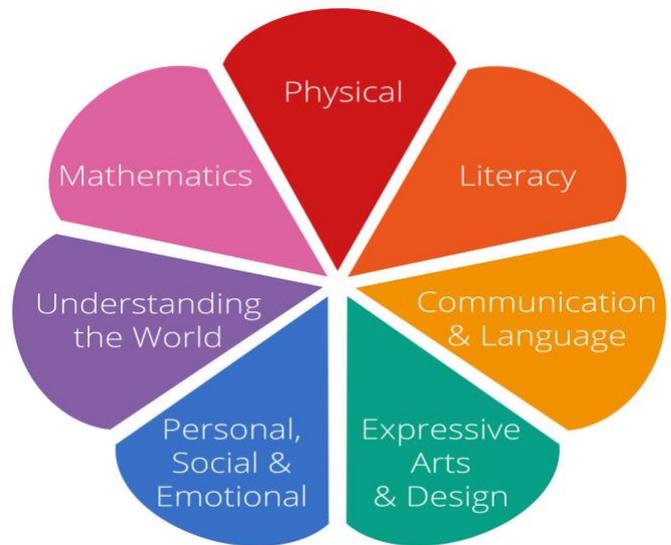
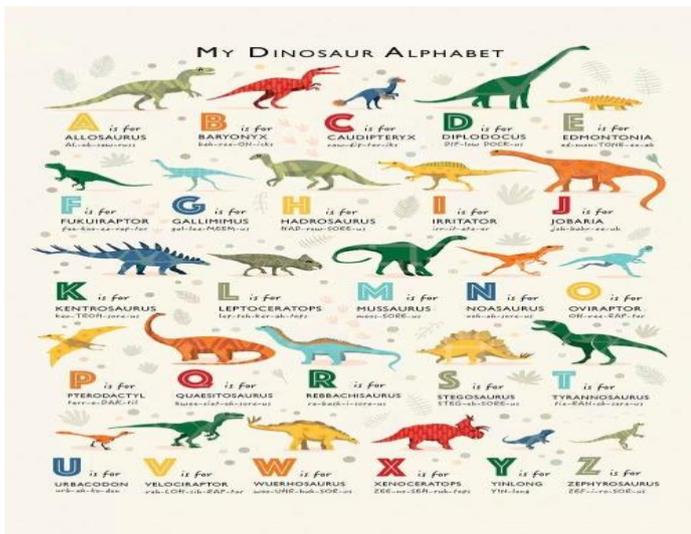


The COET&L & Capturing new Learning.



Developing Strong Practice

Deborah Udakis Consultancy Ltd – www.deborahudakis.co.uk

Examples of recording



Characteristics of effective learning:
Playing & Exploring / Active learning /
Creating & thinking critically.

Baby takes first steps - observed by practitioner, captured in photograph.

Practitioners Evaluation: Child (13m) took their first steps. This is a milestone in their physical development. Shows increased confidence and body awareness, delights in greater freedom and movement, takes steps using alternate feet. (PD, PSED)



'I planted herb. Curly parsley'.

Child aged 2.7 – uses new vocabulary in context – relishing their time in the garden.

COEL – Playing & Exploring, Active Learning.

New learning in Mud Kitchen –

Practitioners Evaluation: is interested to investigate and explore; shows high levels of curiosity. Uses new vocabulary in context, shows comprehension and understanding (UTW, C&L, PD, PSED)



'Look at me! I can do this all by myself! I'm not scared'. 3.3

New Learning – Physical / PSED – (child aged 3.3 - 3y 3m) shows new confidence and physical prowess as they climbed the spiral frame and crossed the 'crocodile bridge'. Evidence of COEL observed: Playing & Exploring, Critical Thinking, Active Learning. (PD, PSED, C&L, UTW)



Ella 4.6 – 'I can write my name and spell it e-l-l-a'.

Practitioners Evaluation: Ella 4.6 confidently writes and spells out her name. Her early mark making, and letter formation has developed over time. (Literacy, PSED, PD, C&L) COEL observed: Active learning, Creating & thinking critically.



