

TEACHER OBSERVATION IN PRESCHOOLS (TOP)

With adaptations for use in the *Tools of the Mind* curriculum evaluation Digital Recording Version For Use with a Tablet Computer

Carol Bilbrey, PhD Elizabeth Vorhaus, MEd Dale C. Farran, PhD Peabody Research Institute Vanderbilt University Nashville, TN 27203 (2007) TOP Manual Adapted for evaluation of the *Tools of the Mind* curriculum Bilbrey, C., Vorhaus, E., & Farran, D. Peabody Research Institute

TEACHER OBSERVATION IN PRESCHOOLS (TOP) (TOP for use with Tablet Computers)

The Teacher Observation in Preschools (TOP) is a system for observing teachers' and assistants' behaviors in preschool classrooms across a day-long visit. The TOP is based on a series of snapshots of the teacher's and assistant's behaviors across a period of time. Each snapshot may be, by itself, an unreliable piece of information, but collectively, they combine to provide a picture of how the teacher and assistant are spending their time in a classroom. The TOP is used in conjunction with the Child Observation in Preschool (COP), a system that focuses on children; the TOP has never been used independently of the COP.

Contact Information:

Dale C. Farran, PhD
Department of Teaching and Learning
Peabody College/Vanderbilt University
Box 0230 GPC
Nashville, TN 37203

Dale.Farran@Vanderbilt.edu
(615) 343-9515

CODING BEHAVIORS

Coding Procedure: Once all the children in a classroom have been identified for the COP observation, begin to code the first sweep for the classroom by observing the teacher and assistant. Observe the teacher's behavior for a count of 1, 2, 3, and then begin scoring. Once scoring has been completed for the teacher, follow the same procedure for the assistant in the classroom. Then locate the first child and observe and score using the COP. Continue the 1, 2, 3, observation for each child in the classroom. When observations of each child have occurred (1 sweep of the members of the classroom), begin a second observation of the teacher and the assistant. If you cannot code a behavior, make a note of the sweep and the problem on the notes program of your tablet or on a separate sheet of paper. Questions regarding codes should be resolved immediately upon return from the field. Do not code when the class is outdoors, in specials (i.e., gym or music), eating meals outside the classroom, or napping. If the teacher/assistant is out of the classroom while the children remain in the classroom, skip that sweep; when the teacher/assistant returns, complete the missed sweep(s), if possible.

Note: This version of the TOP was used in the Experimental Validation of the *Tools of the Mind* PreKindergarten Curriculum study.

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VERBAL & TO WHOM

During the coding interval, look first to see if the teacher/assistant is talking or listening, and to whom. Sometimes both listening and talking can occur within the same 3-second interval. Code whichever occurs first, NOT both.

IS THE TEACHER/ASSISTANT TALKING OR LISTENING?

NO (N) Teacher/Assistant is neither talking nor listening to someone else.

YES (**Y**) Teacher/Assistant is talking.

LISTENING (L) Teacher/Assistant is listening to another person (cell phones, PA system, TVs,

and other electronic sources of sound do NOT count in coding *Listening*).

TO WHOM IS THE TEACHER/ASSISTANT TALKING OR LISTENING?

NO TALK/LISTEN (NT) Not talking or listening to anyone.

CHILD (**C**) One child.

SMALL GROUP (SG) Group of children (more than one).

SMALL GRP W/TCHR (SGT) Group of children and another teacher or assistant.

WHOLE GROUP (WG) 75% or more of the class.

WHOLE GRP W/TCHR (WGT) 75% or more of the class and another teacher or assistant.

SELF (S) Talking to self (includes talking on cell phone).

PARENT (P) Parent.

TEACHER (T) Teacher or assistant.

EXTERNAL ADULT (EA) Adult not usually in the classroom, not including parents (may

include other staff members such as the custodian,

director/principal, therapist, etc.).

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SCHEDULE

This is not necessarily the teacher's posted schedule. Rather, this is a description of types of learning settings one would find in most preschool classrooms. Thus, this category can be used across many varieties of curricula. The observer should be familiar with the lesson plan for the day and be able to recognize and record the appropriate component. The teacher's posted schedule is the beginning point; the schedule as enacted may be different. The same schedule code continues until 75% of the children have begun to do something different.

