

Standards Unit

Linking theory to practice: observation

Teacher and trainer handbook 1:
how to develop good observation
skills

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Success for All website:
www.successforall.gov.uk

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Foreword

The Standards Unit

We are committed to the following principles which underpin all our work:

- We will recognise and celebrate excellence in the post-16 sector.
- We will recognise and celebrate diversity.
- We will be open and participative in our approaches to development.
- We will recognise barriers to excellence and be supportive of those working in challenging contexts.
- We will challenge underperformance.

Success for All is a partnership between the DfES Standards Unit and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Standards Unit leads on Themes 2 and 3 and the LSC on Themes 1 and 4:

- Theme 1 – meeting needs, improving choice
- Theme 2 – putting teaching, training and learning at the heart of what we do
- Theme 3 – developing the leaders, teachers, training and support staff of the future
- Theme 4 – developing a framework for quality and success.

The Standards Unit was set up in January 2003 to embed excellence in teaching, training and learning and to modernise and upgrade the sector's workforce. It acts as a catalyst, selecting priority curriculum areas for action and harnessing the work of partners to improve quality in the post-16 learning and skills sector – in FE and sixth form colleges, sixth forms in schools, work-based learning, adult and community learning and the prison service.

The Unit's staff includes officials and expert practitioners seconded from colleges and other providers and the inspectorates. This core team is supported by call-off consultants, whose expert knowledge enables delivery in a range of areas. The work of the central team is supported by nine regional offices who are crucial to the national dissemination of the teaching and learning resources and the delivery of step improvements across the country. The Unit selects curriculum areas because of their importance to the economy and social inclusion and because inspection outcomes show there is room for improvement

To support the improvements required, the Standards Unit is also providing national free training in coaching for teachers and trainers who have been nominated as Subject Learning Coaches by their managers. The programme is designed to provide professional training for Subject Learning Coaches so that they can work confidently with colleagues to further improve teaching, training and learning in their subject area. It is a new and exciting programme which is being embedded through subject networks, where Subject

Learning Coaches from different backgrounds meet to share best practice and develop their coaching skills. If you would like to know more about becoming a Subject Learning Coach, why don't you speak to your Standards Unit Regional Director or look at www.successforall.gov.uk.



This health and social care resource will be a valuable reference in network meetings when Subject Learning Coaches are discussing the health and social care curriculum. We hope you will find this a useful resource and we look forward to receiving your comments and feedback.

Jane Williams
Director of Teaching and Learning
Head of Standards Unit

Introduction

The seven teacher and trainer handbooks are linked to the seven learner observation booklets. The booklets are designed for learners undertaking a level 3 qualification in early years. On completion of the first six booklets, the learners will have developed the skills and understanding essential to complete an observation to professional standards. The seventh booklet is an extension of Booklet 3 – methods of observation. Three of the methods are dealt with in more depth and detail.

Working as an early years practitioner is a very important profession. It is a privilege to be responsible for supporting a child as they become a confident and well balanced individual, able to take their place in society. It takes many skills to provide a firm foundation for the future of a child. The most important are the ability to make objective observations, draw appropriate conclusions and prepare plans to encourage each child to achieve his or her full potential. Encourage your learners to be unobtrusive observers of children and they will learn much that will help them to develop these essential skills.

Effective observation is a sophisticated skill essential for working in a variety of early years health and social care settings. Observation skills are applicable through all vocational sectors and work-based learning environments. Rigorous observation processes demand many high level skills including recording, reviewing, monitoring, interpretation and evaluation.

The teacher and trainer handbooks provide ideas, resources and guidance to assist you in planning and organising learning. The handbooks aim to stimulate ideas to help you to improve teaching and learning but are not a definitive guide. The seven teacher and trainer handbooks link to the learner observation booklets and may be used flexibly to meet the needs of individual learners. You may decide to use individual sessions for other programmes. For example, Handbook 6 would work well as part of an induction programme for most courses.

Throughout this handbook we refer to the following publications: *Foundation Stage Profile Handbook* and *Birth to Three Matters* DfES publications, produced by Sure Start.

NOTE

Guidance notes for teachers and trainers and a specimen scheme of work may be found in this handbook. The appendix of this handbook deals with how to adapt the resources for health and social care. The Teacher and trainer key skills handbook shows key skills mapped to the activities in Booklets 1-7c.

The seven teacher and trainer handbooks support each of the following learner observation booklets:

Handbook 1

How to develop good observation skills

Handbook 2

How to plan and record objective observations

Handbook 3

How to choose methods of observation

Handbook 4a

How to make sense of your observations

Part 1: Interpreting your observations – milestones and norms

Handbook 4b

How to make sense of your observations

Part 1: Interpreting your observations – theorists and expert opinion

Handbook 5

How to make sense of your observations

Part 2: recommendations and conclusions

Handbook 6

How to use references and bibliographies

Handbook 7a

Supplement to booklet 3: methods – checklists

Handbook 7b

Supplement to booklet 3: methods – graphs and charts

Handbook 7c

Supplement to booklet 3: methods – time and event sampling

Each handbook is subdivided into three sections:

1. Session plan.
2. Activities.
3. Resources.

How you can use the booklets

The accompanying set of seven booklets provide opportunities for learners to work either in a group or on their own. However, these booklets are not designed as distance learning resources.

It is important to ensure a holistic approach to learning by encouraging learners to look at the 'big picture' rather than single subjects or topics. All the booklets link together. The first six booklets cover aspects of the observation process. The seventh booklet (Booklet 7) provides opportunities to practise further methods of observation covered in Booklet 3.

Confidentiality

Throughout all seven booklets you will find the underlying theme of confidentiality. This subject is often discussed during induction. A review through a short quiz might be useful to reinforce learning. You may ask the learners to bring examples of confidentiality policies from their workplace or you may wish to provide examples of policies from your organisation to form the basis for discussion. You may already have used the confidentiality activity provided by the Standards Unit Health and Social Care Team.

Differentiated activities

Knowing your learners will enable you to plan effectively to meet their individual needs, and maximise learning opportunities and achievement. You will find that most activities can be covered in group sessions, but some may be undertaken either in groups or individual study. Planning the groups prior to the session will be beneficial. It is important to give careful consideration to the resources available for activities. There should be opportunities for learners to work on their own, and for them to discuss their findings at a tutorial.

Extend learning by asking learners to provide additional information or examples on the child-centred approach by identifying key factors put forward by theorists. Some learners may need additional support to understand what to look for in an observation and how to interpret their findings. You may find it helpful to arrange additional workshops or tutorial time with individuals in order to check their understanding.

Equality and diversity

It is important to reinforce equality and diversity at every opportunity. You may make links to the child-centred approach. Ask learners to explain how they would value and celebrate individual differences, for example, by presenting positive images of children and promoting the first language through learning simple words, such as 'good morning' or 'my name is ...'. Take care to ensure that a child with a disability can participate in activities, for example, by giving these children space and time for practical activities and for sharing tasks with peers while working through the exercises. It is important to ensure learners do not make assumptions or use stereotypes.

Health and safety

Health and safety is a fundamental issue for all aspects of work with children. Take every opportunity to check the awareness of learners, for example, during discussion of an observation. Such discussions should include the role of the adult in preparing and maintaining a safe environment at all times.

Supporting learners to develop key skills and literacy, language and numeracy skills (LLN)

Key and basic skills have been mapped at Levels 1 and 2 for these resources. Teacher and trainer information can be found in the Observation teacher and trainer key skills handbook. This highlights opportunities within each activity where you might use them to develop and practise these skills.

Resources for use with learners

The resources can be used in developing and practising key skills where these form part of a learner's programme or entitlement. It is important to stress that they are designed to support teaching, training and learning rather than evidence collection. Learners developing their literacy, language and numeracy skills may be working towards *Skills for Life* achievements at Levels 1 and 2. The resources may be used to develop these skills providing they are appropriate to their needs and interests.

It is important that the development of these skills should be part of a planned and well-coordinated approach involving the whole course/programme team, including key skills and literacy, language and numeracy specialists. Planning logical staged teaching, training and learning opportunities that develop vocational and literacy, language and numeracy skills in tandem is very important. It will ensure that learners have the opportunity, and can see the relevance, in gaining the literacy, language and numeracy skills which underpin the successful completion of many vocational activities.

Planned developments should be clearly identified, where appropriate, in schemes of work and session plans. You may find it helpful to discuss this with your programme manager.

Some learners working towards achievements at Level 2 – even those not working towards literacy, language and numeracy qualifications – may need support with literacy and numeracy to complete their programmes successfully. Teaching these skills is a specialist area. It is common practice for literacy and numeracy specialists to work alongside vocational teachers and trainers to plan and implement suitable teaching, training and learning strategies to support these learners. Bear this in mind in planning your use of the resources. For example, when using the resources you may need to work with learners with reading difficulties who could feel unduly challenged when asked to read their written observations out loud. Teaching and learning strategies to meet individual needs would need to be employed.

Some useful links

Guidance for key skills

The Key Skills Support Programme provides a wide range of support and guidance including training, resources, consultancy and newsletters. For more information about the programme, see their website on www.keyskillssupport.net.

In particular, the programme has produced good practice guides with ideas about how to support each of the key skills. There are versions for both work-based providers and for colleges. See www.keyskillssupport.net/publications/workbased/publications/index.asp and www.keyskillssupport.net/publications/schoolscolleges/publications.asp

Currently there are two sets of resources available for health, social care and early years:

Social care – order ref: embedded/SC.

Family health – order ref: embedded/FH.

Paper-based versions of a teacher and trainer reference file are available free of charge by telephoning DfES publications on 0845 60 222 60, quoting the relevant reference number.

Further relevant resources are due by June 2006. These will include:

- family life: the growing child;
- family life: parenting issues and community skills.

Reflective practice

By encouraging learners to reflect on their achievement at the end of each booklet, you are also introducing or consolidating their understanding of reflection as an important tool for improving professional practice. This will provide an opportunity to discuss the importance for learners of looking back on what they have done, noting what went well and what needed improvement. Learners working on their own may complete the review sheet to be found at the end of each learner booklet. It will be important to review this during assessment and tutorials, to ensure that an individual is making a careful and realistic assessment of achievement to date. This review sheet can be used to inform and revise individual targets during a review. Alternatively, learners working as a group may benefit from a focused discussion with peers prior to completing an individual assessment of progress.

