



# ECE311 CAPSTONE PROJECT

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## **Observation Techniques**

### **Anecdotal Record**

An anecdotal record is an informal observational method used to help understand the child's personality or behavior. Provides a running account of behavior that is typical or unusual for the child. Anecdotal records are direct observations of a child that provide a window of opportunity to view a child's actions, interactions, and reactions to people and events. An anecdotal record is an excellent tool that provides teachers with a collection of narratives that can be used to show a child's progress over time. Compared to a running log, anecdotal logs provide short notes that focus on a specific event or activity.

### **Running Record**

A running record is a detailed, objective, sequential log that is written while the event occurs. It is usually short, often only 10 minutes or less. The observer records everything possible that the child says and does during a specified period of time or during a designated activity. All observed behaviors are recorded in great detail: actions, body and verbal language, facial expressions, etc. this is only what is observed directly and noting the elapsed time frequently. When writing a running record, you should use the present tense and detail the action that is happening in front of you as it occurs. It will record the scenario, situation, and sequence in which the behavior occurred. Be as descriptive as possible and yet as concise as possible. It is important to give yourself a time frame (e.g., 10 minutes) in which you will become a spectator and begin to observe and write down what is happening as it happens. Running records are most often used to assess reading skills, but they can have a wide range of different

applications. Regardless of the purpose of a running record, there will be a conclusion at the end of the document in which the observer can draw inferences about the behaviors they have just observed. The goal of a running record is to capture a student's activity as it happens, gauging both their performance and behavior in any given task. Objectivity is crucial here, as an observer must write down exactly what is happening. To do so takes focus and some practice.

### **Developmental Checklist**

An observation checklist is an efficient and practical way to collect information about a child's development. With each age of range, there are certain expectations and skills that a child should be able to achieve. This checklist is designed to track each child's competencies in all the developmental domains including physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional. With this checklist we can easily see what a child can do, as well as note what areas of development need further support. I would do a checklist in my classroom to track the whole group or an individual child. This will help me to keep track of their development in each area, and data can also help plan curriculum activities.

### **Descriptive Review**

The descriptive review is a mode of inquiry that draws on the rich, detailed knowledge teachers and parents have of children. It is founded on the ability to describe those children in full and balanced ways, so that they become visible as complex persons with particular strengths, interests, and capacities. The descriptive review process asks the teacher to look together at pieces of student work, to discuss what they see in the work, and to bring multiple perspectives to an analysis of the work in order to improve the quality of the work designed for students.

## Physical Development Checklist

Fine Motor Skills	No Observed	Observed
Cuts online continuously	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coordinating hands to brush teeth or hair.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Copies 9 block models	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Builds things with smaller linking blocks, such as Duplo or Lego.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Holds the pencil with a tripod grasp (3pt grasp)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Copies cross.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Copies square	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writes their name.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Writes numbers 1-5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Copies letters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Starts to learn to print some capital letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Starts to draw pictures that are recognizable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using a preferred hand for most activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dresses and undresses independently (excluding shoelaces).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Opens zip lock bags, containers and lunch boxes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Completes 8-12 pc interlocking puzzle.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **Descriptive Review**

P is standing in front of his table, he is writing his name on a whiteboard, using a marker and an eraser. P writes his first name twice on the whiteboard. Now he is writing the initial of his name, erases it and rewrites it. P holds in pencil using the tripod grip while writing. a few seconds later he begins to play with the eraser, grabs it with one hand and starts turning it around on the table. circles his name, then begins dividing the letters that have his name, then crosses it out. She plays with the eraser again and turns it over and a few seconds later starts writing again. This time she shares with the educator that what we see on the board is the name of his brother.

Immediately after that between several background conversations, she hears the educator say that they have two minutes to clean up because they are going outside, he rushes to erase everything he had written on the board and takes it to his storage place. During the observation I could see that P demonstrates the ability to use fine motor skills, he also demonstrates adequate body awareness when moving in different spaces, and when the teacher says they are going outside P was able to exhibit self-help skills by cleaning and putting everything he was using in its place.

## Language Development

### Running Record

Boy A and Boy B are playing with Lego Duplo on the carpet, while building different objects, Boy A says, "We're making them into shooting cars with three guns." Child B says, "these are the engines" "attack, attack, attack." the caregiver asks them What are your favorite toys to play with at home? Child A says "Lego, I like to play with small Lego" and child B says, "people make different things out of it" After the same question was asked to the rest of the students, there are those who said they liked to play with soldiers and Star Wars. one of the students said "i like playing with Lego because you do not have restrictions you can make anything" a girl in the class said that she liked to play with jigsaw puzzle.

Q-What would you like to play with?