WHOLE GROUP (WG)

Whole groups occur when the entire group is meeting together and some form of content is being discussed. If children are gradually taken out of the group for toileting and hand washing, continue to code WG until 75% of the children have moved away from WG. If half the children are removed from the classroom for another activity (including toileting at a hallway bathroom), the remaining children constitute the whole group.

SMALL GROUPS (SG)

Only code SG if the students are working in small groups that are facilitated by an adult and/or are assigned by an adult, an adult calls specific children over to participate and the activity is not optional. The adult may have assigned one or more children to an area to work on specific tasks or with specific materials. All children in the room must be expected to be working in small groups for this code to be used.

CENTERS (C)

Center time (sometimes called "Activity Time" or "Free Play") is characterized by children having relatively more freedom about what they do and where they go, although teachers may place limitations on children's choices. Thus, centers can be tables where children have a limited number of choices about what they can do (puzzles, journals) or center time can be freer play, during which children are allowed to move about the classroom freely. Another type of center time can be seen when children are assigned to areas but have complete freedom to choose what they do in that given center.

MAKE BELIEVE PLAY (MBP)

Make believe play is when the individual centers are set up to align with a theme and the children are expected to enact roles and scenarios according to that theme. Children can use roles to cross center boundaries and continue the scenarios in different areas of the classroom. (Children may not be carrying out the roles very well or at all. What is important for coding MBP is the expectation that children will carry out roles connected to the classroom theme.)

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COMBINATION OF SMALL GROUP AND CENTERS (SGC)

If small group(s) and center time are simultaneously occurring in the classroom, then code SGC. Confusion could occur when there are not enough adults in a classroom to have one for every small group. If a group of children has been assigned a specific activity to complete without adult supervision and the other children are in adult-led groups, code SG, not SGC. SGC is NOT coded for the times during centers when a teacher may sit in a certain center to facilitate activities. Sometimes assistants are assigned one area to monitor and even lead activities while the teacher is in another area. This usually is NOT coded SGC.

TRANSITION (T)

Code T if the sweep takes place during a transition time, such as brushing teeth, lining up, or washing hands. In the case of gradual transitions (such as center time to another part of the day), 75% or more of the class must be transitioning for the sweep to be coded as such. Transitions may also begin when an activity has clearly ended (e.g., storytime) and the next activity has not yet begun. If half of the class transitions to the restroom in the hall and the other half remains in the room, continue to code in the classroom. If all of the students leave the classroom, code until the teacher and students leave the classroom; resume coding when the teacher and students re-enter the classroom.

TRANSITION WITH INSTRUCTION (TI)

Code TI if the teacher is leading an activity anytime during a transition, such as a fingerplay, singing a song while waiting to leave classroom, making patterns with children (girl, girl, boy) in line, pretending to be an animal while moving from activity to activity, or having children count children waiting in line. To be coded TI, however, the expectation has to be that 75% or more of the class is supposed to be participating. If the teacher is doing fingerplays with the small group of children who have already assembled at the door, this is not TI until 75% of the children are involved.

For both T and TI, the code relates only to the Schedule and does not affect what else you code for the teacher or assistant's behavior. The teacher and assistant can be engaged in a variety of activities during T and TI, including instruction.

OTHER (O)

Code O if the activity is something else not listed, and describe the activity. Nap/rest times that occur with the light on and during which children are able to get a book and read on their mats are coded as O. (If an observer encounters something in the schedule that he/she does not know how to classify, code O and write down a detailed description for later decision making. Questions regarding codes should be resolved immediately upon returning from the field).

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MEAL TIME (MT)

Mealtime is coded if students eat in their room, including snack time. Code MT as soon as the students have started to eat or to pass the food (in the case of many Head Start classrooms). If students are sitting at their places but not yet allowed to eat (or the food has not been passed out), the appropriate Schedule code is *Transition*.

Coding Notes:

- If children are sitting at tables doing different activities at each table and an adult is involved, code the schedule as SG.
- If the children are at tables and they are all doing the same worksheet and the teacher is monitoring the work, code the schedule as WG. (Graphics Practice in *Tools* is an example.)
- For *Tools of the Mind* Play Planning, code the activity as SG if each group (or most groups) is receiving help from the teachers.
- If MBP and centers are occurring during the same time, code the schedule as the grouping that has the most centers involved. If a classroom is doing half MBP centers and half free choice centers, code MBP as schedule.
- Code only one classroom sweep during mealtime in the classroom. This would mean coding the entire class one sweep during breakfast and one sweep during lunch if the meals occur in the classroom.

