

Informed assessment  
 \*Prex placement

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E L L C O

# Literacy Environment Checklist

This checklist can be completed when no children are present, ideally before the children arrive. As classroom observers fill out this checklist, they become familiar with details of the environment. The careful attention paid to the environment helps observers complete the Classroom Observation, therefore, the checklist should be done prior to making the Classroom Observation.

## Book Area

1. Is an area set aside just for book reading?  
 Circle one: YES  NO

*If this area is used for other activities, such as for circle time or as a block area, score this item NO.*

2. Is the area where books are located orderly and inviting?  
 Circle one: YES  NO

*Are the books displayed in a bookshelf or bookcase? Are they oriented properly (front covers or spines facing out and right-side up)? Are they neatly organized?*

3. Does the area where books are located have soft materials?  
 Circle one: YES  NO

*Are there pillows, cushions, or comfortable furniture (e.g. couch) in the area so that children can look at books comfortably?*

Book Area Total **3**

## Book Selection

4. Do the books in the classroom range in difficulty level?  
 Circle one: YES  NO

*This item refers to all books that are accessible to children, not only those books in the book area. Do some books have no words or very few words per page, whereas others have one or two paragraphs per page? Do some books include simple language, whereas others incorporate more sophisticated vocabulary?*

5. How many books are easily available to children?  
 Circle one: Fewer than 15  16-25  26+

*Count all books that are accessible to children, not only those in book area.*

6. How many books convey factual information?  
 Circle one: 0  1-2  3-5  6+

*Count all books that are accessible to children, not only those in book area. Include science- or math-related books and social studies books, or books about other cultures, as well as health-related books.*

7. Are there three or more books related to the current theme?  
 Circle one: YES  NO

*The current theme should be evident through classroom displays, activities, and teacher conversations with children. If you are unsure about the current theme, ask the classroom teacher.*

Book Selection Total **8**

7/14/11 page 4

### Book Use

How many books are easily available for children's use in the following areas? Only count books if the area in question is separate from the book area. For example, if the block area is also used as the book area, circle "0" for the number of books in the block area.

8. How many books are available in the science area?

Circle one:  0     1-3     4+

9. How many books are available in the dramatic play area?

Circle one:  0     1-3     4+

10. How many books are available in the block area?

Circle one:  0     1-3     4+

11. How many books are available in other areas (not including the book area)?

Circle one:  0     1-3     4+

List these other areas: Carpet / Classroom area

12. Is there a place for children to listen to recorded books/stories?

Circle one: YES  1    NO  0

The listening center does not have to be a permanent area in the classroom. However, it must be in working order and available to children without adult assistance on the day of your observation.



### Writing Materials

13. Is an alphabet visible?

Circle one: YES  1    NO  0

This includes but is not limited to alphabet posters, stencils, and letter shoes. The alphabet must be at children's eye level or readily used by children.

14. Are there word cards with names or familiar words?

Circle one: YES  1    NO  0

For example, are there cards with children's names held together on a ring or cards with familiar words posted on the wall next to or above the writing area? Word cards must be in a place intended to support children's writing. (Word cards do not include labels on objects around the room.)

15. Are there templates or tools to help children form letters?

Circle one: YES  1    NO  0

For example, are there alphabet stencils, sandpaper letters, rubber stamps, and so forth?

16. How many varieties of paper are available for writing?

Circle one: 0     1-2     3+  2

For example, are there construction paper, white lined and unlined paper, tracing paper, and so forth?

17. How many varieties of writing tools are available?

Circle one: 0     1-2     3+  2

For example, are there pens, pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, magnetic letters, a chalkboard, a whiteboard, a typewriter, rubber stamps, and so forth?

# Literacy Environment Checklist

18. Is a distinct area set up and functioning for writing? YES NO  
 Circle one: 1  0

*In order to score this item YES, the area must be used only for writing. It cannot be combined with an art area, book area, or any other area.*

**Writing Materials Total**

7

## Writing Around the Room

19. How many varieties of teacher dictation are on display in the classroom? 0 1-2 3-5 6+  
 Circle one: 0  1 2 3

*This item is designed to determine the variety, rather than the number, of dictations. If the display of teacher dictation consists of work from a one-time, teacher-led activity completed by all children, count it as one example. If a single display consists of unique or spontaneous work from each child or the works were completed over a longer period of time (2+ weeks), count each item as a separate example.*

20. How many charts, big books, or other evidence of full-group literacy are there in the classroom? 0 1-2 3-5 6+  
 Circle one: 0 1 2  3

*Include teacher-created charts that show evidence of group discussion (e.g. My Favorite Color, Our Trip to the Aquarium).*

21. How many varieties of children's writing are on display in the classroom? 0 1-2 3-5 6+  
 Circle one:  0 1 2 3

*This item is designed to determine the variety, rather than the number, of child writing samples on display. If the display of children's writing consists of work from a one-time, teacher-led activity completed by all children, count it as one example. If a single display consists of unique or spontaneous work from each child, or the works were completed over a longer period of time (2+ weeks), count each item as a separate example.*

- 22a. Are there writing tools in the dramatic play or block area? YES NO  
 Circle one:  1 0

*For example, are there paper, pens/pencils, a chalkboard, a typewriter, and so forth?*

- 22b. Are there props that prompt children to write in the dramatic play or block area? YES NO  
 Circle one:  1 0

*If there are no writing tools in the dramatic play or block area (i.e., you scored item 22a NO), then mark this item NO. Props include items such as clipboards, telephones, menus, and so forth.*

23. Are there alphabet puzzles available for children's use? YES NO  
 Circle one:  1 0

*Alphabet puzzles must include all letters of the alphabet. Puzzles must be available without adult assistance.*

24. Are there puzzles with words available for children's use? YES NO  
 Circle one:  1 0

*Puzzles with words must include several short words, and meanings must be clearly indicated by pictures. Puzzles must be available without adult assistance.*

**Writing Around the Room Total**

8