



Ongoing Child Assessment to Support Learning

EarlyEdU Alliance®

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Intentional Teaching Framework



House Framework



Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework

	CENTRAL DOMAINS				
	APPROACHES TO LEARNING	SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	COGNITION	PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
▲ INFANT/TODDLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Cognition	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
● PRESCHOOLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Mathematics Development	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
			Literacy	Scientific Reasoning	

Head Start programs choose curriculum and assessments that align with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework.



Objectives

- Observe children objectively and responsively.
- Describe bias and what steps you could take to mitigate it.
- Make plans for ongoing child assessment.
- Share clear and engaging assessment information with families as partners.
- Explain effective strategies to assess children, who are dual language learners, in language development and other areas.
- Share information with families of children who are learning more than one language.
- Share information with families of children who have disabilities.



Reflect on Your Experiences with Assessment

- Did you think assessment results accurately reflect your abilities? Why or why not?
- Did your feelings change before and after?
- Were there times that you were being assessed and didn't realize it?
- What feelings do you have now related to assessment or testing?



Assessment Meaning

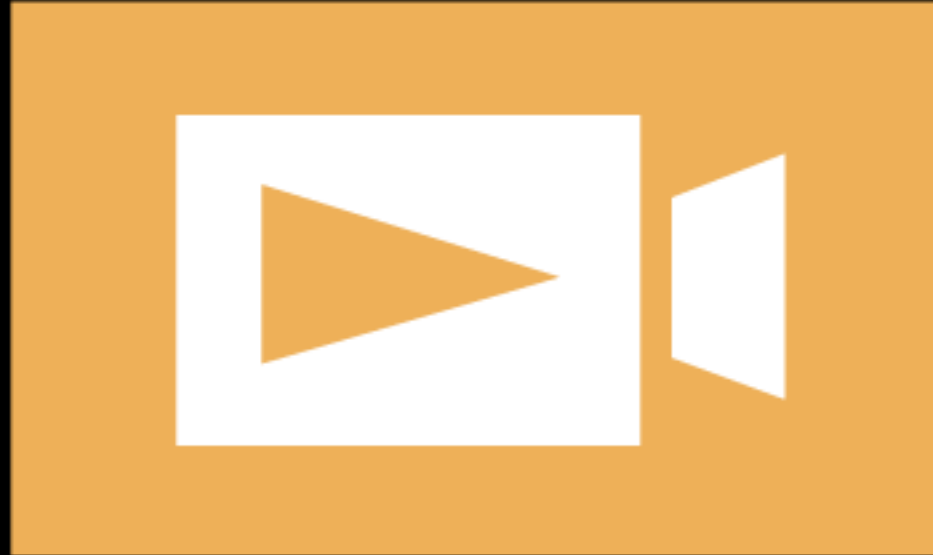
In early childhood education, ***assessment*** has multiple meanings.



Video Intro: Assessment Tool Considerations

As you watch the video, think about this question:

What does the speaker say is important when selecting and using assessment tools?



