about his relationship with his family and his relationship with his friends, stating he had a good relationship with both and never struggled with interaction with either. Next was the questions about his decision making. I asked if there were a group of boys in his grade that were bullying someone and told him to join, would he join, decline, or do something else. Now leaving the

“something else” floating there may have spurred him on, but he said that he would decline then tell a teacher, which shows that he’s able to make decisions for himself. The last question I asked was what were his plans for the future, would he go to college or work with his father, or even something completely different. He told me that he would probably choose to work with his father as it’s a family business and it seems like the most sensible thing to do. Upon hearing that it seems like he has a strong sense of who he is, what his values are, and what he wants to do. By answering all of these questions the way he did it proved that he is in the fifth stage of Erikson’s developmental stages.

Conclusion:

Observing Christian was very interesting, speaking with his brother and family had given me the necessary insight to test him and see where he may be developmentally, it was odd seeing the things we studied play out in front of my eyes, of course there are outliers that are ahead or behind developmentally, but it seems Christian was always where he needed to be without fail. As a result I understand how children develop and how there can be some difficulties, this will aid me in the future.

Citations

“Teenager 13-18 Years.” *Teenager 13-18 Years | Ages and Stages Developmental Milestones | SLT for Kids | Speech & Language Therapy, across Manchester & the North West*, sltforkids.co.uk/ages-and-stages-developmental-milestones/teenager-13-18-years/. Accessed 10 Dec. 2025.

Kendra Cherry, MEd. “How People Develop an Identity or Cope with Role Confusion.” *Verywell Mind*, Verywell Mind, 14 Oct. 2025, www.verywellmind.com/identity-versus-confusion-2795735.

Kendra Cherry, MEd. “Levels of Developing Morality in Kohlberg’s Theories.” *Verywell Mind*, Verywell Mind, 29 Jan. 2025, www.verywellmind.com/kohlbergs-theory-of-moral-development-2795071.