

ALL KINDS OF MOVEMENT

Key Focus:

Physical Development

Observation:

The following series of observation notes about Kylie are from the month of November:

Kylie cried out and banged a block on the floor when she was trying to build a tower of blocks but she didn't get more than three stacked and stable. (November 2)

Kylie was in the dramatic play area selecting clothes and putting them on. First she picked the princess dress. Then she put on the tiara. Next were high-heeled shoes. (November 5)

Kylie was outside during playtime running around with other children. She climbed the ladder and went down the slide on her belly with her arms in front of her. She did this two more times and then went on the swing—pumping her legs and leaning forward and back to swing. (November 10)

At the end of the day, Kylie was at her cubby getting ready to leave. She grabbed her jacket and put one arm through, but had difficulty reaching the other arm. After a few tries she asked the assistant teacher to help her. (November 12)

For lunch today Kylie was the plate and napkin setter. She put a plate and napkin at each child's place. (November 15)

During clean-up, Kylie crawled under the work table and picked up the crayons. Then she put them in the crayon basket and carried it to the storage shelf. (November 21)

Kylie made a wall with blocks stacked three high. (November 24)

Reflecting on the Documentation:

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

This is a series of anecdotal observations.

Ask: Over what period of time did these observations take place? What is the advantage of looking at children's growth longitudinally (over time for almost three weeks)?

Sample Responses: By capturing Kylie's physical movements in a series of observations, we are able to understand more about her development than we would with one example at a single point in time. For example, we know that although she has good control over many of her gross motor actions, there are also areas where she has some difficulty.

Over the three-week period it seems that she may have improved in stacking blocks, but it is hard to tell because it is not clear if she built the

base first or stacked a series of towers. More focused observations over time (for example, describing how she put on her jacket at different time points or how she stacked blocks) would have been easier to interpret than this somewhat random set of anecdotes.

Ask: What additional information would you want to see in anecdotal records? Do some of these notes provide more information than others?

Sample Responses: The note on getting dressed during dramatic play tells the order in which she put the clothes on, but not how she did it; we do not learn about her motor skills. For example, did she step into the dress and then put her arms in one at a time, or did she put it over her head? The teacher would probably know whether the princess dress has any closure and if it is over-sized, but that is not clear to others. We know that Kylie put on a dress, but we don't know how large it was, how she put it on, or if she had to open or close any fasteners. The notes about putting on the jacket and building the tower of blocks are informative of where she may be struggling. It would be nice to know where Kylie is successful (for example, what fasteners, if any, she is able to manipulate).

Interpretation of the Observation:

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

Ask: Describe the strengths in Kylie's motor development

Sample responses:

- She can pump her legs and manipulate her positions (for example, crawling on her stomach, climbing).
- She has enough control over her arms to appropriately place larger items where she would like them (for example, setting the table).
- She put on a dress independently (but we don't know how large it was, if it had fasteners, or how she put it on).
- She shows increasing levels of proficiency, control, and balance in walking, climbing, running, jumping, etc.
- She demonstrates increasing abilities to coordinate movements in using the slide.

Ask: Describe some of the difficulties Kylie has

Sample responses:

- Kylie has difficulty putting her second arm through her jacket and may need to learn a different way to do this.
- She had difficulty at the beginning of the month stacking blocks. It is unclear how she built the wall, but it seems she persisted and found a way to build something three blocks high.

Ask: Aside from motor development, what else do these scenarios tell us about Kylie?

Sample Responses: She seems for the most part independent, but will call on adults for help. Even though she had some trouble with block building, she continued to go and play in that area. She used one-to-one correspondence with the plates and napkins. She cooperated during clean-up.

Relating Your
Observation to the
Child Outcomes
Framework:

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

8B1/2 (Physical Health and Development/Gross Motor Skills): Shows increasing levels of proficiency, control, and balance in walking, climbing, running, jumping, hopping, skipping, marching, and galloping. Demonstrates increasing abilities to coordinate movements in throwing, catching, kicking, bouncing balls, and using the slide and swing.

8C2/3 (Physical Health and Development/Health Status and Practices): Participates actively in games, outdoor play, and other forms of exercise that enhance physical fitness. Shows growing independence in hygiene, nutrition, and personal care when eating, dressing, washing hands, brushing teeth, and toileting.

6A2 (Social and Emotional Development/Self Concept): Develops growing capacity for independence in a range of activities, routines, and tasks.

7B1 (Approaches to Learning/Persistence): Grows in abilities to persist in and complete a variety of tasks, activities, projects, and experiences.

Next steps for
large group
instruction:

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

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

**Responses will vary but might include:*

- As part of morning circle time, play a "Simon Says" game that involves many movements that require that children stretch their arms to the side and above their heads and clap behind their backs.
- Play "pretend games" in which children need to pretend they are animals like birds (to flap their wings) or trees blowing in the wind. You might also play music that facilitates these types of movements.
- Play games with beanbags and softballs that involve throwing at a target or dropping into a box or a basket.

- For the above activities, the teacher could create a checklist of the movements and note which movements children are able to do.

Next steps for individualized instruction:

Ask: Based on these observations, write two to three goals for Kylie's motor development.

** Responses will vary but might include:*

- Teach Kylie to put on her coat independently (over her head if she cannot reach it from behind).
- Help Kylie stack more than three blocks. For many children, this is more difficult if they have a hard time releasing a block when they want to do so. Perhaps incorporate activities such as dropping clothespins in a container to help her practice releasing her grasp. It may also be that she needs more practice directing her arm movements. You may want to do try bubble blowing, having Kylie reach for and pop the bubbles.

Ask: Given the goals, what activities and materials would you provide for Kylie?

** Responses will vary but might include:*

- Encourage Kylie to spend time in dramatic play and try on long sleeve jackets in the area.
- Work on dropping buttons or chips into a can or clothespins into a bottle.
- Add blocks of different sizes to the block area.

Additional Notes:

Create a checklist of the specific motor skills you want Kylie (and other children) to engage in. Look at how well she does with releasing a ball when throwing it (how many feet away does the ball land?), how she catches (hugs ball to self, two-hand catch, one-hand catch), how well she controls stopping and starting movements, and how well she balances and imitates movements such as hopping, galloping, and walking heel to toe. Include an area for noting the date. You may want to include an area to note how long she does these activities (how many seconds) or how far she goes (skips and follows a line for 8 feet, throws a ball 2 feet), or what part of a task the child does herself (pulls zipper up once engaged). You may want to leave a comments section or create a more specific checklist. Think about what you want to know and how it will be easiest to collect the information. For example, if most of your children already pull up the zipper when it is engaged, then you want to know when they are able to do the entire task independently.

Sample Motor Skill Checklist: When do children achieve the skill? Notes and Comments

	Kylie		Jose		Ebony	
	Date	Comment	Date	Comment	Date	Comment
Ball Play						
Release/throw						
Catch						
Movement						
Controls starting						
Controls stopping						
Hops						
Gallops						
Walks heel to toe						
Dresses self						
<i>With assistance?</i>						
Buttons						
<i>With assistance?</i>						
Zippers						
<i>With assistance?</i>						
Other?						