Video: Assessment Tool Considerations



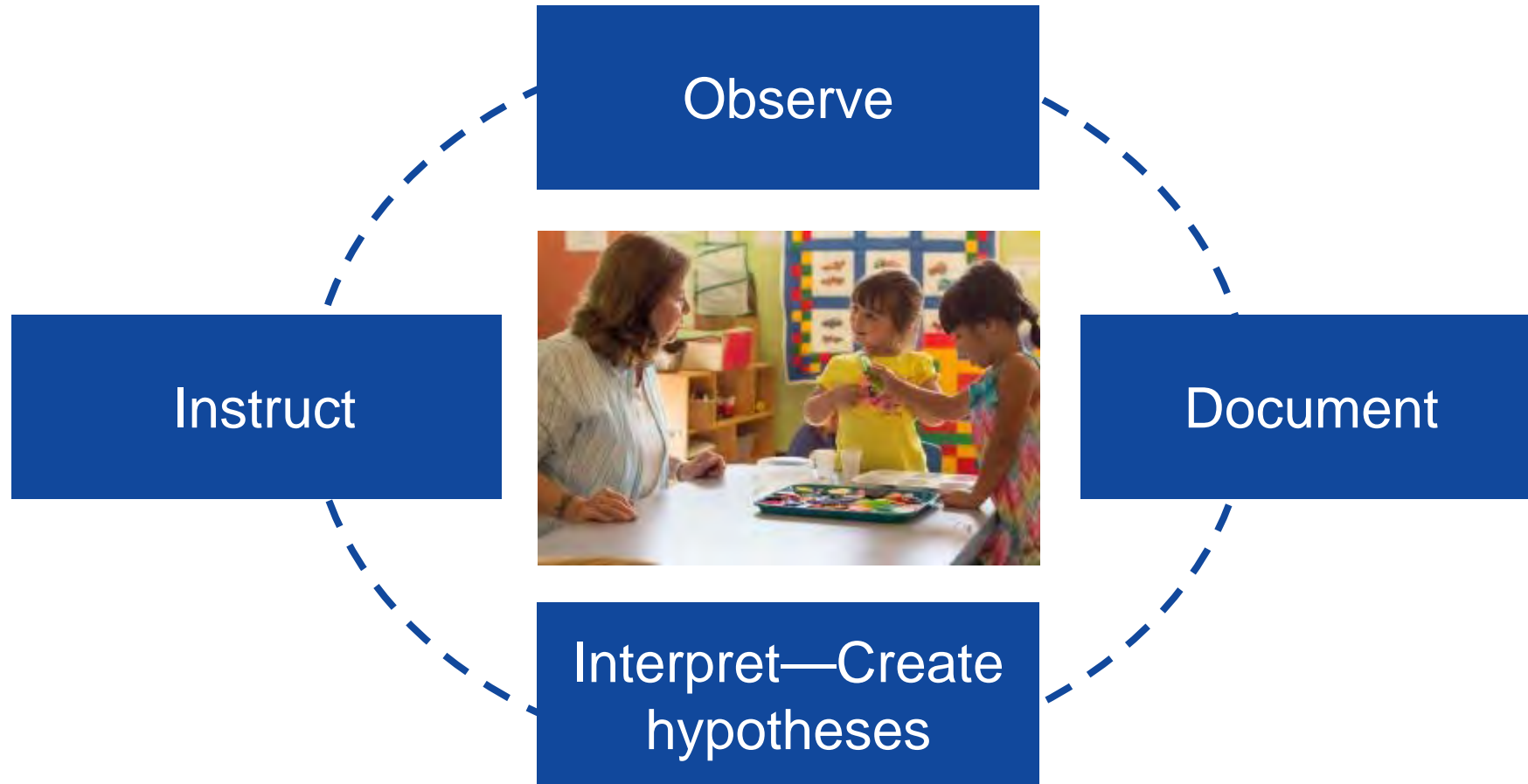
Video Debrief: Assessment Tool Considerations

What did you hear the speaker say about considerations for assessment tools?

Key Parts of Ongoing Assessment

- **Observing** children's strengths, progress, and development by **collecting evidence** over time during **children's regular routines and environments**.
- **Interpreting** information to make informed **decisions about teaching** and responding.
- **Partnering with families** to gather information and plan ways to support children's learning.

The Ongoing Assessment Cycle



Ongoing Assessment Purposes

- Track children's progress and development
- Guide early learning professionals' planning and teaching
- Identify children who may need special services
- Report and communicate with others
- Evaluate programs