Child 1 (3.6); 'I'm putting the stegosaurus beneath the bridge'. Child 2 (3.8); 'Good idea. What about the Tyrannosaurus Rex? He won't fit under the bridge'. Child 1 thinks for a moment – 'put him on top where he can see all the other dinosaurs'. Child 2: 'Ok, yeah'.

Practitioners Evaluations: Children use new positional language and work collaboratively in the construction area. They confidently share their ideas and work together to solve problems. COEL observed: Playing & Exploring / Active Learning / Critical Thinking, UTW, C&L, Maths, PD, PSED.



'My umbrella has a shadow.

Look at the different colours. There are 5 different ones. My favourite colour is purple.

The sun is reflecting...

The sun is making my umbrella shine.'

Child 3.10

UTW, PD, EA&D, C&L, PD

COEL – Playing & Exploring / Active learning / Creating & Thinking Critically

Practitioners evaluation: Child uses new vocabulary and understanding of how the sun reflects through the coloured paper and casts a colourful shadow. They are developing their curiosity and using a range of skills and processes to problem-solve, experiment, hypothesise, research and investigate.

During Heuristic Play (Child 9m) made sounds from banging different objects together and knocking them against another surface.

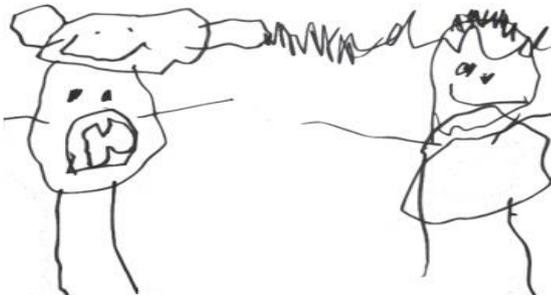
Practitioners' evaluation: The child figured out that different objects made different sounds; and explored what happened when they banged the item with a different item – differentiating sounds, focus and perseverance.

COEL: Playing & Exploring, Active Learning, Creating & Thinking Critically.

UTW, PD, PSED.



What does it mean to **listen**?



"When the sounds go into your ears and then down into your heart and you can really listen. The heart really listens. I listen to Kieran with my heart."

Children were asked what does it mean to listen?

Child 'When the sounds go into your ears and then down into your heart and you can really listen. The heart really listens. I listen to Kieran with my heart'.

Practitioners' evaluation: child 4.5 shows a great understanding of the importance of listening and how hearing the words of others can affect them emotionally. Strong evidence to show child's empathy, attention, understanding and PSED. Evidence of COEL re: Playing & Exploring, Active Learning, and Creating & Thinking Critically.



Child 3.11

'Oh no! There's a Gruffalo'.

'His eyes are orange, his tongue is black, He has purple prickles all over his back.'

Practitioners' evaluation: after reading the story of the Gruffalo, Child 3.11 created a wonderful visual representation of the 'deep dark wood' using clay. The child uses their imagination and knowledge of the story to describe and explain the Gruffalo's different body parts, describing its physical appearance, colours and the different animals in the story.

Literacy, C&L, PD, PSED, UTW, EA&D – COEL – Playing & Exploring, Active Learning, Creating & Thinking Critically.

Examples of recording children's learning



Chloe (3.8) explains her baby sister does not like to have her nails cut.

'This is my baby sister. She has little nails'.

Chloe shows concern for her baby sister and delights in telling her friends how she helps take care of her.



Jayden (4.1)
 'Look, I can build a tower'.
 He stacks 10 blocks one on top of the other = counting the cubes 1 – 10.

Jayden is an increasingly confident counter. He accurately counts 1 – 10 while pointing to individual blocks.
 (Maths, PD, UTW, EA&D, PSED, C&L)



Mia (4.3) uses a mirror, making faces and explores how her face works

'I love my curly hair'.



Mia is developing herself—esteem as she explores her face and facial features.
 (EA&D, PSED, C&L, UTW, PD)



Look at the delight on Leo's face as he takes his first steps with support.

As he becomes increasingly mobile his world changes and his desire for independence increases. (10m)

(PD, PSED)



Ellie (3.11)

'I am cutting wood'.

(This is a handwritten note)

Today we have been using tools in the invention shed. We had a lovely time exploring all of the resources together. The children were very careful, while using the different tools and they used their new skills to develop their ideas and create amazing models such as a boat and a trumpet.



