**OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME (OST)
OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT**

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Contents

OBSERVER PROCEDURES

Use of the following procedures is essential to achieve the reliability levels described in the report, *Out-of-School Time Observation Instrument: Report of the Validation Study* (2008).[1]

Overview

For OST program staff and researchers, the OST Observation Instrument provides a tool for measuring observable indicators of positive youth development and OST program features known to contribute to positive youth outcomes. The instrument's conceptual framework is grounded in the youth development literature, and, in particular, it assesses activities against the four SAFE features found by Durlak and Weisberg (2007) to contribute to positive outcomes for youth in OST programs that sought to affect participants' social and personal outcomes.[2]

SAFE activities in OST programs are:

■ **SEQUENCED:** The activity content and staff instructional strategies build progressively toward increasingly advanced skills and knowledge, and they challenge youth to achieve goals.

■ **ACTIVE:** The activity offers opportunities for youth to engage actively in learning. Youth lead and participate in discussions, develop their own projects, contribute their original ideas, work together, take on leadership roles, and/or are highly oriented toward completing tasks.

■ **PERSONALLY FOCUSED**: The activity strengthens relationships among youth and between youth and staff.

■ **EXPLICIT:** The activity explicitly targets specific learning and/or developmental goals.

The OST Observation Instrument, booklet and insert, includes the following:

■ *Cover Sheet*: A checklist for capturing basic facts about the observed activity, such as activity type, staff roles, number of participants, and grouping patterns

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[1] Pechman, E.M., Mielke, M.B., Russell, C.A., White, R.N., & Cooc, N. (2008, February). *Out-of-school time (OST) observation instrument: Report of the validation study.* Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc.

[2] Durlak, J.A., & Weissberg, R.P. (2007). *The impact of after-school programs that promote personal and social skills*. Chicago, IL: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL); University of Illinois at Chicago.

- **OST Indicator Item Ratings:** A list of items under five domains: youth relationship-building; youth participation; relationship-building among staff and youth; instructional strategies; and the activity content and structure

  Observers rate each item on a 1-7 scale.

- **Academic and Technology Features:** Items related to literacy and math instruction and the use of technology

  Ratings indicate which academic processes and content features of activities occurred during the observation period.

- **Environmental Context:** Items related to the adequacy of the learning context for the observed activity, including adequacy of supervision, space and materials

- **Observer's Synthesis and Rating:** Observer's syntheses of the activity's overall quality, using the SAFE framework as the quality standard and rating each SAFE feature on a 1-7 scale

- **Observer's Notes:** A worksheet for recording notes describing how the observed interactions are consistent with SAFE features

Completing the OST Observation Instrument

> **Every activity should be observed for 15 minutes.**

STEP 1. Enter the activity area and situate yourself as unobtrusively as possible to observe the setting. Fill in the introductory items on the *Cover Sheet* (e.g., location, observer, date, time) and check appropriate descriptive categories.

STEP 2. In the *Observer's Notes*, record the types of interactions, strategies, and other actions occurring in any or all of the SAFE categories (structured, active, personally focused, and explicit). To the extent possible, record details about the activities, youth and staff comments, and descriptions of the general affect in the setting. Bring extra paper to record on as many pages as your descriptions warrant. While taking notes, make sure to look for both the occurring indicators and the SAFE features, and check that all aspects of the observable events are being captured in your notes.

> **After 10 minutes of observation, while still in the activity setting, complete Steps 3-5.**

STEP 3. Complete all sections of the *Cover Sheet* and, in the box on the left of each indicator, enter an *OST Indicator Item Rating* using a rating of 1-7, as follows:

1 = Exemplar is not evident
2 = Exemplar may occur momentarily but is not sustained
3 = Exemplar may occur once or twice but is rarely evident throughout the observation
4 = Exemplar occurs more frequently but is not fully evident
5 = Exemplar is evident or implicit
6 = Exemplar is strongly evident or implicit, but could be more consistent
7 = Exemplar is highly and consistently evident

To select one of the preceding ratings, first move to the ODD NUMBER that most closely reflects how evident and pervasive the item is. If that number is imprecise, move up or down to the even number that more accurately reflects the item's level of presence within an activity.