The first answer is "I like to play with Ben and Ruby that are my dolls and my friends and my teddys"

Then "I like playing with my iPad because I make special effect things like, so I take a video and add the special effects, or I come out playing hurling"

For the next segment the question is who do you like playing with?

Here are two girls painting the girl with a yellow shirt says to the girl with a black shirt, "Can you mix it on to this purple?" The girl in the black shirt does what her partner suggests, then the girl in the yellow shirt says "black" immediately recognizing the color they created by combining

the colors. A few minutes later, during a small conversation between the caregiver and the student, the girl in the black T-shirt tells the teacher: "I like to paint alone at the easel." Then the same question was asked to another student and her answer was "I like playing with the other children" also, the boy who had a striped shirt, says, "I like playing with Sean, suddenly we hear another voice saying, "I am Sean." Each child develops differently either when they are participating in a lesson or when they are playing, some prefer to work and play alone as in the case of the student in the blue shirt, he says "I don't really play with anybody, I like playing by myself."

Now the question that was asked is, if you had a magic wand?

here we look at a group of children playing with water. the girl in purple says "I want some more, I want some more water" the girl in white listens to her partner's request and says "there you go, you're full" then the caregiver asks both girls what you do with a magic wand? the girl in purple answers saying "turn the crocodile into disappear, I'm going to disappear them as well" the teacher smiles and says, you gonna disappear the kids as well, and immediately the caregiver asks her partner, "what Do you think about that J? and J responds "we will hide and she won't ever find us" the girl in purple says "yes I will"

Q-Have you enough time to play?

here we see a girl playing in the toy kitchen, the girl says, "I'm making pancakes" then this girl walks up to her partner and says, "Do you want a pancake?" and her partner without answering takes the supposed pancake and pretends to taste it. the caregiver then asks, do we have enough time to prepare all the food? A child's response is "We can do it tomorrow!" then other children are asked this same question and some say they don't have enough time to play, or at



least not as much time as they would like. But there is another question that children are asked, what do adults need to know? the girl in purple says "I like to run outside and play outside" one of the children gives his point of view on the benefits of going for a run outside, he says "when you play you learn to run faster and faster and get stronger" the child C says, "I think adults should know we need a little more time to play" and child D says, "I think adults should know how much fun it is to play."

### **Descriptive Review**

The students in the group are three-year-old children, they show interest and enthusiasm in the activities that are taking place. we can see that students engage in activities and conversations between peers and adults. These children use oral language to express ideas and their taste for certain things, for example when the girl in purple says, "I like to run outside and play outside", these children also respond appropriately to questions and display an extensive vocabulary during conversations.

## **Cognitive Development**

### **Anecdotal Record**

Noah is in the pretending play area; he was pretending that he cooked for the caregiver and one of his classmates. The caregiver says, "Noah I thought you were going to make us something" and Noah replied, "I'm going to cook" the caregiver replied, "what type of food?" and Noah says, "that food" and points his finger at him to show what he's preparing on the other side. Then a girl in the class says "I want a lettuce sandwich" the caregiver asks Noah if he can make a lettuce sandwich for his classmate and he answers "yeah," then the caregiver says, "I'm going to want a hamburger and I'm going to want an apple" Noah replies "I'm going to cook" the caregiver says "yes, cooked" Noah is aware that when the food is cooking or just cooked is hot, and this is demonstrated when she tells the caregiver "It's very hot" multiple times to warn her to be careful. Then the caregiver says "Okay, let me know when it's cool okay" then Noah says "It's done" the caregiver right away says "is it okay for me to hold it yet? Should I blow on it?" Noah responds, "To blow" the caregiver tells him that it was delicious to which Noah responds, "you want more?" the caregiver says "yeah, can I have an apple too because I'm hungry" her classmate tells her that she is also hungry and wants an apple too, Noah replies "Okay, I'm going to cook it" but the caregiver pretends to be very hungry and says, "I wonder how long it's gonna to take to cook it?" Noah says, "I'm cooking, and he is hungry too, and the baby is hungry too, and you too" then the caregiver says, "How long is it gonna be?" Noah responds, "Today."

## **Descriptive Review**

Noah is a talkative boy, who decides and starts activities that interest him. This builds self-confidence when he initiates conversations with his classmates and caregivers, he shows a great ability to communicate his intentions and ideas. Noah has a specific idea about what to do with the materials or how to use the tools. The child assumes simulated roles and represents his own scenarios. We can see this when Noah pretended to cook for his caregiver and his classmate, and before giving them what he pretended to have cooked, he warned them that it was very hot multiple times, Noah said, "It's very hot" this lets us know that Noah knows the difference between what is hot and cold, then the caregiver says "Okay, let me know when it's cool okay" and Noah's answer is "It's done" but still reminds them to blow. Noah also shows the ability to put together more than five words, this was demonstrated when he said, "I'm cooking, and he is hungry too, and the baby is hungry too, and you too." He also uses time related words like today, the caregiver says, "how long is it gonna be?" Noah responds "Today."

