



Respond to the following question:

- When you are observing in a teacher's classroom, what do you look for to help you determine their performance?

Developing Teachers by Collecting and Analyzing Observation Data

Nevada Early Childhood Leadership Series

Session Objectives

- Use a birth-five observation rubric to effectively observe and develop teachers
- Take high-quality, low-inference observation notes that capture teacher practice and evidence of student outcomes
- Provide accurate ratings on teacher performance

Agenda

Opening

Tools for Data-Driven Observations

Effective and Efficient Classroom Observations

Next Steps and Closing



Respond to the following question:

- When you are observing in a teacher's classroom, what do you look for to help you determine their performance?

KEY IDEA

We know that **leadership matters**. Research points to the pivotal role of strong instructional leadership in improving teaching and student achievement. The ability to identify, nurture, and develop teaching talent sits squarely with center and school leaders. **To have an effective teacher in every early childhood classroom, we need a transformational leader in every early childhood center and school.**

We also know that **teachers matter**:

Research shows that students with even one top teacher...

are less likely to have children as teenagers...

are more likely to attend college...

earn a higher salary...

and save more for retirement.

Developing a strong teaching staff begins with effective and frequent classroom observations and identifying targeted areas for teacher development.

Agenda

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Effective and Efficient Classroom Observations

Next Steps and Closing

Why Use Rubrics?

Key Idea

When observing classrooms, you want to absorb as much as possible about what is happening so that you leave with an accurate understanding of teacher and student performance. A rubric helps to provide that clear and accurate picture.

- They provide both teachers and leaders **clear guidelines for what to do** and what to look for in classrooms
- All school/center staff have a **common language** to use to talk about classroom success
- Rubrics provide a clear structure for teachers to understand **where they are performing** and what they should do to **grow and improve**
- Helps leaders **identify trends** (both strengths and growth areas) across classrooms and throughout the school or center
- The rubric we will use allows teachers and leaders to **focus on instruction and student learning**, as opposed to compliance

The Rubric and Its Structure

Rubric Handout

Competency

Essential Question

BUILDING ORAL LANGUAGE SKILLS

Does the activity help students to build

oral language skills and/or vocabulary?

Rating Scale

Indicator	1. INEFFECTIVE	2. MINIMALLY EFFECTIVE	3. DEVELOPING	4. PROFICIENT
The teacher models complex language (a variety of words; unknown words connected to familiar words or ideas; academic vocabulary) for students, in a wide variety of activities and settings (physical development activities, changing table, centers, reading texts, transitions, etc.)	The teacher does not model complex language	The teacher inconsistently models complex language	The teacher consistently models complex language but only in some activities	The teacher consistently models complex language in most activities
Students determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words. (Students use context clues, illustrations, word walls and other strategies to define new words.)	Students were exposed to no unknown words or multiple meaning words or almost no unknown or multiple meaning words	Students were exposed to very few unknown or multiple-meaning words but the teacher provided the meaning.	Students had several opportunities to determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases with appropriate support from the teacher	Students had many opportunities to determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases with appropriate support from the teacher
The teacher utilizes self-talk and parallel-talk in multiple settings throughout the day.	The teacher never or almost never utilizes self and parallel talk.	The teacher inconsistently utilizes self and parallel talk.	The teacher consistently utilizes self and parallel talk models but only in some settings	The teacher consistently utilizes self and parallel talk in multiple settings.

- (Teacher throughout actions; teacher actions)
- **What do you notice about the rubric?**
 - **What is included? What is not?**
 - **What is helpful about this rubric? Where might it be challenging to use?**

How to Rate Overall Performance

1. Decide on your rating for each **indicator**.
2. Consider the ratings for all the indicators under a particular **competency** (i.e.. Building Oral Language Skills).
3. Using your evidence and indicator ratings, assign an **overall rating** to that competency: Ineffective, Approaching Developing, Developing, Proficient.
4. Write **2-3 evidence statements** that support your overall rating.
5. **Repeat** for each relevant competency.

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Tools for Data-Driven Observations

Effective and Efficient Classroom Observations

Identifying Key Levers for Teacher Development

Next Steps and Closing

Key Idea

When observing classrooms, you want to absorb as much as possible about what is happening so that you leave with an accurate understanding of teacher and student performance.