The children are naturally curious about their world and enjoy exploring their surroundings. They observe the environment and use their senses to learn about the environment. They ask questions, to explore, to discover, and to have fun. (UTW, C&L, PSED, PD)

Clara (4.2) 'I wonder what is under the rocks?'

Basil (3.11) 'What is that bird eating?'

Avl (4.1) 'Does that flower smell?'



Austin (6m) was absorbed in his play. During Heuristic Play, he spent 20 minutes exploring objects by handling and mouthing them in order to find out about their physical characteristics.

Look at the concentration on his face. (PSED, UTW, PD, C&L)



Ria (2.10)
'I making magic soup.'
'You have some?'

During potion making, children learned about numbers on the scales and cylinders, counting how many pebbles they are adding and how many drops of water out of the pipettes. The children were observed exploring, actively learning, creating and critically thinking.
(Maths, PSED, C&L, EA&D, PD, UTW)



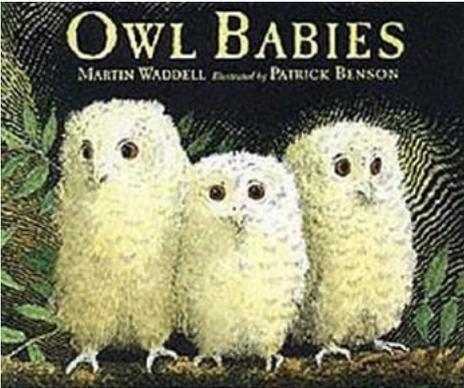
'I made a letter for my Mummy'

Freya (3.11) draws squiggle lines to represent text. Though these squiggles may appear random, they are made with intention.
Her writing mimics real writing and is an important stage of her literacy development.



Emily (5m) turned the pages of the book and babbled with delight

Reading and storytelling with babies and children promotes brain development and imagination, develops language and emotions, and strengthens relationships.



Eli showed an interest in woodland animals. He has learned that 'Owls are carnivores and hunt for mice and lizards and other small animals at night'. 'Owls have soft feathers to keep them warm.' (UTW, C&L, Literacy)

Owls have big eyes that can see at night. They are nocturnal'.
Eli (4.4)

Henry (4.4)

'The big jug is too small to hold all the water from the other jugs.'



Henry learned how to read the scale on a measuring jug by looking at it. He discovers that 250 ml of water and 300 ml of water doesn't fit into a 500 ml measuring jug.

'You can't go near a volcano because the lava would burn you.'

Look at the eruption! When you mix the ingredients there is a reaction.'

Today Sarah took part in an experiment representing the explosion of a volcano. She developed her concept knowledge, and vocabulary, using words including, lava, eruption, ingredients, experiment, mouth of the volcano, magma and reaction. Sarah shared her predictions and explained her thinking.



Take photographs of each display, with the children who created it, before it is taken down. Put all of the pictures into big class floor books and invite children to add captions and comments to them. Keep them in the book corners, reading areas or home corner, to be shared whenever the children choose. Make them available in the reception areas at open days, fairs, productions and events, at parents' consultations and meetings, and for Ofsted inspectors to view.

Value contributions from every child, including drawings, paintings, collages, prints, patterns and models.

Encourage both emergent writing and verbal contributions – adults can also scribe for children to record the comments and descriptions that they offer during a project.

Look at your displays from a distance to ensure that they are attractive, and easy-to-read and understand.

Add a variety of examples, textures and real items to bring displays to life.

Change displays regularly and frequently enough, maintaining a stimulating environment that helps children and families to learn together.



The Characteristics of Effective Teaching & Learning (COET&L)

What are the characteristics of effective teaching and learning, and what do they mean?

These characteristics are what we look for and are likely to see when children engage in high quality play and learning activities.

They can help us understand how children approach their learning through their decisions and interests. These CoETL also relate to how children tackle new experiences and deal with challenges.

During our observations and interactions with children, we need to be alert to signs of the CoETL and make effective use of teachable moments to support and enhance learning.

The characteristics of effective teaching and learning are split into three main areas.

- **Playing and Exploring**
- **Active Learning**
- **Creating and Thinking Critically**

Children can develop these characteristics over time, and they contribute to children being able to engage, enjoy and make use of their time learning.

