

ROSA AND JULIO IN THE LIBRARY

Key Focus: Literacy

Observation: *When Rosa, who is 4, is in the library area, she chooses a book to read with Julio, who is 3.*

The following are notes from a list of early literacy concepts:

Rosa: April 9

Holds book right-side-up: yes

States title: no

Turns each page: yes (skips a few)

Points to pictures: yes

Points to text: yes

Uses storybook language: no

Then Julio reads the book to Rosa. He demonstrates the following:

Julio: April 9

Holds book right-side-up: no (Rosa corrects)

States title: yes

Turns each page: yes (skips a few)

Points to pictures: no

Points to text: no

Uses storybook language: no

Reflecting on the documentation:

**Participants may quickly shift from reflecting on the documentation to interpreting the observation or suggesting strategies for extending learning. Remind participants to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the documentation technique.*

Ask: What advantage does a checklist like this offer?

Sample Responses: Allows the teacher to measure and observe pre-defined skills; focuses the observation; measures discrete skills. It could be used over time to see how they change or to confirm hypotheses about what a child knows (for example, did Rosa hold the book upright because it is a familiar book?)

Ask: What information is missing from this documentation that would be important to include?

Sample Responses: The name of the book and/or the type of book (non-fiction books don't use storybook language), whether the children are familiar with this book or if it is a new one in the classroom; examples of what they were listening for as "storybook language."

Ask: What would a free-running record have recorded that this observation lacks?

Sample Responses: Some of the information about the type of interaction between Julio and Rosa; direct words that Rosa and Julio used; information about whether they described the pictures, or if what they said was about individual pictures but was not connected to the previous pictures, or was not connected to the pictures in any way.

Interpretation of the observation:

**Remind participants that in their interpretation they are looking for patterns, critical incidents or errors. It is important to stick to the data.*

Ask: What can you learn about the children from these observations?

Sample Responses: Rosa and Julio both show some book knowledge. Rosa correctly used directionality and held the book right-side-up as well as correcting Julio when he did not. She turned each page in the correct direction and pointed to both pictures and text, suggesting that she understands there is a difference between the two. Rosa does not, however, state the title and does not use storybook language.

Julio stated the title of the book and turned the page. He did not hold the book the right way, point to pictures, point to text, or use storybook language.

Rosa and Julio seem to be paying attention to different aspects of storybooks. Both Julio and Rosa show interest in reading activities as they engage in pre-reading activities with each other.

Relating your observation to the Child Outcomes Framework:

**Although participants can defend other interpretations, there should be general consensus that this observation demonstrates:*

2B2 (Literacy/Book Knowledge and Appreciation): Shows growing interest in reading-related activities, such as asking to have a favorite book read; choosing to look at books; drawing pictures based on stories; asking to take books home; going to the library; and engaging in pretend-reading with other children.

2B4 (Literacy/Book Knowledge and Appreciation): Progresses in learning how to handle and care for books; knowing to view one page at a time in sequence from front to back; and understanding that a book has a title, author and illustrator.

2C3 (Literacy/Print Awareness and Concepts): Demonstrates increasing awareness of concepts of print, such as that reading in English moves from top to bottom and from left to right, that speech can be written down, and that print conveys a message.

Next steps for large group instruction:

**Help participants make connections between what they learn from the assessment and the next steps they want to take in instruction. If suggestions for instruction extend activities to new areas of learning, ask participants to consider what aspects of children's progress they would assess and how they would do so during those extension activities.*

Ask: What would you recommend that the teacher do next for the class as a whole?

**Responses will vary but might include:*

- In large group, read a big book and demonstrate the concepts listed in the checklist. Be explicit about calling it the title and comment that it helps you to know what the story will be about. Then have all children write a book that has a "title."
- Think about storybook language and what that means with the class (for example, "Once upon a time," "In the beginning," "and then," "Happily ever after").

Next steps for individualized instruction:

Ask: What would you recommend that the teacher do next for individual children?

**Responses will vary but might include:*

- Sit and read with Julio and model pointing to text as you read.
- Sit and read with Rosa and invite her to make up the story from the pictures. Scaffold her story with storybook language or questions such as, "What happens next?"