

GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING

An essential feature of an effective planning framework in early childhood settings is an integrated system for observing and documenting the learning and development of individual children and groups of children.

Planning experiences for children is essential in providing quality and meaningful learning for children in early childhood settings. The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) (DEEWR 2009b: 17) states:

Assessment for children's learning refers to the process of gathering and analysing information as evidence about what children know, can do and understand. It is part of an ongoing cycle that includes planning, carrying out plans, documenting and evaluating children's learning.

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The Cycle of Planning

Early childhood programs include a number of steps that together make up the cycle of program planning. These steps typically include:

1. **Observation** – *what the children do*
2. **Interpretation** – *relating to child development and learning*
3. **Future provisions** – *how we can do to support development and learning*
4. **Planning** – *what we can do to support development and learning*
5. **Implementation** – *what we do*
6. **Evaluation** – *how it worked*
7. **Reflection** – *how did the children react/ what I did as a practitioner*
8. **Follow-up** – *where to next?*

Professional Conduct (More information can be found in Chapter 7 'Birth to Big school' pp.336-337)

Working with young children and their families requires carers to behave in an ethical manner. Some professional issues related to observation and planning include:

- **Confidentiality:** Parents should be informed at the time of enrolment that written observations of children are an integral part of program planning. All information gathered about the child should be regarded as confidential and should not be discussed or shared with anyone who is not directly working with the child without the written permission of the parent/s or guardian. Parents and guardians have the right to read any written records, including observations or reports. Children's written records should be kept in a secure place that can only be accessed by authorised staff.
- **Record without bias:** Observations and reports should be written in an objective manner and avoid terms that label or stereotype children. For example, it would not be appropriate to use words such as 'selfish', 'spoiled', 'cheeky' or 'cruel' to describe a child. Such labels are very subjective and may not accurately reflect the child or the child's situation.
- **Record without spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors:** Anything written about a child may be read by parents, colleagues and other professionals. It is essential that documentation be free of errors in spelling and grammar. Attention to spelling and grammar reflects a professional approach to the task and also demonstrates respect for those who may read the document. It also supports the professional status of early childhood educators.

- **Avoiding jargon and generalisations.** All professions tend to use industry specific jargon – early childhood educators are no exception. Jargon helps educators to communicate ideas and concepts in a shorthand method and is acceptable when it is used among colleagues. However, when documenting information about children it is important to limit the use of jargon, particularly if the documentation will be read by people who are not familiar with such jargon. It can be useful to develop a bank of words or phrases that are easy to interpret and are not ambiguous. Avoid using words such as ‘good’ or ‘poor’ – what does this mean in the context of development?

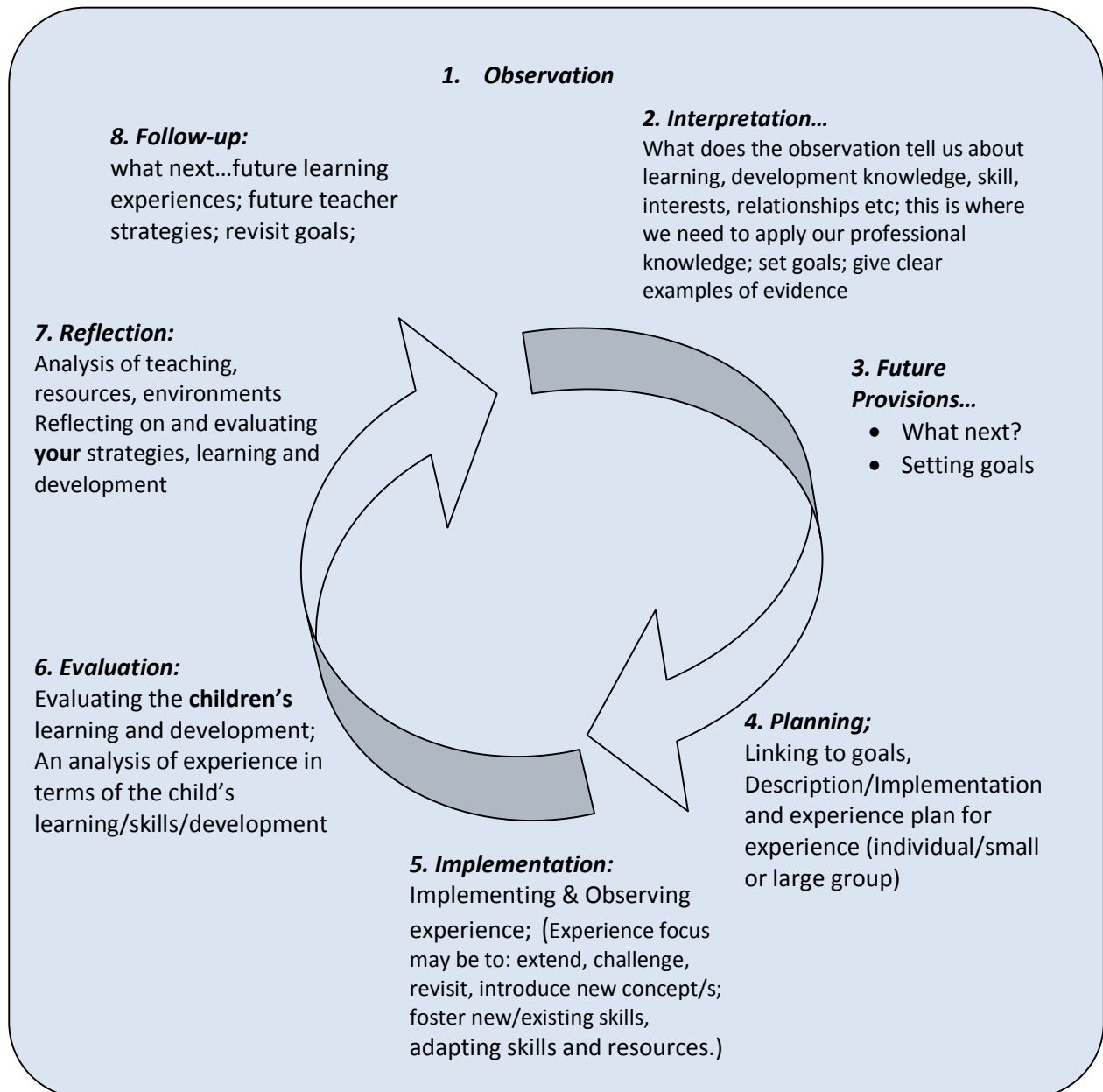


FIGURE 1: *The Cycle of planning*

1. OBSERVATION

Children should be observed during regular play sessions and daily routines, in different situations, at different times of the day/week and on a number of occasions to build up an accurate picture of their development.

While there is no 'best' way of gathering and documenting information about children, it is important that the information gathering process:

- is organised systematically and allows carers to gather enough information about individual children to make informed and accurate decisions
- is able to document changes that demonstrate the progress of children's learning and development in all areas
- provides information which directly contributes to future planning that supports the learning and development of children
- reflects the 'whole child' and takes into account cultural and social contexts
- is an accurate and unbiased record of the child's development.

Narrative Observation Strategies

Written observations need to be relevant and contribute to an understanding of children's learning and development. The strategies used to document observations will vary according to the situation, and the skills and professional knowledge of the observer. A narrative observation is a 'story' about a child's learning – it records a play episode or an incident. They can be about a single child or group of children. They may focus on a play episode or they can focus on an incident such as a conversation at morning tea, or an occasion where children solved a problem. (*More information including examples of each of these techniques can be found in Chapter 7 'Birth to Big school' pp.330-349*).

There are different types of narratives that vary in the amount of detail collected and the length of the recording. Narratives include:

- jottings
- running records
- anecdotal records
- learning stories

Acquiring a series of narratives will provide the carer with a wealth of information about the child but will guide planning only if the information is organised in a manner that is easy to read and manage. In order to use narratives as an assessment and planning tool, the information gathered must be linked with the curriculum. Narratives can provide a rich source of information about children if the information gathered is **interpreted thoughtfully** and in the correct context.

