

ECERS-3: Learning Activities

ITEM 17: FINE MOTOR

Question: Where should dominoes be used and stored?

Answer: Dominoes are fine motor materials when used for non-building activities such as when lined up end-to-end to knock over. They are math materials if used for counting games. They are block materials only when used for the purpose of block building and construction. This answer applies only to dominoes greater than 2-2 inches in size. Teachers should observe to see how children play with materials and ask the question, “What is the purpose of the play?”

Question: When gears are difficult to take off a toy, is that related to accessibility?

Answer: Difficult gears are not related to accessibility.

- Accessibility (page 10) means that children can reach and use materials.
- Individualized teaching (page 11) relates to whether a toy meets the learning needs of individual children. Gears may be a toy that meets the needs of some children and not others. When a child has difficulty removing a gear, and a teacher shows him/her how to do it, this would be an example of individualized support/teaching. The ECERS-3 notes state that staff might encourage a 4 or 5-year-old to use smaller fine motor materials or do tasks that are more complex.
- In addition, see Subscale 29 - Individualized teaching and learning on page 71. At 3.4, “most” activities must be right for children’s ages and abilities, and children should not show frustration, even if they are a challenge. “Note that *most* does not require that all materials are appropriate, and it is expected that there will be a range of materials in any classroom to meet varying needs and interests.” (Subscale 29, Item 3.3, 3.4, 5.3, and 7.1).

Question: Where should ramps, pulleys, and gears be stored?

Answer: The purpose of a ramp with a conveyer belt, a pulley with a hook, and gears that turn the inner shaft to move the wooden shelf outward are for science. These are considered simple machines used in STEM curriculum. If teachers model how to use these with young children (e.g., to move objects along the conveyer belt, to hook objects and pull them up with the pulley, and slide the shelf in and out,) then children will experiment and play with the materials as science objects.

Since staff should discuss these as science objects, they should be stored and used in the science area. While a child may carry one or more of these to the block area and use them for building purposes, they should be stored in the science area.

Like all materials, it depends on how children play. It also depends on the way staff facilitate and encourage engagement, conversation, and understanding of the materials. Staff should recognize these objects as ramps, pulleys, and gears, and therefore facilitate discussion about the objects in the science area.

Question: Are cookie cutters OK with playdough?

Answer: ECERS-3 does not exclude cookie cutters as part of a group of other types of tools. Page 48 introduces art materials, such as playdough with tools, and page 46 includes art materials as fine motor materials.

Question: Would rolling pins, rolling cutters, tools which look like cement smoothers and items which make an imprint in play dough be allowable in the art center and count as tools in one of the five categories noted as required for art materials?

Answer: Playdough is an activity that meets the requirements for both fine motor and art. If a group of children is playing with playdough and tools, and a staff member is engaged in their play, credit is given for Item 17 (Fine Motor) and Item 18 (Art).

For art, programs need items from five categories. One of those categories is tools. The items described in your email is a good example of tools to work with playdough.

Question: Can items count for fine motor materials also earn credit as a math material?

Answer: Yes, items may be counted as math materials and fine motor materials as long as the items challenge children's fine motor skills.

Question: Are books required in the art area?

Answer: Books are not required in the art area. Staff may use books to introduce artists, show examples of work, and facilitate language learning in preparation for or during art activities. When present, books must enhance creative art activities and not distract from them or interfere with space.

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ITEM 20: BLOCKS

Question: What is required to make a block area a block interest center?

Answer: It will help to review the definition of “interest center” on page 10. Additional information is included on page 52 for blocks. Ample space must be present for at least three children to build block structures. Additional materials beyond the three required accessories require space that does not interfere with the three children’s construction activities.

indicators 3.2, 5.2, and 5.3 require that teachers review the amount of space needed for the structures children make. Space needed will differ based on the age group, developmental needs, and from classroom to classroom depending on how the area is set up and used.

For Item 20, Indicator 5.1 focuses on space, the number of blocks needed, and the three required types of accessories.

For Item 20, Indicator 5.3 defines whether or not the area meets the definition of an interest center. All materials stored in the area must enhance block play. Therefore, while books may be introduced or brought over to the center, books may not be stored in the center area.

Question: What types of blocks are needed?