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PROXIMITY

Proximity describes who is near the teacher/assistant regardless of whether they are interacting. Proximity includes anyone within 3 feet of the teacher/assistant, or approximately an adult-arm's reach. If the teacher/assistant is in a defined area of the room (enclosed on 3 sides), anyone else in that area (e.g., the library corner) would be coded as in proximity.

TEACHER (T)

Teacher/assistant is within 3 feet of an adult (e.g., other teachers/assistants, parent visitors, "grannies," etc.) and no children are within 3 feet.

CHILD (C)

Teacher/assistant is near a single child (no other child within 3 feet).

CHILD ADULT (CT)

Teacher/assistant is near a single child and another adult.

**This is coded as SGT on the tablet computer version of the TOP used in the *Tools* project.

SMALL GROUP (SG)

Teacher/assistant is within 3 feet of a small group of children (at least 2 children).

SMALL GROUP ADULT (SGT)

Teacher/assistant is within 3 feet of a small group of children and another adult.

WHOLE GROUP (WG)

Teacher/assistant is with the whole group. (75% or more of the group of children constitutes *whole group*.)

WHOLE GROUP ADULT (WGT)

Teacher/assistant is with the whole group and another adult.

SELF (S)

Teacher/assistant is alone or set apart from others. Reaching around 3 feet, the teacher/assistant could not touch anyone else. Proximity to *Self* is also coded when a teacher/assistant is leading a whole group activity and is standing behind a barrier such as a podium or bookshelf.

Coding Notes:

- If the teacher/assistant is in an open area, proximity includes anyone within 3 feet of the teacher/assistant.
- Remember to look around the teacher/assistant. For example, if a teacher/assistant is in a center area, code the teacher as in proximity to the children in that center, even if the children are not necessarily within an arm's reach.

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- If ALL children are seated at desks or tables and *could* form an unbroken chain by touching one another, and the teacher/assistant is within an arm's reach of the whole group, code WG.
- Attend carefully to the presence or absence of the assistant during whole group instruction. When the assistant is not there, the teacher is in proximity to the whole group; when the assistant is there, code WGT for Proximity for both teacher and assistant.

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TASK

This category captures the task/activity with which the teacher/assistant is engaged. Code teacher independently of what the children are doing. The emphasis is on what the teacher/assistant is enacting.

INSTRUCTION (I)

In a preschool classroom, instruction is broadly defined. It involves any learning activity during which the teacher is interacting with a child or children. Instruction could involve activities that are typically considered academic (e.g., math or literacy), as well as activities in which the focus is art, music, puzzles, or blocks. Instruction also occurs without materials, as in a discussion of why children should be kind to each other. Level of engagement and the extent and type of direct teaching going on are coded separately. When Instruction is coded, codes for Material and Focus MUST be entered as well in order to describe the learning activity. If the assistant is actively participating in an activity led by the teacher (e.g., singing the song, doing the hand motions), code the assistant as instructing.

ASSESSMENT (AT)

Teacher/assistant is administering an assessment or test. Assessment includes taking anecdotal notes about students, during which the teacher may be observing but not directly interacting with the children. When *Assessment* is coded, Material and Focus MUST be coded as well to describe the content of the assessment.

ADMINISTRATIVE (AD)

Teacher/assistant is engaged in an activity that is required by the school (paperwork, attendance, speaking to a parent, or talking on the phone for a school-related reason). Teacher/assistant checking school or system website for e-mail alerts would also be AD.

MANAGERIAL (MA)

Teacher/assistant is engaged in an activity that is required to run a classroom. The teacher must be actively engaged. Examples include lining children up, organizing children to move from one activity to another, passing out materials, and describing what children are going to do in centers. For example, if the teacher asks the class to turn around so everyone can see or tells the class to change centers or small groups, Task would be coded as MA. MA is coded instead of *Instruction* if the teacher is passing out materials but has not really started to engage children in focusing on them.

