

# The Webinar Series: *Using The Work Sampling System to Support Intentional Teaching*

## Session #3

### Making Meaning with The Work Sampling System



## Webinar #1: Observe to Build Relationships

*I observe to get to know children better — to figure out how to relate to them better and to teach them better. By observing, I know that Thalia has a sense of humor because I have seen that little smile and the twinkle in her eye. I am going to figure out ways to get that twinkle in her eye a little more often.*



## Webinar #2: Observing During Interactions



- Let children know that you see them and that you are interested in what they are doing.
- Then, introduce an interesting vocabulary word as you further describe what you see.
- Perhaps you might pose an open-ended question that invites an explanation or offers a new challenge.



**Webinar #3:**  
**Making Meaning with  
The Work Sampling System**

# Meaning Making and Decision-Making

- Think about the first two hours of yesterday as you did your work (as teacher, administrator, specialist).
- List some decisions you made.
- What guided your decisions?





# Making Meaning

- To make meaning requires knowledge, reflection and interpretation.
- Figuring out what the “evidence” tells you so that you can make informed decisions.
- When you USE assessment – in this case Work Sampling, you make meaning in informal and formal ways throughout the teaching and learning process.
  - When you set up the environment
  - As you interact with children
  - As you plan (daily, weekly, longer term)
  - To evaluate (at intervals to determine performance and progress)
  - When you talk with families

# Using Assessment

## *not Doing Assessment...*

- The more we use assessment, the less “hit or miss” decisions will be.
  - Basing decisions on knowledge of individual children is the essence of individualizing.
  - When decisions are purposeful and intentional, we can do an even better job supporting children and families.
  - Work Sampling helps make meaning of what we see and hear.

# The Stance of Persistent Curiosity

- Three ideas to ponder:
  - Teachers are learners.
  - When planning for and interacting with children, it helps to use the habit of mind of inquiry (I wonder) rather than advocacy (I know).
  - Interpreting or making meaning requires informed judgment which is different from being judgmental.



## To guide decision-making, use the assessment cycle.



- Interpret evidence = make meaning.
- Using WSS helps with meaning making and in turn can guide intentional decision-making.

# Use Work Sampling to make meaning of the learning environment.

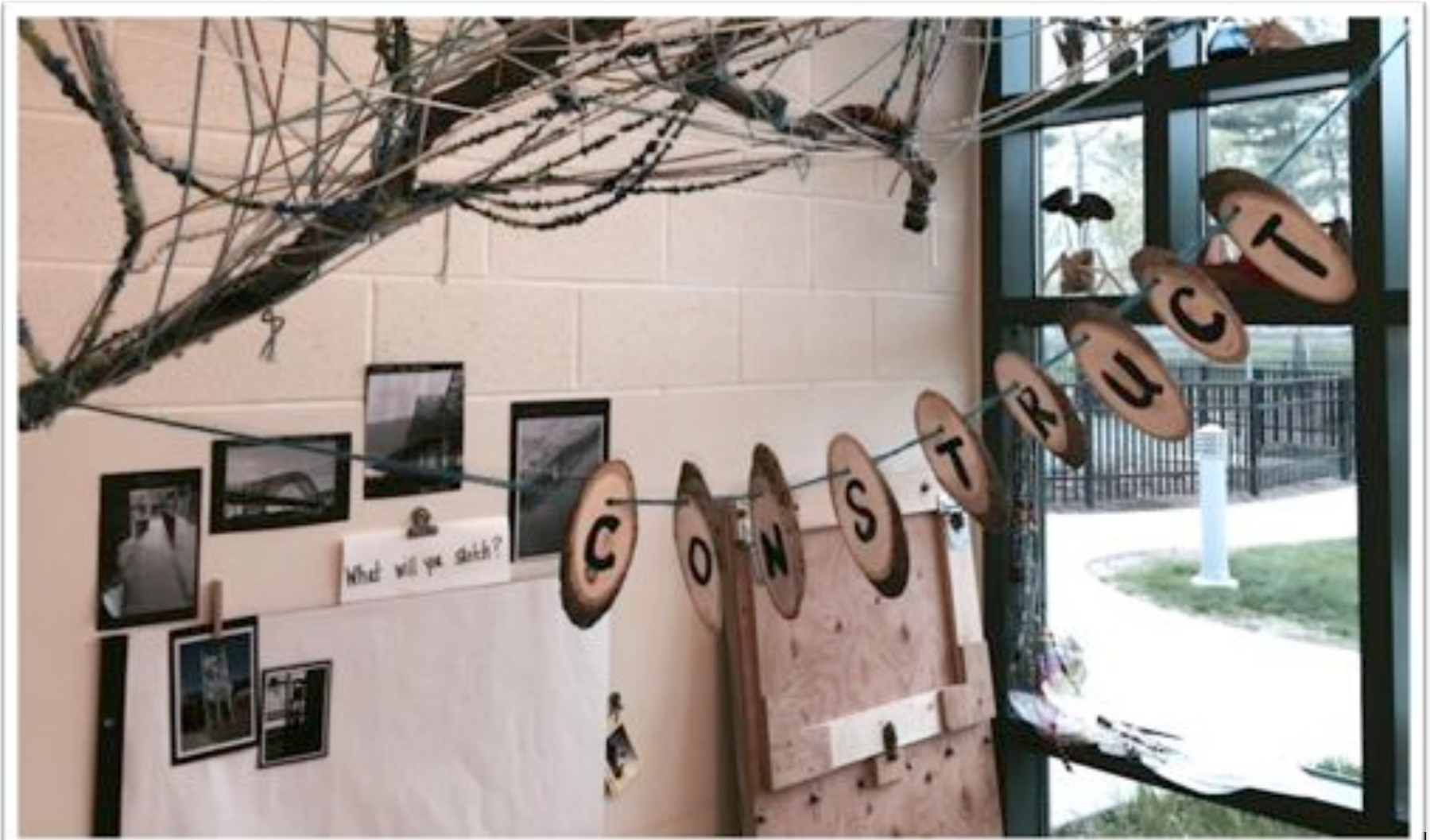
- What can children learn in this area?
- How do I set things up to support this learning?