Creating a Culture of Inquiry

Curiosity

Reflection

Systems thinking

Embracing change

Using feedback

Tolerance of failure and vulnerability



Young children's development is often uneven

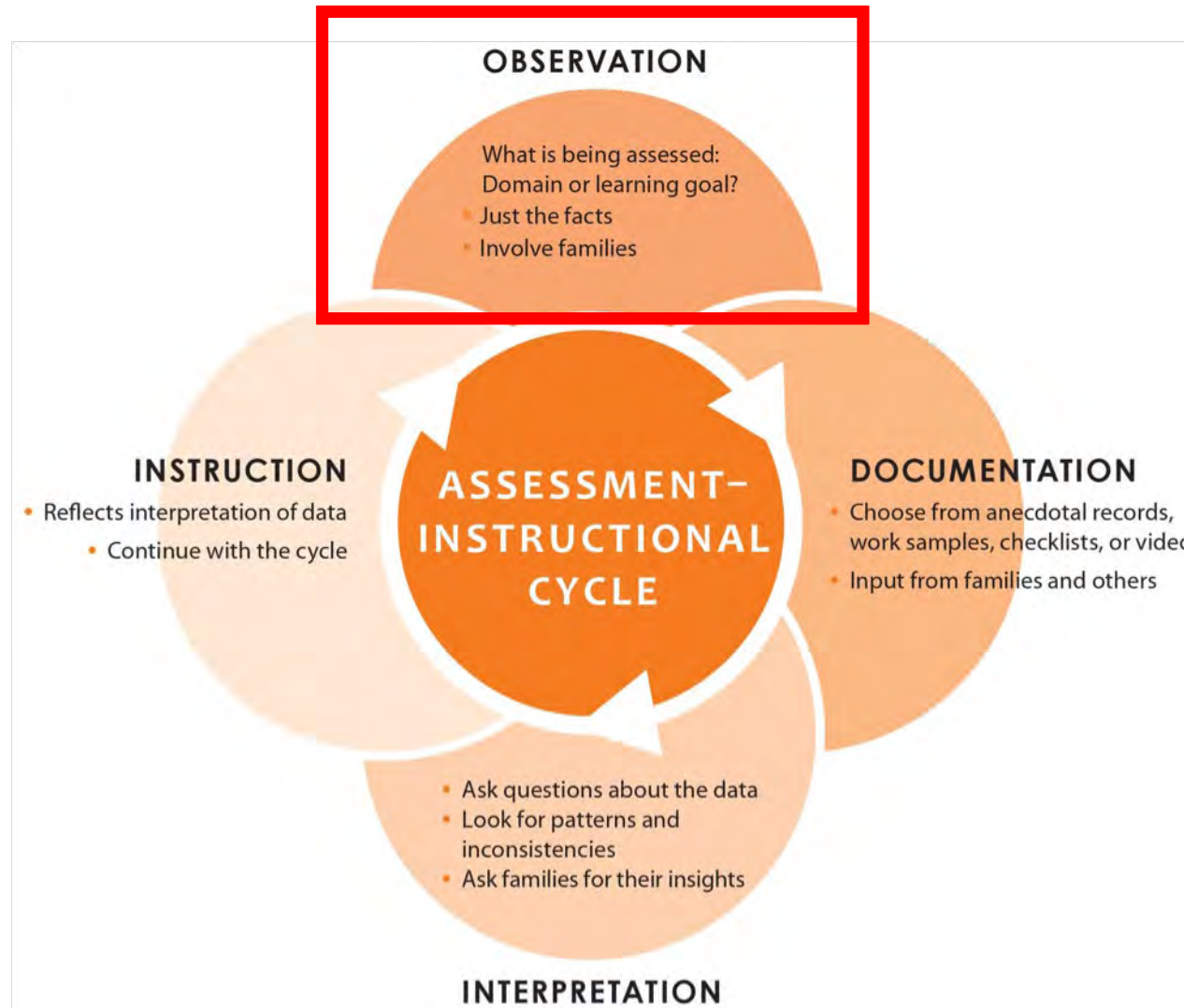


Definition of *Observation*

“*Observation* means intentionally watching and listening to learn about children.”