> **HELPFUL HINT**: When rating an item, read its definition and then underline those elements that are observed. This will help highlight how much of an item's full definition occurred and clarify the prevalence of the behaviors during the activity segment.

Neutral items. Use the "5" rating when the exemplar is implicit in the activity. For instance, if youth are observed engaging in casual, friendly interactions, then the rating would be a "5."

Homework activities. Homework help activities should not be rated on the *Content* and *Structure: Activity* items of the *OST Indicator Item Ratings*.

STEP 4: Complete the three *Environmental Context* questions on the last page of the *OST Indicator Item Ratings*.

STEP 5: Complete the *Observer's Synthesis and Rating* section. Write one or two sentences that describe or synthesize the overall quality of each element.

Observing more than one staff member in an activity. If more than one staff member is actively working in the room with youth, ratings involving staff should reflect all staff interactions taken together. For instance, if one staff member uses effective behavior management techniques while the other resorts to threats and sarcasm, the ratings should reflect an average of the two approaches (e.g., a rating of "3" or "4").

Sampling

Reviewing the program's activity schedule. If possible, meet first with the program director to select observable activities using the following guidelines:

1. Identify activities that reflect the range of main activities conducted at the program, prioritizing the most important activities and those with the greatest opportunities for serious youth engagement.

2. Observe across varied grade levels as well as varied activities.

3. Verify with the program director that each scheduled activity will occur as planned and determine where it is located.

4. Verify the staff member who will be present at each activity, noting the staff member's title, level of education, or special skills (e.g., high school student, certified teacher, arts specialist) to accurately rate the staff categories.

Determining the number of observations to conduct. At the outset of the observation period, site visit teams should co-conduct two observations to confirm inter-rater reliability, following the procedures described above. Check YES in the co-observed checkbox and enter both observers' initials.

After completing these observations, take 5 to 10 minutes to discuss the commonalities and differences in your ratings and to achieve a mutual understanding of the definitions, ratings, and quality of activities and interactions observed. DO NOT CHANGE THE ORIGINAL RATINGS, even if observers and co-observers later remember them differently.

In a typical, three-hour OST program that offers multiple activities, each site visitor should observe 8 to 12 after-school activities over at least two afternoons. This number of observations improves the overall reliability of the evidence collected on each program. Each site visitor team should complete an observation instrument for every observed activity during the program visit. This level of observation will ensure a representative sample of the typical afternoon in an OST program and will generate the optimal number of observations for later analysis. If the after-school program is not comprehensive, or if it offers relatively few activities, the site visitors or program leaders should determine the appropriate number of observations to be conducted based on the requirements for adequate data collection. The reliability and validity of quality judgments increase as the number of observations increases.

Selecting activities to observe. Site visitors should select activities to observe that are representative of the activities offered and that prioritize skill-based and/or content-based activities.

■ Depending on the activities offered, site visitors should try to co-observe **either** a homework help or content-based academic enrichment activity and **either** an arts

or fitness activity. *Other enrichment* activities can replace the second, non-academic or homework joint observation.

■   Site visitors should avoid observing activities and groups with the same staff and the same students in the same activity session more than once in a single observation visit. However, if an activity involves two very different dimensions of teaching/learning, such as students planning a dance performance in one observation and students practicing the performance later, the same activity or group can be observed twice during the same observation visit. The same activity leader and content can also be observed if the observation involves a different set of staff/student pairings (e.g., a different group of students).

