

## Activity 1: Unpacking Student Learning within Quality Early Childhood Environments

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#### Summary

The purpose of this 2 part activity is to train your eye to see quality in early learning environments and artifacts of student work.

First, each team member will select an indicator card from the folder pocket (one per person). Next, you will be shown videos and/or photos of early learning environments and asked to look for the specific quality described on your selected indicator card. You will have the opportunity to discuss elements of quality viewed with your team. **Keep in mind, you are focusing on what you see rather than on what you do not see.**

Second, you will review and analyze a teacher's evidence collection of student work and teacher narratives. As you look at the evidence collection, consider and discuss as a team:

1. How would you describe the growth that took place between each point A and point B set of student work?
2. What qualities of the work stand out to you? Is growth demonstrated?
3. Was the demonstrated student learning developmentally appropriate?
4. Was the demonstrated student learning connected to a TN-ELDS standard?
5. What information was gained through the accompanying teacher narratives?

#### Folder Pocket Labels:

#### **Detecting Quality within Early Childhood Environments**

### Activity 1: Unpacking Student Learning within Quality Early Childhood Environments

The purpose of Part 1 of the activity is to train your eye to see quality in early learning environments.

- First, each team member will select an indicator card from the folder pocket (one per person).
- Next, you will be shown videos and/or photos of early learning environments and asked to look for the specific quality described on your selected indicator card.
- You will have the opportunity to discuss elements of quality viewed with your team.
- **Keep in mind, you are focusing on what you see rather than on what you do not see.**

## **Developmentally Appropriate & TN-ELDS Connection**

### **Activity 1: Unpacking Student Learning within Quality Early Childhood Environments**

The purpose of second part of the activity is to train your eye to see quality in artifacts of student work. Keep in mind, student work should first be developmentally appropriate and connected to the TN-ELDS.

**Part 2:** In this second part of the activity, you will review and analyze a teacher's evidence collection of student work and teacher narrative entries. As you look at the evidence collection, consider and discuss as a team:

- How would you describe the growth that took place between each stage of student work?
- What qualities of the work stand out to you? Is growth demonstrated?
- Was the demonstrated student learning developmentally appropriate?
- Was the demonstrated student learning connected to a TN-ELDS standard?
- What information was gained through the accompanying teacher narratives?

Additional Activity Material Cards for:

Part 1: Quality Indicator Cards (Copy, Cut, and Mount to individual cards)

**Physical Environment Design & Arrangement:** This indicator will consider the layout and the design of the physical environment. Here are some things to look for:

- There should be a good flow to the environment with a mix of active and quiet areas and space for learning through movement.
- The space should include literacy embedded, hands-on learning centers.
- The classroom should be print rich and culturally responsive.
- There should be evidence of diversity acceptance.
- Learning centers should be organized and distinguished from other areas of the classroom.
- Furniture and materials should be child-centered and sized.

**Learning centers:** This indicator will consider the selection and organization of learning centers. Think about:

- The effective balance between teacher-directed and student-directed leaning centers.
- How standards are integrated through inquiry-based learning.
- How the centers are managed? Do the children stay on task, remain in the center, and know what is expected?
- What types of student learning and growth artifacts can be captured?

**Artifacts of quality Student Learning and Growth in process:** This indicator is looking for quality examples of student learning that capture the process rather than the product of learning. For example, worksheets only capture a product of learning. Look for examples of:

- Discovery learning: experimentation
- Open-ended questioning
- Teacher and child talk (metacognition)
- Active construction of knowledge
- Opportunities for problem-solving and creativity
- Evidence of differentiated, individual instruction and support
- Goal setting with the child

**Program structure and scheduling:** This indicator is looking for an effective use of whole group and small group instruction times. Here are some things to look for:

- Whole group instruction kept to 10 to 15 minutes.
- Whole group instruction used to introduce themes or to build in song and movement times.
- Reading aloud to children happens throughout the day rather than once a day during whole group instruction. Reading books to small groups of children or individual children should happen frequently throughout the day.
- There should more time in the day devoted to learning centers which contain hands-on learning activities with embedded literacy and connection to other TN-ELDS standards.
- Transition times should be short and kept to a minimum. Learning should still occur during transitions.

To recap: There should be times for whole group, small group, and individual instruction with less time spent in whole group and more small group and individual instruction

**Climate, Culture, & Interactions:** This indicator is looking for such things as:

- How does the space feel?
- How do the teachers and children feel in the learning space and during activities?
- What opportunities are there for social/emotional development including self-regulation and problem solving?
- How do teachers interact with the children?
- How are the children interacting with one another?
- How are social and emotional skills being developed?

**Sample Teacher Narrative Entry:**

In Jamel's point A work, the most emergent stages in writing are evident, including squiggles and disconnected lines. When prompted to tell the story of his picture, Jamel did not point to different parts of his picture, nor did he respond when asked to "share his story." During this time, Jamel's mother had a new baby, and she shared with me that Jamal was having a difficult time with not receiving all of her attention, and that he had reverted back to some baby talk.

Point B demonstrates more awareness of the lines and squiggles connecting to form pictures and stories. Jamal still did not verbally respond to the request to "share his story", even with additional prompting. However, Jamal's point B artifact shows a cohesiveness of the lines that resembles a body with arms and legs.