



## Early Childhood Assessment: Play Skills

Est. Time: 6 Hours

### Objective

To observe and measure children's play and analyze the nature of the play.

### Overview

Children engage in many different types of play, which is an important part of their daily routine. Not only is it a central behavior of young children but it is also a context in which other skills can be taught. Play can involve the use of fine or gross motor skills, communication skills, social skills, and cognitive skills. Assessing play can serve an important role in devising suitable interventions for young children with disabilities.

### Activity

Use the steps outlined below to complete this activity.

1. Identify times of day during which it is appropriate for the child to engage in play.
2. Review several taxonomies of play (e.g., Smilansky [1968]; Chance [1977]; Wehman [1977]; Sutton-Smith [1970]; Parten [1932]; Malone, Stoneman & Langone [1994]; Sheratt & Peter [2002]) and select at least two that are appropriate to the child.
3. Assess the child using the guidelines for the observational taxonomies.
4. After the observations, analyze the data as suggested by the method used.
5. Analyze the data to identify objectives for prompting play skills.
6. Write your report using the underlined words below as headings. Only one report should be submitted for each group and each should include all of the information outlined in the bullets below. Be sure to write in a style that is professional but that can be understood by individuals without advanced training.



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### Activity [Cont.]

#### Identifying Information (Who was observed?)

- List the child's name, gender, date of birth, age in months, and diagnosis in columns.

#### Methods of Observation (What did you do?)

- List the context of the measurement: the dates, observer/tester, purpose of observing/measuring (e.g., toy play), the activities and routines observed, where the activities occurred, how many adults and children were present, and the beginning and end times of each observation. This information should be presented in a table (using dates as rows).
- Describe the two taxonomies used. Define the behavioral categories of each taxonomy and describe the measurement system employed.

#### Results (How did the child do?)

- Describe the child's play in a manner that is appropriate for the taxonomies used. This should include a table for each taxonomy as well as a narrative description. Place the toy play results in the context of the major play outcomes discussed in class.

#### Recommendations (How would you use the data?)

- Based on your analysis, list two objectives that could be established.
- Provide a three-to-four sentence rationale for each objective.
- List at least one intervention practice for each objective.

**Note:** Attach the completed data sheets and other notes (raw data). These do not have to be typed, although the rest of the report should be.