Observe all major activities offered, regardless of the reported quality.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

COVER SHEET ITEMS	
ACTIVITY NAME	The title of the activity, as given by the project
ACTIVITY OVERVIEW	1-2 sentence description of activity
ACTIVITY TYPE (check all that apply)	
Homework Help/Test Prep	Check this category when youth work on homework or specially assigned skill drill. If youth participate in academic activities that are not homework, mark *Academic activities*. If youth are working on an in-depth, expanded academic assignment, but it IS homework, mark THIS category.
Tutoring	Tutoring refers to skill-focused academic assistance to individuals or small groups with common learning needs. It is distinguished from homework or other activities in that it aims to strengthen or remediate specific academic skills.
Academic activities (not homework)	This item refers to an activity that develops broad-based conceptual/cognitive learning; it may or may not be directly related to school content, but it includes enriched supplementary instructional content that goes beyond homework, tutoring, and rote skill practice. Examples could include purchased literacy or numeracy curriculum, research, science, social studies, newspaper club, poetry club, or school store. If supplementary activities are offered but are not in-depth or cognitively rich, do not mark this activity type.
Story reading/listening	Reading or listening to a story.
Visual arts	Specialized visual arts-based activities such as painting, drawing, clay/sculpture, photography, knitting, sewing, etc. that include structured lessons in appropriate use of techniques, materials, and design elements to create products. Often the activity involves creating projects in multiple stages that may take several days, weeks, or months to complete.
Dance	Dance lessons, practices, or performances. This area does NOT include athletic types of movement such as cheerleading or martial arts, which are marked in one of the *Sports* categories.
Music	Instrumental or vocal lessons, practices, or performances.
Drama	Drama lessons, practices, or performances.
Crafts	Non-specialized arts activities, using crayons, paints, yarn, etc. Involves creating a product for fun, but does not involve basic instruction in design or technique. Often is a short-term project, involving a product but requiring only the activity period or a few days to complete.
Sports—practicing/learning a skill	Preparation and training in a sport or athletic skill of any kind, including basketball or baseball skill clinics, martial arts, gymnastics, weightlifting, yoga, cheerleading practice.
Sports—playing competitive or non-competitive physical game	Supervised or non-supervised games using athletic skill, indoors or outdoors, such as basketball or baseball games.
Open, unstructured time (e.g., table games, Internet, free play)	This category refers to a focused activity freely chosen by youth and not structured (but may be supervised) by adults; typically, youth have invented, selected, or identified a task and are implementing it without adult direction.
Staff-assigned learning games (dominos, chess, etc.)	Staff assign youth to engage in certain specified educational games.

COVER SHEET ITEMS (continued)	
Community service	Planning or assisting with projects that support the quality of community life or foster program-school or community-school linkages.
College/career preparation	Activities directly involved in career or college planning or preparation.
Cultural awareness clubs/projects	Activities/projects that develop cultural, religious, or ethnic awareness, understanding, or identity.
Other	Describe here activities observed that cannot be categorized or grouped above (e.g., chess club or student government).

Type of Space (Check only one.)	Classroom	Check the one location in this category that best applies to the setting in which the activity takes place. If "Other" is marked, specify the type of space used.
	Gym	
	Computer lab	
	Library	
	Cafeteria	
	Auditorium	
	Art room	
	Music room	
	Hallway	
	Outside playground	
	Other	

Total Staff (Count and record in the space on the right the NUMBER of staff in each activity. The number should correspond to staff levels/skills. Do not count middle school students who are acting as helpers.)	High school student	High school students are in grades 9-12.
	College student or young adult	College student or young adult refers to staff who have finished or left high school and are approximately 18-24 years of age.
	Certified teacher	Certified teachers are classroom teachers from the host school OR another school.
	Specialist/other professional	A specialist has skills or talents that are the focus of the activity, such as a musician, artist or chess instructor. *Other professional* includes social workers, guidance counselors, or other staff with professional degrees.
	Other adult	Other adult refers to staff approximately 25 years of age or older; these staff are school aides, paraprofessionals, parents, community members, etc. who may or may not have an undergraduate degree.