Jottings

Jottings are short notes made by the observer about significant behaviours or events that are observed. Jottings can be collected overtime and transferred or copied into children's individual records to form a collection for later analysis. *Figure 1.2* shows that the carer has recorded information about individual children, ideas for follow-up experiences, concerns about a child and about the lunch routine.

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These jottings will provide a framework for a series of actions by the carer. For example, in relation to Jazzie, the carer may decide to observe Jazzie just prior to transition to rest time to try to determine what is causing her to become distressed. The carer has also made a note to talk to her parent. The carer has also identified some key interests of the children – snails, cooking and butterflies – that can be incorporated into future planning.

Jottings

Date: 12th April 09

Kalia very interested in snails - found 3 in the garden and wanted a container so she could keep them

Jazzie upset again today at rest time - need to talk to mum

Faisal asked when we were going to do some cooking - plan for next week

Kuai & Jing talking to each other in Mandarin today - get them to teach the other children some words

Butterfly Learning Centre - again great interest - can we get someone to come and talk about butterflies - check with uni?

Need to talk about lunch transition - not working well & needs to be improved.

FIGURE 1.2: An example of a Jotting

Anecdotal Records

Anecdotal records are the most common form of observation conducted in children's services. Anecdotes are recorded after the event. This makes documentation manageable when carers are busy working with the children. Anecdotal observations are simply a story of an event. They provide information about a moment in time as the child or children are engaged in some aspect of the daily program. The observer is required to recall and document as much detail as possible soon after the observation occurs.

FIGURE 1.4: An example of an Anecdotal Record

Anecdotal Record **Date:** 7th March 09

Name: Stevie **Age:** 3 years 3 months **Time:** 10.15 a.m. **Setting:** Indoors
Recorded by: Erin

Purpose: To understand Stevie's concept of 'same' and 'different'.

Observation:

The children were provided with a wooden box with six compartments and a container with multiple figures of six different farm animals. There is also included a lion and an elephant.

Stevie stood at the table and carefully put one type of animal into each compartment. He sorted the remainder of the animals until he was left with the lion and the elephant. then tipped the animals out of the box and repeated the process. This time he went to the block corner and collected two small wooden bowls from the props shelf. He placed the elephant in one and the lion in the other.

He then lined the two wooden bowls up with the wooden sorting box. He was looking very pleased with himself. Stevie then asked the carer to see what he had done. He pointed to and named each set of animals. The carer asked him why the elephant and the lion were in separate bowls. 'Because they don't belong', he said. 'They not farm animals.'

Interpretation:

Stevie understands how to classify objects by sorting and grouping all similar animals together. He classified the group of animals as 'farm animals' and was able to exclude the lion and the elephant which he said did not belong to the set of farm animals. This provides an excellent insight into Stevie's cognitive skills.

He has an age-appropriate understanding of classification and was able to use his problem-solving skills to deal with the lion and the elephant, which clearly did not belong to the farm animal set.

Learning Stories

Learning stories tell a story about a moment in time in a child's day. They differ from anecdotes in that they usually include photographs and comments or reflections by the recorder. Learning stories can be produced by Educators and added to by parents and children.

Learning stories are able to 'capture the moment' in greater detail because of the comments or reflections added by the recorder which provide greater insight into the event.

You can see in this example of a 'learning story' (Figure 1.5) how the carer has recorded what she observed but also clearly linked the observation to development. If the carer had simply taken the photograph and written the story it would not have been clear what development or learning was taking place. It doesn't matter which headings are used, the important thing is to identify behaviours that will help you to understand what the child is trying to learn or has learned.

FIGURE 1.5: An example of a Learning Story

MAKING A WIZARD'S BREW!

Date: 09/03/xx

Carley, Jock and Bob decided to make a wizard's brew after Carley had shared with them a story her father had read to her about a wizard who makes a magic brew to make everyone happy. 'It's gotta be sloppy and have lots of things in it so it's magic', explained Carley.

'I know!' said Jock, 'we can mix it in the tyre and put in lots of bark and things from the garden'. 'Yeh, good idea!' says Bob. The children began to create their brew, adding mulch, leaves, pebbles and sand. 'Brooke, can we have the hose for our brew?' asks Carley.

I helped the children with the hose and asked how they were going to mix their brew. 'Well, the wizard used a huge big spoon', said Carley. 'Mmm, I don't think we have a spoon big enough', I replied. 'I know', said Jock, 'what about we use our shovels'. Jock is a great lateral thinker and is always coming up with creative ideas to solve problems. So the mixing began. The children added more water and then noticed that it was soaking into the ground. 'We should have put plastic underneath', said Bob, our number one construction worker.

Oh, well, it doesn't matter. Who wants to try our happy, happy brew?' calls out Carley. There are no takers. 'It doesn't look very tasty', I say. 'Let's go get all the dolls and pretend they are cranky and give them some some brew', said Jock.

This play went on for quite some time while the dolls were fed the brew. Finally, the children announced that all the dolls were happy. The dolls were lined up along the fence and Carley sang them a 'happy song'. This experience was wonderful to observe. T

he children really got into the idea of the brew and worked co-operatively, bouncing ideas off each other. The imagination and creativity that resulted from this experience was amazing - everyone joined in as though they all knew exactly how to make a 'happy brew'.

2. INTERPRETATION

What does the observation tell us about learning, development knowledge, skill, interests or relationships? Once you have gathered information and recorded observations about children the next step is to 'interpret', analyse or make sense of what you have observed. Interpreting involves analysing evidence and making informed judgments based on sound professional knowledge. This specialist knowledge is fundamental to the work of early childhood professionals – without it we cannot make informed decisions to support children's development.

To assist you in interpreting observations you might like to make use of the following 'tools' at the end of this document:

- Tools for interpreting observations
- HighScope Preschool Curriculum – Key Developmental Indicators

The following scenario on *Melanie* provides an example of what can be interpreted by drawing on child development knowledge.

Analysing:- looking closely at something and breaking it down into smaller components so that it can be better understood

MELANIE



When asked about her drawing, Melanie (4 years) replied, 'I like drawing pictures of myself'.

When asked why, she replied, 'Because sometimes I forget what I look like. Sometimes my hair is in a ponytail and sometimes I just wear an Alice band.'

So sometimes I look different but I'm still me'.

General Comment:

Melanie enjoys drawing pictures of herself.

Developmental Comment:

This is an interesting and rather unexpected comment from Melanie. At this age she is able to draw figures that are quite detailed. Melanie is developing a strong sense of self. Melanie understands that she can make some changes to her appearance without changing her identity. Quite a complex concept for a young child.

Points to consider when interpreting/analysing observations:

- **Comment on the overall outcome of the observation** – what did the children demonstrate in general (ie may relate to *developing* and/or *developed* interactions, skills, abilities, knowledge, interests etc) *What was the child/ren able to do? What is the child/ren working towards?*
- **Interpret the child/ren's learning, development, skills and interests** ie. *What does the observation tell you about the child's/children's:*
 - level of Learning and previous/current knowledge & understanding?
 - Level of development?
 - Abilities and Skills used/developed/working toward?
 - Interests?

- **What area/s of development can be assessed in the observation?**
- **How did the child/ren engage themselves?**
- **What does the observation tell you about the child's preferences?**

When making an interpretation/statement about development, learning, skill, interest, it is also useful to provide an example as evidence of development. Consider the following statement in relation to the narrative 'Sound Waves':

"The children's discovery reinforced their friendship as they co-operated, investigated and worked together. Monique and Luke utilized their thinking skills as they developed their knowledge of 'sound travel' and 'vibration'; and worked out further ways to communicate."

For your Information:
The following narratives provide examples of interpretations along with great deal of meaningful information about children, their interests and knowledge, their learning styles and the many factors that influence their development.

NARRATIVE: SOUND WAVES

Children: Featuring Monique and Luke

Teacher: Brooke **Date:** 05/03/xx

Monique and Luke were together investigating our new water tank. The water tank was empty and they discovered that if they spoke into the overflow pipe on the ground their voice travelled up the pipe and echoed out of the tank. We discussed how and why this happens ... sound waves, and vibration. They also discovered the reverse. If you yell into the side of the tank your voice can be heard out of the pipe!