(Dichtelmiller, 2011, p. 55)

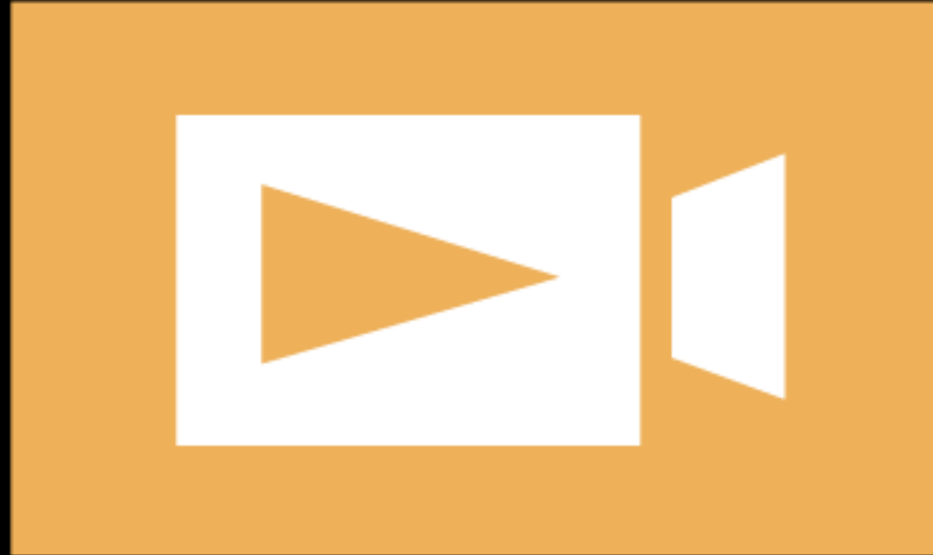
Observation





Video Intro: Observation

As you watch the next video, listen for concepts that are important to observing effectively.



Video: Observation



Video Debrief: *Observation*

What did you hear about important concepts for effectively observing young children?

Objective Documentation

DO

- Describe interactions with concrete words.
- Add details.

DON'T

- Use adjectives like *kind* or *bad*.
- Add your opinion or interpretation.

How to Document Observations



Image credit: EarlyEdU

- Watch and listen
- Observe details about the child's body position, facial expression, words or vocalizations, actions, interactions, and creations
- Be objective



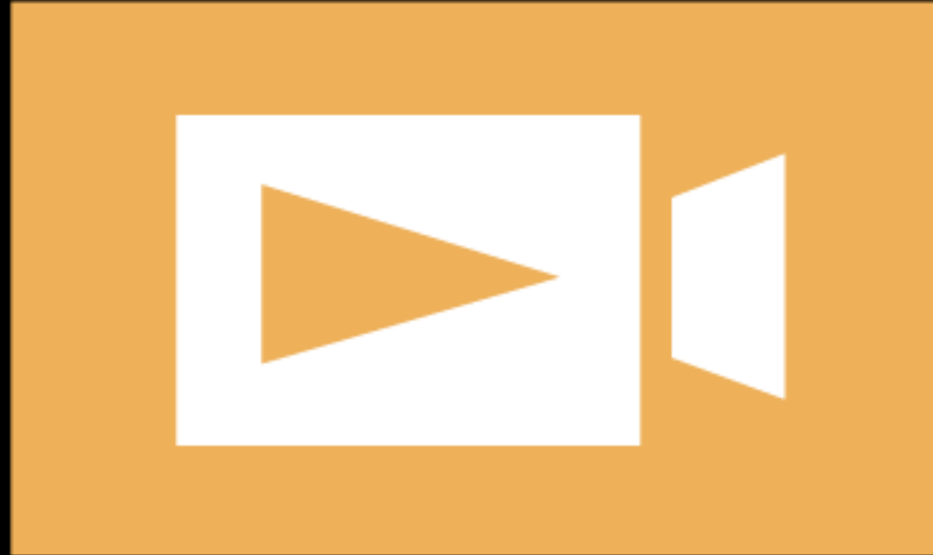
Activity: Fact or Opinion

- Find a partner.
- Read the examples together.
- Which observations are stated objectively?
- Which ones share opinions?



Video Intro: *Container Play*

- Watch the next video and write down your observations about what you observe.
- Use objective language and include details.