Answer: ECERS-3 lists what is needed on page 52. Blocks should include unit blocks, large hollow blocks (cardboard blocks are considered hollow), and accessories. Accessories may include small people, animals, or vehicles. The size of the cars may interfere with block play if they are too big. Road signs, fences, and small buildings may be included, but are not required. Examples of small buildings we often see are hollow garage-type accessories.

Farms or castles typically take up space and interfere with block play. Block play should be the primary focus. The accessories present should support block play. Blocks, by definition, do not lock, so large waffle-type blocks and Legos should not be stored in the block area.

All commercially purchased blocks must be larger than 2 by 2 inches and used for the purpose of block building. Interlocking blocks, on the other hand, or those smaller than 2 by 2 inches belong in the fine motor area.

Question: How many blocks are needed and what else should be considered?

Answer: Since ECERS-3 does not provide a checklist for materials, space, or interactions, consider the guidelines on page 52 of the book and the notes for 3.1 and 5.1. The notes state that to determine the number of blocks, teachers should consider “the developmental abilities of the children in the group.

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Younger preschoolers may need fewer blocks than older preschoolers who are able to build more extensive structures – tall and complex buildings or wide, far-reaching road systems.”

When children run out of blocks while they are building, this is a sign that more blocks are needed. The space must encourage complex play – where children can use their imagination and physical coordination to build “sizable independent structures at the same time” (see notes at 5.3).” Since three children must be able to build extensive structures, programs should invest in ample materials.

Teachers should consider whether specific children in a specific classroom are able to access materials, and whether there is enough space and plenty of blocks present (meaning children do not run out) to support complex block play.

The goal is for coaches to encourage teachers to think about supporting rich and challenging block play so that development and learning are strengthened. Teachers can watch children at play to determine if the structures they build are complex and whether there are plenty of blocks present to support this kind of play.

Question: May hollow blocks be made of cardboard?

Answer: The definition of hollow blocks is on page 52. “Large hollow blocks allow children to build larger structures, and can be made of wood, cardboard, or plastic.”

Question: Where should tree blocks (those made from parts of branches) be stored and used?

Answer: Teachers should consider the way they model the use of tree blocks and how children actually play with them. For tree blocks, if larger than 2 by 2 inches and when used for building/construction purposes, these may be stored in the block area. However, if these blocks are placed in a bowl or container and children inspect them with magnifying glasses, draw them, or use them to explore the physical properties of trees, they should be stored in the science area.

Question: Should train tracks be stored and used in the block area?

Answer: Train tracks should be considered a fine motor activity rather than a block accessory. Train tracks require a great deal of space and generally interfere with complex block building. When stored with blocks, they detract from needed space while children play with blocks. Tracks should be stored in fine motor or a separate area.

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Question: Do Duplo cars belong in the block area? What if children bring the cars over to the block area during free play time?

Answer: If a child brings a Duplo car over to the block center to build a garage or structure for it, this fits the purpose of block building. However, brick-type, interlocking blocks (e.g., Legos, Duplo, and similar items manufactured from commercial companies) serve the purpose of fitting pieces together (e.g., matching the raised pegs with corresponding holes in adjacent brick-blocks). Therefore, interlocking materials like bristle blocks, waffle blocks, or spider-type blocks should be stored with fine-motor materials.

The goal of block play is for children to build complex structures. Harriet Johnson (Bank Street School, 1920) described seven stages of block play. These include carrying, stacking, bridge building, creating enclosures, patterns and symmetry, early representational structures, and later complex representational structures. Block play also increases creativity, problem solving, communication, and collaboration – 21st-century skills.

Vocabulary children learn during block play includes:

- Math concept words (e.g., first, second, third..., same, different, less, more, small, large, bigger, smaller, all, none)
- Position words (e.g., above, below, beside, behind, front, back, inside, next to, outside)
- Descriptive words (e.g., open, closed, balance, center, tall, short, bridge, etc.)
- Shape words (e.g., square, circle, triangle, cube, cylinder, tube, etc.)

ECERS-3 focuses on what children are learning when they use materials – see ECERS-3, item 20 Blocks. At 7.2, staff link block play to language by talking with them, writing their comments, taking photos, etc. At 7.3, staff point out math concepts that are demonstrated when children use blocks. Therefore, it is essential for staff to understand the concepts related to block play. This will help them evaluate where materials should be placed.

Question: May a tape measure be stored and used in the block area?

Answer: The tape measure may be in the block area, as long as it does not interfere with block play. If the children use a tape measure to measure blocks, this is encouraged for credit at the seven level.

