



Reflect on your own experiences with children, families, and colleagues. If you are an supervisor, administrator, or adult educator, how might you use these questions and activities to help other adults reflect on their experiences?

Know Yourself

Testing Culture Invades Lives of Young Children

“...in a widely used vocabulary test, the administrator says a word, shows a child a set of four pictures, and asks the child to point to the one that best represents the word.”

“There are many problems with this approach. The first is that young children’s development is extremely labile; it is in a constant state of change. Until third grade, children’s skills—and their ability to demonstrate those skills—change rapidly. No one-time administration of a standardized test can adequately capture this change and evolution. Second, these tests rarely reflect the lessons and skills children are really learning in preschool and kindergarten. They don’t address physical growth and motor skills, social-emotional development, the arts, appreciation for reading, early writing and math skills, and more. They tell us nothing about a child’s problem-solving process or preferred method of learning. They ignore vast differences in culture and previous opportunities for learning that shape the context in which the child experiences the test.”

Excerpt from an article by Samuel J. Meisels, Ed.D

What strategies are you using to make curriculum developmentally sound during this era of accountability and testing in our profession?

What keeps you from getting overwhelmed, distracted, and confused with assessment and documentation requirements?

What are your biggest challenges with assessment and documentation requirements?

Try This

Read and respond to Samuel Meisels' comments. You can find them on the website in the Know Yourself Key for this competency. How does what he says resonate with your thinking or experience?

Describe your program's assessment and documentation processes.

What tools and instruments do you use? What are their pros and cons, in your opinion?

How do you manage assessment and documentation while working with children?

How is this process supported in your program?

To whom do you turn for assistance?

What systems and strategies have you devised that enable you to observe and document children's interactions and play in your program?

How would you coach or mentor another teacher or colleague to help him or her maintain a sense of curiosity and sense of wonder as they observe and authentically assess children?
