Objective vs. Subjective Observations

Observation is a useful resource in early childhood education as observation:

• Provides teachers with information.
• Helps teachers evaluate their program.
• Provides a tool for evaluating children’s progress over time.

Guidelines for accurate and objective recording of observations:

• Focus on the facts.
• Record each detail.
• Use action words when possible.
• Avoid opinions.
• Include only what you see and hear.
• Use description words but NOT subjective words (such as happy, smart, helpful, pretty, or secure).
• Be sure to provide an overview of what has happened in the order it occurred.

(modified from Brown and Wright, 2000, p. 32. AR Pre-K ELLA Training Manual).