

DOLORES

(8th Grader – No disability
New immigrant to the United States
Achievement Delayed)

Dolores is an 8th grader whose parents emigrated from Central America last year. In their native country, Dolores' family lived in a small village with limited schooling available and she did not attend school regularly. Rather, she took care of her many small nieces, nephews and her own younger siblings. When she arrived, her primary language skills were difficult to assess. Although she knows some Spanish, her primary language is a little-known dialect. Her parents are illiterate, and communication is difficult due to their limited Spanish and English skills, and the limited availability of translators. A distant relative translates on occasion and assures the school Dolores is a “fine, obedient child, with language skills expected for her age.”



Dolores is excited about school, though highly distractible. In the last year, Dolores has learned to write her name, label colors, identify letter sounds and names and begin to read in English. Her spoken language skills in English are proceeding well, and she is highly motivated. She carries on simple conversations with teachers, though hesitantly. Dolores is well liked and has one friend who speaks her language. She states she wants to, “Be a doctor someday.” She receives YMCA after school tutorial services and spends hours on her homework every evening. Her parents are very proud of her. Mr. X works on an office cleaning team, and Mrs. X is employed in a small assembly business operating factory equipment.

Dolores' teachers are unsure how to teach her the concepts in history, language arts and science due to her limited reading skills and concomitant difficulties with written language at this time. All teachers believe with her motivation, English fluency is likely to be attained in the next few years.