

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) Basic Overview

The CLASS® and CLASS® Environment are observation tools that focus on the physical environment as well as the daily interactions among teachers and children that promote children's social and cognitive development. An observer trained in CLASS® will observe in your classroom for three 20-minute cycles within a single observation day. The observer will stay in the background and observe regular routines and activities of your classroom as well as the interactions among all students and adults in the classroom. The observer will complete scoring between each cycle. Below are brief descriptions of the various components of a CLASS® and CLASS® Environment observation.

Emotional Support Domain	
This domain refers to specific teaching behaviors that help children develop warm, supportive relationships, experience enjoyment and excitement about learning, feel comfortable in the classroom, and experience appropriate levels of autonomy or independence.	
Dimension	Example Indicators
Positive Climate	Smiling, warm tone of voice, shared enthusiasm, respectful language, physical affection (e.g., pats on the back)
Negative Climate	Harsh tone, sarcasm, yelling, physical roughness, frequent conflict or tension
Teacher Sensitivity	Aware of children's needs, responds promptly, notices peer issues, provides comfort
Regard for Student Perspective	Allows student choice, flexible routines, values student input, encourages independence

Classroom Organization Domain	
This domain describes specific teaching behaviors that help children develop skills to regulate their own behavior, get the most learning out of each day, and maintain interest in learning activities.	
Dimension	Example Indicators
Behavior Management	Clearly stated expectations, proactive strategies, consistent follow-through, positive redirection
Productivity	Maximizes learning time, smooth transitions, minimal disruptions
Instructional Learning Formats	Engaging materials, group work, hands-on activities, effective use of time

Instructional Support Domain	
This domain refers to the specific teaching behaviors that support children's cognitive development and language growth.	
Dimension	Example Indicators
Concept Development	Promotes higher-order thinking, connects ideas to real-world experiences, asks "why"/"how" questions
Quality of Feedback	Feedback extends learning, provides specific guidance, prompts student thinking
Language Modeling	Uses advanced vocabulary, asks open-ended questions, repeats and expands on child speech

Environment Observation	
This domain examines the physical environment including arrangements, displays, and materials that contribute to a child's engagement, emotional support, and behavioral support within the learning environment.	
Dimension	Example Indicators
Physical Arrangement	Spaces arranged for group/individual work, materials are accessible and well-labeled
Displays	Children's work is displayed, interactive elements (charts, word walls, visuals)
Materials	Variety of age-appropriate, inclusive, and engaging materials across interest areas

Following each CLASS® observation (once in the fall and once in the spring), the observer will schedule a feedback session to review and share the information collected with you. This observation will be used to inform coaching and professional development topics.