Total Participants (Count and record the number of girls and the number of boys in the activity.)	Total number of girls	If in doubt about gender, make an educated guess rather than disrupting the class.
	Total number of boys	

COVER SHEET ITEMS (continued)		
Grade Levels (Circle all that apply.)	**Grade level observed**	Circle all the grades that are represented in the classroom or activity space. More than one category can be circled, if appropriate.
Participation Type (Check one.)	**By age or grade**	Indicate the predominant way that youth are selected to participate in this activity.
	By interest (child's choice)	
	All attendees (in the program)	
Skill Development (Check one.)	**Skill-building**	Check "Skill-building" if youth are engaged in an activity that builds on a previously learned skill and is intended to help youth reach the next level of mastery, or if a new skill is learned and built upon. An example may be a new piece of dance choreography, rehearsing the next scene in a play, revising a piece of writing, or continuous practice and improvement of a recital piece.
	Skill practice/ reinforcement	Check "Skill practice" if youth are using or reinforcing a skill already learned but the activity is not intended to help youth reach the next level of mastery. An example might include completing a math skills sheet.
	Neither	Check "Neither" if activities do not build or reinforce skills already learned.
	This is a homework activity	Check "This is a homework activity" if youth are working on homework.
Primary Skill Targeted in Skill-Building (Only complete this area if "Skill-building" or "Skill practice" were checked in the Skills Development section above.)	**Physical/athletic**	Athletics, games, skills of physical sport (including martial arts, yoga, step, cheerleading, gymnastics, etc.).
	Artistic	Artistic skills, working in any medium (visual, musical, dance, dramatic, photographic, video, etc.).
	Math/numeracy	Mathematics learning, skill development, practice.
	Reading/ writing/ literacy	Reading/language arts learning, skill development, practice.
	Decision making/ problem solving	Developing skills in making practical or conceptual decisions or solving practical or conceptual problems.
	Interpersonal communication	Developing skills that involve self- or group reflection, negotiating, interaction, and/or improvement of connections/relationships among people.
	Other	Check this category AND DESCRIBE here specific other content areas (e.g., science, social studies, foreign language) or skills developed that are not listed above.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT ITEMS	
1. Is the level of adult supervision appropriate to activity and age group?	Mark YES if the number of adults in the room allows for safety, activity implementation, and individualized attention to youth.
	Mark NO if there are too few adults to ensure participant safety, to implement the activity, or to provide adequate support to individual participants; also mark NO if there are too many adults deterring youth interactions and/or leadership. Provide an explanation of the NO response in the space provided.
2. Is the work space conducive to the activity?	Mark YES if the physical work space is conducive to the group size and activity type.
	Mark NO if the physical work space has evident hazards, is not conducive to the group size, or is inappropriate for the activity type. Provide an explanation of the NO response in the space provided.
3. Are necessary materials available and in sufficient supply?	Mark YES if participants have an adequate supply of the materials/tools they need to make progress on tasks or activities, if the quality or condition of the materials is adequate (materials/equipment are in working order, not piecemeal or broken), and if activities/tasks can be completed with what is available.
	Mark NO if materials are in poor working condition, or if there is an inadequate supply, to the extent that the activity is not effective for youth. Provide an explanation of the NO response in the space provided, such as "Not enough instruments for all youth."

