Teacher-Child Interactions: The Research

- Vygotsky: the vital connection between interactions and learning
- NSCDC: relationships affect virtually all aspects of children's development
- Hamre and Pianta: the quality of classroom interactions moderates the risk of early school failure

Assessment and intentional interactions go hand-in-hand!
Why?

The greatest opportunity for learning lies in moments of teacher-child interaction when the teacher crafts learning experiences that stretch children just beyond their current skill level. 
Munro, 2008

Research finds that interactions in which teachers intentionally promote learning are few and far between. 
Early et al. 2005; Pianta 2010

Intentional interactions are guided by the assessment cycle.
Intentional Interactions = Powerful Interactions

In a Powerful Interaction the teacher intentionally connects with a child in order to extend that child’s learning.

3 Steps of a Powerful Interaction

Be Present  Connect  Extend Learning

Step 1: Be Present

- Pause to prepare.

*This important step is about self-awareness and allows for intentional decision-making.*
A Stance of Persistent Curiosity

What do I know about Sherelle?
What can I learn about her in this setting?
What is she investigating?

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Step 2: Connect

- Make a personal connection.
- Let the child know that you see her, are interested in what she’s doing, and that you want to spend some time with her.

Hi Sherelle. May I join you?

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Step 2: Connect

- Then wait to see if the child accepts your invitation to connect.
- Slow down – allow wait time.

Sure, I’m building ramps – like we did yesterday.
Pearson Webinar
Observing During Interactions

Step 3 – Extend Learning

• Stay present.
• Maintain the connection.
• Encourage the child’s engagement in learning.

Step 1 Be Present

What’s happening here? Tajuan is looking frustrated. Can I quiet my static and find the just right fit?

Hmm, how can I help him see the problem so that he can solve it?
Meghan’s Observation of Tajuan

Tajuan couldn’t get roof to stay on cave
Expressed frustration: “We're making a cave but we can't get a roof”
I described problem w/ blanket sagging he and others generated ideas.
T said nails but changed his mind when I questioned
T suggested clothespins w/ prompt about hanging laundry + paintings.
Ariel said tape - T recalled “the pink hopscotch tape” and got it.
IC2, IC3, ID1, IIA1, IVB1

Mirror Talk

• Gives children specific, detailed information about what they are doing and saying.
• Raises children’s awareness of their own actions, words, thinking, and learning.
• Encourages children to repeat and practice learning behaviors, leading to deeper engagement.
• Exposes children to new language and vocabulary
• Helps the teacher observe what children are doing.
Rosie, I see that you …

Interacting and Observing: Small Groups

So much going on…

So many balls to juggle…

How can you listen for what children teach you about what they know and can do?

Slow down, watch and listen for the child’s agenda.
BLOCKS

WRITING CENTER

What do you know about? What will happen if? I wonder why?
Posting Questions

- What are you working on?
- Tell me about your ______.
- What are your plans for these materials?
- What could you use this for?
- What would you do if that were you?

Observe to assist with step three – extend learning.

Decide to:
- Use mirror talk as feedback to describe, validate, or demonstrate vocabulary.
- Offer a suggestion, information, or guidance.
- Model a new skill or strategy.
- Introduce a new material, book, or vocabulary word.
- Use an open-ended question to encourage the child to describe, explain, predict, compare and contrast.

Individualizing Questions

- Linked to child’s agenda
- Matched to child’s cognitive development
- Appropriate amount of scaffolding
Be ready to document!

I don’t want to forget this. I’m going to write it down.

Record what you see and hear.

Zaria 4/6
Playing matching shapes game.
Z: I’ll go first. Puts 2 red traps, says I’m putting 2 reds.
T: I see you put 2 red trapezoids.
Z: My turn - puts and says 2 green △ under blue diamonds.
Z Continues taking turns - Z says orange square next to blue diamond.

Documentation of Learning
Make it work for you!

- Use the 4 x 5 = 20 approach (or # of children ÷ 5 days)
- Work as a team.
- Plan and organize!
- Create a system that is manageable for you.
I've got assessment integrated naturally in my everyday teaching routines.

Assessment? How do I do that?

Seeking a habit that works. Experimenting w/a clipboard for each of us. 4 kids each/day and a class list w/space to write. Weekly check online to get reports of what we know and need to learn the next week; plans for individual and group experiences.

I'm trying out different methods of documenting.

Thank you
Stay in touch...

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