



Students will Use **Observations** to Strengthen Every Aspect of an Early Childhood Program

Strand 4


Observations

Definition of Observation:

Watching children with the clear goal of studying a specific behavior or ability.

Purpose of Observation:

It helps you learn and understand children and better enables you to interact with and teach them. Helps to identify how best to challenge and support the children. It shows growth and behavior patterns as you observe over time. To develop realistic curriculum and goals.



Naturalistic & Participant

Naturalistic Observer: An observation is **watching** children with the clear goal of studying a specific behavior or ability.

Participant Observer: An observation during **interaction** with children with the clear goal of studying a specific behavior or ability.



Assessment

Definition of Assessment: Evaluation or estimation of the nature, quality or ability of someone or something.

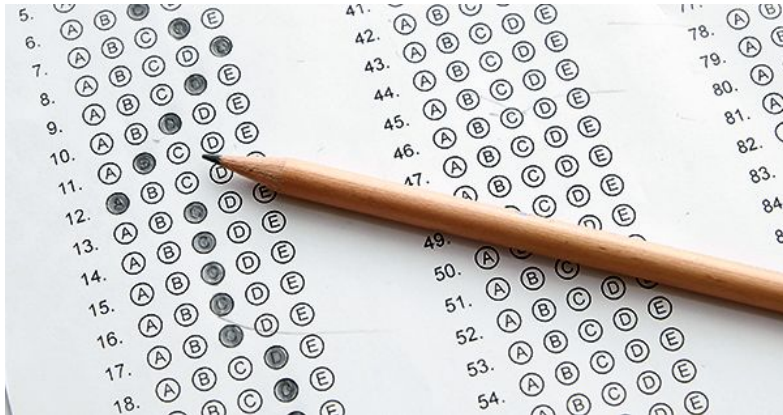
Purpose of Assessment: To determine what the child does and does not know.



Formal vs. Informal

Formal Assessment: include **standardized** tests and research instruments, recording data on carefully designed forms, and analyzing and interpreting data.

Informal Assessments: **observing** children in the classroom, collecting samples of their work, interviewing parents, and **talking** with children.



Types of Informal Assessments

Anecdotal:

- These records are short descriptions of incidents involving one or more child. These records provide data on a child's interests, interactions, and progress.
 - Example: Jessie and Katie are playing together, and the teacher notices they both love to play with hula hoops. The teacher writes on a sticky note, " Jessie and Katie love playing with hula hoops. Use hula hoops to teach sorting."

Checklist:

- Checklists allow you to gather observational information about children's skills, behaviors, or attitudes.
 - Example: The whole class is working on number recognition and the teacher walks around with a checklist determining if children can A) Point out a number that is told to them. B) Say the name of the number. C) Recognize what order they go in. There is a paper for each child, and the teacher puts a check if they can do it, and an X if they can't.

Types of Informal Assessments

Time Sample:

- Records the number of times something happens during a specific time.
 - Example: Johnny has a hard time regulating his emotions and often cries when we can't do something. The teacher observes how often he cries in a 1 hour period and records the findings.

Student Portfolio:

- A collection of students work, assessments, or photos that a teacher collects.
 - Example: At the end of the month the teacher collects all of the assessments the student has taken and reviews them to see what areas the child needs to improve in.

Skills/Factual Statements

Definition: Statements that rely on and are based on the solid facts using the 5W's (who, what, where, when, how, why) as a foundation. They focus only on what you can see and hear. **They set aside personal feelings and prejudices.** This type of statement should be used more often.

Example: The teacher records, "Johnny sat and stared at the blocks before he began to build with them"



Subjective/Interpretive Statements

Definition: Rely on **personal opinions, assumptions, and feelings** about their behavior that has been observed. Generally, should not be used.

Example: Teacher writes, “Johnny did not want to build with blocks, I don’t think he likes playing blocks, so he sat and stared at them”



Planning and Evaluating Observations

Part of planning and implementing a lesson is **doing an observation and evaluation to see if your plans met specific skills and behaviors** throughout the developmental areas. [Example](#)

Steps for a Written Observation Record:

1. **What did you observe?** - Kate is gluing beans to a paper with a flower on it.
2. **Observe and document.** - Kate is very focused. Often the beans slip out of her fingers, and she keeps trying instead of getting frustrated.
3. **What does this tell me?** -Kate is able to regulate her emotions well and is still developing her fine motor skills.
4. **Evaluate and interpret.** -Kate is still developing in her fine motor skills, she understands the concept and enjoys doing it, it just takes her longer than other students.
5. **What do I do with this information?** - I am going to give Kate more opportunities to practice her fine motor skills during class.
6. **Plan and Implement.** -The teacher plans an activity for the class to do where they string bead onto a string in order to make a necklace. She does this with Kate in mind.

Schedules

- Daily/weekly schedules should be posted for preschool and school-age groups. The schedule should include, at a minimum, meal, snack, nap/rest, and outdoor times.
- Daily activities should include outdoor play or indoor play that support gross motor skill development.
- Providing a flexible daily schedule helps the center run smoothly and provides consistency and diminishes misbehavior.

 Arrival	8:45 We greet each other. Students arrive, take off coats and shoes, and hang up their backpacks.
 Morning Work	8:55 Students complete "morning work" on the carpet. Younger students do a name activity. Preschool students do a color game.
 Circle Time	9:00 Morning Meeting Circle time includes a name song, a brief calendar time (for Pre-K only), checking the snack chart, a welcome from Betty (our puppet) and a quick introduction to one of the centers for the day.
 Centers	9:10 - 11:00 Students choose the centers that they would like to work on. They move and rotate through the centers at their own pace. Teachers engage with them at the centers.
 Bathroom	10:00 We call the students individually to go to the restroom and wash their hands.
 Circle Time	10:10 When they're finished, they go to the carpet for music & movement and a thematic mini-lesson.
 Snack Time	10:20 Students eat and then ask to be excused. When they are finished, they return to working at centers.
 Clean Up	11:00 We turn off the lights and play clean up music. Students return the toys and supplies to the shelves. When the room is (mostly) clean, they put on their shoes & coats.
 Recess	11:15 We play outdoors. When it rains (booo) we stay inside and play a large group game.
 Story Time	11:40 During this final "Circle Time" we review a strategy or math skill (a letter, or a shape, or a quick rhyming activity - Pre-K only) and then read a story. The younger preschoolers just talk about the book then read the story.
 Dismissal	12:00 Students put on their backpacks and we walk them to the car line for pick-up.

DAP

Implement these DAP learning experiences into the daily schedule:

1. English Language Arts
2. Mathematics
3. Science/Sensory
4. Creative Arts
5. Social/Emotional and Social Studies
6. Physical Health and Safety

