

USING ASSESSMENT TO MAKE MEANINGFUL DECISIONS ABOUT TEACHING AND LEARNING



Judy Jablon
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Welcome -
Thanks for Coming!

*I'm Judy Jablon -
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*Thanks to my colleagues at NAEYC for your sponsorship.
And to my colleagues at Early Childhood Investigations: Fran Simon and Andrea Miles.*

POLL - Who has joined us today?



- A. Teacher/Provider/Caregiver/Ass't Teacher
- B. Home Visitor/Family Outreach
- C. Coach/Specialist/Mentor
- D. Consultant/Higher Ed Faculty
- E. Director/Supervisor/Manager/Owner

Today's Topic

Using Assessment to Guide Decisions about Teaching and Learning



Assessment: Answering Questions about Children's Learning



An Important Question: Are Teachers Doing or Using Assessment?



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POLL – Are you/your teachers **doing** or **using** assessment?



- A. Doing it...
- B. Using it...
- C. A bit of both...

Using Assessment *not* Doing Assessment...

- The more teachers use assessment, the less “hit or miss” decisions will be.
 - ▣ Basing decisions on knowledge of individual children is the essence of individualizing.
 - ▣ When decisions are purposeful and intentional, teachers can do an even better job supporting children and families.

A Stance of Persistent Curiosity

Hmmm. Sherelle is working alone.
She is constructing ramps.
She's placed them at two different
inclines.



Observation

- Watching and listening with intention to learn about children
- What we see children do from the outside helps us to ask questions about what children are thinking, feeling, and experiencing on the inside



What Is Happening Here?



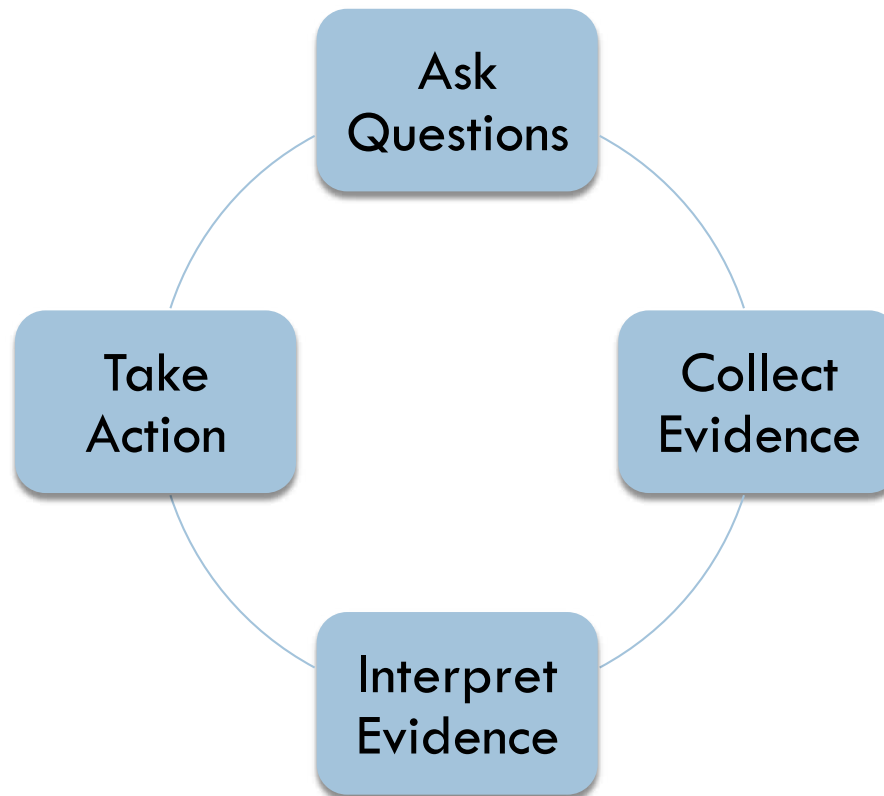
- Imagine you are watching these children building in the block area.
- What do you see?
- What does it make you wonder about?

