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SCED Professional Year

**Child Study (Alexis)**

Alexis is a young adult that the schools make exceptions for, but also overlook. He is a nineteen year old immigrant that works hard and knows what an American education can offer him. The state allows Alexis extra time to complete his G.E.D., but with limited English proficiency he has to work harder in order to complete his assignments, and will likely struggle to pass the standardized tests. Alexis, like the other students in his ELL English class, try their best to speak only English to the instructors, but finds himself reverting to Spanish when interacting with his Spanish speaking peers. This year Alexis has had struggles that many students will never face; Alexis was absent (excused) for two weeks during one semester because he had to appear with his mom at immigration court. Although all of the absences were excused, the amount of time he missed required his teachers to give him failing grades. Ms. Sweeny, his English teacher, plans to submit a grade variance report, but does not believe the principal of Dundalk High will allow him an exception.

Alexis did not let his absences hinder his schooling, though. As soon as he was back in the classroom he began staying after school in order to complete his make-up work and receive extra help from his teachers. While Alexis is highly motivated to perform well, and the state required him to miss time in school in order to appear in court, the state is also going to deny him a passing grade for the quarter. Alexis is visibly older than the other students in his classes, but the students do not seem to acknowledge the age difference. Other than the physical differences you would not know that Alexis is older; his behavior and interactions with other students are typical of his peers, and his struggle with English and problems at home seem to be all that holds him back. My meeting with Mr. Holmes confirmed my beliefs that Alexis was an intelligent young man. Mr. Holmes seems to believe Alexis's biggest problem in the classroom is his short attention span; I frequently saw Alexis talking across the classroom to his friends, or randomly changing seats to sit next to someone. Seeing Alexis in the hallways allowed me to see him outside of the confines of the classroom. Alexis seems incredibly sociable amongst his Spanish speaking peers, but did not make conversation with anyone in English. Like his time spent in the hallways. Alexis is very sociable amongst his peers in the classroom, too. There were times when the issue needed to be addressed as it was interrupting the class, but overall Alexis is a good student.

The articles I read related to Alexis offered insight on how to better teach him in the classroom. Harper's " Misconceptions about teaching English-language learners" ensured me that his case is not unique. ELL students all learn at different paces; while some students may adopt English very quickly, other will take much longer. The article also states that just because someone is using English does not mean they are learning it. Alexis's instructors want their ELL students to speak English at all times in the classroom, but if using Spanish helps them learn English then they should make exceptions and allow them to discuss English concepts amongst themselves in their native tongue. I believe Alexis would benefit from more control in the classroom. Alexis finds it too easy to get distracted, and is not reprimanded for aimlessly walking around the classroom to visit his peers. If he becomes a distraction he is asked to return to his seat, but if he remains quiet he is able to be lazy in the classroom. Aspects of the child study that I would use in my own classroom would be finding relevant articles that apply to the students within my classroom, and contacting school personal that interact with students regularly. While students may be unwilling to open up to their classroom teacher, they may feel more comfortable with other adults. For instance, Alexis speaks openly with Mr. Holmes because Mr. Holmes speaks Spanish. Alexis feels comfortable speaking with Mr. Holmes and goes to him for advice.

