

Notetaking for CLASS[®] Observations



As a CLASS observer, effective notetaking is a key skill to practice and develop over time. Follow these guidelines as you refine your notetaking skills, and review examples of effective and ineffective notetaking on the next page.

Record Objective Evidence

Objective evidence is based on what the observer saw and heard during the observation cycle. This is distinct from subjective evidence which is biased on the observer's opinion, interpretation, or feelings about what they saw and heard.

- + **Remaining objective** is essential. All observers will encounter moments when they see and hear things they like or dislike. Effective observers notice that they are having this reaction, interrupt those thoughts, and are able to continue documenting only the facts of what they see and hear, grounding their observations in the manual. Reliable observers must maintain objectivity while observing, notetaking and coding.

Take Concise Notes

Concise notes are brief yet comprehensive and provide sufficient evidence to support codes. Shorthand is a helpful tool. Excessive or scripted notes are ineffective, because they document unnecessary details and distract an observer from noting important ongoing classroom interactions.

Include Specific Details

Notes with specific details about behaviors included in the CLASS tool help an observer assign indicator ranges and dimension codes. These details help the observer reliably evaluate key teacher-child and peer interactions for depth (quality and impact), duration (how long), and frequency (how often). Details to note include direct quotes (especially in the IS domain), children's responses, and with whom and how key interactions occurred.

Document both Teacher and Child Behaviors

The specific behavior of teachers and children and their responses to teacher-child and peer interactions provides key information about the impact and quality of these interactions. The CLASS tool is a measure of interactions between the adults and children, as well as interactions among children.

Record Objective Evidence

EFFECTIVE EXAMPLE	INEFFECTIVE EXAMPLE
<p>T on rug with Ch @ large group time. T & Ch smile and laugh—matched. T went to each center to talk to Ch during center time. T: “What are you going to build with Legos today?” C: “I’m gonna make a house with lots of rooms!”</p>	<p>The teacher seemed happy sitting on rug—great lesson! Center time—T spent too much time at computer table. Not fair to kids who had to wait. T only talked to one boy at the Lego table and ignored the rest. T should have asked all the boys what they were going to build.</p>

Take Concise Notes

EFFECTIVE EXAMPLE	INEFFECTIVE EXAMPLE
<p>Ch frequently shared artwork with T. C: “Look @ my princess.”, “I made a race car.” T on level. T&C LOL!!! FBL—race cars & speed. GJ IIIII! Peer talk—artwork.</p>	<p>The child excitedly ran to the teacher and said, “Look at my princess!” The teacher leaned down on the child’s level and responded, “Great job!” Overall, the children showed great comfort with the teacher and frequently the teacher smiled when the children smiled and they also got excited together about the pictures several times. The teacher and the boy in the red shirt had an extended feedback loop about race cars and the speed they have on the race track.</p>

Include Specific Details

EFFECTIVE EXAMPLE	INEFFECTIVE EXAMPLE
<p>Prediction ?’s during story “Bunny Cakes”: “What do you think will happen when Max takes the note to the grocer?” & “Which cake do you think Grandma will eat first?” 8 Ch answered (raise hands) T: “Why do you think that?” II (Ch answer)</p>	<p>Read story. Prediction questions II Raised hands IIIII Why/how? II</p>

Document both Teacher and Child Behaviors

EFFECTIVE EXAMPLE	INEFFECTIVE EXAMPLE
<p>T mostly asks rote ?—“What did Max knock over?” & “What color is Ruby’s cake?” Ch only point or say color. 8/20 kids looking away or playing for 5 minutes. T not aware. C calls out, “I think the cake is strawberry!” T pauses and asks, “Why do you think that?” C: “Because it’s pink.” T: “Ohh, who likes strawberry cake?” All kids answer.</p>	<p>T asks rote questions—“What did Max knock over?” “What color is Ruby’s cake?” “Who did she give it to?” T asked one why question and one real world about strawberry cake.</p>