

Teaching and Learning

Observational tasks



Strong observational skills are a must in all practitioners. The ability to apply our knowledge of child development, to what we hear/see children do, is the steppingstone to a meaningful curriculum that meets the children's individual needs.

There are many strategies and methods for observing children, such as.

- Anecdotal records
- Learning stories
- Time samples
- Tracking observations
- Magic moments
- Checklists
- Group/individual observations
- Photo/recordings

Using a variety of methods to observe children at different times of the day, doing and experiencing different things, will enable practitioners to gather a holistic view of the child, leading to accurate assessments of the child's development.

Are you participating when observing?

Are your observations planned or spontaneous?

We don't write everything down – how do you decide what to capture?

What do we do with our observations?

Do you share or discuss your observations with the child, parents or others?

Task 1

Practicing your observational skills:

Agree on a time and child to observe with a partner – make a note of anything that you feel is relevant to capture about the child.

What did you note down?

What was your focus?

Did you note anything different to one another?

Was your opinion of your observation similar to that of your partner?

What areas of development did you observe?

This kind of activity is a great way to practice your observational skills and to moderate your findings.