Video: Container Play



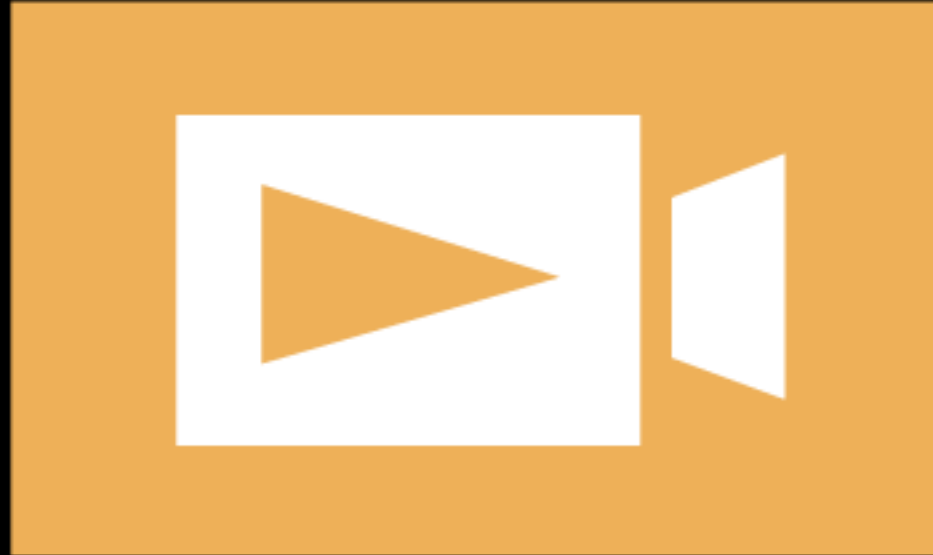
Video Debrief: *Container Play*

What did you observe when you watched the video?



Video Intro: *Responsive Observation*

When you watch the next video, listen for key parts of responsive observation.



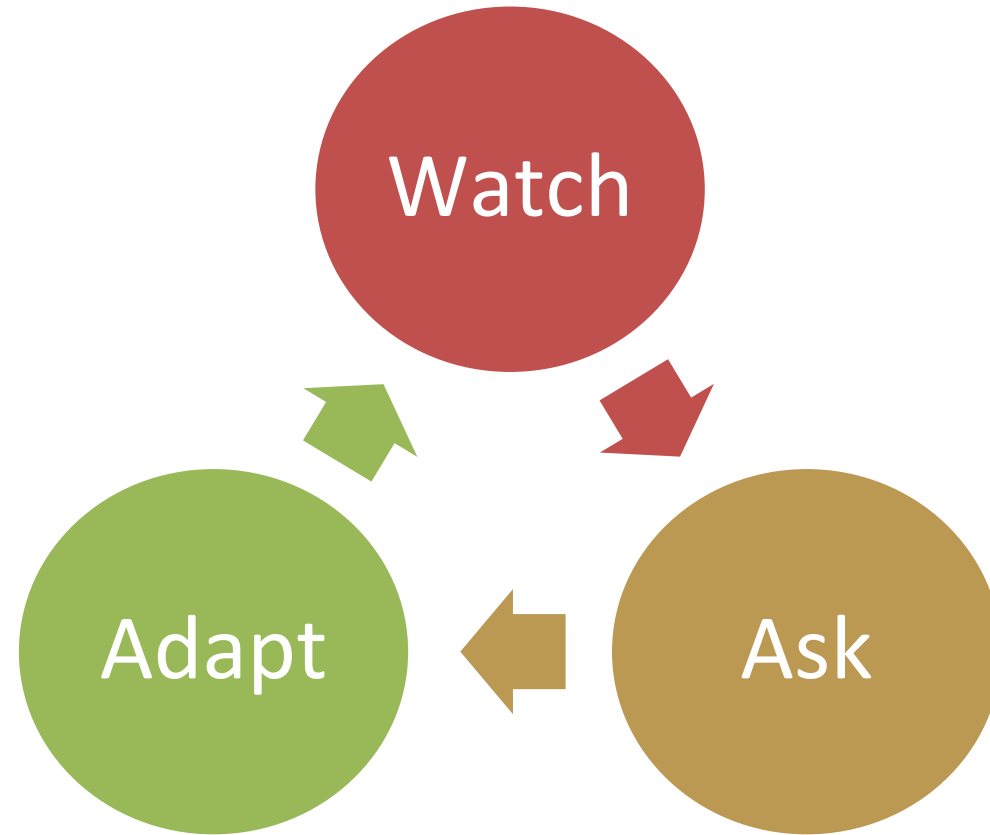
Video: Responsive Observation



Video Debrief: *Responsive Observation*

What did you hear about key elements of responsive observation?