RATING OF SAFE FEATURES	
Sequenced	Sequenced activities are content-driven and develop core skills. This includes any activity that uses some content—academic or non-academic—to extend or deepen youth's learning. If a lesson is in the context of other lessons that came before and will follow, that is evidence of "sequence." If youth are relying on skills previously learned to develop those skills and/or add new skills, that is sequenced learning. A sequenced activity structure can characterize any kind of learning, whether academic or non-academic.
Active	Active learning engages youth dynamically with the content of learning, through dialogue, questioning, collaboration, youth-to-youth support, and by creating a product (paper, report, performance). Active learning opportunities can occur in both academic and non-academic activities, such as sports, dance, theater, music, or in situations where youth are creating a project, an artistic product, or trying to win a game. Active learning also includes competitive activities in which youth are collaborating or reflecting on how to be more successful competitors (e.g., math/science competition, sports competition). It could involve planning or completing such activities as a community service project, advisory groups, governance committees, events, etc.
Personally Focused	Interpersonally focused activities build and sustain healthy adult-to-youth and youth-to-youth relationships. They include activities in which the adults engage in and strengthen positive relationships with individuals or the group. Evidence of this element would include personal discussions that are part of lessons or activities, exploring personal thinking and ideas among youth, or warm and supportive behavior that the leaders exhibit and/or encourage youth to exhibit. If leaders seek to engage all members of the group productively, interpersonally, and ensure that anyone who might feel left out is included, the activity is interpersonally focused.
Explicit	When the activity is well enough organized that youth know what they are doing and why they are doing it, with or without the facilitator's direction, the activity is explicit and targeted. If youth are focused and working actively on a task, it is likely because this "explicit" element is in place. It is possible the observer does not actually observe the goals and purposes being communicated, but observers will see evidence that participants understand well what they are doing and why. Facilitators/adults might be circulating to check progress and understanding, or they may be keeping participants on task and in focus with encouraging guidance, questions, or suggestions. Participants are task-oriented and engaged.

OUT OF SCHOOL TIME (OST) OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT

COVER SHEET

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">CO-OBSERVED?
☐ Yes   ☐ No</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">CO-OBSERVERS' INITIALS:
1._____   2._____</td></tr>
</table>

Program ID/Location:	Observer Initials:	Observation Number:	Room Number:	Date: (mm/dd/yy)	Start Time:	End Time:

ACTIVITY NAME:	
ACTIVITY OVERVIEW (1-2 sentence description):	

ACTIVITY TYPE	✓ ata*	TYPE OF SPACE	✓ one	TOTAL PARTICIPANTS		#					
Homework Help/Test Prep		Classroom		Total number of girls							
Tutoring		Gym		Total number of boys							
Academic activities (not homework)		Computer Lab		**GRADE LEVELS** (circle all that apply)							
Story reading/listening		Library		K	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Visual arts		Cafeteria		7	8	9	10	11	12	other	
Dance		Auditorium		**PARTICIPATION TYPE**						✓ one	
Music		Art Room		By age or grade							
Drama		Music Room		By interest (child's choice)							
Crafts		Hallway		All attendees (in the program)							
Sports—practicing/learning a skill		Outside Playground									
Sports—playing competitive or non-competitive physical games		Other: _____		*ata = all that apply							
Open, unstructured time (e.g., table games, Internet, free play)		**TOTAL STAFF**	#								
Staff-assigned learning games (dominos, chess, etc.)		High school student									
Community service		College student or young adult									
College/career preparation		Certified teacher									
Cultural awareness clubs/projects		Specialist or other professional									
Other: _____		Other adult									

At the end of the observation, please indicate what type of skill development, if any, took place in this activity.		**PRIMARY SKILL TARGETED IN SKILL-BUILDING**	✓ one
SKILL DEVELOPMENT	✓ one	Physical/athletic	
		Artistic	
Skill-building		Math/numeracy	
		Reading/writing/literacy	
Skill practice/reinforcement		Decision making/problem solving	
Neither		Interpersonal communication	
This is a homework activity		Other:_____	

11

OST INDICATOR ITEM RATINGS

<u>Directions to Observers</u>: After 15 minutes of observation, assign a rating of 1 (not evident) to 7 (highly evident <u>and</u> consistent) to each item below. To select a rating, identify the ODD NUMBER that most closely reflects how evident and pervasive an indicator is. If that number does not precisely reflect the level of evidence observed, then move down or up to the adjacent even number that more accurately reflects the item's presence within an activity.