Interpretation

Luke and Monique have a genuine respect for each other. Their discovery reinforced their friendship as they co-operated, investigated and worked together. Monique and Luke utilized their thinking skills as they developed their knowledge of 'sound travel' and 'vibration'; and worked out further ways to communicate.

What Next?

Pose question: 'What would happen if there was water in the tank?'

Further explore the concept of sound waves.

Use other implements to demonstrate to peers.

The narrative 'Sound Waves' provides an example of children sharing and respecting ideas and engaging in a shared learning experience.

In the following example of an anecdotal observation of Katy (4yrs 3mths) the carer indicates by her interpretation that she has some concerns in relation to Katy’s cognitive, fine motor skills and social interactions with peers. This is supported by the observation but would require further observations and investigation to determine if this observation is typical of Katy’s skills and behaviour. As a follow-up the carer has suggested setting up a Vet dramatic play experience (because of Katy’s interest in dogs). This will allow the carer to further observe Katy’s skills.

FIGURE 1.6: Sample Anecdotal Observation with Interpretations

<p>Name: Katy Age: 4 years 3 months Time: 9.40 a.m. Setting: Threading Activity Date: 9 May Purpose: to observe Katy’s concentration skills and persistence at a task Observer: Jade</p>	<p>Interpretation: (What this observation tells us about Katy’s development.)</p>
<p>Katy sat at the threading activity for approximately eight minutes. The task involved threading wooden beads of various sizes, shapes and colours onto plastic string. Katy selected eight large beads of different colours and shapes, and placed these in a straight line. She held the plastic string in her right hand and picked up a bead in her left hand. She then tried to put the beads onto the string but because she held the string too close to the end, there was not enough string to allow the bead to slip through and it fell to the table. Katy then tried again, this time holding the string in her left hand and holding it lower down the string. Katy successfully threaded two beads; but they fell off as she did not move her fingers so that they could slip to the end of the knotted string. Katy made no further attempts at threading. She wandered to the home corner and stood watching the other children.</p>	<p><i>Katy showed persistence at this task but again lacked the skills to complete the task successfully.</i></p> <p><i>Katy appeared to change her strategy.</i></p> <p><i>Does Katy have a dominant hand?</i></p> <p><i>Is there an issue with fine motor skills?</i></p> <p><i>Did she realise that she needed to leave room for the beads to slide onto the string?</i></p> <p><i>Katy’s not demonstrating age-appropriate problem-solving skills.</i></p> <p><i>Katy shows interest in others but appears to lack the skills to enter a play situation.</i></p>
<p>Follow-up:</p> <p><i>Need to confirm Katy’s level of cognitive and fine motor functioning.</i></p> <p><i>Work alongside Katy and act as a support and coach to help her engage in play with others - set up some small group experiences. (Katy loves dogs - perhaps a Vet dramatic play area?)</i></p>	




How might Katy respond to a dramatic play scenario based on pets and vets?

FIGURE 1.7a: Sample observation with Interpretations and Future Provisions

NARRATIVE: WATER COLOUR RAINBOW

Child: Imanee **Teacher:** Brooke **Date:** 18/02/xx

Imanee explored the water colour pencils today. We talked about ways to use them, and she quickly set out to create her own pictures.



'I'm drawing a rainbow', she said. I followed her lead and began recalling some colours of the rainbow in song. Imanee joined in. Imanee drew her rainbow and set it aside.

Intending to extend the thinking, I posed the question... 'How could we paint night?'

Imanee responded: 'You need stars and it's dark!'; as I experimented on paper following her suggestion, Imanee joined in. Using black she created the 'night' that turned into 'stars'. Imanee painted stars and then wrote her name.

Date: 23/02/xx

Today at the paint table Imanee revisited the experience from last week.

She recalled painting a 'rainbow' and shared this experience again. 'I'm painting another rainbow!'; (this week we added thicker water colour base to use in conjunction with the pencils).

It was interesting to observe how Imanee utilised the water colour pencils and the water colour paints as she created and recreated a rainbow.

Olivia joined her. Olivia was interested in 'printing' and Imanee quickly followed suit. She painted and folded to create a print on the same page. We then discussed making a print of the same image. Imanee created her own print of another rainbow using this technique...with much pride she peeled off the top paper to reveal yet another...

WATER COLOUR RAINBOW!!

Interpretation

This was an obvious ongoing interest for Imanee evident by the time spent exploring, discussing and using the medium. She confidently explores new ideas and openly discusses ideas and experiences with peers and adults. Imanee creatively utilised the medium following her own interest in rainbows.

She is able to independently revisit a topic of interest taking on board new ideas and suggestions from peers and adults and interprets them in her work. She demonstrated strength in making choices, fine motor control and communication.

What Next?

Continue to provide opportunities for Imanee to revisit experience.

Implement range of media for Imanee to experience; give opportunity to express self and share ideas and experience with peers/small group.

Also referred to as Future Provisions/ experiences

3. FUTURE PROVISIONS/ EXPERIENCES

EYLF:
Early Years
Learning
Framework

Once you have interpreted an observation or work sample the next step is to decide on *future provisions*. That is what you could plan as a follow-up experience. Ask yourself... *'Where to from here?', 'What would be the next step or relevant and meaningful experience?'*

There must be a clear relationship between observations, interpretation and future provisions.

Questions to ask yourself when deciding *on future provisions*:

- What would be the next step? Where can you take the experience?
- What skill/s (for the child) would you work on or keep working on; and how will you do this?
- How might you extend, promote further learning, understanding?
- How might you extend or develop the interest, skill or ability?
- Has the learning been complete? If yes, explain why.
- What might you change or add to the resources and environment to maintain, evoke interest, challenge skills/knowledge/development, or ensure further learning?

Figures 1.3, 1.6, 1.7 & 1.7a provide examples of Future Provisions.

4. PLANNING:

Each child will learn in ways that reflect the uniqueness of the child, the family and the sociocultural context. Each child's learning journey will be unique and the ability of each child to reach his or her full potential will be influenced by a wide range of factors.

The use of observations, narratives and developmental profiles will provide a series of snapshots of the child as they develop. In particular, narratives will serve not only to highlight the child's skills and knowledge but will also provide valuable insight into how the child functions in the social context and the child's attitude towards himself or herself as a resourceful learner.

This documentation of the skills, knowledge and disposition of the child will provide the practitioner, the child and the family with an accumulation of information that will serve to inform and guide program planning.

It is important to ensure that each child's development and learning across all areas is monitored to ensure they are making progress. To do this you can gather information about each child and plan for their learning and development by recording long term goals for each. From long term goals, short term goals can be developed based on ongoing observations of children. Planning from these goals should be flexible and take into account the children's observed interests and abilities, along with spontaneous events that occur within the daily program. To assist you in planning from goals it may be useful to use the learning outcomes as outlined in the EYLF.

Planned experiences will include experiences that are routinely provided each day and offer children the opportunity to develop a range of skills across all domains of development. Planned experiences focus on the development of both skills and knowledge. Planned experiences may be open-ended, child-directed and allow children to make choices. Planned experiences may include experiences that are supported/guided by the

