

OBSERVING AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN

During the course of the class, you will complete different types of observations. Before beginning the observations, decide which type of observation you wish to complete. This will allow you to focus and be better prepared when you are watching the children. Observations are done on an individual basis. You do not work together when doing observations. If you are caught visiting during the time you have been given to observe, you may be dismissed from the observation area. Not only does visiting keep you and others from completing the observations, but it also interrupts the teachers and the children.

Observing children means watching them carefully in different situations, with specific purposes in mind. This helps one to understand more about them and interacting with them. A child may be observed in his/her own home at play in the yard, neighborhood, store, on the street, in a child care center, or at school.

GUIDELINES FOR OBSERVING CHILDREN:

1. Record the child's name, sex, and age on the observation sheet.
2. Have a paper and pencil ready to take descriptive notes during the observation. (A detailed write-up of the observations and conclusions will be completed at a later time.)
3. Keep your notes. Hand them in with your observation form.
4. Be open-minded; see the situation as it actually is, what the child actually does-- not just your interpretation of what he/she does. Record only actual happenings.
5. Always believe the best of a child in all situations.
6. OBSERVE ONLY!!! Do not participate in the activities.
7. Do not interfere with a child's constructive play by asking questions or trying to help him/her.
8. Stay in the background to avoid interfering with the areas of activity.
9. Take advantage of these opportunities to observe and learn about children to help you better know how to work with children in the future. **DO NOT VISIT WITH CLASS MEMBERS. DO NOT DO HOMEWORK WHILE OBSERVING. DO NOT STUDY FOR TESTS. DO NOT LET ANYTHING DISTRACT YOU OR OTHERS FROM OBSERVING.**
10. Never laugh at a child. Laughing at a child invites showing off tactics.
11. Be alert to give assistance in emergencies.
12. If you have questions about a child, bring the questions to class.
13. **CLASS DISCUSSIONS ARE CONFIDENTIAL.**