Criteria for Effective Note-Taking

Know the rubric

Find a good vantage point(s)

Use shorthand

Notice teacher and student actions

Write low-inference notes

 **Low-Inference Note-Taking:** Describe what is taking place without drawing conclusions or making judgments about what you observe.

 **Your notes should:**

- Be objective and focus specifically on what is happening. Stay away from notes that say “I think” or “I feel”.
- Notes capture specific evidence. For example, instead of “many students raised their hands” say “17 of 20 students raised their hands.”
- Contain actual teacher and student quotes. For example, instead of “teacher asked open-ended questions”, write the actual questions that teachers used.
- Be void of emotion or judgment. For example, saying something like “the environment is beautiful” implies judgment, and something like “teacher effectively engaged students” is subjective.

Sample Observation Notes

Original Notes:

TIME	TEACHER ACTIONS	STUDENT ACTIONS
1:23	<i>Teacher engages in a management procedure to ensure maximum engagement.</i>	<i>Students are responsive – excellent work!</i>
1:30	<i>Your providing students with definitions was a great example of building complex language.</i>	<i>Students listened to definitions and did a great job acting out words.</i>

Revised Notes:

TIME	TEACHER ACTIONS	STUDENT ACTIONS
1:23	T claps out a rhythm to get S's attn.	12/14 Ss clap same rhythm, stop talking in groups, and turn to track T.
1:30	T: Now let's act out the word "joyful", or when you're really, really happy. Show me a joyful face!	Ss all show faces with big smiles. 2 Ss bounce up and down and giggle.

Sample Notes:

1:00 Students on carpet during calendar mini-lesson. Lots of students walking around the classroom while the teacher tried to get their attention.

1:01 Teacher asked questions about the calendar. Many students were not listening while the teacher reviewed the days of the week.

1:02 Steven called out over and over again when you asked the question about the days of the week. Lesson is falling apart and unsuccessful.

Improved Sample Notes:

1:00 Ss on carpet during mini-lesson. 3/15 Ss walking around the classroom while the T says "sit on the carpet in 3-2-1". Ss all join group by "1".

1:01 T asks "How many days are in the week?" 5-6 Ss talking over T. T calls on S (Terrance) who says "7". T asks Ss to stand for Days of the Week song, 16/27 Ss comply.

1:02 T asks "What comes after Sat.?" Steven called out "Mon.!". Most Ss laughed. 2 boys roll on carpet and knock into 2 girls.

Check Your Understanding



Consider what we have just gone over about criteria for effective note-taking during observations and the characteristics of low-inference notes.

- What are the five criteria for effective note-taking during classroom observations?
- What characteristics make your notes “low-inference”? Why is it important for your notes to be low-inference?

Criteria for Effective Note-Taking

Know the rubric




Find a good vantage point(s)

Use shorthand

Notice teacher and student actions

Write low-inference notes

As we watch [this video](#) of a Pre-Kindergarten classroom, use what you have learned about effective note-taking to collect data on this classroom.

-  Take the next five minutes to score this teacher on the first competency on the rubric. Make sure to think concretely about the evidence you collected during the video. Don't be afraid to be critical!
-  Write 2-3 evidence statements that support your rating for the Building Oral Language Skills competency.
-  Be prepared to share your ratings and your rationale.

How to Rate Overall Performance

1. Decide on your rating for each **indicator**.
2. Consider the ratings for all the indicators under a particular **competency** (i.e.. Building Oral Language Skills).
3. Using your evidence and indicator ratings, assign an **overall rating** to that competency: Ineffective, Approaching Developing, Developing, Proficient.
4. Write **2-3 evidence statements** that support your overall rating
5. **Repeat** for each relevant competency.

