

Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation ELLCO

Informational Presentation
CPIN Network Meeting

Overview of the ELLCO

- Overall view of effective practice with particular emphasis on language and literacy
- Grounded in developmental view of literacy
- Developed by researchers at Education Development Center, Inc. in Newton, MA

Uses of the ELLCO

- Appropriate for Preschool through Grade 3
- Provides basis for self-evaluation
- School improvement efforts
- Identify impact of classrooms on children's language and literacy development

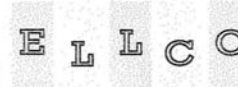
Components of ELLCO Toolkit

- Literacy Environment Checklist
- Classroom Observation
- Literacy Activities Rating Scale

Characteristics of the Literacy Environment Checklist

- Observer catalogs the reading and writing materials
- 15 minutes to administer
- Can be completed when no children are present
- Inter-rater reliability: avg. 88% agreement

Literacy Environment Checklist



This checklist can be completed when no children are present, ideally before the children arrive. As classroom observers fill out this checklist, they become familiar with details of the environment. The careful attention paid to the environment helps observers complete the Classroom Observation; therefore, the checklist should be done prior to making the Classroom Observation.

Book Area

1. Is an area set aside just for book reading? YES NO
Circle one: 1 0

If this area is used for other activities, such as for circle time or as a block area, score this item NO.

2. Is the area where books are located orderly and inviting? YES NO
Circle one: 1 0

Are the books displayed on a bookshelf or bookcase? Are they oriented properly (front covers or spines facing out and right-side up)? Are they neatly organized?

3. Does the area where books are located have soft materials? YES NO
Circle one: 1 0

Are there pillows, cushions, or comfortable furniture (e.g., couch) in the area so that children can look at books comfortably?

Book Area Total

Book Selection

4. Do the books in the classroom range in difficulty level? YES NO
Circle one: 1 0

This item refers to all books that are accessible to children, not only those books in the book area. Do some books have no words or very few words per page, whereas others have one or two paragraphs per page? Do some books include simple language, whereas others incorporate more sophisticated vocabulary?

5. How many books are easily available to children? Fewer than 15 16-25 26+
Circle one: 1 2 3

Count all books that are accessible to children, not only those in book area.

6. How many books convey factual information? 0 1-2 3-5 6+
Circle one: 0 1 2 3

Count all books that are accessible to children, not only those in book area. Include science- or math-related books and social studies books or books about other cultures, as well as health-related books.

7. Are there three or more books related to the current theme? YES NO
Circle one: 1 0

The current theme should be evident through classroom displays, activities, and teacher conversations with children. If you are unsure about the current theme, ask the classroom teacher.

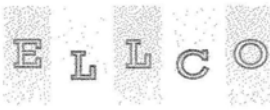
Book Selection Total

Literacy Environment Checklist Items

- A total of 24 items in the following categories:
 - Book Area (3 items)
 - Book Selection (4 items)
 - Book Use (5 items)
 - Writing Materials (6 items)
 - Writing Around the Room (6 items)

Characteristics of the ELLCO Classroom Observation

- Rating scale with 14 items and brief interview
- 45 minutes to administer
- Good inter-rater reliability & strong psychometric properties
 - 90% agreement within one point
 - Cronbach's alpha = .90



Classroom Observation

General Classroom Environment

	5 Exemplary	4	3 Basic	2	1 Deficient
<p>1. Organization of the Classroom</p> <p>Evidence: Status and organization of furnishings, observation of traffic flow, activities, and materials available to children</p> <p>Notes:</p>	<p>There is strong evidence of an intentional approach to the organization of the physical environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Furnishings are appropriately sized for young children and are in good repair. The classroom does not appear barren or crowded with furnishings. The physical environment is intentionally organized to allow for groupings of different sizes (e.g., individuals, small groups, large groups) and for different types of activities (e.g., quiet, active, messy). There are established patterns of "traffic flow," which serve to organize and support children's movement throughout the classroom with a minimum of disturbance to those already engaged in activities. Furnishings are arranged to support children's ability to independently engage in activities. For example, shelves are low enough for children to select and replace materials; areas for messy projects are near clean-up supplies. 		<p>There is some evidence of an intentional approach to the organization of the physical environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Furnishings are appropriately sized for young children and are in good repair. The classroom does not appear barren or crowded with furnishings. The physical environment is arranged to allow for groupings of different sizes (e.g., individuals, small groups, large groups) and for different types of activities (e.g., quiet, active, messy), but some reorganization of space may be needed to accommodate some activities or groups. "Traffic flow" in the classroom may seem haphazard and may interfere with children already engaged in activities. Although some furnishings are arranged to support children's ability to independently engage in activities, other activities may require extensive teacher involvement or supervision to complete. 		<p>There is minimal evidence of an intentional approach to the organization of the physical environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Furnishings do not appear to be appropriate for young children and may be in disrepair. The classroom may appear barren or crowded with furnishings. Furnishings and space are not arranged to easily accommodate groupings of different sizes (e.g., individuals, small groups, large groups) or different types of activities (e.g., quiet, active, messy). "Traffic flow" in the classroom may lack organization and may be disruptive to children already engaged in activities. Furnishings do not support children's ability to independently engage in activities. For example, teachers may retain control over the distribution of materials and may need to constantly supervise active or messy activities.
	Score: <input type="text"/>				