Note that each indicator may not be present or applicable in each observation; therefore, a rating of "1" may be accurately descriptive and not necessarily negative. The "5" rating is also used in cases where the indicator's presence is implicit within the activity. For instance, if youth are generally friendly to each other throughout the observation, but most do not go beyond a casual, friendly interaction, the rating would be a "5." If the congeniality is active, pervasive, and continuous, the rating would be a "7."

RATINGS:

-------1-------   -------2-------   -------3-------   -------4-------   -------5-------   -------6-------   -------7-------

Exemplar is
not evident

Exemplar is
rarely evident

Exemplar is
evident or
implicit

Exemplar is
highly evident
and consistent

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: YOUTH…		PARTICIPATION: YOUTH…	
	Are friendly and relaxed with one another. Youth socialize informally. They are relaxed in their interactions with each other. They appear to enjoy one another's company.		**Are on-task.** Youth are focused, attentive, and not easily distracted from the task/project. They follow along with the staff and/or follow directions to carry on an individual or group task. Noise level and youth interactions can be high if youth are engaged in the expected task(s).
	Respect one another. Youth refrain from causing disruptions that interfere with others accomplishing their own tasks. When working together, they consider one another's viewpoints. They refrain from derogatory comments or actions about an individual person and the work s/he is doing; if disagreements occur, they are handled constructively.		**Listen actively and attentively to peers and staff.** Youth listen and respond to each other and staff. They appear interested in what others have to say. They look at peers and/or staff when they speak, and they provide concrete and constructive feedback about ideas or actions.
	Show positive affect <u>to staff</u>. Youth interact with the staff, and these interactions are generally friendly interactions. For example, they may smile at staff, laugh with them, and/or share good-natured jokes.		**Contribute opinions, ideas, and/or concerns to discussions.** Youth discuss/express their ideas and respond to staff questions and/or spontaneously share connections they've made. This item goes beyond basic Q&A and refers to sharing as part of the activity and within the class norms. Calling out – or disruptively talking out of turn – is not part of this item.
	Assist one another. One or more youth formally or informally reach out to help/mentor peers and help them think about and figure out how to complete a task. This item refers to assistance that is intentional and prolonged, going beyond answering an incidental question. May include assisting one another with drama, dance, step, or sports techniques/moves.		**Have opportunities to make <u>meaningful</u> choices.** <u>Within this activity</u>, youth choose what they do, how they do it, and/or with whom they collaborate, and they experience the consequences of their choices. This item refers to genuine options about how to accomplish the task, not simple choices such as choosing between two types of games, or two sets of homework pages.
	Are collaborative. Youth work together/share materials to accomplish tasks. Youth are equal partners in the work. This item includes strategizing how to complete a product and includes planning a cohesive product or performance (e.g., a dance, a play, or a musical event) or winning a game. This item is different from item D (above) in that it involves a joint intellectual effort.		**Take leadership responsibility/roles.** Youth have meaningful responsibility for directing, mentoring or assisting one another to achieve an outcome; they lead some part of the activity by organizing a task or a whole activity, or by leading a group of youth within the activity.

