Appendix A
Case Studies in Education

Below are descriptions of six students: two elementary school students, two middle school students, and two high school students. Each description—along with the information that appears at the end of each chapter—has been written by a classroom teacher, and each represents a composite of students they have known (it would be an extremely inappropriate invasion of privacy to provide such personal information about an actual student). However, keep in mind that while the “student” may be fictitious, what the teachers are describing to you comes from experience in the classroom each day.

Read each of the descriptions and then choose one to be the case study you follow. You might select a student in the grade range you wish to teach or one whose situation is of interest to you. The choice is yours. Following the last of the descriptions you will find directions for working with the case study. Before getting into all of that, take some time to be introduced to these students.

Brief Biographies

Elementary School

Student's name: Davon  
Age: 5  
Grade: Kindergarten  
Ethnicity: African American  
Gender: Male

General Description: Davon lives with his mother and four siblings, two older and two younger. Davon is tall and has a sturdy build for his age. He comes to school dirty and wearing tattered clothing that is often not appropriate for the weather. He frequently wets his pants and even comes to school wearing dried soiled clothing. Davon regularly shares worries of moving. He talks about how he loves his school and wants to stay. Davon's eyes and smile will light up your heart. Each morning he greets his teacher with a smile and a hug. Davon is quick to defend himself and points out anyone who is treating him unfairly or disrespectfully. He is a sponge for knowledge and loves learning. Davon loves to be a helper and puts forth his best effort in all that he does.

Student's name: Andy  
Age: 9  
Grade: 3  
Ethnicity: Caucasian  
Gender: Male

General Description: Andy has big brown eyes and strawberry blonde hair. He is personable and respectful of adults. He laughs easily and has a good sense of humor. Andy responds well to the special attention he receives from the teacher in his resource room and in his reading classroom. He lives with his grandparents, who received custody of him last year. His brother continues to live with his mother and stepfather. Andy has been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder...
with Hyperactivity (ADHD). He has a history of struggling in reading and was almost retained in second grade. He is currently on a first-grade reading level.

**Middle School**

**Student's name:** Judith  
**Age:** 13

**Grade:** 7  
**Ethnicity:** Caucasian  
**Gender:** Female

**General Description:** Not an academically strong student, Judith enjoys reading (fourth-grade level) much more than math or science. Neither parent completed school. The gross household income is barely above the poverty level. Judith’s clothes are well worn and often in need of washing; opportunities for bathing and personal hygiene are apparently infrequent. This is becoming more problematic as she becomes an adolescent. Judith seeks a sense of belonging and desperately wants to have and be a friend, despite the teasing she takes from other children. For her 13th birthday she invited her “friends” to a party and on the invitations had written “Please bring a present.” No one showed up. Never a problem to her teachers, she seeks out their acceptance with a smile and conversation. This youngster wants to give to others but needs a teacher willing to help her along in matters beyond the curriculum.

**Student's name:** Tiffany  
**Age:** 11

**Grade:** 6  
**Ethnicity:** Caucasian/Hispanic  
**Gender:** Female

**General Description:** Tiffany is from an upper-middle-class family. Both of her parents are professionals who have traveled extensively. Her father is from the northeastern United States. Her mother, the daughter of a Spanish diplomat, was born in Barcelona, Spain, and has lived around the world as the result of her father’s assignments. Tiffany is a polite and pleasant child who has an enormous oral vocabulary. She loves to read and enjoys mind puzzles as a recreational activity. During her third-grade year, Tiffany’s teachers recommended her for the Gifted and Talented program. She was placed there beginning her fourth-grade year.

Socially, Tiffany has no close friends. Most of her classmates consider her obnoxious and egotistical, and ignore her during unstructured times. She enjoys talking and interacting with the adults and usually has enough knowledge of current world events or local concerns to participate in the conversation.

