

CHLD 101: Introduction to Early Childhood Education

K-3rd Grade

Learning Outcomes	4. Identify evidence-based practices, curriculum, environments, teaching models, and technologies that support the development and learning of diverse populations in early childhood. 9. Identify observation, screening, and assessment techniques and demonstrate competencies in observation techniques, synthesis, and analysis by observing in diverse early childhood programs and analyzing information gathered with respect to the role and influence of culture, linguistic, and ability diversity.
DEC Recommended Practices	C11. Environments are provided that foster positive relationships, including peer-peer, parent/caregiver-child, and parent-caregiver relationships.
NAEYC Standards	4b. Knowing and understanding effective strategies and tools for early education. 4c. Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching/learning approaches.

For this field experience you will be visiting the upper age group of the early childhood years in a kindergarten or primary grade classroom in one of our area public schools. The public schools include a very diverse population and the teachers must rely on a broad array of effective strategies. The purpose is for you to focus on the teaching methods, techniques, and strategies that you see them using to address the needs of culturally, linguistically and ability diverse children.

To prepare for this field experience:

- Review Chapter 12: Effective Teaching Practices.
- Review again the extra reading assignment: *Early childhood inclusion: A joint position statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)* this time thinking of how it applies to the primary classroom. Available from: http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC_NAEYC_EC_updatedKS.pdf
- Study the school web page to familiarize yourself with the school and gather information that you will need later for your description of the setting that you will need later.
- If you will be undertaking this field experience during class time, your instructor will schedule the observation for you.

Part I: Classroom Visit. Be prepared to observe within the environment for an hour. While observing, take objective notes on what you observe using one of the observation methods outlined on the class handout “**Common Observation Strategies.**”

Please remember: When you are undertaking a field experience within an ECE environment, you are looking at one point in time. As a result, what you see may be a specific response to a

unique situation and not always reflective of common practices. Therefore, field experiences must be conducted with an open mind.

Part II: Reflection. Based on your observation completed during Part I, please respond to each of the following:

- Questions pertaining to method:
 - What method of observation did you use to collect data?
 - What did you see as the strengths and weaknesses of this method?
- Questions pertaining to environment:
 - Describe the setting you were observing within, including:
 - Type of facility and classroom
 - Number of children
 - Number of staff
 - Activities occurring during observation time period
 - Other relevant information (whether families were in the room, how children responded to strangers, etc.)
 - What environmental and interaction strategies are used to support child and family diversity?
 - What did you see as the environment's strengths?
 - What did you see as the environment's challenges?
- Questions pertaining to children:
 - Describe the diversity-related characteristics of children within the classroom environment.
 - How were children interacting with the environment?
 - Did you feel there was a sense of classroom community?
 - Did the children seem engaged?
 - Would you suggest any strategies to support further engagement?
- Questions pertaining to staff:
 - How was the staff interacting with the children and each other?
 - Did the staff seem engaged?
 - Would you suggest any strategies to support further engagement?
- Questions specific to kindergarten or primary grade classroom:
 - What teaching practices did you observe that you feel were most effective in enhancing children's development and learning?
 - How did the classroom environment you observed within support children's access and participation? Are there any additional suggestions you would make to ensure the access and participation of each individual child is maximized?
- Links to your learning:
 - In what ways did your field experience complement what you have learned in the course?
 - In what ways did your field experience contradict what you have learned in the course?
 - How do observed practices reflect evidence-based practices you have learned about in the course?
 - Did you feel the program was individually and developmentally appropriate?

After you complete your field experience:

- Submit your objective notes collected in Part I and your Reflection developed in Part II to your instructor.