	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: **STAFF…**		INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES: **STAFF...**
	Use positive behavior management techniques that allow youth to accomplish the activity's objectives. Staff set consistent limits and clear behavioral standards, and these are appropriate to the age of the youth and the activity type. If it is necessary to discipline, staff do so in a firm manner, without unnecessary accusations, threats, or anger and there is no evidence of disciplinary problems.		**Communicate goals, purpose, expectations.** Staff make clear the purpose of what youth are doing and/or what they expect them to accomplish. Activity goals/expectations may also be implicit if students are clearly on task without staff direction. This item goes beyond how youth are expected to behave (which would be captured in item K).
	Encourage the participation of all. Regardless of gender, race, language ability, or other evident differences among students, staff try to engage students who appear isolated; they do not favor (or ignore) a particular student or small cluster of students.		**Verbally recognize youth's efforts and accomplishments.** Staff explicitly acknowledge youth's participation and progress to motivate them using praise, encouragement, and/or constructive guidance/modeling. (Must involve verbal statements not just implied affirmation.)
	Show positive affect toward youth. Staff tone is caring and friendly; they use positive language, smile, laugh, or share good-natured jokes. They refrain from threats, cutting sarcasm, or harsh criticism. If no verbal interaction is necessary, staff demonstrate a positive and caring affect toward youth.		**Assist youth without taking control.** Staff refrain from taking over a task or doing the work for the youth. They coach, demonstrate, or employ scaffolding techniques that help youth to gain a better understanding of a concept or complete an action on their own. This assistance goes beyond checking that work is completed.
	Attentively listen to and/or observe youth. Staff look at youth when they speak and acknowledge what they have said by responding and/or reacting verbally or nonverbally. They pay attention to youth as they complete tasks and are interested in what youth are saying/doing.		**Ask youth to expand upon their answers and ideas.** Staff encourage youth to explain their answers, to give evidence, or suggest conclusions. They ask youth "why," "how," and "if" questions to get youth to expand, explore, better clarify, articulate, or concretize their thoughts/ideas. This item goes beyond basic Q&A.
	Encourage youth to share their ideas, opinions, and concerns about the content of the activity. Staff <u>actively elicit</u> youth ideas, opinions, and concerns on the activity content through discussion and/or writing. This item goes beyond basic Q&A to fully engage with youth's ideas and thinking.		**Challenge youth to move beyond their current level of competency**. Staff give constructive feedback that is designed to motivate youth, to set a higher standard, and meant to help youth gauge their progress. Staff help youth determine ways to push themselves intellectually, creatively, and/or physically.
	Engage personally with youth. Staff show a personal interest in youth as individuals, ask about their interests, and engage in discussion about events in their lives. This goes beyond content-based discussions to include personal interest and demonstrate caring by the adults.		**Employ varied teaching strategies.** To engage students and/or reach those with different learning styles, staff use diverse instructional strategies, which may include: direct instruction, coaching, modeling, demonstrating, or others. Varied instructional strategies can occur simultaneously and/or sequentially within the observation period.
	Guide positive peer interactions. The lesson structure/content explicitly encourages positive relationships/interactions and/or teaches interpersonal skills. May involve staff explaining or through planned activity content why negative behavior (e.g., bullying, teasing, etc.) is unacceptable and offering constructive behavior alternatives. However, this item does not refer to behavior management, as described above (see item K)		**Plan for/ask youth to work together.** Staff structure activities so that youth work cooperatively to solve problems, and/or accomplish tasks. The focus of the activity is youth-to-youth, rather than youth-to-staff. This item goes beyond staff-assigned teams for competitive games and sports. In the case of staff-assigned teams, staff actively encourage youth to collaborate, plan, devise strategies, etc.
**CONTENT AND STRUCTURE: ACTIVITY** **(Note: When homework is the observed activity, do not score these indicators.)**		
	Is well organized. Activity has clear (implicitly or explicitly stated) goals/objectives; there is evidence of a clear lesson plan and process(es), and tasks can be conducted in the timeframe available. If special materials are needed, they are prepared and available.		**Involves the practice/a progression of skills.** Activity involves practicing skills needed to complete tasks. If a long-term project, youth's activity on the project provides the opportunity to apply or expand skills or techniques previously learned.
	Challenges students intellectually, creatively, developmentally, and/or physically. Activity's level of challenge is not so difficult that youth have trouble participating successfully and not so easy that youth complete tasks routinely, without thought, and become restless/disengaged.		**Requires analytic thinking.** Activity calls on students to think about and solve meaningful problems and/or juggle multiple activities or strategies/dimensions to accomplish a task. For example, the activity requires youth to think about two or more ideas, and/or understand and apply sequencing or patterns. This can apply to complex dance, arts, theater, or sports moves, routines, or strategies.