Assessment: Formative and Summative

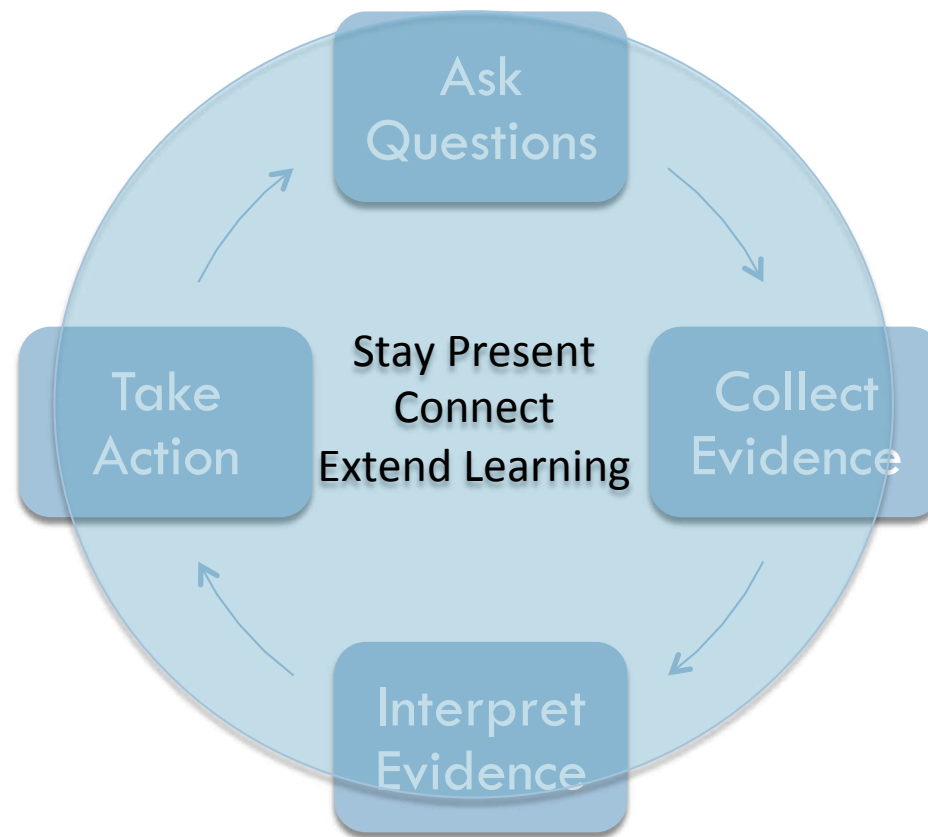


- Formative – assessment for teaching and learning
- Summative – assessment for reporting

The Assessment Cycle



The Assessment Cycle Happens During Powerful Interactions



With a stance of persistent curiosity, Maggie begins a Powerful Interaction, using the assessment cycle.

Hmmm. Sherelle is working alone.
She is constructing ramps.
She's placed them at two different inclines.

Yep.



Hi Sherelle.
May I join you?

I see that you've used long blocks to create 2 different sized ramps.

Assessment Guides Teacher-Child Interactions

The greatest opportunity for learning lies in moments of teacher-child interaction when the teacher crafts learning experiences that stretch children just beyond their current skill level.

Munro, 2008



Using the Assessment Cycle During Powerful Interactions

Ms. Angela with 3-year-old Tallon

- **Ask questions:** What does Tallon know about books and reading?
- **Collect evidence:** As Ms. Angela interacts with Tallon, she watches and listens to find out what he knows and can do.



The Evidence

Tallon reading Dinosaur book

3/2 I join him

T: turning pages of book w/left hand, page by page

Points and says (accurately), "Stegosaurus." Also Ankylosaurus

T: points and says Triceratops

Me: How does the tri... look different from other dinos

T: This one is a triceratops

Me: What do they have that tells you that is what it is?