Essentially, the CoETL are skills which, built upon at a young age, children will be able to use throughout their early education, and beyond.

Playing and Exploring

Playing and exploring focuses on how the child:

- Plans and thinks ahead.
- Is guided by their own thinking and actions.
- Makes their own independent choices.
- Responds to new experiences and has their own interests and fascinations.

[Read more about Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage here.](#)

Active Learning

Active learning is all about how a child:

- Displays goal-directed behaviour.
- Participates in routines and gets to know these routines well.
- Begins to correct their mistakes and persevere even when they find something difficult.

Active learning is the opposite of passive learning, where the child is simply absorbing information from an adult. Active learning challenges students to think, analyse and engage with learning on their own terms.

[Read more about Active Participation in Early Years here.](#)

Creating and Thinking Critically

Creating and thinking critically looks at how a child:

- Takes part in pretend play.
- Sorts materials.
- Can review their own progress to achieve a goal.
- Solve real problems.
- Uses pretend play to think beyond the 'here and now'.
- Feels more confident about their own ideas as their knowledge grows.
- Makes links between ideas and concentrates on achieving things that are important to them.

Creating and thinking critically can be observed when a child is inventive and comes up with their own approach, using their own autonomy, to overcome a problem and make connections and ideas with their imagination. Creating and thinking critically isn't just based in the arts, it's a core part of the thought process. It's when children display that they are actively thinking about the meaning of their actions.

How to observe CoETL

When you're observing the characteristics of effective teaching and learning, examples of the ways in which adults can support may be helpful.

Documentation to support CoETL can be found in **[Development Matters 2020 Non-Statutory Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(New EYFS 2021\)](#)**

Examples of how to support the COET&L within the early years setting.

When considering **Playing and Exploring**, here are some examples of how adults can support this characteristic that may be helpful:

- Offer open-ended resources, such as shells, pebbles, wood slices and different fabrics.
- Support children by encouraging them to talk about their plans or draw a design before they start to make something, for example, when building with construction materials.

- Provide visual aids to support routines.
- Maintain a well-organised learning space to support children's independence.
- Extend children's interests by providing resources that support their fascinations.
- Introduce children to different styles of art and music.

If you're looking to observe the characteristics relating to **Active Learning**, here are some examples of how to support this particular characteristic:

- Provide opportunities to play and explore both outside and in.
- Give children lots of time and allow them to set the pace, so they have time to make connections.
- Give children the tools they need to have ways of knowing how to be helped, for example, ask a friend, watching an adult or child modelling how to do something, or through trial and error.
- Support by knowing and carefully judging when to step in to help and when to step back and allow the child to persevere.
- Teach children 'self-calming' techniques to support their emotional growth.

When observing for **Creating and Thinking Critically**, these support approaches are worth bearing in mind:

- When children are developing their creative thinking by finding new ways of doing things, ensure you encourage and support them.
- Provide consistent routines that allow plenty of time for uninterrupted play.
- Help children to talk about and reflect on their learning.
- Extend children's ideas by asking 'how' and 'why' questions.
- Make time and space for children to become deeply involved in imaginative play.

What is the best learning environment for CoETL?

The learning environment children spend their time in during the EYFS is essential to their development. So, you may wish to consider these questions when exploring your provisions for effective learning.

- Is there enough space, both indoors and out, for children to play and explore? Having space to work freely and openly can be beneficial for children, as they can move into their own space to try out new activities.

- Do children have access to uninterrupted play and exploration time? Having time to drive their own activities and play lets children explore ideas to a greater depth, as they can follow each idea and question where it leads them.
- Do your children make their own choices and decisions? Do you offer the children the chance to make their own choices helps support independence. It can give them the confidence they need to offer their own ideas and drive their own activities, helping to support them as they develop a variety of these characteristics of effective teaching and learning.
- Are children given sufficient opportunities to test out their ideas? Getting to test them out and apply them on their own helps support their creating and thinking critically, working to draw their own conclusions.
- Is the child's skills, attitude, and achievements furthered through play and exploration? Do the things they do for fun help support a range of interests and skills?

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/teaching-wiki/coel#cont-1>

Notes