The tape measures must not interfere with space for accessibility. For example, if the tape measures are the main source of play and children take up most space using these, to measure their bodies or for general play, then this would interfere with accessibility to blocks. With teacher supervision, it is more likely that the tape measures would be used for measuring blocks or structures.

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Question: Do large push-type toys belong in the block center? These include airplanes, boats, trains, and trucks.

Answer: It is essential to consider the purpose of a given space or play area. A block space should be used for children to build increasingly more complex and larger block structures over time. **Push-type** toys are not related to the purpose of a block space, which is the design and construction of structures. Push toys are related to physical play and are better suited for the gross motor space.

Skills used during block play include carrying, stacking, bridge building, creating enclosures, patterns and symmetry, early representational structures, and later complex representational structures. Block play also requires creativity, problem solving, communication, and collaboration. For these reasons, **push-type** toys are not related to the purposes of block play.

Question: Are ramps to be stored with blocks or science materials?

Answer: Teachers should consider the way ramps are modeled and the purpose of the play. When the ramps are used as part of block construction, for example as a road in road construction, then they may be stored with the blocks. When ramps are used to experiment with friction, gravity, and slopes, they should be stored in the science area.

Children may use the planks with blocks; however, if used as slopes to experiment with speed, friction, and gravity – using the balls, cars, and other objects, then the materials should be placed in the science area. Teachers should consider the purpose of the materials.

Question: Can you clarify the use of writing materials in the block area?

Answer: The authors explain the use of writing materials. “We find that blocks construction is devalued as a valid activity for young children. Everyone wants to put an academia twist into the construction. And this is a problem when the block area is too small for the intricate, sometimes enormous creative block structures that are created by older preschoolers. Blocks, just by themselves, have great value. Of course, if the space is large enough, children can bring other materials into the center, but if these materials detract from children’s interest in construction, rather than enhance it, this will lead to a lower score for blocks.”

Paper and writing materials should not be stored in the block area. If the writing materials are used to design (e.g. draw or sketch) and then build a structure, that is okay. However, the use of the materials should not interfere with the space, play focus, or primary intent of the block area.

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Question: Can children make signs as a block activity?

Answer: Making signs is not a block activity, but a writing activity; therefore, it is not part of construction or building. When children want to make signs, they should go to the writing area, use the materials, and return to the block center for building. Typically, drawing should be done before children go to the block area when they are creating plans for building with blocks.

After structures are complete, staff may take a photo. When staff writes comments about what children say about their completed structures, it would be given credit for indicator 7.2, “staff link written language to children’s block play.”

Question: May books be read to children in the block area when the topic of the book relates to blocks, building, or architecture?

Answer: Books may be added to all interest areas as a way of integrating literacy across the curriculum. While pre-K level books about building and architecture can be placed on a shelf above the blocks, when children read them or ask staff to read them, reading should not interfere with the space other children use for block building.

When a child asks staff to read, the book can be read nearby on a beanbag chair or at a table. If the child uses a book to replicate a structure she sees in the book with blocks, the book is placed next to the child, and the book does not interfere with space for other children, it is fine. Books that depict structures are a great idea; however, the use of books should not interfere with the space used by children to build.

Here are some examples:

- If the books are placed on top of a shelf and there is plenty of floor space for play, this placement would not interfere with block play.
- If a child builds a block structure by looking at an illustration in a book and the book is next to the child on the floor, this would not interfere with block play.
- If a teacher reads a book to children while sitting on the floor in the middle of the block interest area, and the children gather around her, this would interfere with block play.
- If books take up physical space on shelves and there are not ample blocks present as required to meet the complex building needs of three children, this placement would interfere with block play.

The program needs to evaluate the amount of space for block storage so that books do not interfere with space for block materials/block play. In addition, they should notice the way children use the books in the center so that book use enhances and does not interfere with block play.

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ITEM 21: DRAMATIC PLAY

Question: Should a dollhouse be placed in the dramatic play area?

Answer: See page 54 in the scale. Under Notes for Clarification, the authors state, “even though children often pretend with small toy people, toy animals, vehicles, or other small pretend-play toys such as dollhouses, such small pretend-play materials often found in the block or fine motor areas do not count in scoring this Item.”

