

## Children's Programming Observation Guide

**Program Name:** Circle time

**Date:** 9/26/2020

**Location:** Youtube

**Time:** 1:30-2:00 pm

**Number of children:** 11

**Observer:** Rebecca

**Number of adults:** 3

### **Setting:**

*Provide a description of the setting for the observation.*

This observation took place in a preschool classroom. The children were sitting cross legged in a circle on a blue rug with colored squares around the edges. One child was using a floor sitter. The teacher was sitting on a stool at the "top" of the circle, and 2 other adults moved around the room during the observation. On the floor to the left of the teacher was a small easel/sandwich board with the word "Welcome" in red letters. During the observation, she flipped over pages that corresponded to different activities. One page was blue with yellow letters that spelled "Songs" and black musical notes. A third page was a calendar that said October at the top with had dates partially filled in. A fourth page was green with words and pictures that I couldn't read/see.

Behind the teacher was a bulletin board covered in brown paper with yellow letters that read "Story Vocabulary". Another bulletin board was covered with brown paper, multiple colored letters that spelled "Happy Birthday", and laminated cupcakes cutouts and names. Further to the right, another bulletin board was covered with red paper; I couldn't see what was posted on that board. Under that bulletin board was a rack that appeared to be filled with books.

### **Summary of Activities:**

*Provide an overview of the activities that took place during the observation.*

The observation focused on a preschool circle time. When the observation began, the teacher was leading the children in counting to 11 by saying the numbers out loud as she placed a series of cards on the floor in front of her one by one. Then the teacher asked the children to stand and led them in saying the pledge of allegiance. Next, the children sang a song. The teacher offered 3 choices and selected a child who chose a song called ABC Rock. The group sang along to a recording of the song and did hand motions.

The teacher then presented a calendar to the students and elicited the current date. She began by eliciting the name of the month (October), and led the children in practicing how to pronounce it. She

then asked questions and led the children in singing a song to identify the day of the week (Tuesday). Finally, she led the children in counting to identify the date (8<sup>th</sup>).

After that, the teacher asked the students to describe the weather. Children disagreed on whether it was sunny or both sunny and cloudy, and the teacher asked them to raise their hands to vote. The teacher indicated the weather was sunny and cloudy. She held up a 3-dimensional weather chart and invited a child to add a block to the “partly cloudy” column. She also asked the child whether it was hot or cold (he said it was hot) and asked him to add a block to the “hot” column. She then asked the group to make comparisons among the numbers of blocks for different columns (i.e., the most, the least, equal).

Finally, the teacher asked the group to stand. She led the children in a yoga pose (warrior) while asking them to repeat specific phrases (I am strong in heart, I support myself, I am ready to act, and I am trustworthy).

**Engagement**

*For each dimension described below, rate the level of children’s engagement you observed. Then describe specific, concrete examples of what you saw and heard to illustrate and support your rating.*

	<i>Did not occur</i>		<i>Occurred somewhat</i>		<i>Occurred frequently</i>
1. Children directed their attention to the presenter and activities.	1	2	3	4	5
<p><i>Examples or description:</i></p> <p>For most of the session, children sat on the rug and watched the teacher. When she walked over to help the child who used the floor sitter, the children’s eyes often followed her.</p> <p>The children quickly followed the teacher’s instructions, which indicated to me that they were paying close attention. For example, when she asked them to stand up for the pledge of allegiance and to do the yoga pose, the children stood up right away.</p> <p>I did not observe children having side conversations or leaving the circle, except for one child who told an adult she needed to go to the bathroom and left the circle for several minutes.</p>					

	<i>Did not occur</i>		<i>Occurred somewhat</i>		<i>Occurred frequently</i>
2. Children participated in the activities.	1	2	3	4	5
<p><i>Examples or description:</i></p> <p>After counting to 11 at the beginning of the session, the teacher told the group, “give your neighbor a high five, say ‘good job, neighbor’.” Most children gave high fives to the child (or teacher) sitting next to them.</p> <p>The teacher led the group in singing ABC Rock. Children sang the letters loudly (“ABC”, “DEF”) and did many of the hand motions (slapping their legs, shaking their hands, waving their arms above their heads). Children sang some of the other lyrics (“We’re singing our alphabet”).</p> <p>During the discussion of the weather, the teacher said, “Some friends think that it’s only sunny and some friends think it’s sunny and cloudy [...] If you think it’s sunny only, no clouds, raise your hands.” Five children raised their hands. “If you think it’s sunny and cloudy, raise your hands” Four children raised their hands. Three children didn’t vote.</p>					