Responsive Observation Cycle





I Wonder Questions

- What are the areas where you could ask *I wonder* questions about children as you observe?
- What are your ideas about what questions you could ask when observing children?



Focused Observation

Focused observation is intentional and directed at a particular behavior or skill.



Video Intro: Look at Me! Using Focused Child Observation with Infants and Toddlers

Think about this question as you watch the next video: What can you learn from focused observation?

During the video, you will also observe a few children and discuss what you learned.



Video: Look at Me! Using Focused Child Observation with Infants and Toddlers

Watch this Early Head Start video:

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/look-me-using-focused-child-observation-infants-toddlers>



Video Debrief: Look at Me! Using Focused Child Observation with Infants and Toddlers

Based on the video, what are your responses to the question:

What can you learn from focused observation?

Noticing Bias

“An observation is like a photograph—it captures a moment in time. As an observer, you are like a photographer, focusing on some things, ignoring others. Like the photographer, you bring your own ideas, preferences, and perceptions to the act of observing.”

Jablon, Dombro, and Dichtelmiller, 2007, p. 31

Reflecting on Bias





Discussion: Influence of Bias

- How do you think educators' initial impressions of young children influence their interactions and teaching?
- What can educators do to see individual children more accurately?
- Describe a time when you revised your thoughts about a child.



Activity: Writing Reflection on Bias

Take a moment to think about the children in your setting or children you have worked with in the past.

- What kinds of assumptions do you make about certain groups of children?
- What steps could you take to mitigate that?

What Do We Know About Children Who Are Dual Language Learners?





Video Intro: Assessing Dual Language Learners and English Learners

While you watch the next video, listen for effective practices in assessing children learning more than one language.



Video: Assessing Dual Language Learners and English Learners

We'll watch this video featuring Dr. Linda Espinosa, professor emeritus at the University of Missouri, Columbia:

<https://vimeo.com/222887856>



Video Debrief: Assessing Dual Language Learners and English Learners

What practices did you hear described that are important in assessing children who are learning more than one language?

Recommended Assessment Steps for Children Who Are Dual Language Learners

1. Assess receptive and expressive language
2. Gather information in English and home language
3. Documentation
4. Assess in home language
5. Screening tools in home language and language dialect

Alternative Approaches

If no appropriate instruments are available in a child's home language, early learning professionals may want to:

- **Observe** the child using a general developmental checklist.
- **Find an interpreter** who understands early language development in the child's home language.



Inviting Families to Share

Ask families of children who are dual language learners about their children's:

- Language background in all languages
- Dual language development
- Language dominance
- Home language experiences

Assessing Children With Disabilities or Suspected Delays



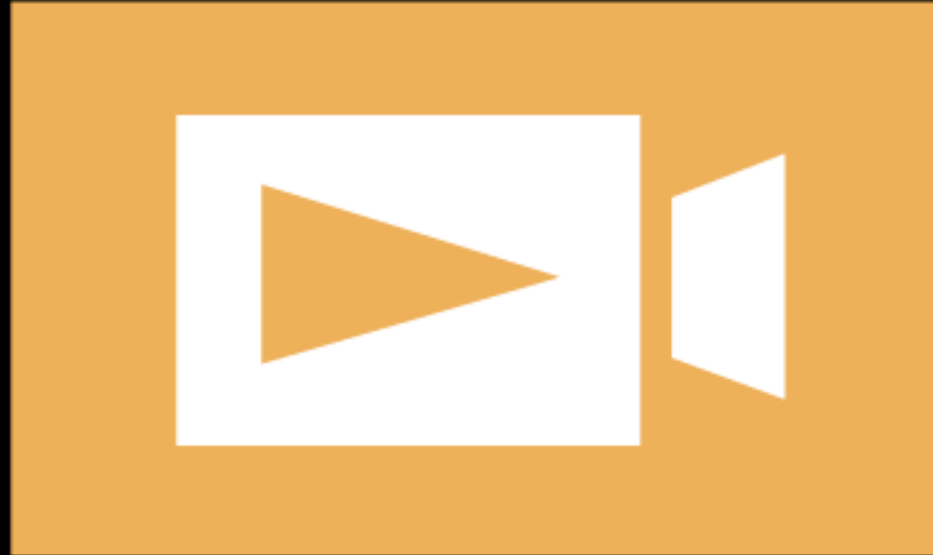
- IEPs and IFSPs
- Ongoing assessment and typical routines
- Teamwork with families and specialists
- Evaluation