During a parent-teacher conference, her parents and teachers expressed concerns that Tiffany is becoming too much of a perfectionist. They are also worried about her lack of social skills and close friends. Her parents have tried to get her involved in many activities, but she has no interest in any extracurricular sports or hobbies. They have tried taking her for counseling through her church and privately, but to no avail. In fact, Tiffany has now proclaimed herself an atheist and verbalizes her belief whenever given the chance. She spends evenings reading in her bedroom. She does not enjoy talking on the telephone and finds television to be, as she says, “immature.”
High School

Student's name: Sam  Age: 16
Grade: 11  Ethnicity: African American  Gender: Male

General Description: Sam is a handsome, polite, and reserved young man. He has a medical diagnosis of Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), confirmed in middle school, for which he is prescribed medication. Sam is also a special-needs student; his eligibility for special education services was first determined in kindergarten. Results of psychological and educational assessments place him in the Low Average range of intellectual ability with significant learning disabilities, which appear to be primarily language-based, in the areas of reading, math, and written language. Specific areas of concern included receptive and expressive vocabulary, auditory processing, and thinking and reasoning skills. To address these deficits, Sam received language therapy through sixth grade, at which time assessment results indicated that language performance and cognitive ability were commensurate, and speech/language services were discontinued. However, Sam's speech is still difficult to understand; he has a very soft voice and mumbles, often making it necessary to ask him to repeat what he says.

Sam lives with his mother and his younger sister. Extracurricular activities include participation in the school cross country/track program and, interestingly, concert choir.

Student's name: Bao  Age: 16
Grade: 11  Ethnicity: Asian American  Gender: Female

General Description: Meet Bao. She moved here from Vietnam when she was three and is fully adjusted to American life. In some ways, she is proud of her ethnicity: She goes to temple with her family, brings Vietnamese food to school for class parties, and enjoys family trips to Vietnam. In other ways, however, Bao is uncomfortable with her background. At school, her classmates and teachers call her Katy; at home, she responds to her parents in English. Being Asian hasn't been an issue at school. A junior, Bao is a cheerleader and member of Future Business Leaders of America. Her grades, Bs and Cs, are just barely good enough to satisfy her parents. Bao gets along well with her teachers and is well liked by most of her peers. She is cheerful to the extreme and shies away from conflict, so you'll never see her confronting her teachers or sharing an unpopular opinion during class discussion. All in all, she is known for being a good student, friendly, and involved without really standing out in the crowd.

Setting Up a Case Study Folder

Though case studies can be used on a chapter-by-chapter basis as you consider the topics discussed in the text, this activity is designed so that you can compile a reflective dossier concerning one child as a semester-long project. If you take that approach, you will complete your introduction to education course with a product
that documents your thinking about many issues and aspects related to teaching. Even the teachers who wrote these composites have commented that the experience allowed them to appreciate their own students to a greater degree.

You could make copies of a standard page (see Figure A-1) and then fill out the record by hand, but it is likely that you will compile your Educational Record using a word processor. If that is the case, you will find a copy of the Educational Record form on the student premium website available with this textbook. Whether or not it must be printed and placed in a notebook or folder will depend upon the requirements in your course. We will describe the process assuming that you will use your word processor and then assemble the pages into a folder.

1. Prepare a cover page for the document. You might want to follow this example:

   ![Figure A-1](image-url)

   Educational Record

   Chapter (No. and Title): _________________________ Date: ________________
   Student: __________________________ Age: ________ Grade: ________ Gender: ________ Ethnicity: ________

   Category: __________________________ Information: __________________________
            __________________________ Information: __________________________
            __________________________ Information: __________________________

   Category: __________________________ Information: __________________________

   Category: __________________________ Information: __________________________

   Question: __________________________
   Question: __________________________
   Question: __________________________
2. The next page after the cover page should list the student’s name and basic information as given in the Brief Biographies. Include the general description of the student as well. You may wish to elaborate on the information provided by describing the community in which the child might live and attend school. You may decide to use a photograph of a local school as the context for your case study. Do not, however, include a picture of a child. Even though we all know that the case study does not describe the child in the photo, other people who see the folder may assume it does.

3. Now format a page to serve as a template for your educational records. The master page might look like the example in Figure A-1. Fill in your student’s name, age, grade, gender, and ethnicity.

As you complete each chapter in the book, use your master page to create a new page for that chapter. At the top of the new page, enter the chapter number and title so that your record will have a context among all the topics discussed in the book. Under “Category” fill in the topic areas from the table at the end of each chapter. For example, Chapter 1 has three categories of information: (1) Type of Person the Student Responds To, (2) The Student’s Academic Demeanor, and (3) Parents’ Perspective of the School. No chapter has more than three categories.

Now fill in the information provided for the student you are studying. The entries are brief. Finally, fill in the questions that are asked for that particular chapter.

4. A complete folder will have 14 of these pages, one for each chapter. Following each chapter page should be the all-important pages that you add as you answer the questions. A brief heading such as the one that follows will help keep the pages in order:

   Educational Record—Personal Perspectives

   Chapter No. ______  Date: ___________
   Question No: ______