



CASE DESCRIPTION - DARIUS

Darius is a 10-year-old in 5th grade who is described as “blunt” and “matter-of-fact.” He often blurts out his thoughts without hesitation, especially in preferred contexts. For example, when playing kickball at recess, he says things like, “I’m nervous I’ll miss” or “I hope I kick it far,” without being prompted.

In non-preferred contexts, however, his language shifts to rigid rules: “I have to do it this way,” “That’s wrong,” or “If I mess up, I’m in trouble.” These rules seem to reduce his willingness to try new approaches — in group science projects, he insists there’s only “one right way” and will argue with peers who suggest alternatives.

Darius occasionally challenges his own rules when a trusted adult offers an alternative (“I guess that could work”), but this flexibility is inconsistent. His teacher notes that when he does experiment with new approaches, he appears to enjoy the process, even if the result isn’t perfect.

He responds well to humor and playful competition, and tends to engage more when asked to “prove his brain wrong” or “see how many ways he can solve something.”

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Therapist: "You just said, 'I have to do it this way.' Is that your brain talking or you talking?"

Darius: "My brain, I guess."

Therapist: "Let's try saying, 'My brain says I have to do it this way.'"

Darius: "My brain says I have to do it this way."

Therapist: "If we wanted to mess with that rule for a minute, what's another way you could do it?"

Darius: "I guess... a faster way."

Therapist: "Nice — that's two ways. Can we find a third?"

Darius: "A silly way." (laughs)

Therapist: "You just proved your brain wrong three times — how's that feel?"

Darius: "Pretty fun."

CASE CONCEPTUALIZATION

What skills are you noticing Darius has?

What things have been probed that Darius responded to?

What are some areas of growth for Darius?

What type of prompts seemed supportive for him?