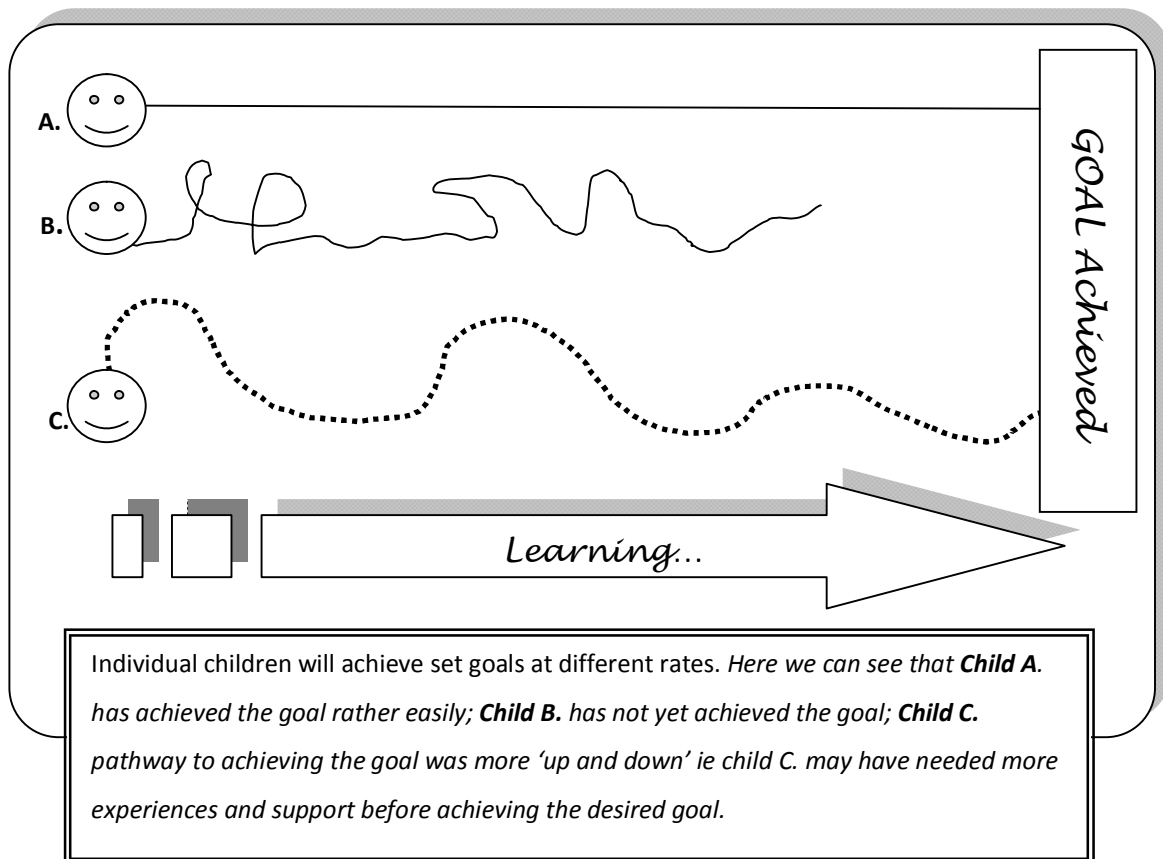
educator. Planned experiences will also include intentional teaching – this may occur one-to-one, or with small or large groups of children.

The process of planning links the observation, interpretation and future provisions – the end result of this process is planning experiences for children.

Goals

Part of planning process involves setting goals for children. Goals provide direction for future learning and form part of the child’s individual documentation. Goals can be documented on goals sheets and linked directly to experiences by recording them onto experience plans.

When writing experience plans for children it is important to record the ‘planned outcomes’ and goals on the plan. This will assist you to evaluate the experience.



What are goals?

Goals are broad in nature. They are statements of *what you want the child to achieve*. Goals are based on previous interpretations and observations about individual children and or groups of children. When writing goals you need to make sure that the goals are observable ie you can see/measure the capacity in which the child/ren have achieved the goal/s.

Goals for development provide a clear direction for planning for each child. Examples of goals:

For child/ren:

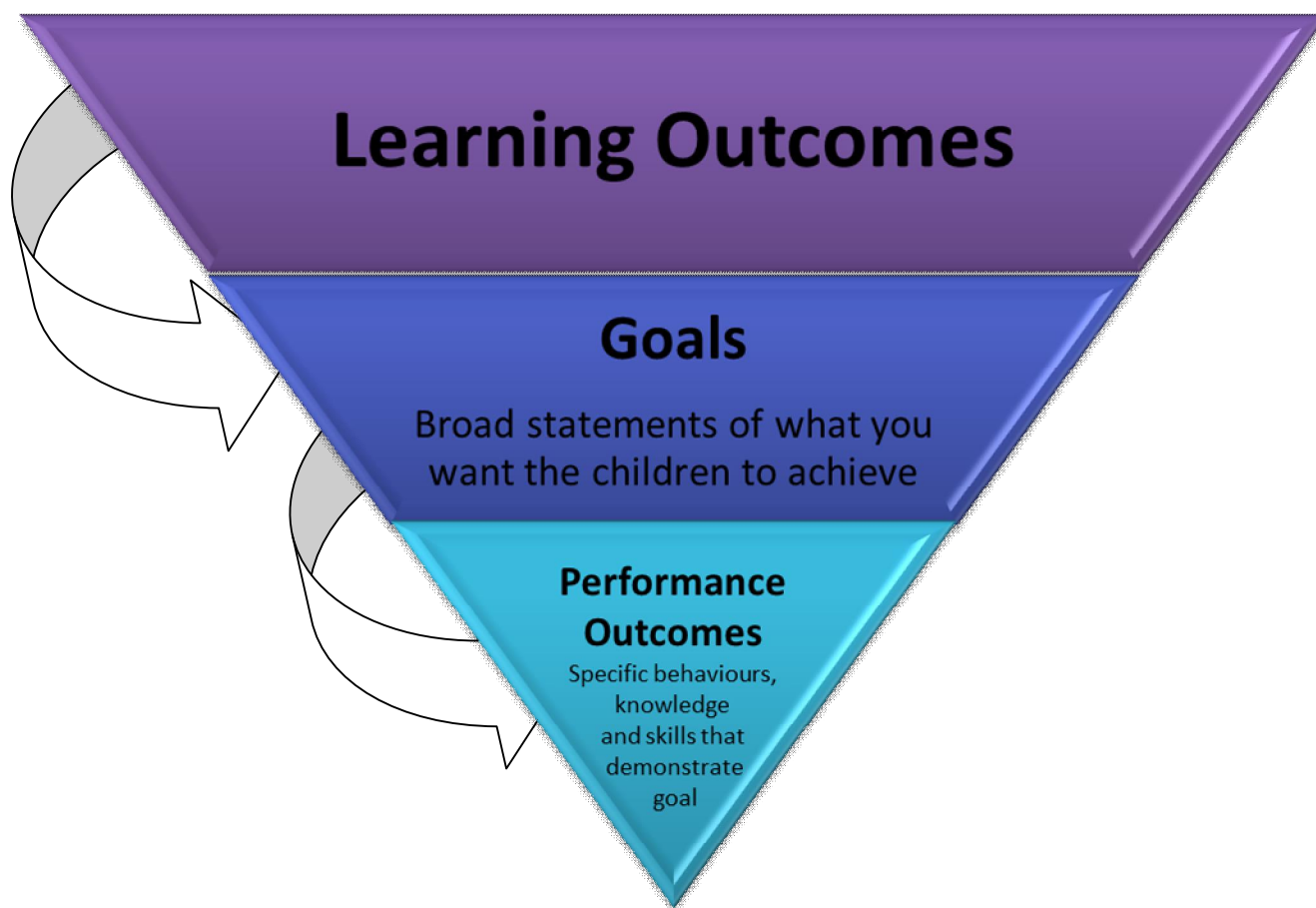
- to complete tasks
- to extend...

- to develop...(skill or ability)
- to establish...
- to practice...
- to distinguish between
- to foster...
- to demonstrate an understanding of...

Establishing specific goals will assist the carer to plan experiences that will target the desired learning and development and also provide a baseline for evaluation. Once goals are established the carer can begin to consider how to support the child and/or children to achieve the stated goals.

Goals for children can be written from learning outcomes which are based on the development of individual children or groups of children. Goals can also be written based on the learning outcomes as set out in the Early Years Learning Framework. Figure 1.9 shows the hierarchical structure of goal development demonstrating the links between each layer. Figure 1.9b shows an example of a goal developed from an EYLF learning outcome, and performance outcomes (or indicator) developed from the goal.