Video Intro: Assessing Children with Disabilities

Think about these questions while watching the video:

- What is the same when assessing children with disabilities and those who are typically developing?
- What can be different?



*Video: Assessing Children
with Disabilities*



Video Debrief: *Assessing Children with Disabilities*

Share your responses to the questions:

- What is the same when assessing children with disabilities and those who are typically developing?
- What can be different?

Practices to Engage Families

In partnering with families of children with disabilities or suspected delays for ongoing assessment, use the same basic practices as with all families:

- Respond to each family as unique
- Encourage two-way, equal communication



Families as Partners

Families should be **equal and contributing partners** throughout the assessment process, including progress monitoring, of children with disabilities.



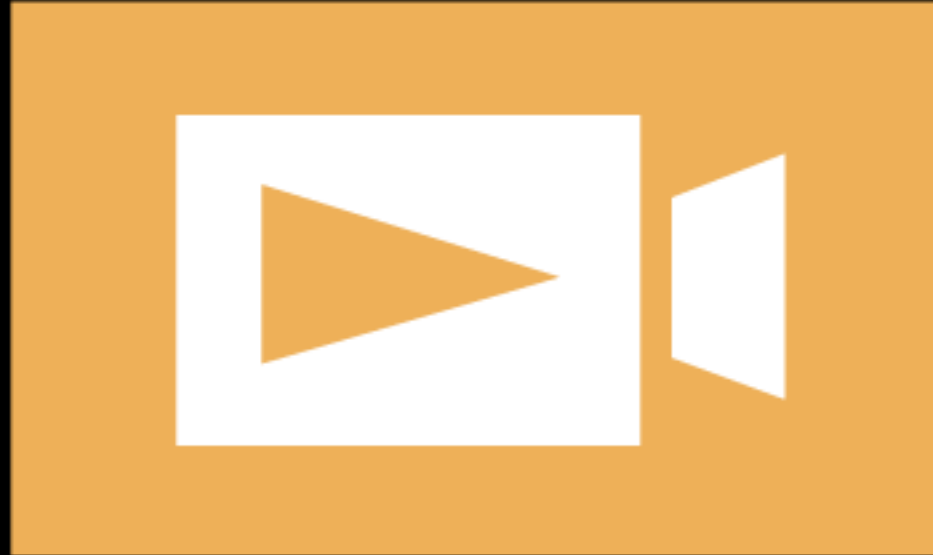
Discussion: Families and Assessment

- What does family engagement mean?
- What prevents educators from fully engaging as partners with families in the assessment process?



Video Intro: *Partnering with Families*

While watching the next video, listen to what early childhood professionals share about how they communicate with families about assessment information.



Video: Partnering with Families



Video Debrief: *Partnering with Families*

Share what you heard educators say about strategies they use in sharing assessment information with parents.



Discussion: Your Approaches

How do you invite families to share information about their children's abilities, development, and interests?