It is important that you are familiar with the resources so that you can explain clearly to your learners how to use them.

Plan opportunities for target setting

It is important to help learners identify areas for development and set individual targets. This might involve working on a particular concept, being more active in group work or working to gain a better grade. Learners could use a personal log to help with individual reflection or use the review sheet, which can be found on the last pages of the booklets. One way to promote personal development is to encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning by taking their review sheet to each individual tutorial or review for discussion with their teacher or trainer.

Consider learners' prior knowledge and understanding:

To maximise the opportunities for learning, it is important for learners to have a basic understanding of the various areas of child development such as:

- physical;
- intellectual;
- cultural /religious;

- language;
- emotional;
- social.

Plan how you will introduce new terminology and concepts:

Encourage learners to keep a glossary of new terminology and concepts to assist them in developing a wider vocabulary.

Plan resources

Each booklet contains a range of resources which may be adapted to meet specific needs. You may decide to provide a range of video and paper-based resources to enhance and extend learning. You need to become familiar with all the learner booklets as well as the resources in the teacher and trainer handbooks.

Think carefully about what you intend to achieve by using each resource and how it will enhance and extend learning. Consider the relevance of the resources to the aims of the session.

It is important to remember that there may be a time lag between completing an activity and the opportunity to meet and discuss issues for the independent learner.

A CD-ROM and a VHS/DVD are available for use with this handbook.

All resources in this handbook can be downloaded from the CD-ROM, including a power point presentation of all handouts and OHTs in their relevant sections.

There is also a learner CD-ROM to enable learners to build upon the work they have completed with support and guidance from their teacher or trainer. The purpose of the CD-ROM is to consolidate what learners have already assimilated and to give them the opportunity to demonstrate what they have remembered through interactive activities related to theorists and theories, methods of observation and subjectivity and objectivity.

Child observation sequences video

This video is intended as a learning resource for introductory level training in child observation skills. Its main function is to enable learners to practice these skills. Its purpose is not to teach underpinning knowledge but rather to act as a supplement to the booklets and classroom activity.

The video shows children in different age groups and aspects of their development. It shows children on their own and in groups, and in a type of day-care setting in which most learners will do their own observation work.

This video resource is intended mainly as a springboard for classroom activity. Teachers and trainers are free to use the resource in whichever way they feel most suits the session. Teachers and trainers may wish to view individual sections, or to use details of sections to illustrate developmental milestones. To facilitate this, the video comes with an on-screen timer for use with the content guide below.

Teachers and trainers could also make use of the opportunity for learners to

review sequences to help develop their skills in carefully observing details. This will enable learners to develop the essential skill of moving beyond superficial observation.

The video also provides many opportunities for classroom discussion. These could include the following questions:

- What kinds of observation and recording methods are most suitable for different types of observation?
- What are the potential problems involved in observing children?
- How does the richness and complexity of interaction differ between children of different ages?
- How does speech and communication differ between children of different ages?
- Are there differences between children of slightly varying ages in the same age group?

Content guide

Each of the following sequences has a clear link to the work of the theorists, for example, Bowlby's theory of attachment and Bruner's theory of scaffolding. These have not been identified within the commentary as there may be the work of a number of theorists included in the sequence.

Arrival

This section provides opportunities for the observation of the social and emotional development of babies.

Child 1: Girl, 10 months – **Focus child** (blue checked dungarees and white t-shirt)

00.30–00.41 child arrives at nursery with carer

00.42–00.47 handover to practitioner

00.48–02.03 child reaches for and returns to carer

02.04–02.22 handover to practitioner, child cries

02.23–02.51 child plays with sensory toys

02.52–02.58 child sits on floor

Mealtimes

This section provides opportunities for the observation of physical skills including fine manipulative skills and social skills.

Child 1: Girl, 17 months – **Focus child** (beige shirt, red bib)

Child 2: Boy, 3 years 9 months (yellow and black t-shirt)

Child 3: Boy, 3 years 2 months (orange t-shirt)

Child 4: Boy, 3 years 8 months (grey t-shirt)

Child 5: Boy, 2 years 11 months (red and white checked shirt)

Child 6: Girl, 3 years 1 month (pink pinafore, pink patterned t-shirt)

Child 7: Girl, 1 year 10 months (stripy cardigan)

03.02–04.08 child 1, independent feeding

04.09–05.16 child 2,3,4,5 pour water into cups

05.17–05.35 child 2,3,4,5 select bread from tray

05.36–06.50 child 6 pours water for child 7

Block play and construction play

This section provides opportunities for the observation of physical skills including gross and fine motor skills, language development and the development of imagination.

- Child 1:** Boy, 3 years, 2 months (orange t-shirt, light trousers)
Child 2: Boy, 3 years, 8 months (grey t-shirt with logo and jeans)
Child 3: Girl, 3 years, 1 month (pink pinafore, pink patterned t-shirt and stripy tights/then pink trousers)
Child 4: Boy, 2 years, 8 months (red, white and blue stripy jumper, blue trousers)
Child 5: Girl, 2 years, 6 months (white patterned pinafore, white polo neck)
Child 6: Girl, 2 years, 8 months – **Focus child** (stripy jumper, stripy trousers)
Child 7: Girl, 2 years, 9 months (denim dress, pink cardigan)
Child 8: Boy, 3 years, 9 months (yellow and black t-shirt, green trousers)

06.52–09.01 child 2,3,4,5,6,7 balance on blocks

09.03–14.23 child 3 and 7 build models using bricks

14.25–15.26 child 1 and 7 play with 'animals'

Independent dressing

This section provides opportunities for the observation of physical skills including fine manipulative skills required for independent dressing.

- Child 1:** Girl, 2 years, 8 months (stripy t-shirt and stripy trousers)

15.29–19.55 child puts on shoes with some assistance by practitioner

Sand play

This section provides opportunities for the observation of physical skills, the development of imagination and language development.

- Child 1:** Boy, 17 months (red sweatshirt, blue trousers)
Child 2: Girl, 13 months (pink hooded top, flowered skirt)
Child 3: Girl, 3 years, 1 months – **Focus child** (pink pinafore, pink patterned t-shirt)
Child 4: Girl, 17 months (beige shirt, pink trousers)
Child 5: Boy, 2 years, 7 months – **Focus child** (beige cardigan, beige t-shirt)

Child 6: Boy, 3 years, 8 months (green t-shirt with logo)

19.58–20.48 child 2 plays with whisk and bucket in sand tray

20.49–21.33 child 3 brings toys to tray, begins to play

21.34–22.12 child 1 tries to touch child 3 toys, told off

22.13–22.47 child 3 gets in to sand tray, sand play

22.48–23.10 child 4 joins group, tries to touch child 3 toys

23.11–23.47 sand play

23.47–24.01 child 1 and 4 move away, child 1 babbling

24.03–24.28 child 5 fills cup with sand, child 6 puts sand in pot

24.29–25.14 child 6 talks to practitioner and moves away, child 5 still filling cup with sand

25.15–25.40 child 5 clears sand and makes a sand 'cake'.

Role-play

This section provides opportunities for the observation of social interaction and development of imagination.

Child 1: Boy, 2 years, 6 months (grey and orange t-shirt)

Child 2: Boy, 2 years, 6 months (green t-shirt)

25.43–29.14 child 1 and 2 playing co-operatively, involved in imaginative play.

Babies

This section provides opportunities for the observation of social and emotional development including early interaction and the development of fine manipulative skills

Child 1: Boy, 17 months – **Focus child** (beige shirt and blue trousers)

Child 2: Girl, 11 months (white t-shirt and pink trousers)

Child 3: Girl, 17 months (beige shirt)

Child 4: Boy, 12 months – **Focus child** (beige, green and orange t-shirt)

29.21–29.49 child 1 and 2 play with treasure basket

29.50–30.30 child 1 explores colander, babbling

30.31–30.53 child 3 picks disc off floor, child 1 points to child 3 who drops disc, child 1 looks and crawls to disc

30.54–31.06 child 3 spins ball

31.07–31.28 child 4 joins in

31.29–31.40 child 4 crawls into prism

31.41–32.01 child 3 plays 'I see', child 4 pushes ball over.

Specimen scheme of work for observations

Session 1: How to develop good observation skills

Aim

To develop good observation skills.

Objectives

By the end of the session learners will be able to:

- explain why observations are important when working with children;
- demonstrate the importance of objective observations;
- illustrate how to record objective observations.

Session 2: How to plan and record objective observations

Aim

To plan and record objective observations.

Objectives

By the end of the session, learners will be able to:

- understand the importance of planning an observation;
- identify what should be included in an observation plan;
- identify important factors to consider before carrying out an observation.

Session 3: How to choose methods of observation

Aim

To identify and explore the use of different methods of observation.

Objectives

By the end of the session learners will be able to:

- use a range of observation methods;
- identify the advantages and disadvantages of each method;
- identify the most appropriate method(s) to use in a range of observation situations.

Session 4: Interpreting your observations

4a Aim

To use observations to compare development with milestones or norms.

Objectives

By the end of the session learners will be able to:

- interpret the information from the observation;
- compare a child's development with milestones or norms;
- understand the dangers of checking against milestones or norms.

4b Aim

To make use of appropriate theories in order to help explain findings from observations.

Objectives

By the end of the session learners will be able to:

- understanding a range of theories and theorists in relation to child development;
- link their observations to theories and expert opinion.

Session 5: Conclusions and recommendations

Aim

To enable learners to reach conclusions and make recommendations that will inform future plans for the child's development.

Objectives

By the end of the session, learners will be able to:

- accurately draw conclusions;
- make clear and realistic recommendations;
- accurately complete observation reports.

Session 6: How to use references and bibliographies

Aim

To demonstrate the importance of using a logical and consistent method of referencing.