FIGURE 1.9: The structure of goal development



Goals and the Early Years Learning Framework:

Goals can be directly linked to the outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

The five Learning Outcomes of the EYLF are designed to capture the integrated and complex learning and development of all children across the birth to five age range. The outcomes are:

- Children have a strong sense of identity

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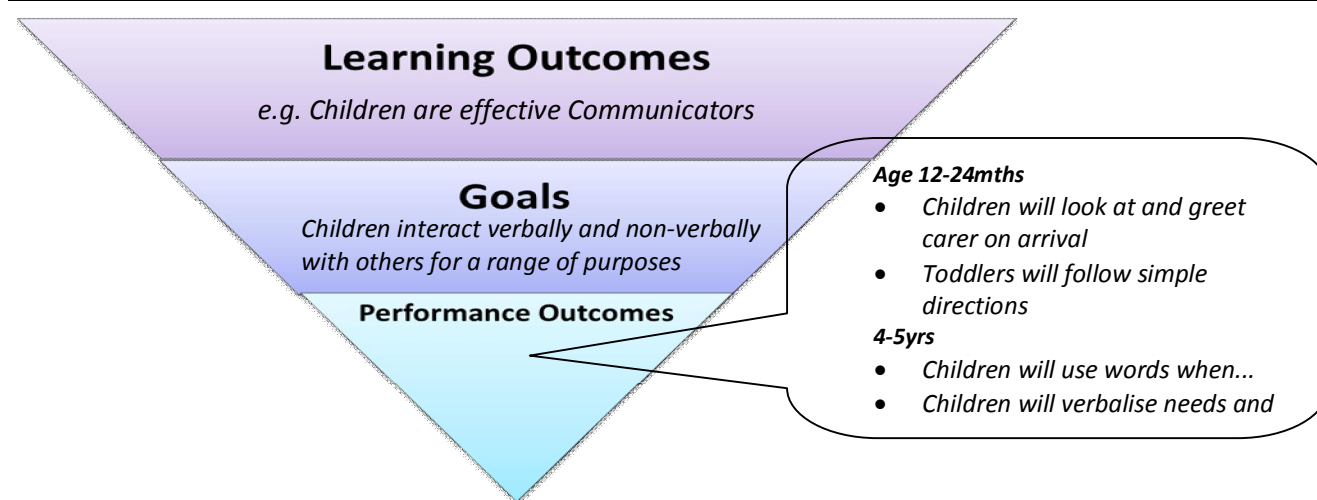
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators.

For comprehensive information, outcomes and further readings regarding the EYLF, please refer to readings.

FIGURE 1.9a: Sample Goals linked to EYLF outcome

OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY	
<i>Children feel safe, secure, and supported</i>	SAMPLE GOALS
<p>This is evident, for example, when children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build secure attachments with one and then more familiar educators • use effective routines to help make predicted transitions smoothly • sense and respond to a feeling of belonging • communicate their needs for comfort and assistance • establish and maintain respectful, trusting relationships with other children and educators • openly express their feelings and ideas in their interactions with others • respond to ideas and suggestions from others • initiate interactions and conversations with trusted educators • confidently explore and engage with social and physical environments through relationships and play • initiate and join in play • explore aspects of identity through role play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For children to develop positive relationships with teachers • For children to develop positive relationships with their peers • For children to separate confidently from parents • For children to become familiar with the routines of the centre

FIGURE 1.9b: Example of a goal and performance outcomes developed from an EYLF Learning Outcome



For Your Information: The following table outlines example of Goals Linked to Routines and EYLF Outcomes;

Learning Outcome: Children have a strong sense of identity	
<i>Children develop their emerging autonomy, independence, resilience and sense of agency</i>	
Goals (12mths – 24mths)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Chn will assist in dressing/undressing -with assist & support from adults b. Toddlers will feed self (finger food, spoon - with assist & support from adults) c. Toddler’s will be supported to make choices of experiences throughout the day
Goals (4-5yrs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Chn will ask for assistance when help is needed b. Chn will make choices of experiences throughout the day c. Chn will share in house- keeping tasks as appropriate
Learning Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing	
<i>Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing</i>	
Goals (12mths – 24mths)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Chn assist in own hand-washing b. Chn will remain seated when eating or drinking c. Toddlers will serve own morning tea (with assist & support from adults)
Goals (4-5yrs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Chn will follow correct procedure for toileting and hand-washing b. Chn will follow simple safety rules – walk when inside, walk around swings, use two hands when climbing c. Chn will follow adult directions
Learning Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators	
<i>Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes</i>	
Goals (12mths – 24mths)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Chn will use gestures and verbal cues to communicate with peers and adults b. Chn will look at and greet practitioner on arrival

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	c. Toddlers will follow simple directions
Goals (4-5yrs)	a. Chn will use words when engaged in conflict resolution b. Chn will verbalise needs and wants c. Chn will make eye contact when talking to others

Developing a Written Plan

When developing an experience plan you will need to list/describe how you intend to implement the experience with the children from beginning (set-up) to end (conclusion/transition to next experience). When developing an experience plan you should:

- Write a clear easy to follow procedure.
- Outline each step in sequence;
- Tell how things will be done:
 - How will the experience be introduced to the child or group of children?
 - What role will the educator play in the group or experience? For example, facilitator, director, role model tutor, coach?
 - What teaching strategies (pedagogical practices) will be used?
 - What questions might you ask or what specific things might you say?
 - What will the child/ren be required to do? For example, listen passively, engage in hands-on experiences, engage in discussion, complete set tasks?
 - How will the experience be concluded?
 - What transition strategies will you use to gather children to the experience and/or move them onto the next activity?
 - What resources will you need to provide and how will these be set up?
 - Where do you plan to set the experience up – time and location?

See Example experience plan Figure 1.8

5. IMPLEMENTATION:

This is the 'doing' stage in the cycle where you implement the planned experience; Remember the experience focus may be to: extend or challenge development, revisit learning, introduce new concepts, foster existing or new skills, adapting skills and resources.

While implementing the experience you should also be actively observing the children so that you can evaluate the following elements:

Observe children engaging in experience, taking note of the:

- learning occurring;
- language being used;



- how children are engaging and interacting with skills/resources/environment;
- how children are interacting with you the carer, and their peers;
- how the children are demonstrating skills, knowledge and/or understanding;

Be mindful along the way of your own teaching strategies, taking note of:

- how you support and encourage children;
- how you interact and guide and/or collaborate with children,
- how you manage children and environment and resources;
- how you extend learning;
- the extent at which you facilitated and participated

After implementing the experience the next part is to follow steps 6-8, of the planning cycle:

6. **Evaluation** – *how it worked*
7. **Reflection** – *how did the children react/ what I did as a practitioner*
8. **Follow-up** – *where to next?*

For an example of these steps refer to Figure 2.1a.

6. EVALUATION:

Analyse the **children's learning and development**;

When writing an evaluation of an experience it is necessary to consider the following points

- How did the experience go? Was it appropriate or not; did it go well or not so well...explain and define pros and cons related to children's learning; what areas needed more work...follow-up experiences;
- Analyse experience in terms of the child's learning/skills/development; ie what learning/abilities/skills/area of development etc was observed
- Refer back to goal/s ...in what capacity did children achieve (or not yet) the goals linked to experience;
- What did the children gain from the experience?
- Evaluate/assess children's interactions;
- How could experience be improved?
- Provide examples of what children did and said, to support your statements /analysis

7. REFLECTION:

Each service will have different systems in place for staff to professionally reflect. The following points will assist in writing a reflection.

Analyse **your performance**: teaching, resources, environment, reflect on and evaluate **your** teaching strategies, and your learning, development, management along the way.

Guidelines for Planning

This is a reflection on your performance. Remember all aspects, good and not so good. A true reflection will comment on elements that worked and elements that need improving...remember learning is continuous and reflection is a tool for professional development and further learning.

Points to consider

- your interactions with the child: were they positive/appropriate – provide example of why / why not
- how you supported the child
- how you managed the experience
- what you did well and what you could work on for your own professional development
- Is there anything you might change?
- Were there any unexpected outcomes/problems and how they were managed.
- Also think about: tone of voice/supervision /awareness of any safety issues etc. appropriate use of resources
- Follow-up strategies that you would like to work on or continue to develop;



8. FOLLOW-UP:

Ask yourself? what next...future learning experiences; future teacher strategies; revisit goals;

A follow-up relates to the next experience...the next step in the learning, for the child/ren...what next?