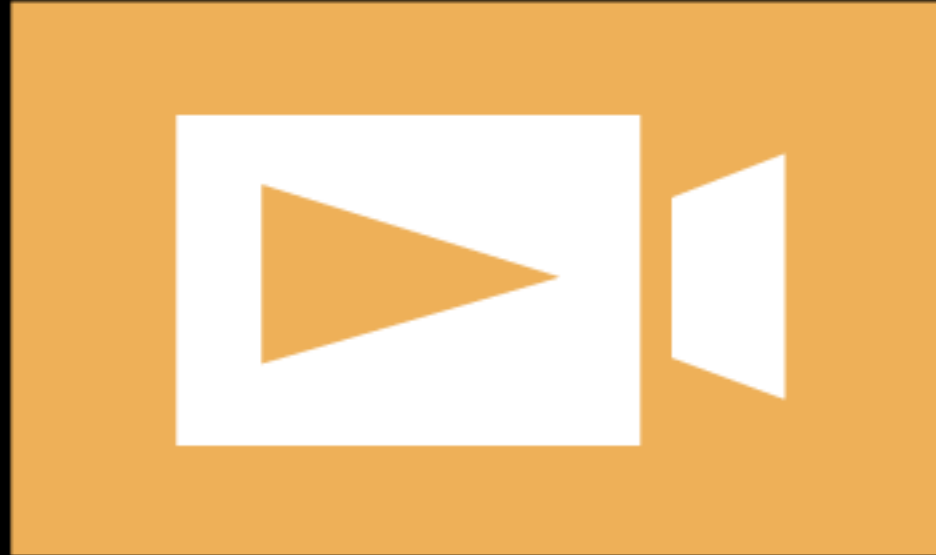
Image credit: EarlyEdU



Video Intro: *Assessment Planning*

Think about these questions while watching the next video:

- What are some strategies that these educators share about planning to assess?
- What helps them succeed?



Video: Assessment Planning



Video Debrief: *Assessment Planning*

- What are some strategies that these educators share about planning to assess?
- What helps them succeed?



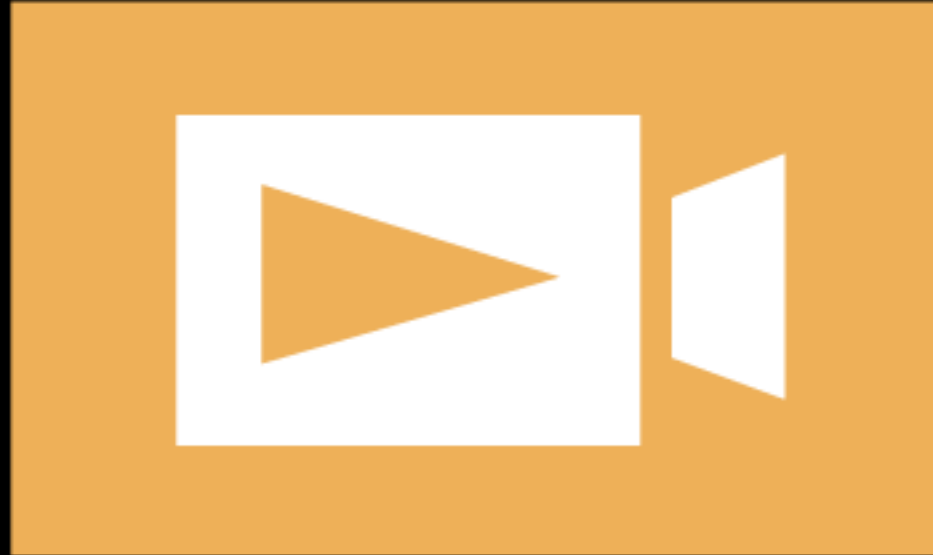
Activity: Mind Map

- Divide into small groups.
- Create a mind map on the poster-sized paper based on the handout.
- Brainstorm answers to each question.
- Be ready to share with the larger group.



Video Intro: *Using Data to Celebrate*

The next video will feature early childhood educators talking about how data helps them see children's progress and support their learning and development.



Video: Using Data to Celebrate



Video Debrief: *Using Data to Celebrate*

What did you hear educators say about how observing and assessing children fuels their passion for their work with young children?



Activity: Remember What Led You to This Work

- If you were teaching others about the topics in this course, what would you tell them about how to retain their enthusiasm and balance assessment responsibilities?
- How will you retain your passion for your work and include effective ongoing assessment practices?

