

Documentation in Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK)

The Question:

What does documentation look like in FDK programs and how does it support exemplary assessment and evaluation practices?

The Answer:

There are five key elements to consider:

1. Defining the purpose of documentation;
2. Key documentation strategies;
3. Using documentation in FDK programs;
4. Supporting the FDK educator team; and
5. Engaging families in the documentation process.

1. DEFINING THE PURPOSE OF DOCUMENTATION

Observation and documentation provide evidence of student learning in FDK programs and inform the teaching and learning environment by:

- x guiding intentional, purposeful interactions among FDK educator teams and children;
- x helping educators and children set learning goals through observing responses to learning experiences;
- x supporting scaffolding and differentiation in response to strengths, challenges, interests, abilities and temperaments of learners;
- x providing tools to articulate learning and make learning explicit;
- x capturing evidence of children's learning within the context of Saying, Doing, Representing as outlined in the program document;
- x providing connections to developmental continua;
- x setting the context for educators and parents to respond to, challenge and extend learning;
- x providing a reference point for children to return to and build on prior learning; and
- x informing assessment for learning (descriptive feedback); assessment of learning (evidence of student achievement); and assessment as learning (development of child's capacity to monitor progress, determine next steps, reflect on thinking and learning, and set individual goals).



Stand aside for awhile and ~~leave~~ **leave** for learning, observe carefully what children do and if you have understood perhaps teaching will be more different from before. Fraser, 2006, p.141

2. KEY DOCUMENTATION STRATEGIES

A variety of strategies are used in FDK programs to capture observations of learning (both indoors and outdoors), including:

- x photos of children engaged in activities as learning and inquiry progress;
- x representation of children's learning including photographs of artefacts, projects and explorations;
- x learning stories capturing the context of the learning environment that may be enabling or constraining learning
- x videotape clips and/or audio recordings of a child or children engaged in play-based learning or explaining their thinking to an educator;
- x records of reading behaviours and authentic writing samples within the context of purposeful play and inquiry;
- x portfolios that capture development, connect to overall expectations and provide evidence of child reflection (e.g., I am learning to...); and
- x documentation panels or a series of photographs paired with captions about the knowledge/concepts children are constructing.