Points to consider:

- Will you revisit the experience? If so why, how and what changes will you make?
- How will you extend/challenge/encourage children's ideas/experience/interests/skills/development/abilities?
- What experiences will you plan next? And in what areas/activities of the program;
- How might you encourage the next step in the learning framework?
- Will you plan a follow-up directly related to this experience or has learning occurred – explain why you think this to be the case.

FIGURE 1.8: Sample Planning Format

Planning for learning and development:...Making Music
<p>Links to EYLF Outcome: <i>LO1: Children have a strong sense of identity</i> <i>LO4: children are confident and involved learners</i></p> <p>Goal: <i>To extend Bob's ability to express himself through own ideas</i></p> <p>Performance indicator: <i>Bob will verbally communicate his theory to his peers;</i> <i>Bob will demonstrate his theory using props;</i></p> <p>Resources: Space near group time mat; table; additional glass jars; various 'tappers' for tapping out the music; coloured water; jug;</p> <p>Procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up props for experience (jars, coloured water, jug, small stick, table and space), with Mitchell; • Assist setup of props and space near group time mat; • Transition children to group time from outdoors; • Introduce experience. • Have Bob explain his discovery, ideas (from Observation 15/10/xx); <i>' If you put this much water (holding his hands apart to demonstrate distance) it will make a low sound...and if you only put a little bit of water in another jar it will make a really high sound!'</i> • Have Bob demonstrate his theory to the group, using props; support and assist along the way; • Invite children to ask questions throughout. • Support ideas and offer further ideas and encouragement where appropriate; • Ask questions: <i>Eg how is the sound made? How does the sound travel? Why does the sound change? What would happen if we added water while tapping? What does the 'music' sound like? How could you change the sound?</i> • Invite children to explore the 'music' from the water filled jars; • Have children predict, input own ideas about the sounds and sound changes, throughout experience; • Conclude experience by reflecting with Bob/ children about sound/music and any other ideas that may have been raised • Leave experience set up for children to revisit; <p>Transition strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition children to Morning tea – choose name out of the name box and play the individual name on the musical jars.

Planning for learning and development:...Making Music

Evaluation of experience: This was a positive experience for both Mitchell and the group Mitchell successfully demonstrated performance outcomes communicating his ideas and also his understanding of sounds from the jars. This was a perfect example of collaboration between children and adults, following Mitchell's interest and previous learning. He openly shared with peers and adults his previous learning after initiating purposeful sound exploration outdoors. *The children noticed that each level of water corresponded to a different sound, proving that Mitchell's theory was indeed correct... 'the high water sounds different to the low water' said Toni;*

He is very capable of taking responsibility for a task and organises props necessary for follow-up (ie phoning grandma and arranging glass jars); He was able to suggest and recall steps in making sounds with water, how the change in water level effects sound and recalled the props necessary to conduct such an exploration when asked *What happens to the sound as water is poured into each jar?* Mitchell predicted that the sound would deepen recalling his previous knowledge. He tapped the side of the jar while Mrs Deb poured water in the jar. The group listened...and slowly called out 'its going down!' he communicated openly and confidently in front of peers about the topic, providing descriptions, asking questions and explain processes as he continued to lead the group into listening to further sounds... 'see everyone this one is higher cause it has more water'; Mitchell has also demonstrated his ability to recall and retain knowledge, sort according to level and sound (high to low) and respect own and others ideas. This was an extremely engaging for Mitch and the group and provided hands on experience and knowledge in concepts related to tone, pitch, volume, capacity, prediction EXCITING!

Future provisions: Support further opportunities for small group participation as the children took pleasure in own discovery and exploration and discussing with Mitch his ideas. For Mitchell we will continue to have these props available for further discussion and explore concepts further (as with other man made percussion sounds and instruments)...discuss with Mitch 'what next?' as to brainstorm some ideas...as a part of continuing the collaboration!

Reflection on your role: I feel that I supported Mitchell's interests learning and self discovery by offering him the opportunity to express his ideas about 'making music'. I supported Mitchell and extended learning and development by listening and responding collaboratively. Respecting his ideas and collaborating with Mitchell has given him the opportunity to actively engage in his own learning and therefore given him a strong sense of worth and identity. I extended learning through questioning for example: The sound was soft so I asked Mitchell and the group what would happen when the lids were removed? They thought that the sound would 'come out'... I asked would this make the sound louder or softer? The group said louder!. Mitchell took the lids off each jar and we found a heavier stick... Yes it was louder! As a group we discussed why this was so.

While most of the children equally engaged I felt I could have more effectively managed the group by redirecting children who were easily distracted. I am building my confidence when asking open ended questions by preparing a set of basis questions to ask before implementing the experience. This was really helpful as I was able to quickly refer to them without hesitation.

Goal you can work on to improve your skills: Observe participation of all children not just immediate children; continue to think about open ended questions before exp, as this help maintain flow and extended learning in more meaningful manner.

Putting it all together:

Figure 2.1 provides a conceptual framework of documentation that places the EYLF learning outcomes and key components as the beginning point for planning. The program is represented as a series of puzzlepieces, some of which will fit neatly and easily together while other pieces will not fit so easily. This symbolises the diversity of early childhood programs, the many factors which contribute to the program and the daily reality of program delivery where nothing goes quite as planned and the unexpected is to be expected!

At the top you can see the ‘EYLF: Learning Outcomes and Key Components Group Goals and Individual Goals’; this provides the foundation for the framework. At the bottom are socio-cultural contexts in which the program is situated. These influences include the child and the family, practitioners’ professional knowledge (including child development and learning theory) and personal values as well as external influences such as licensing regulations and quality assurance.

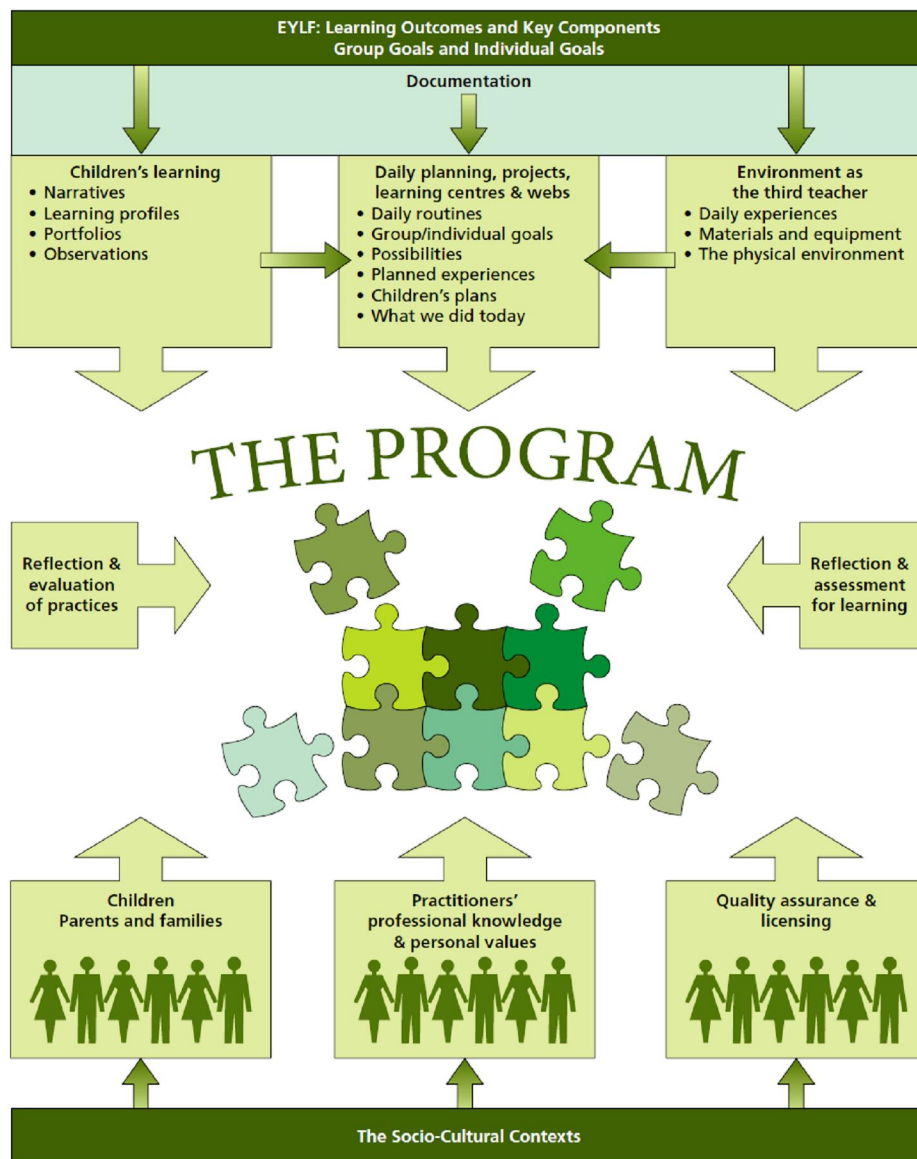


FIGURE 2.1: Example Observation: 'Making Music'

Making Music...