If a classroom decides to keep a dollhouse along with its accessories in dramatic play, they must make sure the area is large enough for children to engage in dramatic, make-believe play and that the dollhouse does not interfere with the intent of the interest center (p. 11).

When a classroom has a large dollhouse and accessories, we recommend they create a dollhouse interest center, which meets the criteria from page 11 in the scale. A dollhouse with a separate area, appropriate accessories, and enough space can be distinguished as an interest center.

Question: Would a home-made washer and dryer constructed from boxes be okay in the dramatic play area?

Answer: The laundry boxes are appropriate as a prop for dramatic play; however, these should not be the only materials in dramatic play. For 5.3 and 7.2 a box is not furniture, even if it is painted. The indicator calls for “a wealth of materials for children to use in their pretend play,” which means each classroom needs many and varied props. To receive credit for item 21, the classroom needs all the items listed under 5.1.

Question: Can puppets be stored in dramatic play and have the dramatic play area be considered an interest center?

Answer: See page 65. Puppets are called dramatic play props in the additional notes in indicator 5.1. Also, see page 11: “If one or two materials are present that do not match the intent of the center’s particular type of play, give credit for an interest center as long as the materials do not interfere with the intent of the interest center. For example, if their use would not take up needed space or adversely affect the noise level required the center’s type of play.” A consideration in scoring is whether a material takes up too much space or detracts from the intent of the center. If a puppet is being used as part of dramatic play, that is fine. ECERS-3 notes that “pretending” means acting out roles.

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ITEM 22: NATURE/SCIENCE

Question: How do we **determine if materials belong in the science area?**

Answer: The five categories required for nature/science materials are living things, natural objects, factual books/picture games, science tools, and sand/water. In the photograph, the yellow tube blocks require children to match the corresponding top item with the matching base dock/hole. Therefore, it is a puzzle. Puzzles belong with fine-motor materials. (See page 46, see notes at 5.1 for table blocks and puzzles).

When subscale 22 suggests 15 types of nature/science materials at level five, it does not imply that this is all that should be present. It means that fewer materials would be considered inadequate. Materials that are set out in September should be changed throughout the weeks and months to provide increasing challenge and variety for children's exploration.

In addition to focusing on materials, teachers can ask, "What questions and conversation will promote children's engagement with materials to build their understanding?" Children are natural scientists as they explore, ask questions, and experiment to understand the natural world. We can use the ECERS-3 to help teachers reflect on high-quality materials and teaching strategies that will prepare children for future success in school and careers in science.

Collections may include beautiful or interesting rocks, minerals, crystals, fossils, sticks, twigs and bark, acorns, shells, leaves, and seed pods, snake-skins or bird's nests, feathers, plants of various kinds, growing herbs, dried or pressed flowers, seeds, and tools to explore (tweezers, scale, magnifying glasses, etc.).

A bird feeder and butterfly garden or caterpillars and other allowable insects, fish, or classroom pets in containers can invite investigation and learning. When a pet is present, children should be involved in taking care of it. They can collect insects outside and explore them in containers that they bring inside. Inside, they can have caterpillars and watch them hatch or include an ant colony in the science area.

All materials need to be stored in the science center with a table present to receive credit as an interest center. Teachers should include related information books and can add nature and science games and nature magazines for children.

A good rule of thumb for coaches to advise teachers to ask the goal of a material. If the goal is for children to learn about nature or living things, the purpose is science. If the goal of materials is for children to match the top of an item with the bottom of an item or to fit pieces together (e.g., a puzzle), the purpose is fine motor. If the goal of materials is to weigh objects or compare weights, the purpose is math.

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Question: Are a table and chairs required in the science/nature area?

Answer: For item 22, nature science at indicator 5.1, the program would not receive credit for a science interest center, unless chairs are present. To receive credit, the table and chairs must be present along with the materials detailed on page 57 of the ECERS-3 book.

Question: Are sensory bottles, sound cans, or smelling jars appropriate for nature and science materials?

Answer: Sensory bottles, sound can/jars, and smelling cans are allowed in science interest centers. They do not count towards the defined categories for science materials in ECERS-3: living things; natural objects; factual books/nature-science picture games; tools; or sand/water toys.

ECERS-3 does not set a definitive list of all possible materials. Instead, it sets minimum guidelines for materials and interactions. This ensures children are exposed to basic experiences with science.

Question: Would a butterfly nursery with living butterflies living in it (located in the science area) count as a living thing on the nature/science item in the ECERS 3? Might an exploration going on in the classroom on this topic with these materials count for Item 22, 7.

