

## Due July 23<sup>rd</sup>

Instructor: Shireetha Gethers, M.A. CDEV 103 Child Development El Camino College  
PRESCHOOL OBSERVATION (110 points) Rev 6.19.16

**OBJECTIVE:** The goal of this assignment is to help you develop a clear understanding of important child development terms, identify the behaviors associated with these terms in a preschool setting, and articulate and evaluate what you observed.

For this assignment you are required to observe in a preschool or licensed family childcare setting for a minimum of two hours. The children must be between the ages of 2 1/2 to 5 years. Be sure to call the program director and explain that you are in a child development class at El Camino College and request permission to observe. If you are asked for a letter from me, please let me know.

**STEP ONE: Conduct the observation.** Read the text and familiarize yourself with all the terms and behaviors below. Design a strategy for recording information about each topic.

**STEP TWO:** Sit quietly in an inconspicuous place during the visit. Try to minimize any interaction with the teacher and children so that you do not disrupt their class time. You may only participate in an activity if invited to do so. Be sure to thank the teachers and the director when you are through. Sending a thank you note shortly after your visit is a VERY professional gesture.

**STEP THREE: Write the report.** Your report should be approximately 8-11 double-space typed pages for full credit.

### REPORT GUIDELINES

#### General Information

Name of Facility	Director's Name
Date of Visit	Teacher's Name
Address of Facility	Time In and Out
Ages of Children (Must be between 2 1/2 through 5)	Include a brochure or some type of printed material from the program

**Observation:** Make each of these terms a bolded heading. Write out the definition of each term and then give a detailed example for each one. You must cite the text a minimum of one time for each category for full credit where indicated. If you do not observe one of these items, include exactly what you were looking for, or provide an example on your own. Otherwise, I will assume you skipped it and will deduct points.

**Definitions for these terms can be found on the next page. For additional information, please refer to your textbook.**

You must include direct quotes from the textbook for categories 1-8.	Quotes are <u>not</u> required for categories 9- 13. Refer to your class notes for information.
1. Language Skills	9. Socio-dramatic Play
2. Fine Motor Skills	10. Rough and Tumble Play
3. Gross Motor Skills	11. Child/Teacher Relationships
4. Scaffolding	12. Child/Child Relationships
5. Functional Play	13. Teacher/Teacher Relationships
6. Constructive Play	
7. Associative Play	
8. Cooperative Play	

**Summary-** Develop a two-page (minimum) summary that includes:

- The positive and negative and positive aspects of the program.
- Recommendations for ways in which the program could be enhanced or improved.

**Work Cited Page-** Include a Work Cited page at the end of your report. See example in the visual instructions section.

## Preschool Observation Definitions

Use the following definitions in your report. Remember to formally quote and cite the text for each category as indicated in the directions on the first page.

### 1. Language Skills

Language skills refer to the child's ability to speak and to communicate so that he/she can understand and be understood by others. It includes grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and inflections. Language arts activities include speaking, listening, pre-reading and pre-writing (Gethers, 2016).

### 2. Fine Motor Skills

Physical abilities involving the hands, and more specifically, the fingers. It involves activities that help a child develop the pincer grasp and prepares them for handwriting (Gethers, 2016).

### 3. Gross Motor Skills

Physical abilities involving large body movements that help children develop and strengthen the large muscles in their arms and legs (Gethers, 2016).

### 4. Scaffolding

A sensitive structuring of the young child's participation in learning encounters which gives the child just enough help so that they can complete the task on their own (Gethers, 2016).

### 5. Functional Play

Play that involves simple, repetitive activities typical of 3-year olds. May involve objects or repetitive muscular movement (Feldman, 2012).

### 6. Constructive Play

In this more sophisticated play, children manipulate objects to produce or build something. This skill is usually developed by age 4. Constructive play lets children test physical and cognitive skills and practice fine muscle movements (Feldman, 2012).

### 7. Associative Play

This type of play involves two or more children interacting, sharing or borrowing toys or materials, although they do not do the same thing (Feldman, 2012).

### 8. Cooperative Play

In this type of play children genuinely play with one another, taking turns, playing games, or devising contests. (Feldman, 2012).

### 9. Socio-dramatic Play

Pretend play in which children act out various roles and themes in scenarios they create themselves with other children. This does NOT include teacher directed activities (Gethers, 2016).

### 10. Rough and Tumble Play

Play that mimics aggression through wrestling, chasing, or pretend hitting, but that actually occurs purely in fun, with no intent to harm (Gethers, 2016).

### 11. Child/Teacher Relationships

The nature and quality of the relationship between the teacher and the children in the classroom setting (Gethers, 2016).

### 12. Child/Child Relationships

The nature and quality of the relationship between the children themselves (Gethers, 2016).

### 13. Teacher/Teacher Relationships

The nature and quality of the relationship between the adults in the room (Gethers, 2016).

**Refer back to pages one and two for the “Summary” and “Work Cited” instructions.**

# PRESCHOOL OBSERVATION SAMPLE FORMAT

## Cover Page

### Preschool Observation

Your Name  
Child Development 103  
Instructor: S. Gethers  
Date of submission

## Page One General Information

Name: Little Angels Preschool  
Teacher: Rachel Green  
Number of Children: 18  
Director's Name: Monica Geller  
Date of visit: October 31, 2014  
Time: 9:30 to 11: 30 P.M  
Ages: 3 and 4 years-olds  
(Include the brochure or other printed material.)

## REPORT

(This is single-spaced because of space constraints. Your report should be double-spaced.)

### Fine Motor Skills

Definition: Physical abilities involving the hands, and more specifically, the fingers. It involves activities that help a child develop the pincer grasp and prepares them for handwriting.

#### Example:

There were many materials available to the children that supported fine motor development. In this classroom I saw children working with puzzles with small pegs (little knobs) attached to each piece. They used their fine motor skills as they grasped the pegs and put the puzzle pieces in place. In addition I saw two different peg boards. These were boards with holes in them with a basket of pegs next to it. One had very small pegs and the other had larger pegs for the younger children. It was very good that there was such an array of activities for children to use that allowed them to develop their fine motor skills. According to Feldman (2012), “**fine motor skills encompass such varied activities such as using a fork and spoon, cutting with scissors, tying one’s shoelaces, and playing the piano**” (p. 212).

## SUMMARY (Double-spaced)

Note: THIS IS AN ABBREVIATED VERSION

One negative aspect of this program was the way in which the children were rushed through snack time. The teacher kept saying, “Hurry up or I’ll have to throw your snack away.” I know that it is against the law to withhold food from children. They all finished in time, but this didn’t seem right to me.

Another negative aspect was when one of the aides forced a child to share his blocks with another child. He had been working on a tower for about 10 minutes and a child wanted to play. Instead of directing the other child to something else, she told the first child that he “needed to share.” When he protested, the teacher told him he was not being nice. Sadly, he left his block work and went on to something else. I think the teacher should have allowed him to continue with his important work and should not have made him feel badly about wanting to work independently.

I observed many positive aspects of this program. The first was all the wonderful materials that were set out on low shelving so the children could reach them. Another positive aspect was the outside play yard. It had climbing structures, a sand box, and plenty of shade. I was also impressed with the kind way in which Julia dealt with the children. She was very patient, always got down to their level to speak to them, and seemed genuinely interested in what they had to say.

The **recommendations** that I have to improve this program include . . .

## Work Cited

Feldman, R.S. (2012). *Child Development* (6<sup>th</sup> ed). Boston: Pearson

Gethers, S. (2016, June). *Preschool Project*. Lecture conducted from El Camino College, Torrance, CA.