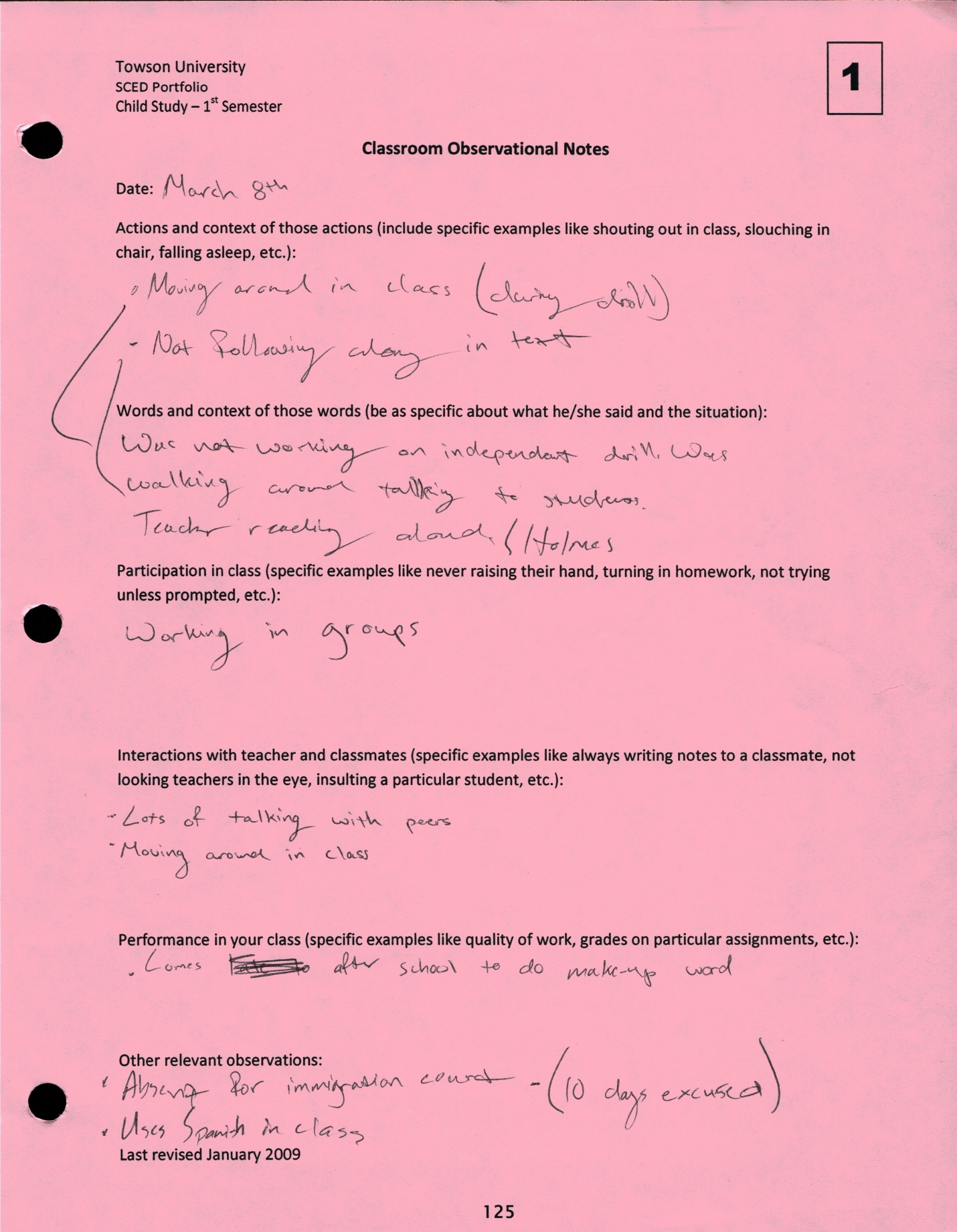
**Articles / Chapters**

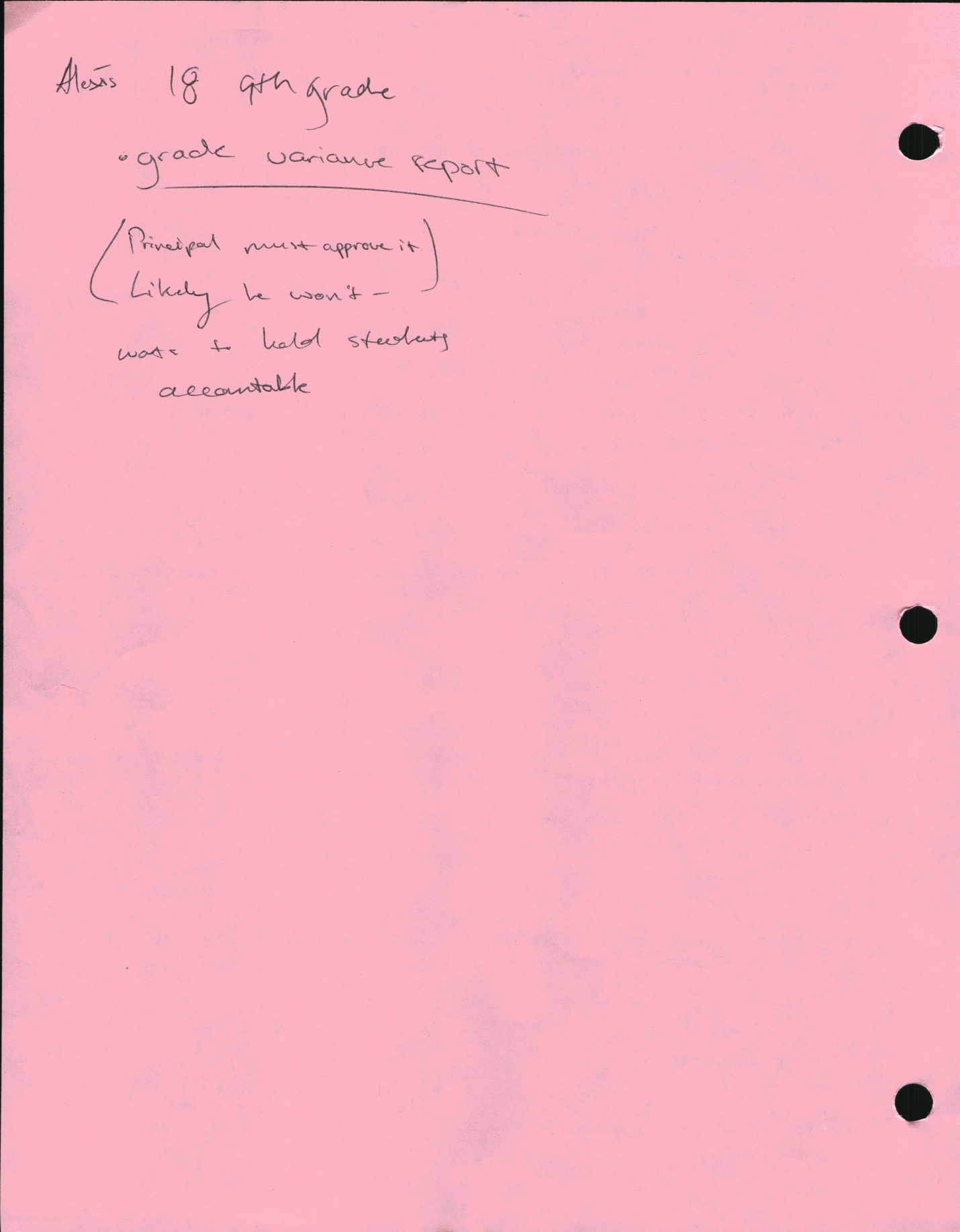
Harper, Candace; De Jong, Ester*.*Misconceptions about teaching English-language learners.*Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, Oct 2004, Vol. 48 Issue 2, p152-162, 11p

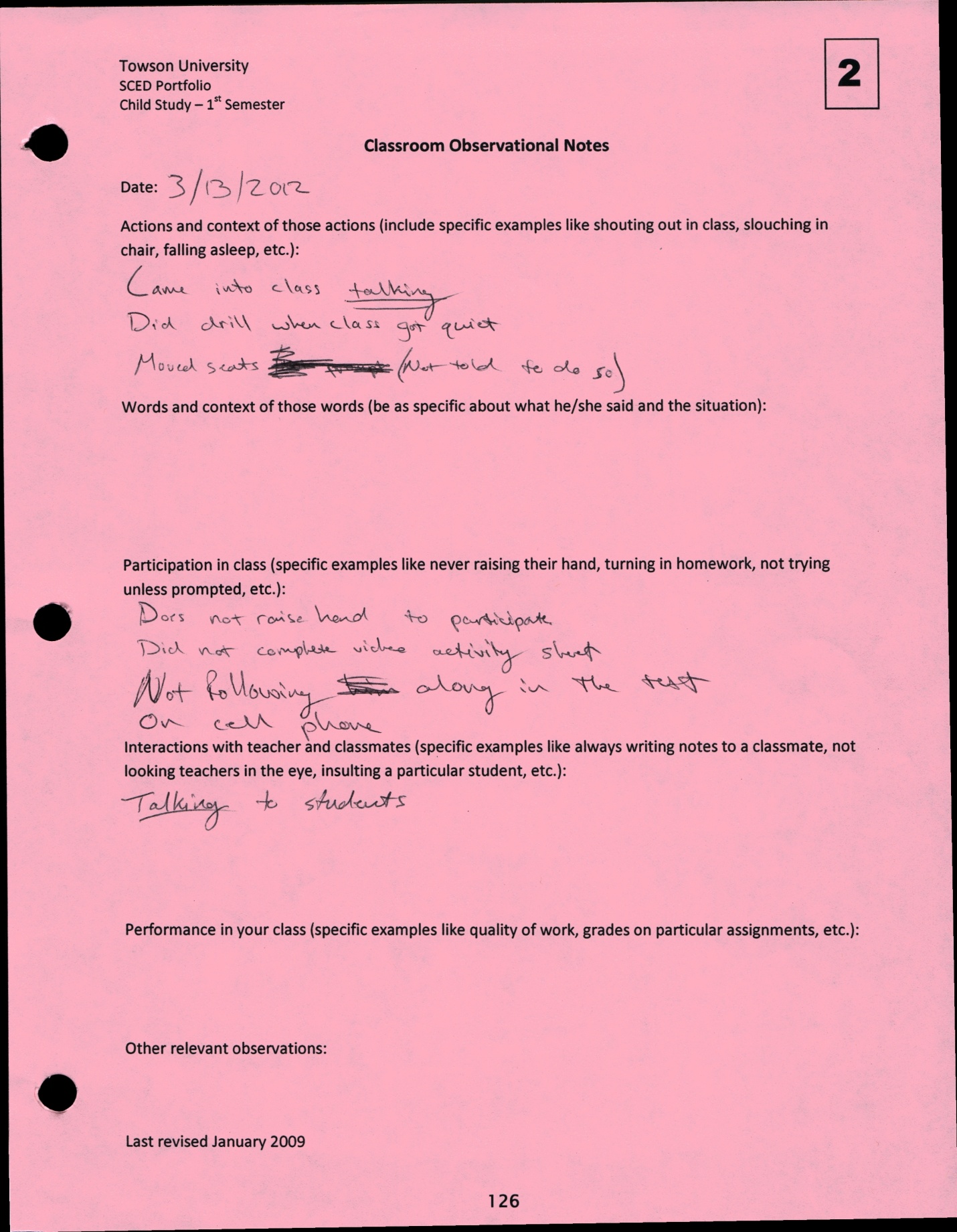
The chapter "Misconceptions about teaching English-language learners" features four common misconceptions that instructors tend to believe when teaching ELLs. The misconceptions have dramatic impacts on student success in the classroom and range from the belief that learning a new language is not that different from learning ones native tongue, to the belief that all ELLs learn English at the same rate. Knowing these misconceptions and how to overcome them in the classroom could have great impacts on the way students like Alexis learn. The chapter concludes with general advice on helping ELLs succeed in their educational career. The solutions to the misconceptions are all research based.

