**ECE 224: Guiding Young Children’s Behavior**

**Interactions, Relationships & Environments (IRE) Assessment**

**Multiple Due Dates**

In this assignment, you will be examining environments and interactions in early childhood settings. Goals of this assessment include assessing your competencies in describing the characteristics and practices of culturally responsive, collaborative, supportive learning environments; identifying supportive practices and strategies within these environments; and creating and adapting environments that are responsive to external requirements and the unique development and learning needs of each and every child

This assignment requires you to observe in an early childhood classroom. In Stage 1 of the assignment, you will develop an overview of legal mandates, standards, and ethical principles that are essential considerations in designing learning environments. In Stage 2, you will conduct an Environmental Scan and you will conduct an Interaction Event Sample. Following your observation for Stage 3, you will write a summary of the data collected and analyze the data in your Post-Reflection.

**Stage 1: Overview (1-2 pages, double spaced, 11-12-point font)**

**DUE: 10/3/21**

**POINTS: 175**

Stage 1 requires that you describe factors within the early childhood environment (such as space, materials, images, sounds, language, ideas and adult behaviors and interactions) that influence classroom community and children’s development and learning. Be sure to include legal mandates, standards, and ethical principles that are essential considerations in designing learning environments. Discussion on issues of cultural, ethnic, and familial diversity which may affect the classroom environment should also be included. With these factors in mind, provide at least a two-page overview of critical considerations for each of these factors when designing engaging environments for young children.

**Stage 2: Environmental Scan, Interaction Event Sample, and Observation Summary**

**DUE: 11/7/21**

**POINTS: 150**

Stage 2 requires a 30-minute environmental scan and 60-minute interaction event sample. You will need paper, pencil/pen, and chart (provided below) for the event sample.

**Prior to your observations:**

* Call and schedule your classroom observation.
* You should plan 90 minutes for the total observation, 30 minutes for the environmental scan and 60 minutes for the interaction event sample.
* When setting up your observation, explain to the teacher/ program administrator that you will be taking notes on the organization of the environment and then observing interactions in the classroom. Be sure to arrange a time when a variety of interactions will be observable (i.e not nap time).

**Environmental Scan (30 Minutes)**

* Upon your arrival, introduce yourself to the teacher and work with her/him to choose a location to observe from where you will not hinder classroom activities.
* Ask the teacher if it is possible to obtain a copy of the daily schedule. If this is not possible, write the schedule down.
* During the 30-minute Environmental Scan, develop a diagram of the classroom design. Take notes on features and aspects of the physical environment. Include in your notes the following:
	+ Details on signage, labeling, and organizational strategies that are used within the environment to help children navigate and self-regulate.
	+ Characteristics of the learning environment that support or impede collaboration
	+ Characteristics of the learning environment that support or impede creativity and exploration
	+ Ways in which the physical and social environment reflects cultural responsiveness

**Interaction Event Sample (60 Minutes)**

* Create a chart (see attached example) prior to your visit that will allow you to collect interaction samples and data for specific periods of time during the 60-minute period.
* To begin your event sample, provide an overall description of the following:
	+ Number of children in the room.
	+ Number of staff in the room
	+ Activities occurring during observation time period
	+ Interaction strategies used, including verbal communication and guidance strategies
	+ Other relevant information (whether families were in the room, how children responded to strangers, etc.)
* For the 60-minute period focus specifically in on interactions collecting the following information:
* A description of the interaction you observed (can include quotes)
* The location of the interaction
* Reason for the interaction
* Duration of the interaction
* Interaction type (Adult to child; Child to Adult; Child to child; Child to environment)

**Observation Summary**

Your Observation Summary is based on Parts 2 and 3 of your Assessment. Include the following for your summary:

* A one-page summary of the environmental scans for each observation site. In the summary, include information (in a broad sense) on how children’s learning and development is supported or not supported by the environment. (Attach your diagram and daily schedule for each site).
* A one-page summary of what you observed in the event sample. In the summary, include information (in a broad sense) on how children’s learning and development is supported or not supported by the interactions. (attach your completed observation charts).

**Stage 3: Post-Reflection (At least 2 pages, double spaced, 11-12 point font)**

**DUE: 11/21/21 by midnight**

**POINTS: 175**

Your Post-Reflection requires that you reflect on data collected in your observations, and suggest adaptations to the environments you observed within. For your Post-Reflection, respond to each of the following:

* What was your overall assessment of the environments observed in terms of their ability to support positive behavioral and developmental outcomes? Identify specific environmental strengths and opportunities.
* What strengths and opportunities did you observe within the environment related to fostering trusting relationships with children and their families?
* Describe culturally and individually responsive strategies observed within each of the environments. In addition to strategies observed, identify opportunities, if applicable. How can strategies be adapted in ways that are respectful of personality and temperament?
* Based on your responses to each of the questions above, how effective do you feel each of the environments you observed within were in terms of supporting the healthy development and learning of young children, including:
* encouraging active, creative exploration
* promoting children's positive interactions with others
* supporting self-regulation
* supporting health social and emotional development
* supporting access and participation
* and promoting positive behaviors
* What would you suggest in terms of environmental adaptations or changes to the learning environment overall to enhance the learning community and ensure that the diverse development and learning needs of each and every child is enhanced?

**Event Sample Chart**

Observation Date/Time \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Observation site/Classroom \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Number of children \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Number of Adults (roles) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Activities during observation (i.e. large group, centers, snack, small group etc.) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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|   | Minutes 0-10  | Minutes 10-20  | Minutes 20-30  | Minutes 30-40  | Minutes 40-50  | Minutes 50-60  |
| Interaction #1   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Interaction #2   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Interaction #3   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Interaction #4   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Interaction #5   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Interaction #6   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Interaction #7   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Interaction #9   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Interaction #10   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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