## **Social Emotional development**

### **Anecdotal Record**

Mariyam is sitting at the table, ready to eat her snack. She is trying to open her snack with the scissors, which she successfully opened. Then Mical arrives and Mariyam kindly offers her scissors so that she can open her own snack. Mical is having a hard time opening his snack, and Mariyam is trying to talk to her, Mariyam says some words that I was not able to identify but Mical's answer was "yes" accompanied by a movement of his head back and forth. Then Mariyam says "I have a big chair" as if wanting to have a topic of conversation. while Mical is having a hard time opening her snack with the scissors. So Asli joins the table, she kindly offers to open her classmate's snack, to which Mical agrees and gives it to her for her to open. Asli opens her partner's snack and then I'll open hers. In response to Asli's help, Mical just smiles and proceeds to eat his snack.

### **Descriptive Review**

Mical, Mariyam and Asli are three-year-old girls, they show interest in communicating with others, but they are also capable of identifying when a partner needs help, as in the example of Asli, when she saw that her partner Mical could not open her own. snack and she, perhaps with a little more experience with the scissors, offered to help. This is a show of empathy for her partner who was having a hard time doing it herself. Through these actions these girls are creating positive relationships, we can also observe the expression of emotions such as when Asli opened the snack to Mical, Mariyam was attentive to what she was doing, something that she will surely end up doing in the future when someone be in this situation. As for Asli, her reaction was wordless, but with a grateful smile.

## **Conclusion**

To observe child development, we must consider the different development domains that provide us a framework to analyze and describe how children develop over time in a variety of areas.

Those domains are physical, language, cognitive, social-emotional. Observations can help us see how and when to intervene in ways that help children be successful. Instead of jumping in and solving a "problem" for an infant or toddler, provide enough help, such as loosening the lid of a jar but not removing it, this encourages children to explore and learn more on their own. Also, through continuous observation, we learn about children's strengths, needs, knowledge, interests, and abilities, and discover any barriers to learning that may exist. While we observe we can gather all the information of different domains at the same time. Observation begins with being present and mindful as children explore their environment individually and in groups, during caregiving routines, while playing, and during interactions. Taking time to observe allows us to explore what infants or toddlers are focusing on, what their intentions might be, and what strategies they are using to learn, and then plan individualized and developmentally based activities. The objective observation and descriptive review play an important role at the time to acquire knowledge in understanding about children's interest, motivations, behavior and skills. That is why they are a source of information, helping teachers to plan the appropriate activities based on the needs of each child. The strengths and challenges vary, for example anecdotal records are an effective way to track a child's performance. Anecdotal notes are very important because they are based on facts, not opinions, they are notes that document our observation of what the child says or does within the context of classroom activities or a routine. While the running records the observer records everything seen, this is a record of what the child is doing and saying exactly as it happens without subjective comments.

## Commentary

Observation is an important skill for infant and toddler teachers to learn. Improving our observation skills and reflecting on what we see throughout the day can become an important and useful tool for individualizing care, adjusting the daily schedule, documenting each child's learning, and planning meaningful curriculum. Through continuous practice, we can develop our observation skills and develop different ways of documenting and interpreting our observations. With practice, we can find the easiest and most comfortable way to adapt it to our daily work with young children. As we individualize the care of children and their families, it is important to consider what works best for us as we collect observations and documentation throughout the day. Different styles of documentation work for different teachers, childcare settings, and times of the day. that's why it's important to try different approaches to see what feels good and doesn't interfere with our interactions with infants and toddlers. From my age group, I observed that most of the children were developmentally appropriate according to their age. For example, Mariyam, Mical and Asli. While Mariyam and Asli have no problem opening their snack bag, Mical has a hard time holding the scissors properly and opening her snack bag. That tells me that we need to help improve Mical's fine motor skills.

To be an objective observer is not easy, so I think that preparation and a lot of practice will help me improve. I personally do not have much experience doing it but with practice I will achieve it. This time for my observations I used videos, it was not complicated since with the videos I had the opportunity to watch them over and over again, but I lack the experience of making an

observation in a classroom. Observation, documentation, and reflection are important skills for high-quality infant and toddler care. Developing these skills can help teachers impressively. Through this research, I learned that observation is an important skill for infant and toddler teachers to learn, and also that writing a descriptive review is an important tool in observing a child's development. and the importance of Improving our observation skills and reflecting on what we see throughout the day can become an important and useful tool for individualizing care and planning a meaningful curriculum.