Module 3 Blog Activity

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**Define how you successfully assess the work of young children in your own classroom.**

Childhood assessment refers to gathering information about a kid, reviewing the information, and then using the data to plan educational activities that are at a level the child can comprehend and can learn from. According to Reutzel (2013), assessment is vital for a high-quality early childhood program. When teachers conduct an assessment, they observe a learner get information about what he/she knows and what he can do. The assessment provides teachers, families, and parents with crucial information about a kid's growth and development. Examples of early childhood assessment tools include observations and checklists, anecdotal records, running records, portfolios, standardized tests, and diagnostic tests.

For the few years I have been a lower-grade teacher, assessment has changed dramatically. When I first began my teaching career, teacher observations and self-made assessments were honored as suitable ways to document the mastery and growth of young kids. My colleagues and I employed our observations and assessments to plan instructions based on our learners' needs. We had the flexibility to evaluate learners in areas that were suitable for them. For instance, we could delay assessing reading skills if a learner didn't yet understand the difference between numbers, words, and letters. Unfortunately, assessment in today's lower-grade classrooms looks like what we would expect in upper-grade classrooms with secure testing materials and proctors.

As an educator of young children, what I find most useful and successful in assessing young children is systematically observing learners through the day in the natural learning environment. I prefer assessing children through observation as observations can be made with little or no intrusion into kids' activities. As an educator, I can regularly observe all facets of learners' development, including social-emotional, linguistic, physical, and intellectual. I often commence the school year with kids who speak little to no English. These learners struggle to answer early literacy standardized assessment tests that most educators prefer to successfully assess their children. But for me, the mandated and widely utilized standardized tests are just but the beginning. I dig deeper to find out what I need to know so as to provide opportunities for growth and development for all my learners. I have learned valuable information using my observations to find the skills and knowledge the children have.

To ensure that I have all necessary information, I start every school year with informal checklists assessing kids' numeral and alphabet recognition, knowledge of shapes and colors, and object and rote counting abilities. I have found that this is essential for all learners. For instance, most of the time, I have learners who speak only English or those who can't count past ten or identify basic shapes and colors. I frequently observe and assess these learners in the first few weeks and months of the school year to see if and to what extent they're making progress. This aids me in determining whether or not their limited knowledge and skills result from lack of exposure to the concepts- an issue I am able to address- or they are problems, like developmental or cognitive delays, that would need additional support and assessment by specialists.

In conclusion, assessments can and should be conducted in an early childhood setting. They are a significant piece of teachers' work with young kids. Every program that educates young kids needs to be sure that their learners know and are able to do what is taught, so they can be successful at every level (Reutzel, 2013). Thereby, these children must be effectively and efficiently assessed.

**Reference**

Reutzel, D. R. (Ed.). (2013). *Handbook of research-based practice in early education* (Vol. 1253). Guilford Press.