Objectives

By the end of the session, learners will be able to:

- explain and demonstrate how to use quotations;
- demonstrate the difference between paraphrasing and plagiarism;
- explain/demonstrate how to write a bibliography using the Harvard System.

Session 7: Methods

7a Aim

To practise using developmental checklists.

Objectives

By the end of the session learners will be able to:

- use a checklist with rating scales;
- link areas of development to the foundation stage curriculum;
- match behaviour to developmental milestones;
- identify advantages and disadvantages of using a developmental checklist;
- identify a suitable checklist.

7b Aim

To practise using charts and graphs to record or represent observation data.

Objectives

By the end of the session, learners will be able to identify the advantages and disadvantages of using the various kinds of charts and graphs. Learners will record results from observation using:

- bar charts;
- line graphs;
- a pie chart;
- tracking charts;
- activity charts.

7c Aim

To practise using time and event samples during observation sessions.

Objectives

By the end of the session, learners will be able to:

- understand when and how to use a time or event sample;
- explain advantages and disadvantages of using time and event samples;
- complete a time sample and an event sample observation.

How to develop good observation skills

Session plan

What you will need to do for this session:

- Read this handbook and copy relevant pages for your learners as handouts.
- Read Learner observation Booklet 1.
- Photocopy enough copies of Booklet 1 for your learners.
- Watch the video clips and select the most appropriate one to use with your group.
- Remember to identify any potential barriers to individual learning. Build in plans to enable each learner to achieve success. Where possible work with a colleague specialising in language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) ensuring learners are able to **acquire** the skills (LLN) or **apply** the skills (key skills) to meet individual need.

The resources you will need for this session:

- Booklet 1.
- This teacher and trainer handbook for instructions for activities.
- The Observation teacher and trainer key skills handbook.

- Resources (handouts and OHTs) from the back of this teacher or trainer handbook.
- Video of child observation sequences.
- *Birth to Three Matters*, *Foundation Stage Profile* and *Key Stage One* curriculum information as references for areas of development.

The session:

- Thought shower – why do we observe?
- The planning cycle.
- Teacher or trainer demonstration.
- Practising observing and recording objectively and accurately.
- Testing learners' understanding of subjective and objective statements.
- Recording objective observations using images.
- Observing a colleague.
- Consolidation exercise.
- Observing using the child observation sequences.
- Review and consolidation.
- How did I do?
- Teacher or trainer evaluation.

Programme	Teacher or trainer:
Unit: Observations	Length of session: 120 minutes
Topic: Objective records	Room:
Date:	Number on register:

Aim: To develop good observation skills.

Objectives

By the end of the session learners will be able to:

- explain why observations are important when working with children;
- demonstrate the importance of objective observations;
- illustrate how to record objective observations.

	Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
3 minutes	Introduction to the topic of observations Discuss aim and objectives of the session	Discuss aim and objectives of session. Ask questions about content of sessions.		Learners are clear about the aims and objectives of the session.

	Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
10 minutes	<p>Thought shower – why do we observe?</p> <p>Record answers on the flip chart/whiteboard. Encourage all to contribute.</p> <p>What do we observe? This could be a large group discussion or learners could break off into smaller discussion groups.</p> <p>Feedback. Learners should feed back on the areas of development.</p> <p>Give learners Booklet 1 and explain its purpose and the key symbols. Explain that each booklet has the same format and allow learners to briefly familiarise themselves with this.</p>	<p>Complete activities/answer questions on why and what we observe. Make notes.</p> <p>If working in smaller groups, feed back to large group and make notes from the feedback of other groups.</p> <p>Spend some time becoming familiar with the format of the booklets.</p> <p>Look through booklet 1.</p> <p>Discuss any concerns with the teacher or trainer.</p>	Booklet 1.	<p>Learners understand why and what we observe giving examples of when to observe.</p> <p>Learners develop knowledge and understanding of the areas and stages of development .</p>
12 minutes	<p>The Planning Cycle</p> <p>Using OHT 1, p. 41 explain the planning cycle to learners.</p> <p>Discuss with learners why observations should always be planned and why it is important to order and structure observations.</p> <p>Prompt if necessary.</p> <p>Optional link: Optional handout 6 p. 49 (Kolb's cycle of experiential learning)</p>	<p>Listen to the explanation, join in discussion and ask questions if they are unclear about any aspect of the planning cycle.</p> <p>Provide practical examples of when the planning cycle has been used. Link theory to their practice.</p>	OHT 1, p. 41	<p>Learners understand and can apply the planning cycle.</p>

	Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
10 minutes	<p>Teacher or trainer demonstration</p> <p>This will illustrate the importance of accurate observation. You will need to read p. 33 and decide on the resources you will be using before completing this activity.</p> <p>Follow the instructions on pp. 33–34 for the demonstration/activity.</p> <p>Feed back.</p> <p>When writing responses on the white board, highlight any subjective answers (opinion) such as ‘I thought...’ and ‘It looked heavier...’</p> <p>Discuss the differences between subjective and objective.</p>	<p>Listen to the instructions from the teacher or trainer on how to complete activity.</p> <p>Write down exactly what happened during the demonstration.</p> <p>Give verbal feedback or present feedback using a flip chart/whiteboard.</p> <p>Identify subjective statements.</p> <p>Discuss the difference between subjective and objective.</p>	<p>Resources for demonstration.</p> <p>Flip chart/whiteboard.</p>	<p>Learners develop skills for recording accurate observations.</p> <p>Learners develop an understanding of subjective and objective.</p>
10 minutes	<p>Repeat the demonstration</p> <p>The aim is to illustrate the importance of saying what you see, not what you think.</p> <p>Catchphrase – say what you see.</p> <p>Feed back on what actually happened and learners have learned from the demonstration.</p> <p>Link– Discussion about assumptions that you or the learners have previously made.</p>	<p>Carefully observe the object.</p> <p>Record what has been seen.</p> <p>Feed back on observation.</p> <p>Ask questions for clarification.</p> <p>Provide examples of assumptions that they may have previously made.</p>	<p>Object.</p> <p>Booklet or paper for recording.</p>	<p>Learners develop skills of accurately observing and recording what they see.</p> <p>Learners understand the importance of not making assumptions when observing.</p>

	Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
10 minutes	<p>Practising observing and recording objectively and accurately</p> <p>This activity will enable learners to practise observing and recording objectively and accurately.</p> <p>Before the session – look at the photographs and OHT overlays pp. 50–57 and decide which activity you are going to use.</p> <p>Introduce the activity to the group.</p> <p>OHT – use the OHT overlays one by one to build up a picture of what is happening.</p> <p>Ask questions about the overlays and get learners to explain what is happening on each overlay. Record the key points on a flip chart/whiteboard.</p> <p>PHOTOGRAPHS – Split learners into pairs. Learners record only what they see on photographs and feed back to the whole group. Record the key points on a flip chart/whiteboard.</p> <p>During feedback for both activities objective and subjective statements should be highlighted.</p>	<p>Listen to the instructions and ask questions about the activity.</p> <p>OHT – record what is seen.</p> <p>Discuss.</p> <p>PHOTOGRAPHS – discuss in pairs, what is seen on the photographs.</p> <p>Feed back.</p>	<p>Photos/OHTs.</p> <p>Flip chart/whiteboard.</p>	<p>Learners develop skills of observing and recording accurately and objectively.</p> <p>Learners develop a greater understanding of what is subjective and objective through photograph/overlay activity.</p>

	Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
10 minutes	<p>Testing learners' understanding of subjective and objective statements</p> <p>Discuss image on p. 9 of Booklet 1.</p> <p>Learners to complete p. 8 of Booklet 1. individually or you may wish to use this as a group activity (p. 35).</p> <p>Feed back to large group.</p>	<p>Discuss image on p. 8 of Booklet 1.</p> <p>Complete p. 8 of Booklet 1 or participate in group activity.</p> <p>Feed back in large group.</p>	A3 sheets and stick pads or statements.	Learners fully understand the difference between objective and subjective.
10 minutes	<p>Recording objective observations using images</p> <p>Discuss with learners Activity 2 on p. 9 of Booklet 1.</p> <p>Ask learners to complete activity.</p> <p>Give feedback.</p> <p>OPTIONAL LINK – Further examples of Activity 2 can be used by providing a handout from this handbook, pp. 46–48.</p>	<p>Complete activity 2 of Booklet 1.</p> <p>Feed back in large groups.</p> <p>Record on flip chart/whiteboard.</p>	Booklet 1.	<p>Learners are able to write an objective description of what they see.</p> <p>Learners are able to explain why their statement is objective.</p>

	Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
15 minutes	<p>Observing a colleague</p> <p>Before the session – read the instructions for learners on observing a colleague on p.12 of Booklet 1.</p> <p>Explain the purpose of the activity – observing a colleague.</p> <p>Read p.12 of Booklet 1 with learners and give them Handout 4 (recording children’s conversations during observations, p. 45).</p> <p>Either work in groups of three as stated or groups of four with two learners completing activity and two recordings (this will give learners the opportunity to record speech).</p> <p>Allow learners to observe for 5 minutes, give feedback (highlighting objective and subjective statements) and then swap over.</p> <p>Join together in large groups for feedback, highlighting subjective and objective statements.</p>	<p>Listen to instructions for the activity.</p> <p>Read p.12 of Booklet 1 and Handout 4.</p> <p>Observe role-play. Observers to write down as much detailed objective information as possible.</p> <p>Discuss in small groups.</p> <p>Swap over and repeat.</p> <p>Feedback in large groups.</p> <p>Discuss objective/ subjective statements.</p>	<p>Resources for role play.</p> <p>Flip chart/ whiteboard.</p>	<p>Learners develop skills required to record a realistic observation including speech.</p>
5 minutes	<p>Consolidation exercise</p> <p>Learners complete checklist on Handout 3 (p. 44).</p>	<p>Complete checklist on Handout 3.</p>	<p>Handout 3.</p>	<p>Learners fully understand the importance of remaining objective during observations.</p>

	Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
15 minutes	<p>Observing using the child observation sequences</p> <p>Before the session – watch the video sequences and choose the one that you are going to use.</p> <p>Give the learners background information to the video. Tell them to make objective notes about the video clip. Remind them about using shorthand to record observations more quickly.</p> <p>Play the video.</p> <p>After the video, give the learners a few minutes to complete their notes.</p> <p>Feedback. Record key points on the flip chart, discuss similarities and differences. Link to areas of development (Activity 1), extend learners by asking for full justification of answers and how this informs planning.</p> <p>Watch the video again to check findings. Check against development charts.</p>	<p>Listen to instructions.</p> <p>Watch video clip.</p> <p>Make notes.</p> <p>Discuss in large groups.</p> <p>Highlight objective/ subjective statements.</p> <p>Link to areas of development.</p> <p>Watch video again and check against notes.</p> <p>Check against development charts.</p>	<p>Video – child observation clips.</p> <p>Flip chart/ whiteboard.</p> <p>Child development checklist.</p> <p>Reference books:</p> <p><i>Birth to Three Matters,</i></p> <p><i>Foundation Stage Profile Handbook,</i></p> <p><i>Key Stage One</i></p>	<p>Learners further develop their skills in observing and recording by viewing 'real' situations.</p>

	Teacher or trainer activity	Learner activity	Resources	Learner outcomes
5 minutes	<p>Review and consolidation</p> <p>Learners review and consolidate their learning by completing Activity 5 of Booklet 1, p. 15.</p> <p>Glossary – learners fill in new words or terms and discuss their meaning.</p> <p>Discuss.</p>	<p>Complete p. 15 of Booklet 1.</p> <p>Discuss in large group.</p>	Booklet 1.	Learners demonstrate a good understanding of recording objective observations.
5 minutes	<p>How did I do?</p> <p>Ask learners to complete Activity 6 of Booklet 1, p. 16.</p> <p>Recap and evaluation of session. Identify any points/issues that need to be carried forward to next session.</p> <p>Check that aims and objectives were met.</p>	<p>Complete p. 16 of Booklet 1 individually.</p> <p>Any questions?</p>	Booklet 1.	<p>Learners identify what they have learned so far and areas needing further development.</p> <p>Learners demonstrate an understanding of new words and terms used throughout the session.</p>
After the session	<p>Teacher or trainer evaluation</p> <p>Complete the teacher or trainer evaluation on p. 31.</p>			

Teacher or trainer evaluation

Identifying the needs of all learners (differentiation)	How the needs of all learners will be met (achieving differentiation)
<p>The following range of particular needs exist (these will have been identified during the learners' initial assessment):</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>The needs of particular learners will be met in the following ways:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Review of:</p> <p>a) what went well</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Review of:</p> <p>b) what went less well and how to improve it</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Review of:</p> <p>c) were the needs of all learners met?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

Activities

You will need a copy of learner Booklet 1.

Think about your learners and whether they should work in groups or alone.

Introduce any new words or concepts, highlighting them to encourage the learners to begin to build a glossary of terms/ concepts for future reference, for example, objectivity and subjectivity, child-centred approach.

Why do we observe?

You may want to set the scene for why we observe and develop the discussion through a thought shower. This would then be followed with “what do I need to observe?”.

What do I need to observe?

Planning cycle (p. 41)

You may find it helpful to use this diagram as an OHT in order to focus group discussion. Some learners may recognise the cycle as being similar to Kolb’s learning cycle, offering a good opportunity for further research or discussion to extend their understanding.

You may wish to remind the learners of the six areas of development. This can be achieved in a variety of ways:

- By using an OHT listing the six areas to generate a discussion.
- By having a thought shower in small groups, with an example of each area of development. For example, communication, language and literature. This could be reading, speaking, songs and rhymes, or word games appropriate for the age of the child.
- Through a handout with each area identified; learners work in pairs or individually to provide an example as above.
- Through focused questions to individuals recording the findings on the whiteboard/computer.

Demonstration

This activity aims to focus the learners on the process of observation: seeing, hearing and noting the fine detail. At the end of the demonstration, learners will be aware of the need to record facts and not make assumptions based on previous knowledge and experiences.

What you need

You will need one of the following:

- Two small and one large feather.
- Two leaves of different sizes and shape.
- A bubble maker.
- Two balloons, one filled with helium, the other with air.
- Two eggs (one hard boiled) and a bowl of water.
- Two pieces of wood.

What you do

Explain that you are going to give a demonstration. You want the learners to work in pairs to watch, then describe what they see happen.

- Drop a small feather/leaf or blow a bubble, allowing it to fall to the floor.
- Ask the learners to take turns to describe to their partner what they saw.
- Repeat with a second large feather.
- Collate responses on a flip chart or whiteboard.
- Ask the learners what size, shape, colour they were. Did they change in any way?
- Taking the large feather/leaf/bubble, ask the learners to predict how it will fall.
- Drop the feather/leaf/bubble, asking learners to write a detailed description of what happens in their booklet.

TOP TIP

You are looking for fine details, for example, which way up was the feather/leaf/bubble? Did it turn, float from side to side? What colour and shape was it? If you used a bubble maker, how many bubbles were made?

Review

Ask learners what they have learned from this demonstration. The key points you are looking for are:

- Say what you actually see.
- Do not make assumptions or try and predict what will happen as this may affect your judgement.

- Think of children rather than feathers, leaves or bubbles; each child is unique.
- You can expect different things from children of different ages, hence the importance of a benchmark or 'norm'. It is important, however, to stress that children will develop at different rates. A delay, or even regression, may be due to a number of factors, for example, the birth of a new baby, moving house, or changing from pre-school to school.
- Stress the importance of making a detailed account within a short timescale. Learners will not be able to ask a child to repeat an action because they missed something.
- Develop a kind of shorthand for ease of recording, although one that can be translated easily later.

Activity

What does, 'objective', mean? (Booklet 1, p. 7)

- You may decide to have this picture of a child eating on a handout or OHT, without the speech bubbles, or use the four OHTs (pp. 50–53) as overlays. Alternatively, you could enlarge the picture to A3 poster size. Give each learner a sticky note, asking them to interpret what they see.
- Use this sensitively to facilitate a discussion as to whether the statement is opinion or fact. Use questions to encourage the learners to explain what they think and ask questions such as 'how do you know that?' or 'what makes you think that?'

Other ideas to try

- You might wish to get a group to think of a recent film or TV programme they have seen. It will be important to get the learners to pair up with someone who has seen the same thing.
- Ask them to choose one particular incident from the film/ programme, asking each to write down key points, for example, who was involved? What happened? Ask them to compare notes identifying any similarities or differences.

TOP TIPS

- Use this exercise to point out why two people may see the same incident, but may identify different factors.
- Extend learning by asking learners to review perception, identifying factors involved in the way we interpret what we see and hear.
- Leave time for discussion to consolidate understanding.
- Provide additional resources to support and extend learning, for example, psychology text books, handouts on perception and images.
- Keep resources visual and encourage learners to draw on life and work experience whenever possible.
- Provide other pictures to illustrate cultural differences.
- Reinforce the importance of meeting individual needs and respect for the child-centred approach. For example, highlight equipment for independence during meal times for a child with a disability or note and encourage awareness of religious/cultural customs at meal times.

Now test your understanding

Activity 1a (Booklet 1, p. 7)

This can be done by learners completing the statements on their own.

- You can check understanding by organising this exercise in a number of ways, for example, by discussion and/or circulating as learners complete this task.
- You may display the correct answers on an OHT using an overlay.

Activity 1b (Booklet 1, p. 8)

This activity develops an understanding of objectivity and subjectivity.

You can choose to organise this exercise in a number of ways:

- Learners to complete the task on their own.
- Learners to work in pairs/small groups to complete the task.

TOP TIPS

- Use whatever resources you have to hand, but keep things simple.
- Ensure that learners have room to work in groups of three.
- Watch the time, allowing sufficient opportunity to observe and record, then compare. The danger is that learners will spend more time on the observation than on the comparison.
- If time allows, encourage all learners to have a turn as observer/observed.
- You could use the activity as an exercise for homework to discuss in a later session.

- Provide a series of A3 sheets, one for each of the five pairs of examples. Draw a line halfway down the paper. Write the statement for (a) on the top half and (b) on the lower half. Give the learners 10 sticky notes with O for objective and 10 with S for subjective. Ask the learners to place either an O or an S sticky note against each statement, making sure that they write their initials on the sticky note.
- Use the initialed sticky note to ask learners why they chose that answer.
- If you use an interactive whiteboard, you may wish to ask individuals to come up and complete a statement. Once all are correct, you could save the answers on disk, enabling each learner to have a correct sheet for future reference.

Activity 2 (Booklet 1, p. 9)

Activities 2 and 3 provide opportunities to practise further and consolidate understanding of objectivity/subjectivity.

There are four photographs for you to use on pp. 46–48.

- Learners can complete this task on their own.
- Learners could work in pairs, with a learner who has grasped this concept well, working with a learner who is struggling.
- You can facilitate a group discussion to identify objectively what is happening in the picture.
- You can encourage learners to justify their statement, by describing why the statement is objective.
- Learners who are still struggling with this activity can be encouraged to complete further examples found in Handout 5.

Activity 3a (Booklet 1, p. 10)

- You could ask the learners to complete a simple jigsaw puzzle or build something with building blocks, or thread different coloured large beads onto string.
- You may choose to use a case study from a video (for example, child observation sequences) of a child at play.

Activity 3b (Booklet 1, p. 11)

This activity is designed for learners working alone.

Observing an everyday activity

- Choose an activity that you, a colleague, or a friend do nearly every day. This could be something such as cleaning teeth, getting children into a car, making a bed or using a mobile phone.

What to record

Start with a description of the setting, for example, 'The bathroom at 6.30 a.m.' Record in **detail** the sequence of events, for example:

- Which hand is used to open the toothpaste?
- In which hand is the toothbrush?
- Is a beaker of water used or is the tap left running?
- How are the teeth cleaned – from top to bottom, or side to side, or both?
- Are there any noises, for example, humming, as the teeth are cleaned?
- What happens at the end of the task?
- Anything else?