Date: 15.10.xx

Name: Bob

Age: 4.5yrs

Teacher Brooke

Outdoors today Bob found a small stick. He moved around the yard dragging, tapping and drumming his stick on different surfaces. On the verandah he tapped his stick on the railing...

I noticed this and replied: 'That's an interesting sound you're making, it travelled up the railing to where I am sitting'; 'Yeah' said Bob.

Bob came over to where I was sitting...he had an idea...

'Do you know what we could do? we could get some glass jars and fill them with water and make music when you tap them! If you put this much water (holding his hands apart to demonstrate distance) it will make a low sound...and if you only put a little bit of water in another jar it will make a really high sound!'

I asked: 'We could certainly try that...where did you learn about that?'

Bob replied: 'I saw it on the television'.

I set to work as to follow up on this idea and opportunity for learning: 'lets gather some jars and we could do this for music tomorrow;' Bob thought for a bit before replying: 'yeah I could ask my grandma for some jars, she has got some at her house...'

On speaking with his Dad Bob phoned grandma that afternoon to ask about the jars

Interpretation/Analysis:

Bob demonstrates his ability to independently engage in his own investigations and learning. He demonstrates well developed cognitive skills as he is able to recall knowledge from previous experiences and apply to new experiences. Similarly he shows understanding of mathematical concept and properties of sound. He is a confident communicator and enjoys expressing ideas and theories. Here the learning was not complete. Instead, an opportunity for collaboration and for Bob to utilise his learning in order to 'teach' others.

What Next?

Implement 'making music' experience with Bob; Give him the opportunity to share his learning with others. Talk with him also about his plans and ideas. Create a Web for learning along the way; Allow Bob the opportunity to express his ideas as to embrace his sense of self and identify.

TOOLS 1: Tools for Interpreting Observations

When interpreting/analysing observations of children it is important to reflect on child development knowledge and age/stage appropriateness...the following tables outline some examples of elements to 'look for' when interpreting observations. A thorough analysis will be achieved when used in conjunction with the 'points to consider' above mentioned.

Examples of things to look for in relation to play skills:		
Time engaged in experience: <input type="checkbox"/> under 5 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 5 – 10 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 15 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 15 minutes + <input type="checkbox"/> 10 - 15 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 15 minutes +	The child: <input type="checkbox"/> initiates interactions with peers <input type="checkbox"/> initiates interactions with adults	The child: <input type="checkbox"/> plays alone <input type="checkbox"/> plays with one or two other children <input type="checkbox"/> plays with a small group of children
The experience was: <input type="checkbox"/> child initiated <input type="checkbox"/> carer initiated <input type="checkbox"/> initiated by another child/children	The child demonstrates: <input type="checkbox"/> persistence <input type="checkbox"/> problem-solving <input type="checkbox"/> exploration <input type="checkbox"/> planning <input type="checkbox"/> self-direction <input type="checkbox"/> communication skills	Comment on how the child engaged with the environment, for example: confidence, curiosity, co-operation, temperament, tolerance of others, on-task behavior, uses equipment/resources.
Types of Play <input type="checkbox"/> Sensorimotor Play: Child explores objects by poking, probing, mouthing, banging, stirring, patting etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Solitary Play: The child is engrossed in their own play and does not take notice or engage in play with other children. <input type="checkbox"/> Parallel Play: Child plays alongside others but does not engage in interactions. Children may be playing with the same materials but do not interact. <input type="checkbox"/> Onlooker Play: Child does not engage in play with others but watches from a distance. Later the child may imitate this play. <input type="checkbox"/> Associative Play: Children play alongside others, observe and imitate the play of others. Generally there is little or no interaction. <input type="checkbox"/> Co-operative Play: Children interact and co-operate in play that is mutually satisfying. Play involves assigning roles, turn-taking, negotiation and co-operation. May involve games with rules.		
Examples of Gross Motor Skills to look for:		
dynamic balance (walk a few steps along a line)	use a small slide	throw ball into large box
run with direction	climbs up small frame	catch ball with two hands from short distance
climb into and out of small container	jumps, landing on two feet from low height	roll a ball with direction
kick ball from standing position	copy simple movements (pat head, stamp feet, shake hands etc.)	propel tricycle with feet on ground
take giant steps	walk on tiptoe	complete simple obstacle course
Can climb up and over A frame without adult support	Pedals tricycle	Throws ball to target with degree of accuracy
Walks up and down unassisted	Jumps in place	Hops on one foot
Kicks ball with direction	Throws ball overhand	Climbs ladder
Runs with direction, can stop and change direction	Walk along a straight line heel to toe	Can move large objects around playground

Guidelines for Planning

Examples of Perceptual-Cognitive Skills to look for:		
Can put objects together & take them apart	Explores cause and effect	Can anticipate what comes next in a familiar story
Sort objects using simple classification eg cars and animals	Uses objects for pretend purposes eg block for boat	Recalls songs and rhymes
Can stay on-task for several minutes	Can sit and listen to age appropriate story	Remembers names of peers
Can name simple objects and their uses	'Reads' books to self	Understand 'more than'
Sorts by more than one attribute	Able to stay on-task and complete tasks	Recalls past events in detail
Recognises one name in print	Understand the sequence of the day	Names simple shapes
Understands concepts such as tallest, biggest, same, more.	Uses problem solving skills	Rote counts to 20, recognises some numerals
Understand concept of same and different	Understand first/last	Able to respond to why? How? where? when? questions
Engages in complex pretend play	Talks about own special interest	Uses research skills such as reference books to gather new information
Example of Fine Motor Skills to look for : 3-5yrs		
Hand preference: right hand, left hand, no preference observed	Self-Help: able to dress/undress self, able to wash and dry hands without assistance	
Pencil grip: tripod, palmer grip	Use of utensils: pours own drink, uses utensils with confidence, requires assistance	
Use of scissors: snips, cuts but does not co-ordinate movement of both hands, cut along a straight line, co-ordinates movement of both hands to cut around a picture	Builds tower with small blocks	
Example of Social Skills to look for: 3-5yrs		
Greets adults & other children	Initiates interactions with adults	Able to accept developmental limitations
Seeks help when needed	Initiates and sustains interactions with peers	Able to participate in a co-operative manner in a group setting
Response to positive praise and encouragement	Shows empathy/concern for others	Engages in mainly co-operative play
Persists at a challenging task	Praises self	Able to share with others most of the time
Displays and accepts affection	Engages in conflict resolution	Able to select own activities and direct own play
Able to assert self and make needs known	Follows simple rules	Accepts adult direction
Examples of Language Skills to look for: 3-5's		
Speech 100% intelligible	Recalls familiar story	Uses personal pronouns correctly
Talks about past events	Can relate object to function	Uses prepositions correctly eg on, in, under
Uses variation in voice tone	Uses humour/jokes	Uses past tenses correctly eg went, gone
Follows 2-3 step directions	Can use 5-7 word sentences	Recalls songs and rhymes
Examples of Language Skills to look for: 2-3yrs		
Labels common objects	Talks in short sentences or phrases	Listens to short story
Knows names of other children	Asks questions	Attempts new words
Names and points to things in book	Responds to questions	Uses non-verbal communication
Can tell adult things they have done	Follows simple directions	Sings songs and rhymes
Can name common actions	Make needs known using words or gestures	Engages in short interactions with others

TOOLS 2: HighScope Preschool Key Development Indicators

Source: HighScope Preschool Curriculum. www.highscope.org (accessed March, 2011)

HighScope Preschool Curriculum Key Developmental Indicators (KDIs)

A. Approaches to Learning

1. **Initiative:** Children demonstrate initiative as they explore their world.
2. **Planning:** Children make plans and follow through on their intentions.
3. **Engagement:** Children focus on activities that interest them.
4. **Problem solving:** Children solve problems encountered in play.
5. **Use of resources:** Children gather information and formulate ideas about their world.
6. **Reflection:** Children reflect on their experiences.