Classroom Observation Items

- General Classroom Environment
 - Organization of the Classroom
 - Contents of the Classroom
 - Opportunities for Child Choice and Initiative
 - Classroom Management Strategies
 - Classroom Climate

Classroom Observation Items

- Language and Literacy
 - Oral Language Facilitation
 - Presence of Books
 - Approaches to Book Reading
 - Approaches to Children's Writing

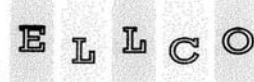
Classroom Observation Items

- Language and Literacy
 - Approaches to Curriculum Integration
 - Recognizing Diversity in the Classroom
 - Facilitating Home Support for Literacy
 - Approaches to Assessment

Characteristics of the Literacy Activities Rating Scale

- 9 items in two categories: Book Reading and Writing
- Record the number and type of literacy activities
- 10 minutes to score
- Inter-rater reliability: avg. 81% agreement

Literacy Activities Rating Scale



This rating scale should be completed at the end of your observation. When answering questions that refer to adults, please consider all adults who were present in the classroom, including lead and assistant teachers, teachers' aides, parents, and volunteers.

Book Reading

1. How many full-group book-reading sessions did you observe?

_____ sessions
 0 1 More
 Circle one: 0 1 2

Write in the exact number of sessions AND circle the appropriate score.

2. What was the total number of minutes spent on full-group book reading?

_____ minutes
 Fewer than 5 5-10 More
 Circle one: 0 1 2

Write in the exact number of minutes AND circle the appropriate score.

3. What was the total number of books read during the full-group book-reading session(s)?

_____ books
 0 1 More
 Circle one: 0 1 2

Write in the exact number of books AND circle the appropriate score.

4. Did you observe an adult engaged in one-to-one book reading or small-group book reading?

YES NO
 Circle one: 1 0

5. Is time set aside for children to look at books alone or with a friend?

YES NO
 Circle one: 1 0

This time may be reflected in the classroom schedule or may be an observed classroom routine.

Book Reading Total

Writing

6. Did you see children include writing in their play?

YES NO
 Circle one: 1 0

For example, children may be writing or scribbling as part of an art activity or dramatic play activity or while using blocks or manipulatives.

7. Did you see children attempting to write letters or words?

YES NO
 Circle one: 1 0

These attempts may include scribbling, but the scribbling must be intentional and the child should indicate what he or she wrote or intended to write.

8. How many times did you see an adult help a child write?

0 1-2 More
 Circle one: 0 1 2

For example, the adult may answer questions about how something is spelled or may show a child how to form a specific letter.

9. Did an adult model writing?

YES NO
 Circle one: 1 0

The adult draws attention to the act of writing by spelling out or sounding out each word or letter that he or she writes or by somehow discussing what he or she has written.

Writing Total

General Guidelines for Observing in Classrooms

- Orient yourself to the classroom
- Be careful not to disrupt ongoing activities while you are observing
- Be aware of the difference between actual scoring guidelines and personal opinions or preferences

Research on Early Language and Literacy Development

- Language and literacy development begin at birth
- Language is related to literacy
- Child play fosters literacy

Research continued

- Print-rich environments contribute to language and literacy development
- Read-alouds contribute to language and literacy development
- Reading and writing development both progress in stages

Research continued

- Children benefit from curriculum that builds upon their prior experiences
- Strong early literacy classrooms help children compensate for risk factors
- Home/school contact contributes to literacy development

Implications of Research

- Conversations should be frequent and meaningful
- Teachers should provide opportunities for the use of higher level thinking and language
- Vocabulary development is an essential part of the curriculum

Implications of Research

- Opportunities for play are crucial
- Literacy materials should be included in play areas
- Effective curriculum builds upon child interests

Implications of Research

- Print should be used for a variety of purposes
- Frequent and interactive read-alouds should be part of the daily schedule
- Language and literacy skills should be modeled and used for authentic purposes

Implications of Research

- Effective instruction begins with assessment
- Parents and teachers need opportunities to exchange information
- Parents may need specific materials to strengthen children's literacy skills

Questions & Answers

Contact Information

- Regional Leads add individual information to this slide

Activity - A Closer Look

- Look at the items in your assigned area and in your table groups brainstorm:
 - ✓ What would an Exemplary classroom look like?
 - ✓ What would a Deficient classroom look like?
 - Choose a recorder and a reporter
 - Each group reports out