Another example might be watching someone using a mobile phone even if you cannot hear what is being said. You could observe:

- in which hand they hold the phone;
- how rapidly their lips move when speaking;
- for how long they listen;
- for how long they speak;
- how they use their hands;
- whether they pace up and down or move around.

TOP TIPS

- Use a current topical subject that you know interests the learners, for example, a local news item or a report on children in other countries or news of a celebrity.
- Remember to draw out cultural differences, for example, eye contact or space between people.
- Ensure that the learners have practised/ developed a shorthand they are comfortable with using and translating.

Activity 3c (Booklet 1, p. 12)

You may want to set this task as homework/independent study.

What you need

- You will need to pre-record a 5-minute slot from the news or a documentary.

What you do

- Draw the learners' attention to the instructions in Booklet 1, p. 14.

Group

- You may decide to play the VHS/DVD with the sound off first, encouraging learners to observe and note carefully what they see.
- You could emphasise the importance of visual cues during communication when playing the recording with sound and vision.

Individual

- You could provide a recording for learners to use on their own.
- You could ask the learner to choose and record their own 5-minute topic, including the recording with their written work.
- You should check understanding at the next available review/tutorial.
- If you use a virtual learning environment, you could ask for the report by e-mail if the learner has used your recording.
- Check understanding through further questions posted via e-mail to the learner.

Activity 4 (Booklet 1, p. 12)**What you need**

- One sequence from the child observation sequence video supplied with this resource.

What you do

- Discuss the video clip with learners, giving details about the child and the environment. Ask the learners to make detailed notes about the sequence, drawing their attention to the use of objective statements.

- After recording the key points, play the sequence again, asking the learners to compare their notes/key points to what is actually happening during the sequence.

Activity 5 (Booklet 1, p. 13)

This is the last activity in this session. The activity assesses understanding of objectivity and subjectivity and is suitable for use with groups or individuals. Individuals complete the activity sheet on their own and must be ready to discuss it with you at the next review/tutorial.

How did I do? (Booklet 1, p. 14)

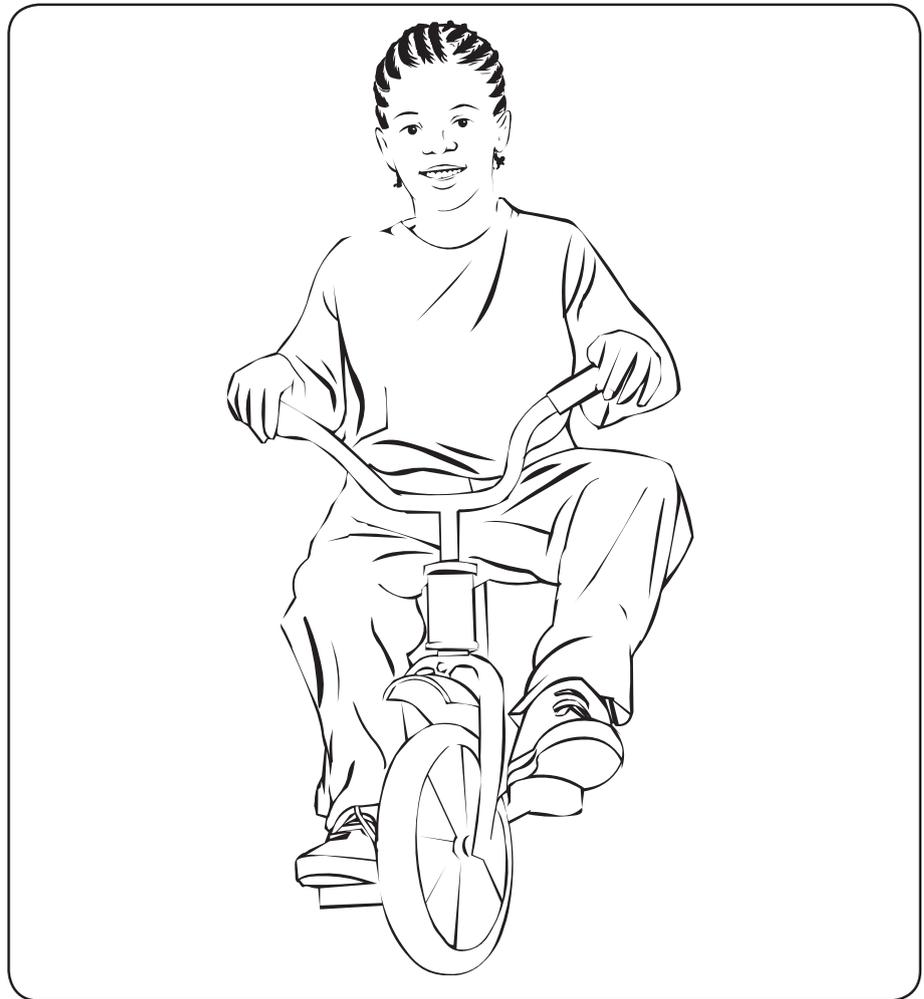
TOP TIPS

- Emphasise the importance of conscientious completion of the self-assessment sheets (Booklet 1, p. 14).
- Use the findings to inform individual action plans for further development.
- Encourage learners to file their booklets, cross-referencing resources to appropriate key skills and other units of the programme.
- Complete your own evaluation of the session to inform your own practice (p. 31 of this handbook).
- Use the findings from the learner self-assessment to inform your plans for future sessions involving Booklet 1.

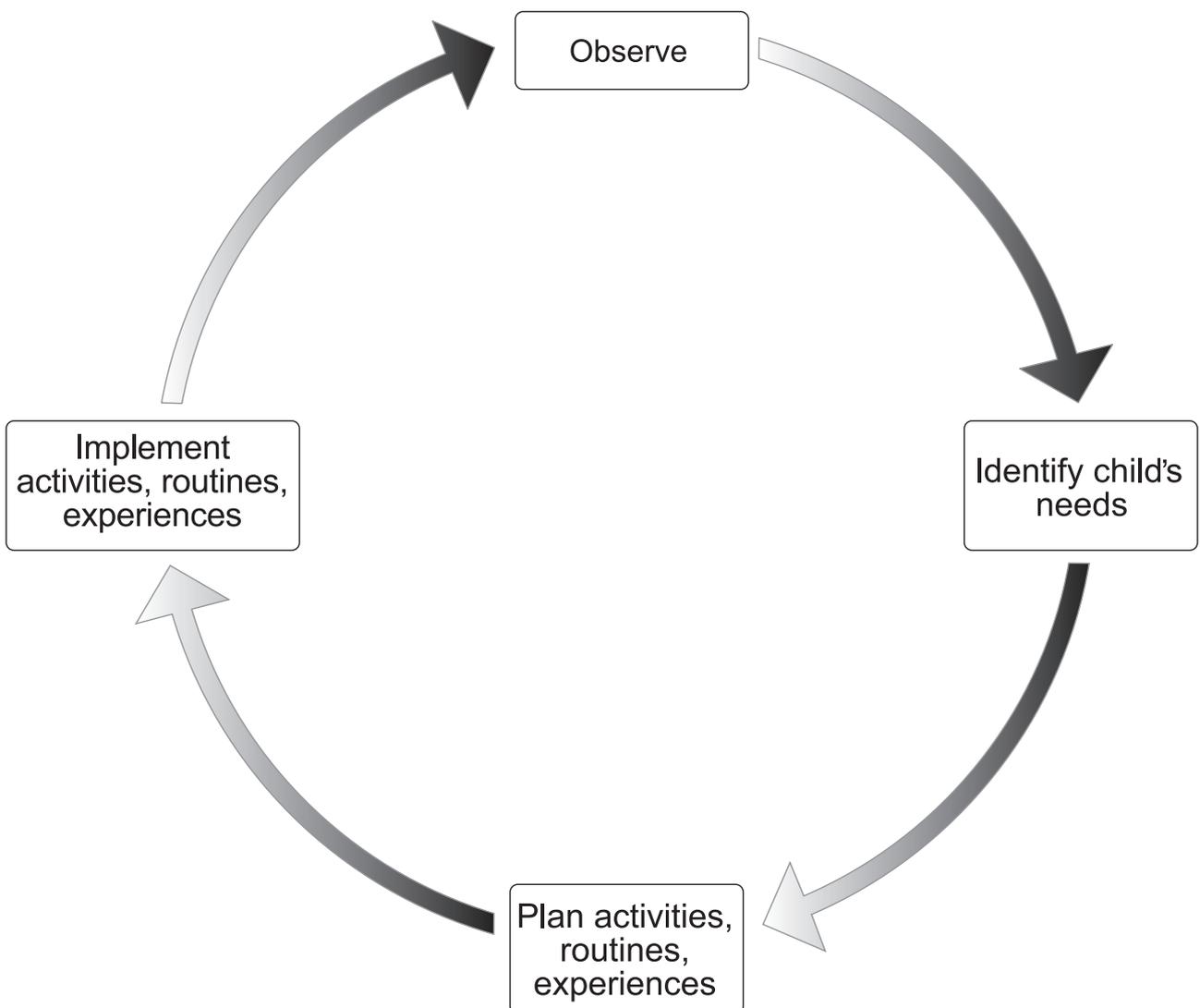
Resources

Booklet 1

How to develop good observation skills



The planning cycle



Why objective observation is important

You may believe that it is impossible to work with children without observing all aspects of their development. Certainly this kind of 'informal' or common sense observation is essential for working effectively with children. There will be times when something a child says or does attracts your attention because it appears significant or surprising in some way. It is then that you may decide to observe that aspect of the child's development more systematically and so you move from 'informal' observation to more 'formal' or systematic observation. Your workplace setting will also have policies or established practices about when observations must be carried out. These policies or practices will relate to formal or objective observations when information on an aspect of a child's or children's development is recorded.

As part of your work as an early years practitioner, it is essential that you develop and use the knowledge and skills of objective observation in order to:

- understand a particular child as an individual and learn about their particular interests;
- gather information to make assessments about a child's progress in relation to developmental norms or national targets. This might trigger a need for specialist support;
- identify any particular difficulties and needs;
- document behaviour that causes concern;
- assess what the child has achieved and plan effectively for the next stage;
- provide information for parents and other professionals who may work with the child.