Answer: A butterfly nursery with living butterflies that has been set up by the teacher and children would count as one of the 15 science/nature materials required at 5.1. At 7.2 the teacher would need to be observed talking with children about the butterflies (e.g., what they eat, materials they need to live), and the butterflies need to be displayed at a level the children can easily see.

Question: Can teachers put individual containers (like dishpans) on a table for sand/water credit?

Answer: Yes. They would get credit.

Question: May sand and water be made available in large sensory tubs placed on the floor?

Answer: No. For ECERS-3, classrooms are required to include a sand and water table. A floor activity would not get credit as a sand and water table activity. The goal is to have the furniture designed for the specific type of play.

Question: Are Magna-tiles a science material?

Answer: In general, Magna-tiles are fine motor or math materials. In order to be placed in the science area, children would need to use Magna-tiles as a science tool. See page 56. For example, several Magna-tiles placed in a bowl with other magnets might be considered tools. However, if children are building

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with Magna-tiles, the tiles should be stored and placed in the fine motor area or with math materials. On page 58, the category “familiarity with shapes” for math includes Magna-tiles. We tell coaches to instruct programs to store magnetic shapes with fine motor or math materials. Scoring, therefore, depends on how children use the materials, whether the materials interfere with storage, or whether they interfere with the intent of the science/nature area. Here are some possibilities:

When Magna-tiles are stored in the science area and are used as a science tool, credit can be given for a science tool in 5.1.

When Magna-tiles are stored in the science area and do not interfere with the science materials and activities, they can be ignored. The page 11 state that “If one or two materials are present that do not match the intent of the center’s particular type of play, give credit for an interest center as long as the materials do not interfere with the intent of the interest center.”

When Magna-tiles are used in the science area as fine motor building materials or as math materials and take up substantial space on the storage shelf such that they prevent other science materials or they interfere with science/nature activities, the program would not receive credit at 5.1. 5.1 requires that children engage at the science center for at least one hour during the observation.

Question: Do tape measures count as a tool in the science center, or are they considered a toy?

Answer: A tape measure is fine in the science area if used to compare the length of science materials, such as comparing feathers or rocks. However, for a tape measure to be counted as a material, the tape measure must be stored with things to measure (ECERS-3, p. 58). For example, if a science area includes tape measures stored together with a natural object to measure, the program will get credit for a math and science material.

If a math material promotes math learning/number and meets the intent of a specific play area/interest center, then the math material meets both areas. An example is a cash register (along with pretend money) stored in a dramatic play area will receive credit for a math material, and if children use it in their pretend play, it will also count a dramatic play prop (ECERS-3, p. 54).

Question: Should a **scale for weighing objects** be placed in the science or math interest area?

Answer: The presence of a balance scale in the science center or a math center depends on how it is used.

A science use of the scale could be to weigh natural objects and living things. The purpose would be to investigate (compare, observe, describe) the attributes of the natural materials.

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For math, children would use the scale to weigh plastic blocks and decide which is heavier or lighter or decide how many of one kind of block equals the weight of another type of block. The purpose would be to count and compare object size and weight.

Teachers need to think about what concepts children are learning when they use the scale. That will help them decide if the activity belongs in math or science. From an ECERS-3 perspective, the way the scale is being used is considered.

ITEM 23: MATH MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

Question: Can a clock get credit for a measuring material?

Answer: No. Not for Pre-K. A linear calendar also is not a measuring material. See page 58 notes. Because time is abstract, it is not an age-appropriate part of Pre-K learning. Measuring materials include a “scale, ruler, yardstick, tape measures, thermometers, foot size measures, height charts, etc.” However, perhaps a teacher points to a clock and says, “Do you see the big number 8? The big hand is pointing to the number 8, so now we are going outside.” This interaction would receive credit at Item 24, math in daily events.

ITEM 26: PROMOTING ACCEPTANCE OF DIVERSITY

Question: Do photographs of children count as items of diversity?

Answer: No. For diversity, see the ECERS-3, page 64 notes for clarification. These clearly state, “Photographs of children in the group are not considered in these indicators.”

A classroom should provide many and varied examples of diversity throughout the classroom, not only in the dramatic play area. In addition, to be considered an example of representing diversity positively, one material must be contrasted with another. For instance, a doll of one culture must be accessible near a doll that represents a different culture. Two contrasting materials meet the requirements of one example of diversity. See ECERS-3, p. 64.

