



Gathering Information: Become an Observer

Language-focused play observations focus on how a child is using language to make meaning and interact with others during play. Educators can use the information gathered from their observations to inform their teaching practices. We invite you to choose one or both of these activities.

1. Observe a multilingual child engaged in play in your setting
2. Observe a multilingual child engaged in play during a home visit

Activity 1: Observe a Multilingual Child Engaged in Play in Your Setting

Observe a multilingual child (or children) engaged in joyful or purposeful play in your classroom, school, or program. Record your observations with text, audio, video, and/or photos and captions (as local policy allows).

Observing and documenting:

- How do the play environment, activity, and resources reflect the child's identity and interests?
- How do they affirm and support the child's linguistic, cultural, and literacy practices?
- How is the child encouraged to use the resources in the environment? Are they accessing the resources provided? Are they creating their own?
- How is the child participating in this play activity? What roles do they take on (for example, initiates conversation, shares ideas, responds to questions, negotiates/problem-solves, only listens)? How does their participation in this activity compare to other settings (the classroom, recess, other school or program environments)?
- How is the child engaging and using language during this play activity? How does their engagement with language in this activity compare to their engagement during other activities?

Informing your practice:

- How will what you learned from the observation help you develop children's language and learning as well as their participation? What will you do next?
- How might you and the children you serve co-create joyful learning spaces?

Activity 2: Observe a Multilingual Child Engaged in Play During a Home Visit

Observe a multilingual child engaged in play during a home visit. Record your observations using scripts, text, audio, video, photos, and captions (as family permission allows).

Observing and documenting:

- How does this child’s play at home reflect the child’s identity and interests?
- How does it affirm and support the child’s linguistic, cultural, and literacy practices?
- How is the child using resources during play? Are they accessing the resources provided? Are they creating their own?
- How is the child participating in this play activity at home? What roles do they take on (for example, initiates conversation, shares ideas, responds to questions, negotiates/problem-solves, only listens)? How does their participation in this activity at home compare to other settings (the classroom, recess, other school or program environments)?
- How is the child engaging and using language during this play activity? How does their engagement with language in this activity at home compare to other activities you have observed in your school or program?



Informing your practice:

- Connect with families to share your observations.
- What do they notice about their child’s language practices and language development during play? (You can use the *Become an Interviewer* tool to engage in a conversation with families.)
- How will the information from this observation and from families’ observations help you plan for continued language growth and development for multilingual children?