Here are some examples of the impact of objective observations when integrated into the planning cycle:

Through regular observations of Lamumba, who is two years old, practitioners at his playgroup notice that he mainly plays with the 'small world' toys such as trains, dinosaurs and people. While the adults recognise his need to be involved in safe, repetitious play, after a while they help him to explore new things. By planning activities in which his favourite playthings are integrated into other areas, for example, putting the dinosaurs into the sand and making trains with large construction bricks, Lamumba is enabled to explore and enjoy a wider range of experiences.

Caitlin, who is six months old, is cared for during the day by Jack, a childminder, in his home. Jack has noticed Caitlin becoming increasingly curious about objects that move and make different sounds. In response to this, Jack has planned an experience where ribbons and bells are attached to a helium balloon, which is then fixed securely to her wrist. Jack is sure that she is comfortable lying on a blanket and spends some time playing with the balloon with her. As Caitlin becomes

Handout 2

more aware of the control she has over the balloon, Jack gently moves away and sits nearby on a sofa observing her joy at doing something all by herself.

A two-year-old new to nursery, Ella, was reluctant to move away from Hyacinth, her key worker, preferring to stay close, hugging teddy. Hyacinth noticed however that she loved talking about what the bear could do. Hyacinth suggested to Ella that they teach teddy to find his way around the nursery. They took photographs as teddy explored the nursery and made a book for him. Ella's confidence grew. She began fetching things for teddy and going out to play with other children and telling him she would return. After six weeks, Hyacinth wrote in

Ella's record: "Ella has begun to settle into the nursery. She talks to other adults and plays with Rashida, her new friend. Ella likes to point to an activity area, before leading Rashida off to play". This experience with teddy has helped Ella to become playfully engaged and involved and, in doing so, to find out about the environment.

(Source: *Birth to Three Matters*)

These examples demonstrate why observation is the first step in the planning cycle. If your observations are not objective, you will not be able to identify the needs of an individual child. If you do not do this effectively, you cannot plan effectively for the child's development.

Handout 3

Checklist to ensure observations are objective

This handout links with Activities 3a and 3b of Booklet 1.

When I observed, did I ...	
• put aside my previous experience and opinions of the child?	
• put aside my own views, attitudes and values?	
• put aside my own needs and personality?	
• forget comments made about the child by others?	
• ensure that I did not make a judgement about what I observed, for example, 'that is cute'?	
• ensure that I did not let my feelings about the child influence my observation?	
• ensure that I did not ascribe feelings to children, for example, 'that upset him'?	

Handout 4

Recording children's conversations during observations

This handout links with Activity 3c of Booklet 1.

Here is an example of how to write your observation of a child or children talking. You may have used a tape recorder to record the conversation or you may have made notes using some form of shorthand or code. When transcribing (writing down) into your observation report, you should write out the conversation in full. Your transcription may not always be a verbatim (word-for-word) record, but it should be as true to what was actually said as possible.

Remember to gain permission when using a tape recorder; there are possible child protection issues to be considered here.

Examples

Harry starts by saying, "I need to write my name on the front don't I so that people know this book is mine and about me." **Abbey** then

reminds him that he has forgotten to draw his glasses. "Oh, yeah, can't forget to draw them. I'd better do it now." Having been asked to draw special people in his home, Harry felt he could include his mum's new partner, "He's special because he looks after us."

Abbey said, "I've got black dots in the middle of my eyes and a bit of green." She turned to Harry to remind him, "Hey Harry, you haven't drawn your glasses!" When recording special things, **Abbey** drew her bedroom, "I like my bedroom. It's pink and full of Barbie things."

Kwesi said, "I like going in my auntie's car, I get excited," while he was drawing on his special times page. Most children draw their school friends on the special page, but **Kwesi** draws his family. "That's my family. My family are my friends."

(Source: *Foundation Stage Profile*)

Handout 5

Practising the skills of objective observation

This is a further example to support Activity 2 from Booklet 1.

This is an opportunity for you to practise the skills of writing objective descriptions of what you see.

A



B



Handout 5
C



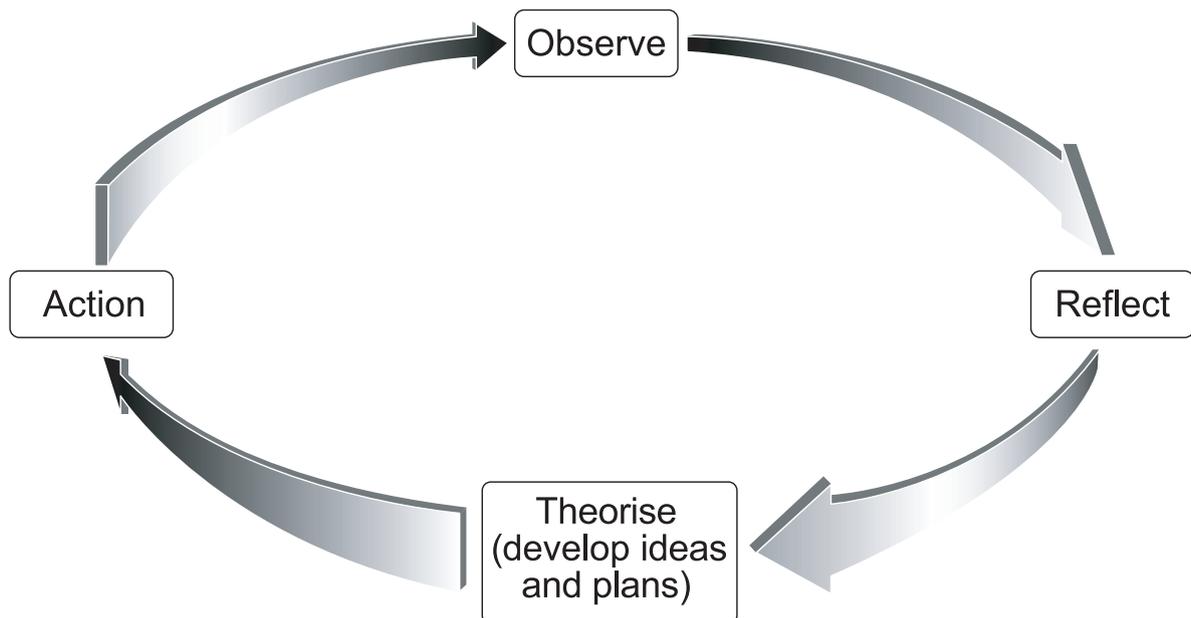
Reflective practice

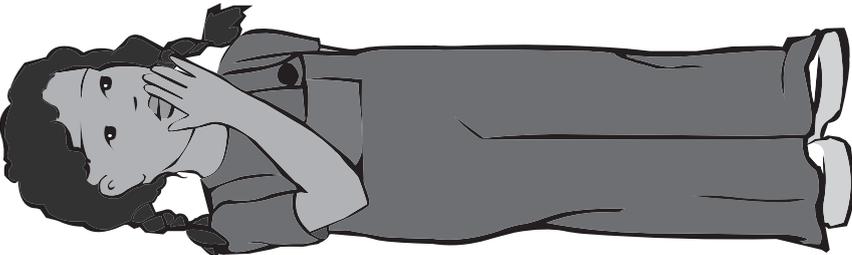
You have been asked to reflect on your own learning in all of the learner observation booklets. This kind of reflection is important and will become increasingly so, if you are to be an effective early years practitioner.

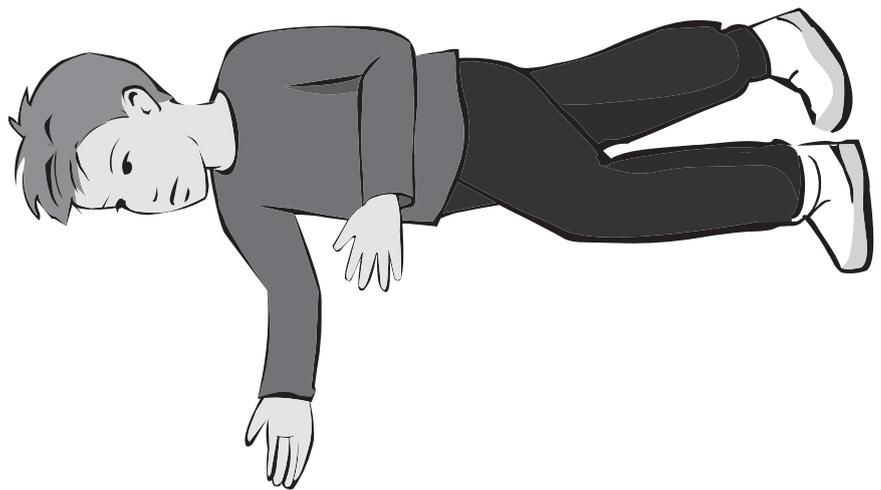
Reflection helps you as an early years practitioner to consider what happened, why it happened and what you might do differently next time. This helps you to relate theories and policies to your practice and so to meet the individual needs of children in your care.

