

Sample Instrument

CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE GAINS IN SCHOOL READINESS (LITERACY SKILLS)

Education Focus Area: Early Childhood Education

Outcome: Number of children demonstrating gains in school readiness in terms of literacy skills (ED24).

Instruments

You will need to develop or identify an instrument to measure gains of children who completed participation in a CNCS-supported early childhood education program (performance measure ED21).

Existing Instrument

First, determine whether the early childhood program in which your National Service participants (“participants”) are being placed is already using an instrument that assesses children in the area of literacy skills. If so, review the instrument and data collected to determine if this data can be used to measure this national performance measure outcome. Discuss with the early childhood program director whether you can use their data for your performance measures:

- Can the data be accessed in a timely manner?
- Can the data for those children that participants serve be separated from the children not being served by participants?
- Can confidentiality be maintained?

Developing an Instrument

If you cannot use an existing early childhood program instrument, you will need to identify or develop an appropriate instrument that can assess the indicators you plan to measure for your national measure. The instrument should have evidence of reliable information identified or recognized by reliable sources (i.e., sources that researched or tested the indicators proposed).

Sample Instrument in this packet

The sample instrument in this packet is derived from two sources:

- Head Start Childhood Outcomes Framework¹
- Maryland Head Start Child Development Outcomes Framework²

¹ Head Start Child Outcomes Framework: <http://www.hsnrc.org/CDI/pdfs/UGCOF.pdf>

² Maryland Head Start Child Development Outcomes Framework:
http://www.mdk12.org/instruction/ensure/readiness/pdfs/MD_HS_CHILD_OutcomesFramework.pdf

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The Head Start Childhood Outcomes Framework is based on the Head Start Program Performance Standards, Head Start Program Performance Measures, provisions of the Head Start Act as amended in 1998, advice of the Head Start Bureau Technical Work Group on Child Outcomes, and a review of documents on assessment of young children and early childhood program accountability from a variety of state agencies and professional organizations.

The Maryland Head Start Child Development Outcomes Framework is a document that integrates the Head Start Performance Standards, the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, and the Maryland Model for School Readiness Framework.

The Head Start Child Outcomes Framework consists of eight Domains, three of which pertain to the early childhood national measures: social and emotional development, literacy, and numeracy (math). For the sample “Literacy Assessment” in this packet, there are five Domain Elements. Each Domain Element consists of four to five indicators. Maryland Head Start Administrators identified examples for each of the indicators. You can choose to use/revise this assessment instrument or develop/identify your own.

How to Use the Sample Instrument in this Packet

Review the “Literacy Assessment” sample instrument for school readiness in the area of literacy:

- For each domain element, review the **indicators** and identify those indicators that you plan to measure to assess children’s gain.
- For each indicator, review the **indicator examples** and select those indicator examples you plan to assess.
- Revise, add, or delete the indicator examples to best fit the early childhood program.

Literacy Assessment

Instructions

What is the purpose?	To determine how many children that completed participation in a CNCS-supported early childhood education program (performance measure ED21) demonstrate gains in school readiness in terms of literacy skills.
Who should complete this instrument?	<p>Individuals who have the ability to assess children’s gains in literacy skills through observation of children.</p> <p>The persons conducting the observations should be persons who are not directly involved in providing services to the children (i.e., not participants). If more than one person will assess the children, it is highly recommended that all data collectors are trained in standard observation procedures and rating criteria to ensure inter-rater reliability.</p>
When should we complete this instrument?	<p>At least two times; when children begin the program year, and again after children have completed participation in your early childhood education program (ED21).</p> <p>Programs may want to observe the children mid-year to obtain a benchmark of the progress being made half way into the program.</p>
What should we do to prepare?	<p>Modify the assessment as needed by deleting indicator examples not appropriate for your program. Add any other indicator examples your program may need to assess gain. Decide who will administer the assessment(s) and how you would like the persons to return the assessment to you.</p> <p>Provide a description and instructions to those who will use the assessment by including an explanation about the purpose of the assessment, how the data will be used, and who will be conducting the assessment.</p> <p>Persons conducting the assessment need to be trained in advance so they are prepared to make consistent observational assessments of children’s development, and how to record responses accurately. Training of all persons conducting assessments will ensure the inter-rater reliability.</p>
What should we do afterwards?	Match the pre-assessment with the post assessment for each child. You will need to measure gains in literacy skills for each child. You may want to enter the data in an Excel spreadsheet (summary log) to make comparisons between pre-assessments and post-assessments easier. Based on your project’s outcome target, identify each student that has met the target and count those students as “demonstrating gains”. Keep all the assessments and summary log in a safe place: these are your raw data and serve as proof that a systematic process was used to document the outcomes.
Can I use an alternative instrument?	Different assessments can be used to assess gains in literacy skills of each child. However, make sure that the instrument is supported by research or other reliable sources that ensure identified indicators are valid.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT LITERACY ASSESSMENT³

Education Program: _____

Child: _____ Age: _____

Person Assessing the Child: _____ Position: _____

Date: _____ Pre-Assessment Post-Assessment

This pre-post instrument assesses the child’s literacy skills in five domain elements. Assess the child at the beginning of the program year (pre-assessment) and at the end of the program year (post-assessment). Mark the appropriate box above. For each indicator and example listed, assess the child’s literacy skills by noting whether “yes”, it is consistently and appropriately present, “no” it is not present or rarely so, or “not sure”, if you have not had an occasion to observe the indicator example. To assess whether the child has gained competency, compare the number of indicator examples marked “yes” in the child’s pre-assessment with those examples marked “yes” in the post assessment.