MONITOR (MO)

Teacher/assistant passively observes children during transition time, small group, whole group, or center time. Teacher/assistant is not usually attending to materials (which would be coded MA) but scanning the room to determine what children are doing. Assistant may be sitting at the edge of a group of children scanning for behavioral problems.

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BEHAVIOR APPROVING (BA)

Teacher/assistant use approving verbal comments, facial expressions, or a physical contact with the children. These include comments of approval, verbal praise, and affection such as, "I like the way you are sitting," "Kiss your brain," or "Pat yourself on the back." Approving facial expressions can include whenever the teacher smiles, winks, or nods at one or more children in response to behaviors. This is a code for behavior approving not a general social interaction code. Behavior approving is used to reinforce a particular behavior; it says to the child that whatever he or she is doing, the teacher wants it to continue or approves of it. Behavior approving can also be used in addressing the whole class, e.g., "I like the way everyone has worked hard this morning." (Hugging a child as the child enters the room during the morning would be coded *Social*.)

BEHAVIOR DISAPPROVING (BD)

Teacher/assistant use disapproving facial expressions, verbal comments, tone of voice, and/or physical contact with children. Disapproving facial expressions could include frowning, grimacing, side-to-side head-shaking, gesturing etc. Verbal comments include yelling, scolding, berating or making fun of the child, and threats (if ...then statements threatening to take away a privilege or issue a punishment). Verbal comments do not have to be negative; as long as the intent is to change the child's behavior, code BD. The teacher or assistant's intention is to say to the child, "I want you to do something different from what you are doing." If the teacher/assistant forcibly holds a child, grabs, hits, shakes, or pushes a child into position, code BD. *Behavior Disapproving* should be distinguished from *Managing*; when teachers tell the whole group "All eyes on me" or "Criss-cross applesauce," *Managing* is coded. However, if the teacher begins to berate the whole group for poor behavior, code BD.

PERSONAL/CARE (PC)

Teacher/assistant performs personal care tasks for children. These tasks can include tying shoes, brushing teeth, fixing clothes, and helping with nose-blowing. PC also includes supervising children engaged in a personal care activity. At mealtime *Personal Care* is coded when teachers are serving food and assisting children in opening their food.

SOCIAL (SOC)

The *Social* code is used for personal conversation or physical contact that has no learning content. *Social* may include conversations about home life, costumes at Halloween, family, etc. if the observer judges the conversation to be spontaneous and without links to the curriculum. SOC can be difficult to distinguish from *Instruction*. SOC can include highly valuable interactions, but social interactions tend to be less purposeful and more personal. Typically, if both Material and Focus can be coded, Task should be coded as *Instruction*. If both Material and Focus cannot be coded, Task may be coded SOC. Social interactions can occur between two adults (e.g., "What did you see on TV last night?" or "Where are you going after work?") or between an adult and a child (e.g., "Did your Mommy get you those new shoes?" or "I am so happy to see you!").

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NONE (N)

Teacher/assistant is not doing anything or doing something completely unrelated to the class (e.g., personal conversation on a cell phone, visiting the restroom, checking personal e-mail). If teachers are eating their own lunch and not monitoring children, code N. If teachers are working a puzzle themselves and not involving children, code N.

Coding Notes:

- Assessment does not include scaffolding individual children during *Tools of the Mind* Play Planning; this would be coded as *Instruction*.
- If a child is redirected individually in order to stop a behavior (e.g., "Kyle, turn around so you can see"), the comment is coded BD. However, if the teacher is making a similar statement to the whole group in order to tell the class where to look or how to proceed, the comment would be coded MA. The teacher can, however, make disapproving comments to the entire class, which would be coded BD.

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LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION

Level of instruction describes the instruction that is occurring at the moment. The levels are dependent on the type of interactions occurring. When *Instruction* or *Assessment* has been coded, Level of Instruction MAY NOT be coded 0.

NONE (0)

The teacher/assistant is not instructing or assessing children. Level of Instruction is coded 0 when *Administrative*, *Managing*, *Monitoring*, *Personal Care*, *Behavior Approving*, *Behavior Disapproving*, *Social*, or *None* has been coded under Task.