Question: May puppets be counted as items of diversity?

Answer: Yes. See page 65, additional information notes, for 26 at 5.1. Puppets count as items of diversity if these provide examples of contrasting races or cultures. When credit is given for puppets at Item 26 at 5.1, the same puppets are not given credit at 5.2. Additional examples of diversity must be found in

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books, displayed pictures, and other assessable play materials. The racially or culturally diverse puppets may be credited for 5.1 or for 5.2.

Question: For Item 26, 7.1, does singing while using sign language a song about classroom rules during circle time count as diversity?

Answer: For subscale 26, item 7.1, the idea is to promote acceptance of diversity beyond the presence of materials in the classroom that reflect diversity. The item provides examples of singing a song in more than one language, playing music from varying cultures, or using sign language for some words.

The ECERS-3 notes on page 64 add that observed learning activities are required. Learning activities are goal specific, meaning they have a purpose. If the idea was to remind children about the rules, but children did not know what sign language is or why it is used, it would not count as a learning activity that promotes acceptance of diversity. In that case, children would simply be using hand motions in a rote way – like they might for any song or finger play during a routine.

To use sign language purposefully during a learning activity, staff might say, “We are going for a walk. This is how we say, “walk” in sign language. If sign language is used in a song, staff might say, “Last time, we sang only using our words. For this song, we are going to use sign language. Some people use sign language to communicate with each other.” Staff would then demonstrate a sign that represents a word or phrase. This subscale and item in ECERS-3 give staff the opportunity to become more purposeful in promoting acceptance of diversity.

If sign language is used during a meal or routine to help children communicate, for example, using the sign for “more,” “all done,” “please,” or “thank you,” it would get credit under subscale 13, encouraging children to use language for item 3.4.

ITEM 27: APPROPRIATE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Question: Are V-Tech toys counted as writing materials?

Answer: V-Tech toys are not writing materials. Without a screen, they are not “technology.” This is a self-correcting alphabet game. It is a fine motor toy. Similar games require children to press the image of an animal, which results in the correct animal sound.

Question: Are the Seesaw or other apps where children type words considered writing activities?

Answer: No. The use of the Seesaw app with students is considered time on a digital device. According to the Seesaw website, teachers find or create activities to share with students, students take pictures, draw, record videos to capture learning in a portfolio, and families can see children’s work there to leave comments (<https://seesaw/me>).

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The notes in ECERS-3 on page 44 state (16 at 3.2): “To give credit, children must both be able to clearly see the print being read and hear the words or sounds. This can happen as staff writes words while a child watches, such as when writing a child’s name and talking about the letters and the sounds they represent.” The words “writing” and “as staff write words” do not mean typing.

At 5.3, the text states, “Evidence of this requirement might be found in display materials, such as charts or children’s artwork with their comments written on it, or staff are observed writing for the children.” The words “observed writing” do not mean typing.

For Art (18 at 7.3), the indicator states, “Staff write captions dictated by interested children.” The example states, “See, I wrote your words.” The words “write” and “wrote” do not mean typing.

For Blocks (20 at 7.2), staff link written language to children’s block play (Ex: write children’s comments...). The words “write children’s comments” mean – as with the other indicators – that staff model writing. Children observe writing modeled (e.g. the formation of letters, words, punctuation, etc.) to represent spoken words.

Question: When children interact with a Smart Board, is this considered technology use?

Answer: Yes. Any time children are interacting with a Smart Board; those times are counted toward the use of technology. When children are interacting with a Smart Board during free play to choose and dance to music, this is technology use. When children use the board to check-in at arrival time (e.g., move an icon over, sign in, etc.), this is technology use.

To model writing or practice writing through the lens of ECERS-3, teachers must use paper and pencil – not technology. Therefore, this aspect needs to be taken into consideration, as well. Smart Board use does not count towards practicing writing skills for children; only the use of paper and pencil. Any writing or interaction with the Smart Board is considered technology use.

If a Smart Board has words written on it before children arrive – for the purpose of displaying vocabulary words with no intended interaction (e.g., used as a blackboard or whiteboard with no interaction), that time if observed by a monitor, would probably not count as technology use.

The message that needs to be given to teaching staff is that in most cases, Smart Boards are considered as technology use.

References

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