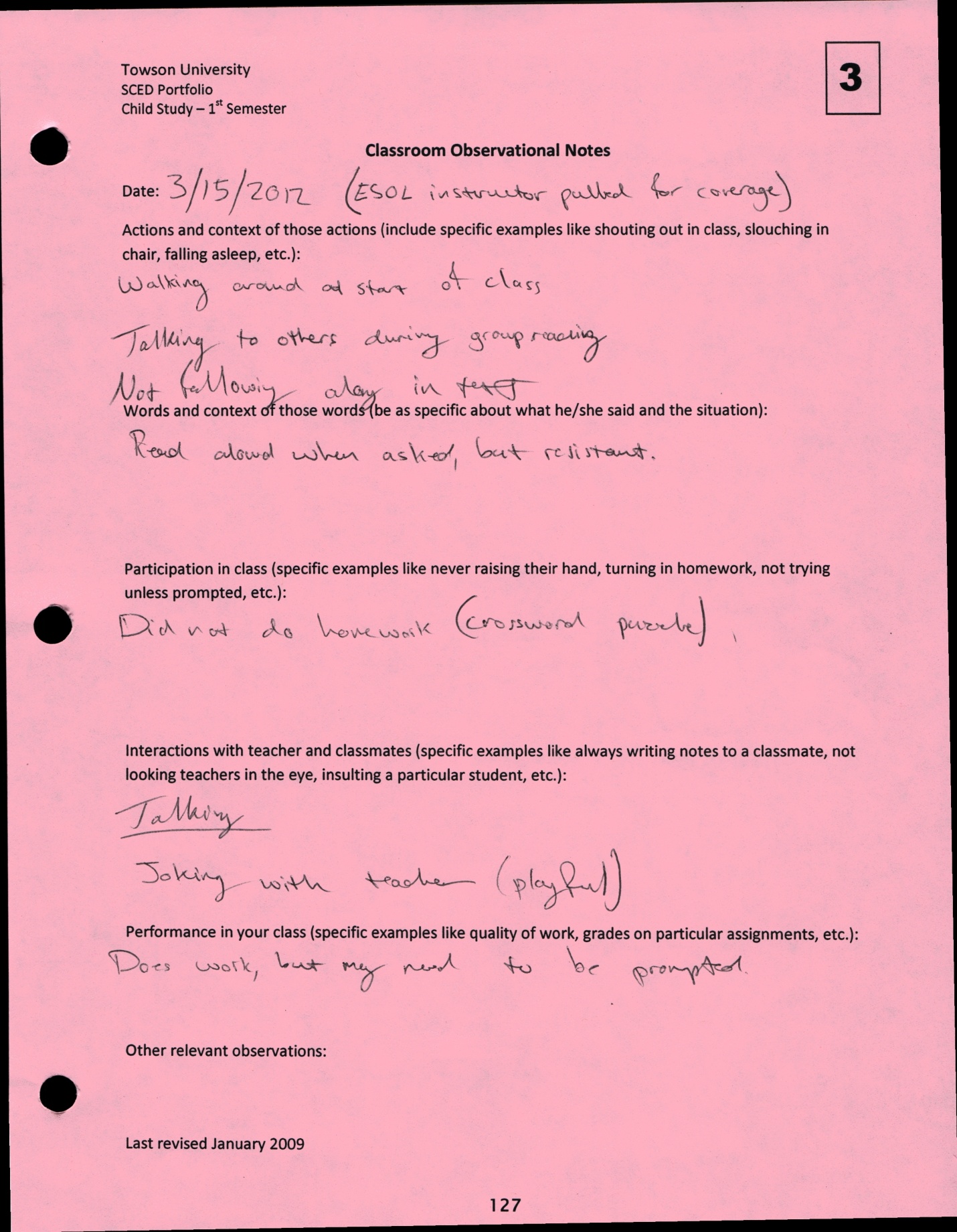
[Best Practices for Adolescent ELLs.](http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/viewarticle?data=dGJyMPPp44rp2%2fdV0%2bnjisfk5Ie46u2P8eXsRuvX54as2%2baH8eq%2bS62prUqup684s7CzS7iprzjOw6SM8Nfsi9%2fZ8oHt5Od8u6OxSq%2bqtVGuqrc%2b6tfsf7vb7D7i2Lt95t6kjN%2fdu1nMnN%2bGu6m2SK%2btt0yxnOSH8OPfjLvc84Tq6uOQ8gAA&hid=18) Rance-Roney, Judith*. Educational Leadership*, Apr2009, Vol. 66 Issue 7, p32-37, 6p

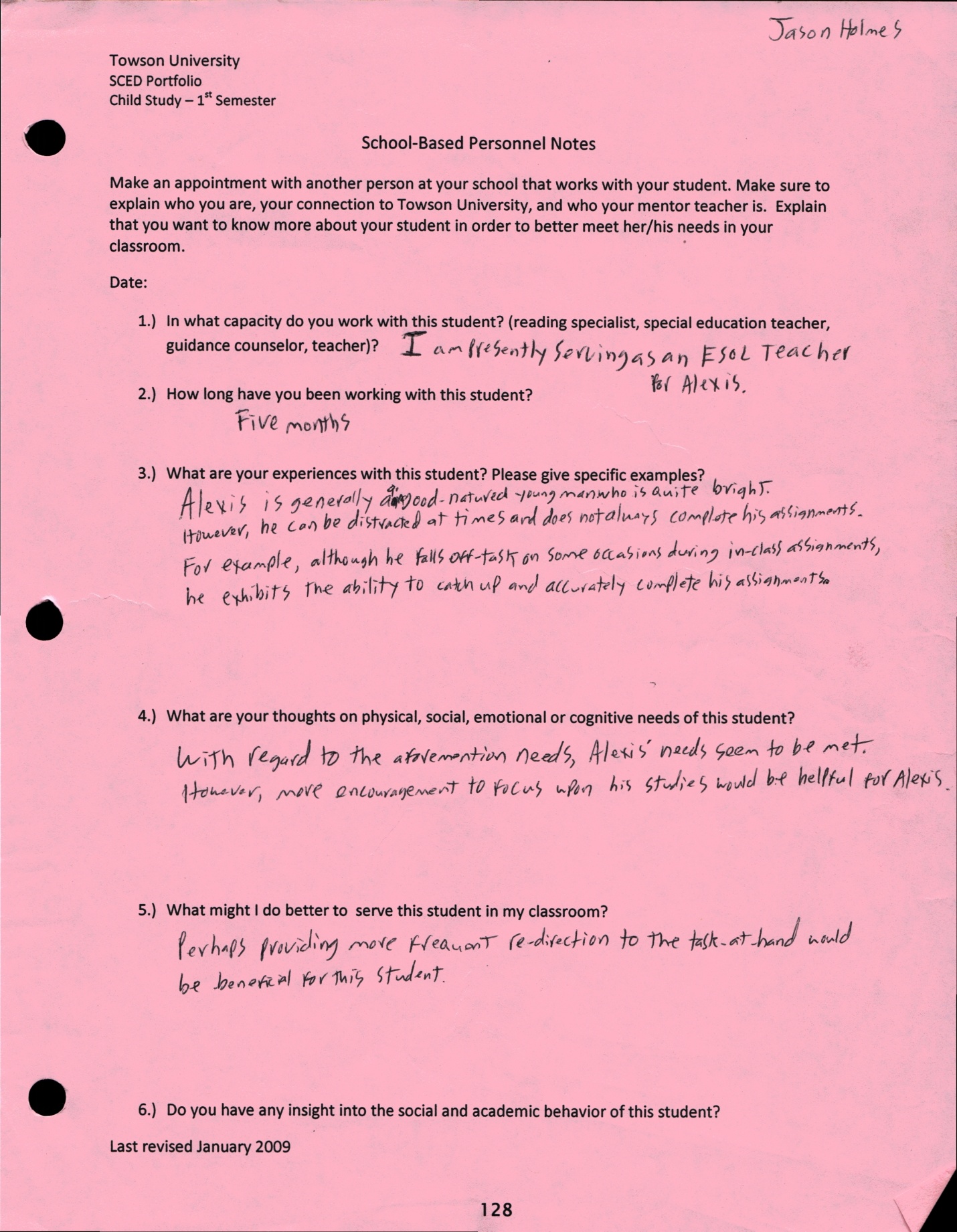
"Best Practices for Adolescent ELLs" offers teaching methods for students ELLs. The article discusses the fact that many schools do not wish to educate ELLs because of accountability on standardized tests. The article suggests that teams be used when attempting to teach ELL students. Teachers specializing in different areas should be working together in order to ensure the students are getting the best education possible. The author notes that ELL students come from varying backgrounds; some students may be immigrants, but other students were born and raised in America, so the backgrounds of these students may be similar to those of the instructors. The article includes also notes that students that speak English proficiently may not have the literary skills necessary to be proficient in writing, and that both need to be monitored.