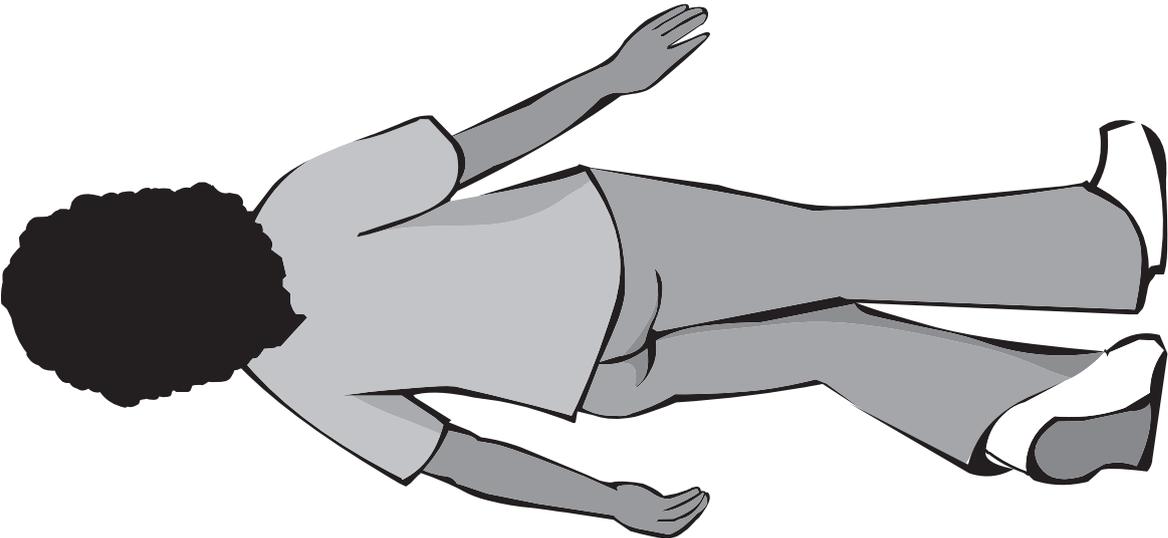
When you start to write down your thoughts and discuss them with your teacher or trainer, you start to order your ideas and make greater sense of a situation or information. Doing this gives you the chance to discuss anything that you do not understand

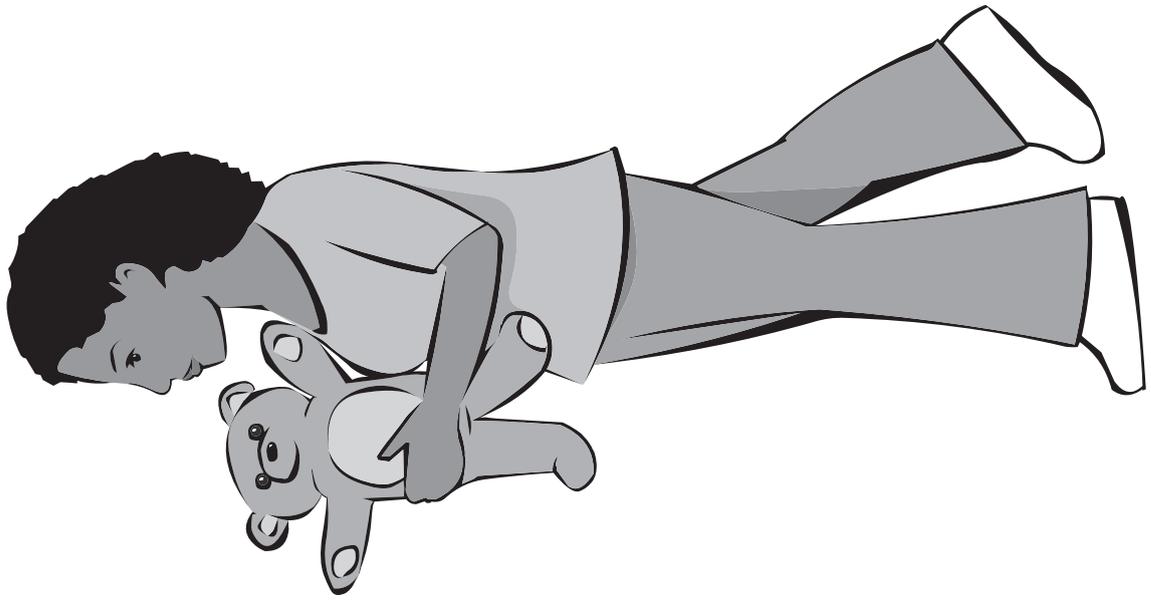
The whole cycle of learning in this way has many similarities with the planning cycle. It was described by Kolb (1984) as the cycle of experiential learning.







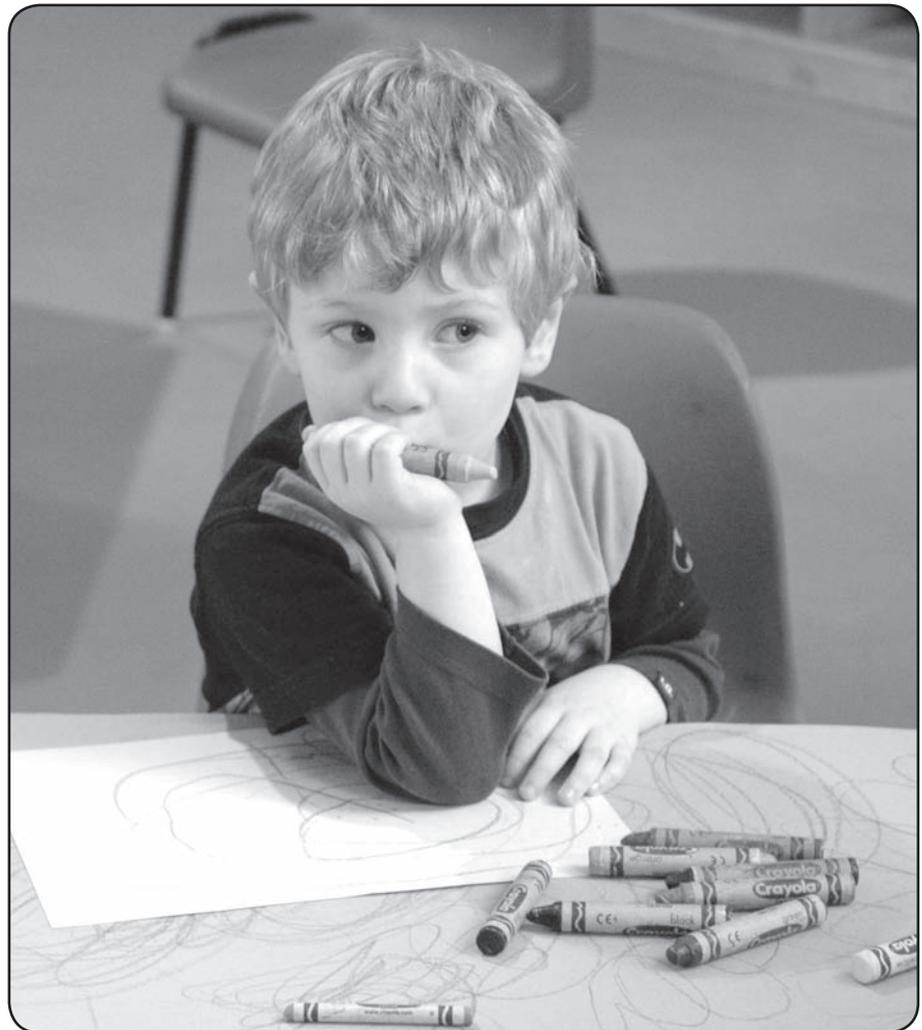












Key skills information for learners

This handout is designed to help learners consider whether it is appropriate to use the observation activities to develop any of their key skills of:

- Communication (Comm);
- Application of Number (AoN);
- Information and Communications Technology (ICT);

at Levels 2 or 3 and, if so, how to set about doing so.

At the start of your programme, it is likely that you drew up an individual learning plan (ILP) with your teacher or trainer. This document would have been based on your prior attainment, including any English/communications, mathematics/application of number/numeracy or ICT qualifications you have gained. It should identify the skills you now need to develop and at what level, in order to pursue your individual career goals and personal aspirations. This individual learning plan (ILP) should inform your planning.

Taking part in these activities will help you to develop your key skills and you may decide just to practise your key skills, in preparation for the external tests (Part A). However, depending on the observation method and subject you chose, there may also be the opportunity to be assessed in some aspects of the three main key skills, so providing

evidence towards your key skills portfolio (Part B).

If you wish to be assessed, during the observation activities, you must discuss this with your teacher or trainer before you start. You should discuss with him/her your choice of observation, to ensure that it is appropriate. Together you will also need to consider what evidence you should provide and how you will capture this for assessment and verification.

Your teacher or trainer will refer to the national key skills standards, published in 2004, which describe the criteria to be covered at each level in each key skill.

In making your choice, you should bear in mind that communication can be shown from nearly any kind of observation. However, if you wish to be assessed in AoN, your choice of observation will have to involve the capture of numerical data. Booklets 7a,b,c will be particularly helpful. ICT may also require some specific approaches to the observation activities. For all three key skills, it is likely that you will need to do some extra work during the activities, compared with colleagues, who are not seeking assessment of their key skills. That is where the planning comes in. With good planning, you and your teacher or trainer can minimise the workload and ensure that the assessment of your key skills is enjoyable and useful, because it is so much a part of your main programme of study.

Adapting the observation resources for health and social care

Observation skills in health and social care

Assessment is a central aspect of providing individualised care. In order to do this effectively, care staff must have a high level of objective observation skills.

These skills are included in the requirements of many study programmes and are enshrined in law – for example the Data Protection Act and the Care Standards Act. They are central to the national minimum standards.

Course requirements

This topic area cross references with the following caring issues, among others, which form the basis of many programmes of study.

- Vocational practice units.
- Care planning.
- Equality diversity and rights.
- Communication.
- Care practices.
- Legislative requirements.

The Data Protection Act 1998

The Data Protection Act states that information should be:

- processed fairly and lawfully;
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up-to-date.

The Care Standards Act 2000

The Care Standards Act (through the National Minimum Standards) requires adherence to the Data Protection Act.

The observation resources

These resources have been written with early years learners in mind but are easily adaptable and are as valuable for learners who are studying on health and social care programmes.

Adapting session one for health and social care

In the following pages, you will find suggestions for adaptations to the resources. You will find some aspects have been adapted ready for you to use. In others some ideas have been suggested for you to explore.

You will have to change the references to 'child' in the booklets to something more appropriate, for example, client/service users/patient.

Below you will find some suggested adaptations for activities included in the session plan.

Why do we observe?

You may want to set the scene for why we observe and develop the discussion through a thought shower. This would then be followed with 'what do I need to observe?'

What do I need to observe?

It may be more useful to substitute 'aspects of self' or 'activities of living', rather than 'areas of development'. See the tables below for some suggestions.

'Aspects of self' and 'aspects of living' are areas that may require attention in order for carers to identify level of need so that high quality, individualised care packages can be designed.

