

### Assessment Essay

1. Explain *the purpose of assessment for young children. (ie. How does the data impact what you as the teacher will teach? what other information can be learned from assessment?)*

An assessment for a young child is used as a determination of the progress and attainments of children ages 3 to 8 years of age. It is the process of gathering information about children from several forms of evidence, then organizing and interpreting that information. With that knowledge, teachers can plan appropriate curriculum and effective teaching strategies to help with determining the children's skills and progress through observation and documentation.

2. Describe what *“developmentally appropriate assessment”* means.

I feel that developmentally appropriate assessment should be defined as child being age/individual appropriateness. Being age appropriate is when the learning environment and the experiences are age appropriate and consistent with age level knowledge. Individual appropriateness on the other hand, is when a child responds to the “pattern and timing” of growth, as well as the cultural things that make such as family background and personality. Fundamentally, developmentally appropriate practice is the ability to respond to each child as an individual.

3. Describe in your own words the difference between *“reliability”* and *“validity”* as it relates to assessment of young children.

Reliability refers to the consistency with which an assessment strategy. Because young children are growing and changing at a rapid pace and their behavior and performance can be quite unpredictable from day to day, few assessments or tests administered to young children can claim high reliability. Validity refers to the degree to which an assessment or test measures what it claims to measure. With young children, it may take as many as six or more examples of similar types of work in order to make valid assumptions about a particular skill, performance, or attainment of a prescribed developmental or learning goal.

4. Identify the difference between *formal and informal assessments*.

Informal assessments rely more heavily on observational and work sampling techniques that continually focus on child performance, processes, and products over selected periods of time and in a variety of contexts.

Formal assessments usually entail the use of standardized tests that must be administered according to prescribed time limits, instructional and scoring procedures, and administration guidelines.

5. Identify three misuses/abuses of testing for assessing young children.

- a. Using tests that require children to respond in unfamiliar ways, so that what they “do know and can do”, are confused with the performance of what they are expected to demonstrate.
- b. Using tests that are not logically matched to the objectives of the program, thus narrowing the curriculum.
- c. Using tests scores as the absolute basis for high stakes decisions.

6. *What is the difference between a developmental screening and a readiness test?*

Developmental screenings are short age/content appropriate performance test based on a developmental criteria linked to ages typical for the behavior. Readiness testing is a set of criteria based on a child's ability to perform in an academic setting. Readiness testing is a means of screening Pre-K and K aged children from being put in a program, where they might be set up for failure.

7. *Identify at least three limitations to early screening of young children.*

a. The greatest difference between children is in the way that they learn. Children build upon the knowledge through interactive and hands on manipulative play. At this age children should not be tested with traditional paper and pencil assessments, but in a naturalistic setting.

b. A developing child exhibits periods of both rapid growth and frequent rest and not at the same pace. All children are different and each child has a unique rate of development. These variables guarantee that a "one-size-fits-all" assessment will not meet the needs of children.

c. It takes time to do assessments correctly. I feel that assessments should be given one on one between teacher and child. A child has a short attention span so that assessments need to be given over a longer period of days or weeks. I can see where teachers may complain at the loss of instructional time from the classroom.

8. *Using the table, **Matching Purpose and Type in Assessment**, identify whether you would use formal or informal assessment for the following situations;*

A. Determining a child's quarterly progress - Informal

B. Determining if a child qualifies for special education services - Formal

C. Determining if a child is ready to start kindergarten - Formal

9. *Describe what type of information would be appropriate to put in a child's portfolio?*

A portfolio is a flexible and adaptable collection over time of various concrete work samples showing many dimensions of the child's learning. This type of assessment tool is particularly ideal for use in the primary grades when children are developing knowledge and skills in several subject areas at different rates. This type of assessment also focuses on the child's strengths and demonstrations of knowledge and skills.

10. *What is the role of administrators in assessment of young children?*

Administrators must face issues of the accountability of the students in their care. People who are in charge of students need to accurately interpret assessment scores so they are not skewed in favor of one program over another. Administrators must be aware and sensitive to each young child's unique development. Administrators also must use information from assessments evaluate and strengthen educational programs.