BUILDING ORAL LANGUAGE SKILLS

RATING: 2-APPROACHING DEVELOPMENT

Evidence Summary

- There were significant missed opportunities to use complex language with students, especially when engaging in the construction center with “The Lorax” and the forest setting. While there were some examples of complex language (purchase, cashier, twig, trail), it was not strategically included in the learning and few students used any complex language.
- There were no examples of self- and parallel-talk, especially in an effort to promote complex vocabulary and reinforce or define any advanced vocabulary for students.
- There were a few examples of semi-sustained student-adult conversations that were driven by student interest and their work, however the teacher was driving the conversation and doing the vast majority of the talking. The teacher’s attention and focus was driven completely by the students’ play.
- Centers include related texts, the store center included writing opportunities, and there was good conversation happening in centers between students and the teacher. This teacher shows a good example of how texts can be used when embedded in a center.
- The teacher asked a mix of open- and closed-ended questions, though there were more closed-ended questions overall. Examples of her open-ended questions include: “Why did you build trees?”, “What’s going to happen when you break it?”, and “What else might you see in the forest?” Only a few students were able to respond to the questions thoughtfully.

Criteria for Effective Note-Taking

Know the rubric



Find a good vantage point(s)

Use shorthand

Notice teacher and student actions

Write low-inference notes

As we watch [this video](#) of a toddler classroom, use what you have learned about effective note-taking to collect data on this classroom.

-  Take the next ten minutes to score this teacher on each overall competency. (Note: You should have 3 total ratings—one for each competency.) Make sure to think concretely about the evidence you collected during the video. Don't be afraid to be critical!
-  Be prepared to discuss your normed ratings and evidence.

How to Rate Overall Performance

1. Decide on your rating for each **indicator**.
2. Consider the ratings for all the indicators under a particular **competency** (i.e., Building Oral Language Skills).
3. Using your evidence and indicator ratings, assign an **overall rating** to that competency: Ineffective, Approaching Developing, Developing, Proficient.
4. Write **2-3 evidence statements** that support your overall rating
5. **Repeat** for each relevant competency.

BUILDING ORAL LANGUAGE SKILLS

RATING: I-INEFFECTIVE

Evidence Summary

- The teacher modeled complex language inconsistently. There were some examples of advanced language, particularly vocabulary like “arched”, “trunk”, and “flippers”, and students had some opportunity to interact with that vocabulary by acting out those words.
- Students were exposed to few unknown words, particularly animal names and body parts. While they were encouraged to act them out, they were never provided with concrete definitions. Additionally, only 1 of 3 students consistently did engage in the acting out of the vocabulary.
- There were no examples of self- or parallel-talk during the lesson. There were missed opportunities for narration on nearly every page when students were being encouraged to act out movements.
- There were no conversation opportunities between student-teacher or student-student. While there were some back and forth interactions at the beginning of the lesson and saying “I can do it!”, there were no opportunities for actual conversational responses since all response opportunities for students were close-ended.
- The teacher used almost exclusively close-ended questions throughout the lesson, limited to mostly “can you do it?” in response to the text.

WORTHWHILE TEXTS

RATING: 3-DEVELOPING

Evidence Summary

- The text used in this lesson was "From Head to Toe" by Eric Carle. It is at or above the expected complexity level for this age group and this time in the school year.
- The text is well-crafted and provides useful, though fairly straightforward, information to students. It is well-written and richly illustrated.
- Children may have gained cursory knowledge about animal body parts through this text.

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE BY ENGAGING WITH TEXT

RATING: 3-DEVELOPING

Evidence Summary

- The lesson did provide students opportunities on nearly every page to participate with the text by acting out the pages and responding "I can do it" when prompted. '
- Every question that the teacher asked was completely linked to the text and illustrations. Students were constantly directed to the text as a source of learning and as a way to engage with the teacher's prompts to act out each animal's movements.
- Few questions asked children to use evidence from the text or pictures to answer questions, though there were a few opportunities when students were asked what animal they thought the pages featured which did require them to reference the text.
- Student response was very limited throughout the duration of this lesson. Only 1 student responded to some of the questions or prompts posed by the teacher.
- Every question focused children on the most important words in the text in order to build their understanding.
- The activities students engaged with (acting out words, call and response, singing along) are child-driven activities that connected directly to the text.



Take 5 minutes to individually reflect on the following questions:

- What parts of observing and rating teacher performance come naturally to you?
- What parts of observing and rating teacher performance felt more challenging?
- What can you do to gain confidence and comfort in observing and rating teacher performance?

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What is most important for you to keep in mind when taking low inference notes?

What will be most important for you to keep in mind in order to accurately rate teacher performance on the rubric?