LOW LEVEL INSTRUCTION (1)

There is a low level of instructional demand. The teacher could be interacting with the materials but the observer cannot recognize the intent to teach a specific academic skill. Developmental demands of fine motor and gross motor skills such as cutting with scissors, working puzzles, and building using blocks would be coded as 1. Other examples include playing a CD of songs and singing songs that do not have instructional content.

BASIC SKILLS INSTRUCTION (2)

The focus is on learning specific skills such as counting or recognizing letters. In level-2 instruction, the correct answer is predetermined and the goal is to have the children learn the correct response/answer, or children may have no opportunity to respond. The teacher/assistant can be directly instructing children, reading a story, asking close-ended questions about a story, singing songs or doing word plays that involve the children practicing specific skills, or asking low level questions (e.g., "What letter is this?").

SOME INFERENTIAL LEARNING (3)

Teacher/assistant is interacting with children using at least some open-ended questions in which the answer is not predetermined. The teacher may be asking a mix of closed-ended and open-ended questions (what, when, why, or how) and allowing children to participate. For example, if the teacher poses an open-ended question but does not give children time to answer, it is not a genuine question and her behavior would be coded as level 2 not 3. It is important to wait an extra second or two to see if the teacher is genuinely waiting for children to respond before deciding between a code of 2 or 3.

HIGH INFERENTIAL LEARNING (4)

Teacher/assistant is interacting with children in exploration of a topic using inferential, open-ended questioning that has several turns. Children are participating, sharing information, and directly interacting with the teacher and with each other. The teacher may be purposely making connections between the information being taught and the children's outside world, or between one set of experiences and another (e.g., a book read in class, previously). Questioning and discussion by children and the teacher make links among learning contents for the child, and the child is actively involved in constructing the links.

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MATERIAL

This code is a classification of the material of the activity with which the teacher/assistant is engaged. It is NOT a code of the learning focus. Material also captures the content of the lesson a teacher may be teaching when children do not have their own materials (e.g., teacher is reading a book, or the teacher and children are doing math finger plays).

MATH (M)

Math materials are defined as materials that were specifically designed to facilitate only the teaching and learning of math (number, comparing number, operations, shape, comparing shapes, composing shapes, spatial reasoning, measurement, patterning, classification). These materials are typically found in instructional material catalogs or are made by teachers to aid in math instruction.

- <u>Numbers</u>: counters, counting wands, counting jars, abacuses, unifix cubes, plastic/magnetic numbers, number stamps, any material that associates numeral to quantity (e.g., number cards and loose objects, peg number boards, counting cakes, two-part number match-up puzzles), calculators, fraction circles, number lines, hundreds boards, materials/worksheets that require quantity comparison (more/less), place value units, real or pretend money, calendars (considered math materials because they involve a sequence of numbers)
- <u>Shapes</u>: attribute blocks, geometric solids, magnetic shapes, foam shapes (not blocks), shape sorters, shape cards, tangrams, geoboards, shape stencils
- <u>Measurement</u> (including length, volume, weight, area, and time): balance scales, rulers, yardsticks, measuring cups, measuring tapes, calendars, clocks, sand timers, thermometers, inch cubes, materials used to compare sizes (e.g., nesting cups, sequenced graduated cylinders, stacking rings)
- Patterning: patterning materials such as pattern strips or tags, pattern blocks, and cutouts
- Classification/Sorting: collections for sorting and classification (e.g., keys, buttons, colored tiles)
- Some materials may be listed under one heading but used for other skills (e.g., inch cubes used for counting, patterning, or measurement).

LITERACY (L)

Materials related to reading/writing print, vocabulary, and comprehension or other materials made by teachers to aid in literacy instruction.

- <u>Reading</u>: books, sequencing cards that tell a story, magnetic alphabet letters, letter stamps, letter playdough cutters, floating foam letters, name-recognition materials (name tags, name cards), picture-recognition materials (e.g., pictures of the daily schedule)
- Writing: recording tools (e.g., pencils, markers, white board, letter and numeral stencils)
- Other: puppets (finger-size and larger), flannel boards

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SCIENCE (SC)

Materials related to exploring physical science and nature or other materials made by teachers to aid in science instruction.