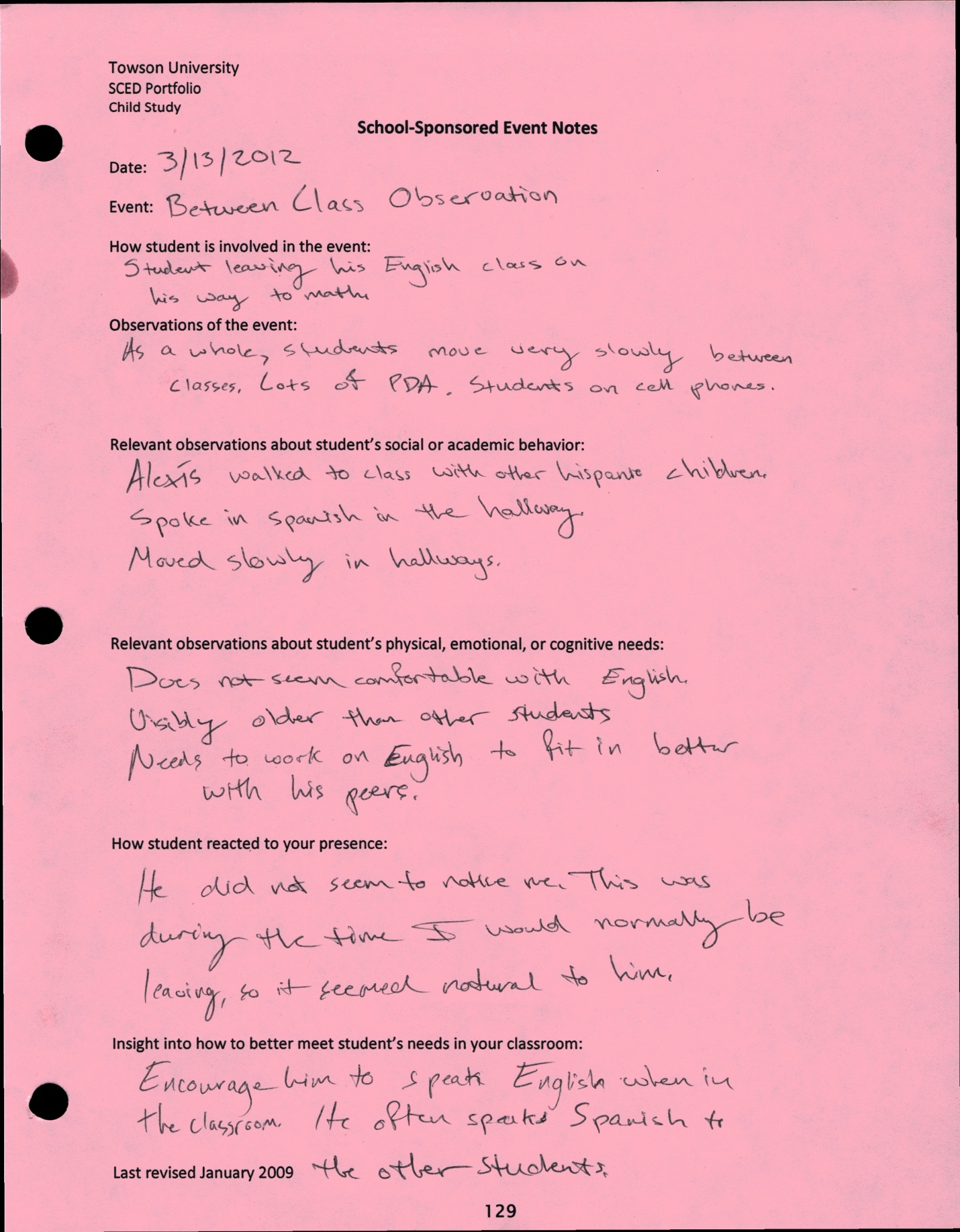
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