

Steps to Success Facilitator Guide Unit 2 Module 2: Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation  
(ELLCO) Toolkit (TVI)

Linda Warren: Earlier in the TVI we learned about observation. Now we're going to take some time to apply what we've learned about early literacy to what we've learned about observing. You're going to use some video-taped footage of two classrooms and then use a formal observation tool to record your observations. The tool we're going to use today is the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Tool Kit, or ELLCO. Brenda works with staff to use this observation tool in her program. Tell us more about the ELLCO, Brenda.

Brenda: Well, we began using the ELLCO with our mentor-coaches, with our master teachers. We trained our master teachers on the ELLCO. We provided the instrument to them and they went through a series of trainings on the use of the ELLCO. We also presented the ELLCO to the teachers. They, they needed to see what the master teachers would be coming into their classroom using as a part of their observations. So the teachers were familiar with it, the master teachers had been trained on it and we use it as kind of a "pre" and "post".

We went in, we used it, we looked at the environment. We looked at teacher/child interactions. We looked at the literacy areas, the book area, the writing areas. And we used it, number one, to look at the environments and to enhance the environments. And, number two, to look at their practices, and begin to talk about in their reflective supervision sessions, how we can take this information and enhance our classrooms by what we've, we've learned from the, from administering the ELLCO. So it was definitely a partnership in using the ELLCO.

The teachers knew about it, the master teachers had been trained on it, and they were using it in their conference sessions to talk about how they could make their classrooms much more effective for language and literacy development with young children. So it really has been helpful in that. The environments have just come to life because the ELLCO really talks about books in the classroom, writing materials, very specific about the types of writing materials that should be in the classroom. Gives teachers really good ideas what to do to enhance their environments.

Linda: Great. Thank you. Let's take a look at the scoring for the ELLCO's classroom observation. It's based on a five point rating scale. There are three anchor ratings. An anchor rating of 5 means exemplary. An anchor rating of 3 means basic, and an anchor rating of 1 means deficient. The scorer needs to consider the strength of the evidence observed in the classroom when deciding on an anchor rating.

Now you are going to take a few minutes with your facilitator to discuss observing in a preschool classroom and using the ELLCO. Stop the video now, and resume playing when you have finished your conversations.

[Short break]

Now we are going to show you some video from a preschool classroom. Remember to pay close attention to how the teacher is supporting children's writing. You can also take notes as you watch the video.

[Video begins] Teacher: Oh, to be the string on the balloon. That's cool. Are you, do you want to do the writing or did you want me to do some writing? You want to do the writing? Good, I would like you to do the writing. Well, you tell me what to write, okay, and I'll write it. Yes, where do you want me to start?

Child: I love balloons.

Teacher: I love balloons is the title? You're gonna write that here. But you want me to write that here, and you're gonna write it here? Okay. Now, you're going to write your title on here right? Right here, like that, you might have to keep opening it and close it up, okay? I love balloons? I l-o-v-e ba-l-l-o-o-n-s. I love balloons!

[children talking] [Video ends]

Linda: Now you are going to take some time to complete your scoring and discuss what you have written with your group. Stop the tape, and resume play when you have finished your discussions.

[Short break]

Welcome back. Experts scored the interaction you just watched as a 3, or basic level. The reasons for their score are that, although the teacher provided some appropriate writing instruction, including taking dictation, she is not always available to support the children's work.

Another reason for the basic level score is that the writing area is not distinct from the art area. Now you're going to take some time with your facilitator to discuss the expert's score, and prepare for your next observation. Stop the tape now, and resume when you have finished your discussion.

[Short break]

Now we're going to a classroom in Boston to watch the next preschool example. Remember as you watch the video playing, you can take notes.

[Video begins] Teacher: Two tickets? Okay. Does it tell me what time to get on the airplane?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: What does it say, what time? 5:10?

[Video ends]

-- End of Video --