- magnifying glasses, microscopes, binoculars, nature collections (seashells, stones, leaves, etc.), transparent Plexiglas color paddles, mystery bags/feely boxes, seeds, plants, care of classroom pets, weather aprons, science photo cards (e.g., life cycle sequencing cards, science photo library), discovery bottles (filled with various liquids), magnets, sink/float materials, flashlights, prisms, mirrors, simple machines (levers, pulleys, gears, inclined planes, pendulums, rack & pinion gears, gear trains), plastic stretch/collapse tubes, stethoscopes (real), butterfly habitats, sand/water/beans/rice and all sensory materials (In the sand/water/sensory table are often multiple materials (e.g., measurers, trucks, figures). If the child is primarily playing with these materials, code them instead of *Science*.)
- Food is also considered to be a science material when used in a learning context (e.g., counting or talking about food groups), including during mealtimes if the teacher/assistant begins to use the food to teach a science lesson.

SOCIAL STUDIES (SS)

Materials related to understanding people, emotions, community helpers, globes, and maps. Often, SS Material and Focus are coded the same because the discussions do not involve artifacts.

- Includes discussions about empathy, honesty and other character content, including discussions of how to behave in class and why (e.g., why it is a good thing not to hit your neighbor).
- Does NOT include a reminder of classroom rules unless there is a discussion of the reasons for the rules.
- Circle time conversations that involve sharing personal information
- However, if children are hearing a book read to them about community helpers, code L for Material (but SS for learning Focus). If teachers are discussing the roles of various characters (e.g., cashiers, waiters, doctors) prior to make believe play, code SS. However, if teachers are demonstrating and modeling how to act like one of the roles, code D for Material (but SS for learning Focus).

TOYS & GAMES (T)

Materials that are toys or related to play or fine motor activity.

- <u>Games</u>: all commercial games, including board games, card games, playing cards (52 card deck) (code teacher-made games according to instructional content)
- Puzzles: all puzzles, including self-correcting, floor puzzles, etc.
- Blocks: unit blocks, LEGOS, hollow blocks, Lincoln Logs, building manipulatives of all types
- <u>Nonstandard Measuring</u>: includes nonstandard measurement tools such as string, Popsicle sticks, shoes, and materials for filling/dumping/pouring (e.g., cups, buckets, funnels at the sand/water table)
- <u>Fine Motor</u>: bead stringing, lacing, pegboards, clothespins, locks and keys, sewing, lockboxes, stickers
- Other: woodworking, pretend animals, people, road signs, vehicles, Mr. Potato Head, etc.

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ART (A)

Materials related to the arts.

• <u>Visual Art</u>: crayons, chalk, paint brushes, playdough, clay, scissors, collage materials, easel painting, hole punches, tape, glue, pipe cleaners, wire, discussion/admiration of art posters (does not include recording tools, such as pencils and markers, which are coded L)

MUSIC/MOVEMENT (M/M)

- <u>Music</u>: singing, musical instruments (sticks, sand blocks, drums, cymbals, tambourines, maracas, tone blocks), dance props (streamers, scarves), music tapes/CDs, dancing to music
- Fingerplays to Music: *Tools of the Mind* Freeze Games and partner fingerplays
- <u>Gross Motor</u>: walking cans, balance boards, balance beams, beanbag toss, yoga, "shaking the wiggles out", "going on a bear hunt" (with no music), any materials/ activities relating to large muscle movement and control in the classroom, hallway, or gym (outside time is not coded)

DRAMATIC (D)

Materials relating to pretend (fantasy) play.

• Clothes, hats, play phones, baby dolls, action figures, figurines, fake food, fake utensils, doll houses, dress-up clothes, pretend stoves/refrigerators, cash registers, costumes (When items such as blocks are used as symbolic play materials, code the materials as *Toy*; capture the dramatic play under learning Focus.)

COMPUTER (C)

Activities conducted on computers, SMART Boards/Tables, or iPads are coded C.

WORKSHEET (W)

A worksheet is any prepared piece of paper that includes or implies instructions about what to do. It includes cut and paste worksheets as well as coloring book pages.

TV/VIDEO (TV)

Includes any inanimate source of sound, including PA systems, televisions, CD players, audio tapes or CDs in the listening center (If the teacher has other materials, such as a book, code that as the material, even if also accompanied by music or a story from a CD player.)

NONE (N)

No activity with academic/learning-related materials. Cannot be coded if *Instruction* or *Assessment* has been coded under Type Task, but must be coded for all others.

