

## APPENDIX 1.1 MEET AMANDA—CASE STUDY

### Amanda

#### 3rd Grade

#### 8 years old

Amanda is achieving two years below grade level academically and two years below age level socially and emotionally. Amanda has been given an intervention in reading fluency during first the first half of the year, and her standardized test scores have improved; however, she has not scored at the proficient level on any of the End of Grade (EOG) assessments. A review of test records shows Amanda's intelligence within the average range.

In interviewing Amanda's parents, Amanda is reported to have Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). When asked questions regarding this disclosure, the parents stated she does not take medication nor has she ever had a 504 Plan. She took medication at one time when they lived in another state, but from the parents' perspective, it did not help Amanda focus, decrease her constant activity, or control her inappropriate behaviors. Her parents feel that she just needs the opportunity constantly to be in motion to release this extra energy. They further report that she has a sister who is much better behaved, has many peers, and does extremely well academically. They wish Amanda could be like the sister in terms of her emotional and academic behaviors. Amanda tends to disrupt things at home by exhibiting tantrums when she does not get her way or needs to change her schedule. Getting Amanda to complete homework and long-term projects is a challenge. Her behaviors makes it difficult for everyone.

During an interview, Amanda's teacher reported that Amanda is always excited to arrive at school and is anxious to help the teacher prepare for the day. The teacher reported that Amanda has difficulty remembering directions, so the jobs she gives Amanda are usually one step at a time. Amanda prefers communicating with adults unless she is directing her peers. She finds it difficult to communicate in a two-way conversation when listening and taking turns talking is required. She craves attention and sometimes seeks it inappropriately.

Amanda has great resilience and comes in each morning with the attitude of doing better. Being part of the class environment and feeling valued by her teachers is very important to Amanda. She loves to dance and share dance moves with others. The problem is that she often perseverates on dancing, and her peers tire of this behavior.

It is difficult for Amanda to make decisions about what to do next, so she procrastinates doing anything. She does not begin tasks when asked, and after several reminders, when Amanda does work on her assignment, she rushes to get it finished and off her desk. This results in the assignment often not completed or completed incorrectly. Attending to more than one task at a time is very confusing for Amanda. She has difficulty prioritizing tasks and loses focus. She does not remember her math facts and uses her fingers to help solve problems. In addition, math is a challenge to her because she forgets the process she needs to follow to solve problems. She avoids word problems partially because she cannot read and comprehend the problem and partially because she has difficulty remembering what she has read. All of this leads to her frustration with math.

She has difficulty remembering words she sees and reads. Amanda has basic phonics skills and knows basic sight words, but she tends to lose focus and stare at the page instead of actively reading it. When she does read, she spends a lot of time looking for answers to comprehension questions and ends up rereading material she already read. She tires and asks that someone read the material to her.

Another challenge for Amanda is written expression, and writing assignments often frustrate her. Amanda makes many careless errors in most written work, and her handwriting is difficult to read. She has difficulty spelling words and uses inventive spelling for many words. She does not want to use the word processor because it takes her so long to find the letters on the keyboard. She becomes anxious when asked to use the word processor. Even if it is for math drill and practice. She does not respond well to e-books, but likes being read to. Amanda has some great ideas when asked what she will be writing about, but she does not organize her thoughts in any way before she begins writing. Therefore, she forgets her train of thought and ends up rambling on and stopping abruptly. She does not check over her work before handing it in, causing her to lose points for careless errors.

In addition, Amanda's teacher reports that Amanda calls out in class, disturbs her classmates, and seeks the attention of the teacher and classmates throughout the day with inappropriate comments. It is very difficult for Amanda to transition between classes and to begin a whole new train of thought. She is not flexible with change in the classroom routine. When she is involved in something she enjoys, she seems to persevere and have great trouble changing to another activity. The other students do not dislike Amanda, but they do not choose to be with her when left to their own choices. They report that Amanda always wants to be in charge and is not interested in what they want to do. Amanda has difficulty reading and interpreting verbal and nonverbal social cues. Although it does not happen often, when Amanda is sad or upset about something, everyone is affected by her mood. She sometimes lashes out at others when she is feeling sad or unhappy.

Amanda takes correspondence to her parents, but even with reminders, homework or papers requiring a signature are not returned. She rarely brings any homework in or spends any time studying for tests even though the teacher makes certain she has written down assignments. Her books and papers are often not where she can access them easily. She needs her glasses in order to do her best academic work, but she often has left them home or takes learning time hunting for them in her backpack before starting an assignment. Her spiral notebook is in her backpack, but papers are just stuffed in without being organized and many have fallen into the bottom of the backpack. This causes her to become frustrated and display counterproductive behaviors.

During an interview with Amanda, she shares that she would like to do better and tries, but she gets upset when she can't do what the others are doing. It makes her "mad" at them and herself. She feels like there is too much work and it is too hard. She wishes she could just dance all the time. She hates always having to "hunt" for her belongings and getting behind from the beginning of the day. She feels she needs more help from the teacher, but when asked what she thinks the teacher might do to help her to be successful, she indicated she "did not know."