# Block Center



# What might I include to ignite children's curiosity?





# Learning in the Science Area...



**As you interact with children, you make meaning in the moment...**





## Allow time to pause so that you can think and make meaning.



- Then... you can decide:
- What language do I want to use to encourage thinking and exploration?
- And – am I supporting learning in:
  - Art?
  - Science?
  - Literacy?

## What support might I offer?



# Make meaning with WSS to give effective feedback.

- Be specific and descriptive
- Relate feedback to performance indicators
- Highlight a child's effort or successful use of strategies
- Offer guidance
- Avoid evaluations



# Make meaning with children.

- “How do I know what you know and can do?”
- What are you learning?
- What should I write down so that I can remember about what you know?
- What do you want me to share with your family?



# Make meaning as you plan.

- How do we ensure that there is time to reflect?
- At what intervals do I reflect?
- When I review and reflect on what I'm learning, what questions do I ask?

# Work Sampling Reports help you to make meaning: Class Profile.

2 Demonstrates phonological awareness	0 students	3 students Julie Lee Miguel Arredondo Zachary McAdams	6 students Avanti Brennan Brooklyn Reagan Derrick Miller Jax Penfield Logan Evert Olivia Lennon	0 students	0 students	0 students
3 Shows appreciation and understanding of books and reading	0 students	6 students Avanti Brennan Brooklyn Reagan Derrick Miller Julie Lee Miguel Arredondo Zachary McAdams	3 students Jax Penfield Logan Evert Olivia Lennon	0 students	0 students	0 students
4 Recounts some key ideas and details from text	1 student Zachary McAdams	2 students Julie Lee Miguel Arredondo	6 students Avanti Brennan Brooklyn Reagan Derrick Miller Jax Penfield Logan Evert Olivia Lennon	0 students	0 students	0 students



# Work Sampling Reports help you to make meaning: Class Ratings.

III Mathematical Thinking																								
B Number						C Operations and Algebraic Thinking						D Measurement						F Geometry						
1 Counts with understanding			2 Shows beginning understanding of number and quantity			1 Understands and begins to apply addition and subtraction to problems			1 Orders, compares, and describes objects according to a single			2 Participates in measuring activities			1 Shows understanding of and uses several positioning words			2 Begins to recognize and describe the attributes of shapes			3 Composes and decomposes shapes			
Collection Period	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Alexander, Jackson																								
Arredondo, Miguel	PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO		
Brennan, Averi	PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO		
Ever, Logan	IP			IP			IP			IP			IP			IP			IP			IP		
Lee, Julie	IP			IP			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO		
Lennon, Olivia	PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO		
McAdams, Zachary	PRO			IP			IP			IP			IP			IP			IP			IP		
Miller, Derrick	PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO		
Perfield, Jax	PRO			PRO			IP			IP			PRO			PRO			PRO			PRO		

## “Getting Behind the Behavior”

- Ratings on WSS Checklist describe a child’s competencies
- They do not reveal why a child is successful or struggling
- Hence they do not make clear how we can best support their growth

## **Making meaning requires asking:**

- Does the child need more?
- How might I scaffold?
- What might prompt increased engagement?

## As you plan, use WSS to make meaning:

- About individual children
- Groups of children
- Missed children
- Missed domains, components, performance indicators



## Use what you learn to determine if you could support learning by:

- Adapting the environment by moving furniture, changing materials or altering the ambiance.
- Adjusting the daily schedule and routines.
- Planning a learning experience targeted to individual children's interests and needs.

# Plan for assessment.

- After reviewing data:
  - What new questions do you have about individuals or curriculum objectives for the entire group?
  - Plan how, when and where to collect data.
  - Make recording sheets if necessary.
  - Decide if you need to provide particular experiences to make sure you're able to get the information you need.



# WSS can enhance professional conversations.



# Interpret evidence = make meaning by examining data.

- With a partner, review one piece of documentation (evidence, data, anecdote, work sample).
  - Is it comprehensive?
    - Who, what, where, when, and how
  - Is it factual?
    - What you saw and/or heard (action verbs)
  - Is it rich?
    - Dialogue, questions, scaffolds
  - Are the notes accurately interpreted?
    - Linked to indicators on a formal instrument
    - Do you agree on the interpretations?

Let's pause and think -

to make meaning



Planning  
Teaching & Assessing  
Planning

# Your Turn

- What questions do you have?



# Thank you Stay in touch...

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