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CAN'T CODE (CC)

If an observer encounters materials/content that he/she does not know how to classify, code CC and write down a detailed description in note section for later decision making. Questions regarding codes should be resolved immediately upon return from the field.

Coding Notes:

- Materials are materials and always coded the same multiple learning foci may be seen with the same materials. These foci do not change the Material code.
- If more than one material is being used, code the most essential material. Materials are the mechanism for delivering the learning focus. With multiple materials, decide the primary mechanism delivering the learning.
- In cases without tangible materials, Material and Focus are coded the same.

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FOCUS

These capture the learning content of the teacher or assistant's activity. Materials can be used to learn many different things. In this coding category, capture the intent or content focus of the learning regardless of the materials being used. Material and Focus are independent of each other. Just because a teacher/assistant has material of a certain type does not mean that he or she will be using it a certain way. Focus captures the content of the teacher's instruction. For example, if a teacher has a book (coded as a *Literacy* material), but is using it to teach counting the number of pages, or the book is about numerals, then the Focus code would be *Math*.

Learning focus also can occur without materials, as when the teacher initiates a discussion of the reasons people feel they way they do (emotions), or if the teacher is leading a discussion about a book read the day before. In cases without tangible materials, Material and Focus are coded the same.

LANGUAGE ARTS (LA) (Code-based)

Code LA if the learning focus is on learning letter sounds and names and/or writing and spelling.

- recognizing alphabet
- practicing letter sounds
- writing single letters, not words or connected text
- spelling
- naming numerals without reference to their quantitative characteristics
- naming shapes with no discussion of definitional aspects of the shape

READING (R)

Code R if the focus is on connected text with meaning.

- browsing through a book or magazine
- storytelling
- scaffolding reading or pretend reading
- reading aloud
- having the class listen to a recorded story while illustrating with a book
- listening to story read by child

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LITERACY (L)

Code L if the focus is literacy-related (i.e., LA and R occurring together).

- scaffolding invented writing or tracing
- taking dictation or scaffolding the writing of text with meaning
- illustrating a self-created book
- name writing or recognizing the names of other children in the class
- writing related to thematic play (e.g., Play Planning in *Tools of the Mind*)
- conversations and communication for the purpose of language development (e.g., Share the News in *Tools of the Mind*)
- teaching concepts of print such as the author, illustrator, front and back of a book

MATH (M)

Code M if the focus is math-related (number, comparing number, operations, shape, comparing shapes, composing shapes, spatial reasoning, measurement, patterning, classification).

- identifying numbers and quantity
- writing or tracing numbers (but only when accompanied by an understanding of quantity associated with the number)
- sequencing numbers
- adding and subtracting
- drawing or tracing shapes

SCIENCE (SC)

Code SC if the focus is science-related (related to exploring physical science and nature).

- color mixing with colored water or paint
- talking about or exploring senses

SOCIAL STUDIES (SS)

Code SS if the focus is social studies (related to understanding people, history, character, social/behavioral skills and emotions).

- discussions about empathy, honesty and other character content, including discussions of how to behave in class and why (e.g., why it is a good thing not to hit your neighbor)
- circle time conversations that involve sharing personal information
- Pledge of Allegiance or School Pledge

DRAMA (D)

Code D if the focus is drama related.

- roles are being described or enacted
- scenarios are being developed
- play revolves around a specific theme; theme is discussed in terms of roles involved
- teacher takes part in make believe play with children at centers

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OTHER (O)

Code O if the focus is on anything other than language arts, reading, literacy, math, science, social studies, or drama. Typically, the *Other* code involves playing with toys (building with blocks, puzzles, matching, etc.) or doing an art or music activity.

NONE (N)

Code N if Material code is None.

Coding Notes:

- When teachers are watching a video/TV with the children, Focus is coded according to the content if it is an educational program and coded O if it does not have a learning focus.
- Identifying, writing, or tracing numerals in the absence of information about the mathematical nature of the numbers is not coded as *Math*. Code recognizing the shape of numbers as *Language Arts* (code-based).
- In *Tools of the Mind*, the activities Remember & Replicate and Patterning are coded as *Math*.

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TONE/AFFECT

This code captures the tone/affect of the teacher/assistant. The code reflects the positive or negative feel of the classroom and the interaction of the teacher/assistant with the children during the 3-second observation.