LITERACY					
Domain Element	Indicator	Examples	Yes	No	Not sure
Phonological Awareness	Shows increasing ability to discriminate and identify sounds in spoken language.	Pretends to read			
		Examines pictures for meaning			
		Retells familiar parts			
	Shows growing awareness of beginning and ending sound of words.	Identifies words that begin with the same or different sounds			
		Identifies words that end with the same or different sounds			
	Progresses in recognizing matching sounds and rhymes in familiar words, games, songs, stories, and poems.	Enjoys the repetition of words, poems, and finger-plays			
		Attempts to initiate matching sounds			
		Identifies and repeats rhyming			

³ Information for this assessment was taken from the following document: Maryland Head Start Child Development Outcomes Framework; Copyright©01/01/02 Carlethea Johnson, Maryland Head Start Administrators. Distribution and reprinting permitted as long as this copyright notice is included.

LITERACY					
Domain Element	Indicator	Examples	Yes	No	Not sure
	Shows growing ability to hear and discriminate separate syllables in words.	Imitates syllables as spoken			
		Creates multiple syllables			
		Blends syllables into a word			
	Associates sounds with written words, such as awareness that different words begin with the same sound.	Examines pictures for meaning			
		Pretends to read			
		Associates between spoken and written word			
Book Knowledge and Appreciation	Shows growing interest and involvement in listening and discussing a variety of fiction and non-fiction books and poetry.	Chooses books to read			
		Attends to story			
		Asks to have books read			
		Predicts actions and consequences of characters			
		Describes story line			
	Shows growing interest in reading-related activities, such as asking to have a favorite book read; choosing to look at books; drawing pictures based on stories; asking to take books home; going to the library; and engaging in pretend-reading with other children.	Attends to the story			
		Asks to have books read			
		Retells familiar parts			
		Chooses and reads books to self			
		Imitates actions of teacher			
		Reads to others			
		Sees self as a reader			
	Demonstrates progress in abilities to retell and dictate stories from books and experiences; to act out stories in dramatic play; and to predict what will happen next in a story.	Predicts next part or ending			
		Retells familiar parts			
	Progresses in learning how to handle and care for books; knowing to view one page at a time in sequence from front to back; and understanding that a book has a title, author and illustrator.	Opens book from front cover			
		Turns pages front to back			
		Tracks left to right, top to bottom			

LITERACY					
Domain Element	Indicator	Examples	Yes	No	Not sure
Print Awareness and Concepts	Shows increasing awareness of print in classroom, home and community settings.	Recognizes letters of their names in media			
		Reads signs (Stop, Exit)			
		Calls out letters in words and signs in classroom			
		Asks what is this word or what does this say			
	Develops growing understanding of the different functions of forms of print such as signs, letters, newspapers, lists, messages and menus.	Recognizes simple signs (e.g., STOP, signs for male and female on bathroom doors)			
		Can make a choice from a list or menu of symbols/words			
		"Spells" words with alphabet toys (e.g. blocks or magnets)			
	Develops increasing awareness of concepts of print, such as that reading in English moves from top to bottom and from left to right, that speech can be written down, and that print conveys a message.	Associates spoken and written words			
		Holds book correctly			
		Traces words or lines of print from left to right with finger			
		Asks "what does this say?"			
		Dictates or attempts to write a story			
		Communicates direction in writing (e.g., "x means stay out")			
	Shows progress in recognizing the association between spoken and written words by following print as it is read aloud.	Tracks left to right, top to bottom			
		Identifies letters in words and repeats words and phrases			
		Follows the story by pointing to words as the story is read			
	Recognizes a word as a unit of print, or awareness that letters are grouped to form words, that words are separated by spaces.	Begins to write name			
		Uses letter like shapes or letters to depict words or ideas			
		Identifies capital letter and spaces between words			

LITERACY					
Domain Element	Indicator	Examples	Yes	No	Not sure
Early Writing	Develops understanding that writing is a way of communicating for a variety of purposes.	Dictates stories or recalls an experience			
		Writes letters or cards to someone			
		Communicates directions/warnings in writing			
		Attempts to write familiar words and names			
	Begins to represent stories and experiences through pictures, dictation, and in play	Draws representation of events as a story (e.g., describes field trip experiences)			
		Uses pretend writing during play (scribble, lines and shapes)			
		Writes some letters from own name			
		Creates original drama through puppets, dolls, housekeeping and other dramatic play materials			
	Experiments with a growing variety of writing tools and materials, such as pencils, crayons, and computers.	Utilizes writing tools to tell stories, give direction and make requests of others.			
		Chooses a variety of materials to create art work and printed form			
	Progresses from using scribbles, shapes, or pictures to represent ideas, to using letter like symbols, to copying or writing familiar words such as their own name.	Draws representational shapes as letters			
		Traces and draws geometrid figures			
		Begins to copy shapes and letters			

LITERACY					
Domain Element	Indicator	Examples	Yes	No	Not sure
Alphabet Knowledge	Shows progress in associating the names of letters with their shapes and sounds.	Recognizes letters and names			
		Begins to recognize sounds and rhyme letters			
	Increases in ability to notice the beginning letters in familiar words.	Recognizes letters and names			
		Recognizes letter sounds, grouping sounds			
	Identifies at least ten letters of the alphabet, especially those in their own name.	Writes and or traces familiar letters			
		Identifies letters seen in the classroom and in written media			
		Recognizes letters in own name			
		Recognizes own name in print			
	Knows that the letters of the alphabet are a special category of visual graphics that can be individually named.	Names individual letters of the alphabet			
		Recognizes letters that begin with own name in stories			
		Intentionally names letters in printed materials			

Definitions

Yes – A child consistently and appropriately demonstrates this developmental skill.

No – A child rarely or never demonstrates this developmental skill.

Not Sure – The respondent has not had an opportunity to observe the child in this area.