

DRAWING RAINBOWS FALL AND SPRING

Key Focus: Creative Arts
Observation:

It's the end of the year and Ms. Concha is going through each child's yearly portfolio. She needs to complete a developmental checklist for each child in her class and provide evidence for the ratings she assigns. She is flipping through the portfolios to give her concrete examples to use to explain her scoring. She finds the following pictures for Esmeralda.



On the back of the paper Ms. Concha wrote, "October 9, Esmeralda's rainbow. Esmeralda said, "My rainbow has the red and blue."



On the back of the paper Ms. Concha wrote, "March 10, Esmeralda said, 'On Saturday, my mom and me went to the lake and there was a rainbow. It was in the sky. That's me over there and that's my mom'."

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

Ask: How can Ms. Concha take a picture portfolio such as this and interpret what it tells her about the child over time?

Sample Responses: Perhaps the first step to boiling down an interpretation of a picture into a checklist format is to compare and contrast the two pictures. What qualities does the first picture have? What qualities does the second picture have? What does the second picture have that the first is missing? What changes are evident in the pictures over time? These are then areas that can help provide evidence for ways the child has changed. Ask yourself: What does the child show us she understands? What can she do now that she could not do in the fall? What else might you like her to understand that is not shown in the picture?

Ask: How can Ms. Concha create a checklist that summarizes the information in this picture portfolio? What are some possible items from a developmental checklist that she might want to include or break down into small steps to look for in children’s work such as these?

**List ideas on chart paper or a whiteboard. Participants may want to look over the assessment tool used for reporting. After participants have brainstormed, you may want to share Handout 2.*

Sample Responses: She might want to have a checklist of the major body parts that a child would put into a picture of a person (head, body, legs, arms, hands, and so on) and enter the date if she sees those in the child’s picture. She could develop a 1-5 rating for the level of detail in the picture or note how many details are included in the drawing of the person. She could have a checklist of the types of lines and shapes in drawings (lines, curves, circles, squares, triangles). She could have a checklist that notes how long the child’s longest dictated sentence is or note other information about language development (see Handout 2). She could have a checklist for what colors the child names and whether she names them correctly.

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. Participants may also suggest new questions (hypotheses) to be examined.*

Ask: What do you notice about the first picture and oral description?

Sample Responses: Esmeralda captures that a rainbow has a variety of colors that appear like “rays” of light. The picture is composed of a variety of lines that are enclosed within a square figure. It is possible that she was trying to make a curve and had difficulty—you may want to look at other art from the fall to see if she created curved shapes. [Note: *Setting hypotheses—developing new questions to be answered about the child’s*

skills—is an important part of interpretation.] When asked to describe her picture she focuses on naming colors: red (which is not in the picture) and blue.

Ask: What do you notice about the second picture and oral description?

Sample Responses: The rainbow is curved, in the sky, made of many colors and part of the context of a larger narrative of Esmeralda and her mother traveling to the lake. There is a lot more detail in the picture. The positioning of the things in the picture is appropriate (for example, flowers below rainbow).

Ask: What do the second picture and oral description have that the first picture lacks?

Sample Responses: In the second picture, Esmeralda adds more background and context. In this sense, she is beginning to take perspective. By the end of the year, the rainbow is not the focal point, but rather something in the sky. Also, the rainbow no longer is in lines encased in a square form, but rather takes on the curvature that is more representative of the shape of full rainbows. Esmeralda also grows in her ability to talk about pictures and use description. Her sentences have increased in length.

Relating Your
Observation to
the Child
Outcomes
Framework:

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

5B2 (Creative Arts/Art): Progresses in abilities to create drawings that are more detailed, creative, or realistic.

1B1 (Language Development/Speaking and Communicating): Develops increasing abilities to understand and use language to communicate information, experiences, ideas, feelings, opinions, needs, questions and for other varied purposes.

3B4&5 (Mathematics/Geometry and Spatial Sense): Shows growth in matching, sorting, putting in a series and regrouping objects according to one or two attributes such as color, shape or size. Builds an increasing understanding of directionality, order and positions of objects, and words such as up, down, over, under, top, bottom, inside, outside, in front and behind.

8B3 (Physical Health and Development/Fine Motor Skills): Progresses in abilities to use writing, drawing, and art tools, including pencils, markers, chalk, paint brushes, and various types of technology.

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:*

- If additional children show an interest in the rainbows, talk about the colors found in a rainbow.
- Perhaps bring in a prism and give children the opportunity to create rainbows on the wall in the classroom.

Next steps for individualized instruction:

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

** Responses will vary but might include:*

- Sit with Esmeralda and talk with her about her second picture. Ask her to tell you about the colors that she put in her rainbow. Ask her to talk about what she and her mom were doing at the lake, who saw the rainbow first, and how long the rainbow lasted.
- You might also talk with her about her drawings of people. Ask where her arms are. Talk with her about what her mom looks like and have her begin to draw those parts of her body as well (for example, two arms, eyes, nose, mouth, ears, etc.).

Additional Notes:

Look at a child development or early childhood handbook and explore what drawings by children of Esmeralda's age might look like. Is Esmeralda's work indicative of her expected developmental drawing stage?

See checklists in Handout 2, Drawing Rainbows.