

Ideas about Classroom Management for ECLAS–2

Questions, Answers and Tips

What are the benefits of individual assessment?

Administration of ECLAS–2 offers the teacher a close-up look at the strategies that students use when tackling specific literacy activities. It is designed to identify strengths and weaknesses, and allows teachers to get to know their students on a one-to-one basis. This time spent together can motivate the child to excel. The success of individual assessment depends, in part, upon classroom management that allows for uninterrupted time.

How do I schedule the Group Activities (Alphabet Writing, Spelling, Vocabulary, and Listening and Writing)?

In 2nd and 3rd grades, group activities can be given to the whole class; in K and 1st grade, smaller groups are recommended. The balanced literacy program, now in your classroom, complements ECLAS–2 activities that require small groups. For example, groups formed for guided reading can be used for ECLAS–2 group activities. The rest of the class can be involved in working independently at learning centers throughout the room. (See: *How Can I Establish Successful Learning Centers?*)

How do I schedule the Individual Activities (Phonemic Awareness, Alphabet Recognition, Decoding, Sight Words, Reading, and Fluency)?

Teachers need to be creative in administering ECLAS–2 tasks *whenever* and *wherever* the opportunity presents itself. If possible, create a comfortable area in the classroom that is designated as your ECLAS–2 corner. Teachers should have all materials readily available, and be familiar with the tasks and the organization of the Kit.

How do I keep other children from interrupting when I'm working with one child?

Explain that all children will have a turn to work with the teacher on the Kit activities, and that they must not disturb the teacher or their classmate during the assessment. Perhaps, a "Please Do Not Disturb" sign on the desk would be helpful.

Must I finish one child's Literacy Development Checklist before I assess another child?

No. You may choose to assess a number of children on one strand, or subskill, at a time.

Which activities can I do when I don't have an extended amount of time?

Some of the activities are quick, requiring 5 minutes or less. These activities can be administered during the transitional times throughout the school day. Quick tasks (e.g., alphabet recognition or sight words) can be administered to one child at snack time, during preparation for dismissal time, and while children are copying homework or packing their book bags. Remember: sight words are recognized instantly—these words are not decoded.

How do I manage the reading section of the assessment?

The Reading Strand requires the longest block of uninterrupted time. In order to complete the reading activities, students need to be able to work independently at learning centers or quietly in small groups while the teacher is assessing one student. Try to dedicate sufficient time to complete Reading Accuracy and Reading Comprehension. These must be completed in an uninterrupted block of time. You may refer to the Flow Chart on page 8 of the Teacher's Guide for the approximate time required. During this segment of time, the training students have received in working independently will be of great value. (See: *What are some techniques for encouraging student independence?*)

How can I establish successful Learning Centers?

Learning Centers should be introduced one at a time. The routines and rules for use of each center should be clearly understood. Post a chart at each center, outlining the rules such as: how many children may be at the center, correct use of the materials and equipment, etc. Be prepared to model the use of the various centers and to closely supervise Learning Centers at first. You will sense when the children are ready to work cooperatively and independently. Some possible centers include: a writing center, a listening center, an alphabet center, a science center – the list is endless, and can be changed throughout the year. Additionally, in most early childhood classrooms, there is a block-building center, a house/kitchen center, and a painting center, as well as woodworking benches, climbing structures, and water/sand tables. (These last three should be used only if there is another adult in the room to supervise the activity.)

What are some techniques for encouraging student independence?

Try Three Before You Ask Me: If you don't know how to spell a word, what are 3 things you can do **BEFORE** you ask the teacher? 1) Try to sound it out, 2) Look in a dictionary or a picture dictionary, and 3) Check the word wall.

Helper Chart: Give children responsibility for caring for the classroom environment and maintaining the learning centers. Assign 1 or 2 children to be responsible for each center. These students need to check to see that the material is being used properly and that the area is shipshape at the end of center time. Change the helpers regularly so that every child gets a turn.

Spare Time Chart: A list of activities that require very little supervision, such as reading a leveled book, buddy reading, drawing or writing about a book you have read, journal writing, copying a poem or a chart and then responding to a prompt, or writing an item for the class newspaper.

Class Meetings: Schedule a short meeting at least several times a week. Discuss and reinforce positive behaviors and brainstorm solutions to any problems that have arisen such as: the class becomes noisy during center time. "*Why is this a problem? Let's think of some solutions.*" Discuss and practice social skills such as taking turns, listening respectfully, complementing others, and speaking in appropriate voices. Students who have the opportunity to identify and solve a problem will probably like the solution.

Cooperative Behavior Bulletin Boards: Each child contributes a positive behavior that is mounted on a display. As new ideas emerge, they can be added. Spend a bit of time reviewing these positive behaviors, and discuss how they are being followed by the class.

Read-Aloud: Read and discuss stories that emphasize positive and cooperative behaviors. A few suggestions: *The Quarreling Book* by Charlotte Zolotow, *The North Wind and the Sun* by Brian Wildsmith and Jean De La Fontaine, or *Swimmy* by Leo Lionni.