T: have horns

Let's Think About EVIDENCE -



10/14 Jayda Math Ctr
Puts spiders in ten frame;
counts w/1-1 Corres.

10/14 Jayda Math Ctr
Works w/Ryan
Task: Choose from frames
(5, 10, 15, 20); choose
mat'ls, make sets
J: I'm doing 10. And I'm
gonna use spiders
R: I'm using the worms
J: I like spiders better
Starts placing s in each box
counting 1, 2, etc. to 9

Assessment: Observing and Decision-Making in the Moment

Should I...

- ❑ Introduce a new material, book, or vocabulary word
- ❑ Join the children to model a new skill or strategy
- ❑ Offer a suggestion, information, or guidance
- ❑ Use *mirror talk* as feedback to describe, validate, or demonstrate vocabulary
- ❑ Use open-ended questions to encourage the child to describe, explain, predict, compare and contrast



Use Assessment to Talk about Thinking and Learning

- Use the words “learning” and “thinking”
- Tell children what they’re learning and why
- Ask children what they learned



Use Assessment to Give Effective Feedback

- Specific and descriptive
- Immediate and frequent
- Relates to learning goal/standard
- Relates to effort or successful use of strategies
- Offers guidance
- Not evaluative



Include Children in the Process

- “How do I know what you know and can do?”
- What do you want me to write down so that I can remember about what you know?
- What do you want me to share with your family?



Assessment Informs Planning



Assessment Guides Decisions

- Individual children
- Small groups
- Classroom challenges



Assessment Guides Modifications to the Program



- Adapt the physical environment by moving furniture, changing materials or altering the ambiance
- Adjust the daily schedule and routines
- Plan a learning experience targeted to individual children's interests and needs

Use What You Learn!

- Gaps in curriculum
- Overlooked skills
- Strengths to build on
- Areas to support



Plan for Assessment



- After reviewing data:
 - ▣ What new questions do you have about individuals or curriculum objectives for the entire group?
 - ▣ Plan how, when and where to collect data.
 - ▣ Make recording sheets if necessary.
 - ▣ Decide if you need to provide particular experiences to make sure you're able to get the information you need.

Assessment Fosters Partnerships with Families



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Assessment and Partnerships with Families



- When families recognize that you see and appreciate their child, they appreciate you!
- Staying open-minded and thoughtful helps you better understand families and help you build more useful and productive relationships.
- Powerful Interactions can make children and families feel heard, appreciated and understood.

Assessment Informs Decisions within Districts and Schools

- Collaborate
- Based dialogue on evidence
- Establish habits of using formative assessment evidence



Assessment Enhances Professional Conversations



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Examining Data

- With a partner, review one piece of documentation (evidence, data, anecdote, work sample).
 - ▣ Is it comprehensive?
 - Who, what, where, when, and how
 - ▣ Is it factual?
 - What you saw and/or heard (action verbs)
 - ▣ Is it rich?
 - Dialogue, questions, scaffolds
 - ▣ Are the notes accurately interpreted?
 - Linked to indicators on a formal instrument
 - Do you agree on the interpretations?

Assessment with Dual Language Learners

- It's vital because it strengthens the relationship with the child so that the teacher knows how to extend learning.
- What might the teacher do?
 - ▣ Learn a few key words in each child's language, you can see how children respond.
 - ▣ **Build non-verbal communication skills** (gestures, facial expressions, silly voices, pictures, props).
 - ▣ Fine tune observing skills to pick up on the non-verbal signals coming from the child.
 - ▣ **Slow down and listen to self** — doing too much talk? Sshhhh.

Make Formative Assessment Work!

- Make it a habit.
- Work as a team.



Let's Revisit: Using Assessment Not Doing Assessment Means Teachers Are Decision-Makers

- The more assessment is used, the less “hit or miss” decisions will be.
 - ▣ Basing decisions on knowledge of individual children is the essence of individualizing.
 - ▣ When decisions are purposeful and intentional, teachers can do an even better job supporting children and families.



Your Turn

- What questions do you have?



Thank you Stay in touch...

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