B. Social and Emotional Development

7. **Self-identity:** Children have a positive self-identity.
8. **Sense of competence:** Children feel they are competent.
9. **Emotions:** Children recognize, label, and regulate their feelings.
10. **Empathy:** Children demonstrate empathy toward others.
11. **Community:** Children participate in the community of the classroom.
12. **Building relationships:** Children build relationships with other children and adults.
13. **Cooperative play:** Children engage in cooperative play.
14. **Moral development:** Children develop an internal sense of right and wrong.
15. **Conflict resolution:** Children resolve social conflicts.

C. Physical Development and Health

16. **Gross-motor skills:** Children demonstrate strength, flexibility, balance, and timing in using their large muscles.
17. **Fine-motor skills:** Children demonstrate dexterity and hand-eye coordination in using their small muscles.
18. **Body awareness:** Children know about their bodies and how to navigate them in space.
19. **Personal care:** Children carry out personal care routines on their own.
20. **Healthy behavior:** Children engage in healthy practices.

D. Language, Literacy, and Communication¹

21. **Comprehension:** Children understand language.
22. **Speaking:** Children express themselves using language.
23. **Vocabulary:** Children understand and use a variety of words and phrases.
24. **Phonological awareness:** Children identify distinct sounds in spoken language.
25. **Alphabetic knowledge:** Children identify letter names and their sounds.
26. **Reading:** Children read for pleasure and information.
27. **Concepts about print:** Children demonstrate knowledge about environmental print.
28. **Book knowledge:** Children demonstrate knowledge about books.
29. **Writing:** Children write for many different purposes.
30. **ELL/Dual Language Acquisition:** (If applicable) Children use English and their home language(s) (including sign language).

E. Mathematics

31. **Number words and symbols:** Children recognize and use number words and symbols.
32. **Counting:** Children count things.
33. **Part-whole relationships:** Children combine and separate quantities of objects.
34. **Shapes:** Children identify, name, and describe shapes.
35. **Spatial awareness:** Children recognize spatial relationships among people and objects.
36. **Measuring:** Children measure to describe, compare, and order things.
37. **Unit:** Children understand and use the concept of unit.
38. **Patterns:** Children identify, describe, copy, complete, and create patterns.
39. **Data analysis:** Children use information about quantity to draw conclusions, make decisions, and solve problems.

F. Creative Arts

40. **Art:** Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through two- and three-dimensional art.
41. **Music:** Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through music.
42. **Movement:** Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through movement.
43. **Pretend play:** Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through pretend play.
44. **Appreciating the arts:** Children appreciate the creative arts.

G. Science and Technology

45. **Observing:** Children observe the materials and processes in their environment.
46. **Classifying:** Children classify materials, actions, people, and events.
47. **Experimenting:** Children experiment to test their ideas.
48. **Predicting:** Children predict what they expect will happen.
49. **Drawing conclusions:** Children draw conclusions based on their experiences and observations.
50. **Communicating ideas:** Children communicate their ideas about the characteristics of things and how they work.
51. **Natural and physical world:** Children gather knowledge about the natural and physical world.
52. **Tools and technology:** Children explore and use tools and technology.

H. Social Studies

53. **Diversity:** Children understand that people have diverse characteristics, interests, and abilities.
54. **Community roles:** Children recognize that people have different roles and functions in the community.
55. **Decision making:** Children participate in making classroom decisions.
56. **Geography:** Children recognize and interpret features and locations in their environment.
57. **History:** Children understand past, present, and future.
58. **Ecology:** Children understand the importance of taking care of their environment.

¹Language, Literacy, and Communication KDIs #1–9 may be used for the child's home language(s) as well as English. KDI #10 refers specifically to ELL/Dual Language Acquisition.

Making Music...

Child: Bob

Teacher: Brooke

Date: 15/10/xx

15/10/xx

'On speaking with his Dad Bob phoned grandma that afternoon to ask about the jars

Interpretation/Analysis:

What Next?

Support further opportunities for small group participation as the children took pleasure in own discovery and exploration and discussing. Outdoors today Bob found a small stick. He moved around the yard dragging, tapping and drumming his stick on different surfaces. On the verandah he tapped his stick on the railing...

I noticed this and replied: 'That's an interesting sound you're making, it travelled up the railing to where I am sitting'; 'Yeah' said Bob.

Bob came over to where I was sitting...he had an idea...

'Do you know what we could do?...we could get some glass jars and fill them with water and make music when you tap them! If you put this much water (holding his hands apart to demonstrate distance) it will make a low sound...and if you only put a little bit of water in another jar it will make a really high sound!' I asked: 'We could certainly try that...where did you learn about that?'

Bob replied: 'I saw it on the television'.

I set to work as to follow up on this idea and opportunity for learning: 'lets gather some jars and we could do this for music tomorrow;' Bob thought for a bit before replying: 'yeah I could ask my grandma for some jars, she has got some at her house...with Bob his ideas. For Bob we will continue to have these props available for further discussion and explore concepts further (as with other man made percussion sounds and instruments)...discuss with Bob 'what next?' as to brainstorm some ideas...as a part of continuing the collaboration!

16/10/07

Bob arrived at preschool today with a bag from grandmas (as organized yesterday). Each jar was carefully wrapped and Bob had even included his 'music' stick in the bag with the jars. For music this morning we tested the theory behind yesterday's conversations.

We found two more small jars. Bob carefully poured uneven amounts of water in each jar and then arranged them in a line according to height.





16/10/07 Cont'd

The lids were screwed on tight and Bob played...the group looked on in anticipation

as Bob struck each jar with a stick. We noticed that each level of water corresponded to a different sound, proving that Bobs theory was indeed correct!

The sound was soft so I asked Bob and the group what would happen when the lids were removed? They thought that the sound would 'come out'... I asked would this make the sound louder or softer? The group said louder!. Bob took the lids off each jar and we found a heavier stick...

Yes it was louder! As a group we discussed why this was so.

Bob continued to lead the group into listening to further sounds...'see this one is higher cause it has more water';

Another discovery was yet to be made...

Water was added to aid further exploration. Mrs Deb returned with a jug.

What happens to the sound as water is poured into each jar?

- the sound changes
- It goes up
- It goes down...lets' see...Bob predicted that the sound would deepen recalling his previous knowledge. He tapped the side of the jar while Mrs Deb poured water in the jar. The group listened...and slowly called out 'it's going down!'

Review/ Interpretation:

This was a perfect example of collaboration between children and adults, following Bob's interest and previous learning. He openly shared with adults his previous learning after initiating purposeful sound exploration outdoors. He confidently suggested and recalled steps in making sounds with water, how the change in water level effects sound and recalled the props necessary to conduct such an exploration. He is very capable of taking responsibility for a task and organises props necessary for follow-up (ie phoning grandma and arranging glass jars); he communicated openly and confidently in front of peers about the topic, providing descriptions, asking questions and explain processes. Bob has demonstrated his ability to retain knowledge, sort according to level and sound (high to low) and respect own and others ideas. This was an extremely positive experience for Bob and the group providing hands on experience and knowledge in concepts related to tone, pitch, volume, capacity, prediction EXCITING!

What Next?

Support further opportunities for small group participation as the children took pleasure in own discovery and exploration and discussing with Bob his ideas. For Bob we will continue to have these props available for further discussion and explore concepts further (as with other man made percussion sounds and instruments)...discuss with Bob 'what next?' as to brainstorm some ideas...as a part of continuing the collaboration!

Brooke 17/10/xx