OST ACADEMIC AND TECHNOLOGY FEATURES

RATINGS:
Not Present. *Activity did not occur at all.*
Present. *Feature is evident during the activity, although it may not have been a central goal of the activity; or the feature is addressed directly by the assignment or in staff statements or instructions.*

Observer's Initials:	Site Name: Observation #:	Activity Name

LITERACY FEATURES

☐ **If this activity/lesson is NOT literacy-focused, mark the box and move to the next section.**

In this literacy activity, students:	Present	Not Present
a. Work on original writing	☐	☐
b. Work on a reading workbook, worksheet, or quiz	☐	☐
c. Read aloud to peers or staff	☐	☐
d. Read books independently	☐	☐
e. Work on understanding new words/word attack skills	☐	☐
f. Discuss the style or structure of literacy activities (e.g., book, poetry, drama, video, other media, etc.)	☐	☐
g. Discuss interpretations, make predictions, or draw inferences from literacy activities (e.g., book, poetry, drama, video, other media, etc.)	☐	☐

MATHEMATICS FEATURES

☐ **If this activity/lesson is NOT mathematics-focused, mark the box and move to the next section.**

In this mathematics activity/lesson, students:	Present	Not Present
a. Practice basic whole number math facts/operations (e.g., addition, subtraction, multiplication, division)	☐	☐
b. Work on a mathematics workbook, worksheet, or quiz	☐	☐
c. Work on problems using fractions or decimals, etc.	☐	☐
d. Work on problems using algebra, geometry/measurement, or data analysis	☐	☐
e. Use manipulatives, mathematics charts, or other tools to solve problems	☐	☐
f. Explain the reasoning behind how a problem is solved	☐	☐
g. Make charts, tables, or graphs	☐	☐
h. Complete open-ended math problems requiring youth to determine method	☐	☐

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

☐ **If technology is NOT used in this activity/lesson, mark the box and move to the next section.**
If computers are used, how many computers are being used during this observation? _____

In this activity, students use:	Not at all	L/T half the group	M/T half the group	Almost all
a. Internet search tools (e.g., Google, Yahoo!)	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Spreadsheet programs (e.g., Excel)	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Word processing program (e.g., Microsoft Word)	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Presentation software (e.g., PowerPoint)	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Drill and practice software for reading (e.g., Destination Reading, READ 180)	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Drill and practice software for mathematics (e.g., Achieve Now, SuccessMaker)	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Calculators	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Digital cameras or video recording/editing equipment	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. Other (describe below)				
	☐	☐	☐	☐

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT		
1. Is the level of adult supervision appropriate to activity and age group?	**Yes**	**No**
If no: →Why not?		
2. Is the work space conducive to the activity?	**Yes**	**No**
If no: →Why not?		
3. Are necessary materials available and in sufficient supply?	**Yes**	**No**
If no: →Why not?		

OBSERVER'S SYNTHESIS AND RATING On a 1-7 scale, rate the extent to which this activity demonstrates these features:		
Element	**OBSERVER'S SYNTHESIS**	**RATING**
SEQUENCED: Activity builds progressively more sequenced and advanced skills and knowledge and challenges youth to achieve clear goals.		
ACTIVE: Youth engage actively in learning. They lead/participate in discussions, develop or research a product, contribute original ideas, collaborate, take on leadership roles, and/or are oriented toward completing tasks.		
PERSONALLY FOCUSED: Actively strengthens relationships among youth and between youth and staff.		
EXPLICIT: The activity explicitly targets specific learning and/or developmental goals		

OBSERVER'S NOTES

Observer's Initials:	Site Name: Observation #:	Activity Name:
SEQUENCED: The activity builds progressively sequenced and advanced skills and knowledge and challenge youth to achieve goals.		**ACTIVE:** Youth actively in learning. They lead/participate in discussions, develop or research a product, contribute their original ideas, work together, take on leadership roles, and/or are highly oriented toward completing tasks.
PERSONALLY FOCUSED: The activity strengthens relationships among youth and between youth and staff.		**EXPLICIT:** The activity explicitly targets specific learning and/or developmental goals.