VIBRANT (V)

Teacher/assistant is having a strong positive interaction with the children. Teacher/assistant is smiling and/or laughing with the children. Teacher/assistant exhibits genuine excitement about teaching.

PLEASANT (P)

Teacher/assistant is having a positive interaction with the students. He/she shows a genuine interest and attention to the child and/or activity. The teacher/assistant nonverbally communicates a positive acknowledgement or appreciation of the children's efforts (looking directly at the child, eyebrows up, nodding, leaning forward toward the child, etc.).

FLAT (F)

The teacher/assistant is neutral and shows no expression. He/she may be involved in the activity but does not show indications of affect regarding that activity.

NEGATIVE (N)

Teacher/assistant is looking displeased and is exhibiting annoyance or disappointment (frowning, headshaking, negative gestures, eye rolling, sighing etc.). The teacher may use mild threats to establish control (e.g., "quiet or you will lose recess," "I'll put you in time out").

EXTREME NEGATIVE (EN)

Teacher/assistant is strongly negative with his or her verbal and/or physical approach to the children. Teacher/assistant may be using sarcasm toward a child, yelling at children, or insulting them. Teacher/assistant may be physically moving children from place to place by dragging or pulling (rather than guiding).

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Peabody Research Institute

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TOP CODING FOR SPECIFIC TOOLS CURRICULUM SITUATIONS

Share the News and Tell Your Neighbor during Story Labs

Material: *Literacy*

Focus: Literacy (since we cannot know if the children are actually talking about the topic assigned)

** Soc/Soc is coded only for conversations outside the context of instruction

Play Planning - Color Wheel

Task: MA when the teacher is only asking a child to choose a center (picking a clothes pin) but not talking about what role the child will play

Teacher and student discussing what role the child will take in the center

Material: *Literacy* Focus: *Drama*

Social Studies if teacher is talking about the role in general (e.g., what cashiers do, generally)

Teacher asks child to draw a picture or write name on his or her play plan

Material: *Literacy* Focus: *Literacy*

Graphics Practice

Material: *Literacy*

Focus: Other unless it is one of three clear content areas – letters, shapes, or numbers

Mystery Question

Material: *Literacy* if the question is in text form

Math if there are only shapes and patterns visible

Focus: Varies with question topic (e.g., patterns – *Math*; color – *Science*)

Weather Graphing

Material: *Math* Focus: *Math*

Science if discussion turns to seasons or weather properties

Reviewing Schedule for the Day

Material: *Literacy* Focus: *Social Studies*

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Math if focus changes to sequencing

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Message of the Day

Material: *Literacy*

Focus: *Literacy* if focusing on lines or message *Language Arts* if pointing out the letters

I Have Who Has Game

Material: Varies with card content (colors – *Science*; numbers – *Math*; children's names – *Literacy*)

Focus: Same as Material

Play Practice

Material: *Drama*Focus: *Social Studies*

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TOP coding sheet as it appears on tablet. Drop down menus have code letters.

No	N o T alk	WG	Teacher	Instruction	0 none	M ath	Literacy	V ibrant
Yes	Child	SG	Child	AssessT	1 low	Literacy	L ang A rts	Pleasant
Listen	Sm Grp	Centers	SG	MA nage	2 skills	SC ience	Reading	F lat
	SGT	SGC	SGT	B ehavior	3 inf	S oc S tudies	W riting	N egative
	W h G rp	Transition	WG	A pproving	4 hi inf	T oy	M ath	E xtreme N eg
	WGT	TInstruction	WGT	D issapp.		A rt	SC ience	
	S elf	M eal T ime	S elf	Pers/ Care		Music/Move	S oc S tudies	
	P arent	Other	CT	MO nitor		D ramatic	Dr ama	
	Teacher			AD min		Computer	O ther	
	Ext Adlt			SOC ial		Worksheet	None	
				N one		TV / video		
						None		

None Can't Code

Time	SW	Verbal	To Whom	Schedule	Prox	Task	Level of Instrct.	Materials	Focus	Tone Affect
	1									
	2									
	3									
	4									
	5									
	6									
	7									
	8									
	9									
	10									
	11									
	12									
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	19									
	20									