	<i>Did not occur</i>		<i>Occurred somewhat</i>		<i>Occurred frequently</i>
3. Children answered the presenter’s questions and/or offered information related to the activities.	1	2	3	4	5
<p><i>Examples or description:</i></p> <p>When the teacher flipped the page over to reveal a calendar, she asked the children “what is this called?” They replied in unison “a calendar”. She asked, “what does it tell us?” One child answered, “the date”. She pointed to the month written at the top and asked, “What is our month?” Several children answered, “October”.</p> <p>To identify the day of the week, the teacher said, “yesterday was Mmm...” and the students chimed in “Monday”. Then she said to the children, “If you have a guess of what our day of the week is” and gestured to raise their hands. Several students raised their hands and she called on them individually. They answered, “Sunday”, “Friday”, “Tuesday”. The teacher then led the group in a song of the days of the week, using a pointer to indicate the days of the week on the calendar. She stopped the song on Tuesday and then asked, “What’s today?” The children replied in unison, “Tuesday”.</p> <p>The teacher asked the group, “What is our weather like out today?” Several children offered their answers “sunny, “sunny and cloudy,” “it’s cloudy”, “I can’t see clouds”, “I see them”, “it’s sunny”.</p>					

	<i>Did not occur</i>		<i>Occurred somewhat</i>		<i>Occurred frequently</i>
4. Children asked questions related to the activities.	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Examples or description:</i>					
I did not observe any children asking a question about activities.					

**Approximately what proportion of children were actively engaged in today's session/activities?**

*None/Very Few*

*Some*

*Most*

*Nearly all/All*

*Notes or comments*

At times it was difficult to hear how many children were speaking when the children answered, counted, or sang in unison. I was also unsure about the level of engagement demonstrated by the child using the floor sitter.

**Math-Related Skills**

*Rate the extent to which you observed children demonstrate the math-related skills described below. Then describe specific, concrete examples of what you saw and heard to illustrate and support your rating.*

	<i>None/Very Few</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Most</i>	<i>Nearly all/All</i>
5. Children demonstrated counting skills.	1	2	3	4
<i>Examples or description:</i>				
At the beginning of the observation, children counted to 11 in unison while the teacher placed cards on the ground.				
To identify the current date, the teacher asked the children to count the days filled in on the calendar. They counted from 1 to 7 in unison, while she pointed to the numbers. The children then shouted "8" when they reached the empty space. The teacher then asked them to clap together 8 times and stop. Nearly all the children clapped and counted together (1 child did not participate). One child continued to 9. The teacher repeated the activity and nearly all the children clapped and counted together (1 child did not participate).				

	<i>None/ Very Few</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Most</i>	<i>Nearly all/All</i>
6. Children demonstrated skills in comparing quantities.	1	2	3	4
<p><i>Examples or description:</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Comparing equal quantities</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Comparing quantities that were clearly different</b></p> <p>Nearly all children demonstrated the ability to compare quantities that were clearly different. When pointing to the blocks stacked up in the 3D weather chart, the teacher asked the children “which weather do we have the most?” (The stack for sunny was the tallest.) One child said “sunny”; another said, “sunny and cloudy”. She asked again, “where do we have the most?” One child said “sunny”; another said, “really sunny”. The teacher said, “Sunny. Look at how many we have. We have the most” and tapped the “sunny” stack.</p> <p>Later, the teacher pointed to the blocks stacked for “hot” and “cold”. (The stack for hot was taller.) She asked, “Which do we have the most, hot or cold?” The children said in unison, “hot”. She asked, “Which one do we have the least?” In unison, the children said, “cold”.</p> <p>Very few children demonstrated the ability to compare quantities that were equal. The teacher pointed to “partly cloudy” and “snowing”, which each had 1 block. She asked, “Are they equal? Or is one the least?” One child said, “yes” when the teacher said “equal”. Two children said “one’s the least.” Another child said “two”. The teacher then pointed again and said, “One and one. Are those the same or different?” A child said, “different”. The teacher said, “Same. One. One. Those are equal.”</p>				

**Additional notes or comments**

Based on the children’s behavior, it was clear to me that the children were familiar with the circle time routine. For example, the children seemed to know which way to face for the pledge of allegiance (they faced a corner of the room, away from the child who held a picture of a flag), to understand how the teacher selected her helpers (by flipping to the next child listed on her set of cards). I wonder how being familiar with the routine might relate to levels of engagement. For example, would children who are less familiar with the routine focus their attention as carefully on the teacher and participate as quickly/fully in the activities.