Aspects of self

Within each 'aspect of self' section you will find some suggestions of factors that may require examination. You can choose to adapt or ask the learners to adapt to your or their needs.

Physical self Wellness/illness/health needs, health status, health changes	Social self Relationships/changes to social self How the person is relating to others Conflict with others
Emotional self Clients self concept, changes to self concept, life changes, emotional issues	Spiritual self Spiritual requirements Is the client able to maintain their spirituality?
Sexual self Sexuality and expression Sexual health	Cultural self Cultural needs/requirements, sense of cultural identity

Independence Changes to levels of independence, requirements to maintain independence	Advocacy Advocacy requirements, ability to self advocate, advocacy support needs
Self-esteem Levels of self-esteem, self-esteem needs	Self-image Changes to self-image, emotional issues due to self-image
Communication Methods of communication Communication needs/ requirements	Sensory Sensory needs

You may of course include other aspects which you find to be appropriate.

Activities of living (Roper et al.,1983)

Maintaining a safe environment	Breathing
Communication	Mobilising
Eating and drinking	Eliminating
Personal cleansing and dressing	Maintaining body temperature
Working and playing	Sleeping

Demonstration

This activity can be carried out as it stands in order to develop learners' objective observation skills.

The meaning of objective

This activity requires little adaptation to be appropriate to learners on health and social care programme. You could choose to use the pictures that have been supplied or you could use your own – you could use pictures from journals like *Community Care* or the *Nursing Times*.

Now test your understanding

Activity 1a

This activity requires no adaptation in order to be suitable for health and social care learners.

Activity 1b

This activity needs some adaptation for health and social care learners. Below is an example of an alternative format.

Activity 1b. Read the following statements and then write in the right-hand column whether the statements are subjective or objective.			
1	a	Susan and Binodini talking in the lounge. Susan said "My son came to see me today". Binodini said "That sounds nice".	
	b	Susan and Binodini enjoyed a nice chat in the lounge.	
2	a	Emily was sobbing and had her head in her hands.	
	b	Emily misses her son.	
3	a	Raoul kept distracting other clients from their dinner.	
	b	Raoul kept making noises and yawning at dinner time.	
4	a	Takis is fussy about food today.	
	b	Takis said "No, I am not allowed to eat meat and I shall not eat this".	
5	a	Chueng collected all the red counters and made them into a round shape, he then collected all the blue counters and made them into a square shape, he then collected all the yellow counters and arranged them in a wavy line.	
	b	Cheung enjoys playing with counters and making shapes.	

Activity 2

This activity requires little adaptation to be appropriate to learners on health and social care courses. You could choose to use the pictures that have been supplied or you could use your own – you could use pictures from journals like *Community Care* or the *Nursing Times*.

Activities 3a, 3b,3c, 4

These activities require no adaptation in order to be suitable for health and social care learners.

And finally...

You will need to change the references to child/children in the resources to something more appropriate, for example, client/ service user/patient.

Glossary of terms

Active learning

Learning that involves learners in practising important skills and in applying new knowledge, in such a way that their understanding is improved.

Advocate

A person who acts on behalf of another person under a range of circumstances.

Aims

Clear and concise statements that describe what the teacher or trainer hopes to achieve in a learning session.

Analysis

Where learners are given the opportunity to investigate a variety of data/information to arrive at an evaluative conclusion about that data/information.

Assessment for learning

The process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and teachers or trainers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go, and how best to get there. See www.assessment-reform-group.org.uk

Assumption

When something is thought to be happening or is taken for granted.

Attitude

The way a person thinks and behaves either independently or collectively.

Birth to Three Matters

A curriculum framework for children from birth to three years of age.

Body language

The communication of thoughts or feelings by the position or movement of the body rather than in words.

Confidentiality

A person/persons trusts another with information that is not to be shared. The other person is not to disclose that information to any other source. (However, there are certain circumstances when confidentiality may be broken such as for the protection of individuals).

CPD

Continuing Professional Development, sometimes referred to as staff development. Any activity that helps teachers and trainers maintain, improve or broaden their knowledge, understanding and skills, and become more effective in their role.

Developmental

Learning that takes place as a normal part of cognitive development. Activities may be structured in such a way that they start at a lower level, then move to the more difficult.

Differentiation

Differentiation is about identifying and addressing the different needs and interests of all learners to give them the best possible chance of achieving their learning goals.

E-learning

E-learning is learning facilitated and supported through the use of information and communications technology (ICT). E-learning includes the delivery of courses, on-line assessment, learner to learners and learner to teacher or trainer communications, use of internet resources, and other learning activities including ICT and the internet.

ESOL

English for Speakers of Other Languages.

Ethical

Decisions made based on a system of moral beliefs about right and wrong.

Evaluation

A process whereby learners, teachers and trainers or an organisation, evaluate their own perceptions of the experience, the overall quality of a study programme, or a particular course/assessment activity. Generally part of a formative process aimed at improving standards. It may be carried out by a questionnaire or by interviews.

Experiential learning

The process of creating new knowledge by transforming experiences using a four-stage process (as defined by Kolb, 1984).

Extension activities

Additional activities provided for learners who have completed basis learning tasks, ideally more complex to offer a higher level of challenge.

Formative assessment

Checking of individual learners' progress both within and outside formal teaching and learning sessions, followed by feedback to the learner. The process allows teachers to adapt their teaching to suit learners' needs and learners to focus on areas of their learning which need improvement.

Foundation Stage Curriculum

The curriculum followed by children from the age of 3 years to the end of reception year.

Hawthorne effect

This is when an individual's behaviour may be altered because she or he knows that they are being observed. Elton Mayo's experiments showed an increase in worker productivity was produced by the psychological stimulus of being singled out, involved, and made to feel important.

ICT

Information and Communications Technology. Any technology incorporating the networking together of computers.

ILT

Information and Learning Technology. Supporting and delivering effective learning supported through technology.

Individual review, action planning and target setting

Formative assessment that takes place outside the classroom or workshop where learners review their progress on a one-to-one basis with their teacher or trainer and formulate actions and targets for improvement.

Individualisation

Recognising and responding to individual needs.

Initial assessment

The overall process of assessing individual learners' needs, aptitudes, preferences and prior learning in order to plan and provide an appropriate learning programme to meet their needs.

Knowledge

The information and experience that a learner has acquired or learnt and is able to recall or use in a given situation/activity.

Learning cycle

A learning process in which the experience of trying something new is followed by reflection and evaluation on what was effective. Reflection is supported by reference to existing theory and then followed by a new plan of action, taking into account what has already been learnt. The learning process is cyclical and can be iterative.

Learning outcomes

Statements indicating what a learner should know/be able to do at the end of a given period.

Learning programme

Strategic programme for learning including schemes of work and session plans which ensure coherence and continuity across the learning experience.

The National Curriculum

The curriculum followed by children from year one.

Objectives

Precise and measurable statements describing what you intend learners should achieve or learn in the time specified.

Objectivity

The ability to think and/or act on the basis on facts rather than personal feelings, opinions or beliefs.

Open/closed questions

Open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no' response or a one-word answer and encourage higher level thinking skills. Closed questions have only one satisfactory answer, which is usually very short. They can be useful when testing knowledge.

Open, flexible and distance learning

These terms are used to describe variations of a mode of learning that allows the learner to study in a place and at times of their own choosing, often away from the traditional classroom-based environment, using specially designed multi-media resources and being offered face-to-face, or through on-line, postal and telephone-based support.

Peer assessment

Learners check each others' work, using clear criteria. This helps them develop and use skills required to check or evaluate their own work.

Public theory

Theories that have been published and are part of the generally acknowledged basis of a particular field of study or work.

Reflection

The process whereby a learner, teacher or trainer takes time to consider an experience they have been involved in or any new learning experience and reflect on how it has been done. It may also refer to teachers' and trainers' consideration of their own work.

Self-assessment

The type of assessment undertaken by the learner in order to evaluate her or his performance, strengths and weaknesses. It may likewise refer to teachers' and trainers' consideration of their own work.

Session plan

A timed plan for a learning session that specifies aims, learning objectives, learning activities, resources and support needs.

Shorthand

A system of rapid writing symbols used by learners to represent words or phrases when observing children/clients.

SMART

Objectives or targets that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic (or Relevant) and Time-related.

Subject pedagogy

Accepted good practice in teaching the content and skills involved in a specific curriculum area.

Subjective

Judgments based on a person's emotions, prejudices or pre-conceived ideas. The learner may make a judgment on what they think that they see and hear rather than what is actually happening.

Summative assessment

An end test or assessment, usually at the end of a unit, module or programme, used to assess a learner's attainment of that unit of learning.

Study skills

The skills needed by learners in order to successfully participate in or complete a programme of study, e.g. note taking, researching information, time management, essay writing.

Team teaching

Working with a colleague to deliver learning sessions that can provide you both with useful feedback on the effectiveness of your teaching and learning strategies.

Thought shower

Putting together a small group of learners to produce a large number of creative ideas in a short time for subsequent evaluation. Also known as, 'ideas blast' or 'wordstorming'.

Understanding/application

The learner shows the capacity to use current knowledge, concepts and skills to solve a problem or task.

Welcome to the observation booklet

REMEMBER

This booklet is not designed as a distance learning resource. The work of the learners should be discussed with the teacher or trainer and appropriate feedback should be provided.

This booklet is designed for you and your learners to use in one or all of the following ways:

- As part of a taught session.
- For learners to complete in their own time.
- As part of a taught session and as part of learners' private or independent study time.

The booklets are designed to have the covers colour-coded as follows:

- Booklet 1: red
- Booklet 2: orange
- Booklet 3: yellow
- Booklets 4a and 4b: green
- Booklet 5: blue
- Booklet 6: purple
- Booklets 7a, 7b and 7c: pink

Instructions

- Photocopy the cover on A4 paper of the correct colour.
- Photocopy the booklet pages on A4 paper in the order they are provided here.
- Collate the cover and the pages, staple them using a long arm stapler and fold in the middle to produce your A5 booklet.