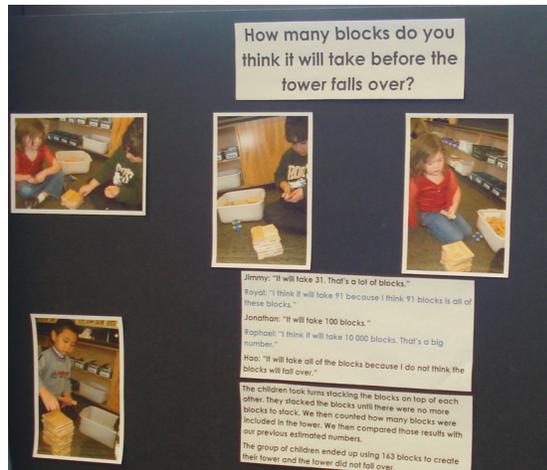


Making Thinking and Learning Visible

Through **Observation and Documentation**



Full-Day Early Learning-Kindergarten
Video Viewing Guide

How to Use the Viewing Guide

The video, *Making Thinking and Learning Visible Through Observation and Documentation* can be watched in its entirety or in segments. The accompanying questions are intended to provoke thinking and discussion before, during, and after viewing.

The Viewing Guide is designed for differentiated audiences and includes reflective questions for Educators (e.g., Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten (FDELK) teams, child care staff, family resource centre staff, other primary teachers), administrators (e.g., principals, child care supervisors) and parents. Administrators and other system leaders have a vital role to play in all aspects of the implementation of FDELK. Engaging administrators and system leaders in reflective discussion will provide educator teams with support in the effective use of observing, documenting, and analysing their documentation to inform learning.

Engaging parents in early learning provides valuable insights and observations that build bridges and relationships between community, home and school. Insights, perspectives, and shared understanding about the purposes and benefits of observation and documentation will ultimately benefit the children.

Observation and Documentation

Documentation is the process that allows a “pedagogy of listening” to be placed and held for consideration by others; it lifts thinking out of the stream of lived experience in education and makes it visible.

Carol Anne Wien, 2008

Documentation is more than a random collection of evidence. It is an organized system for showing children’s learning.

S. Seitz, 2008

Documentation provides an accurate and detailed record of the ongoing evidence of a child’s efforts and learning. Team members’ observations are captured through notes, pictures, and videos and supplemented by the child’s own representations. Parents can contribute to the documentation by sharing their understanding of learning that happens at home. (*The Full-Day-Early Learning–Kindergarten Program (Draft 2010)* p. 28)

Throughout the video you will hear how Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten teams across the province are “rethinking, removing, and repeating” practices in relation to how they are observing, documenting, and analysing the learning. You will hear and see teams reflecting with the children, with each other, with the principals and other Board leaders, and the children reflecting with each other.

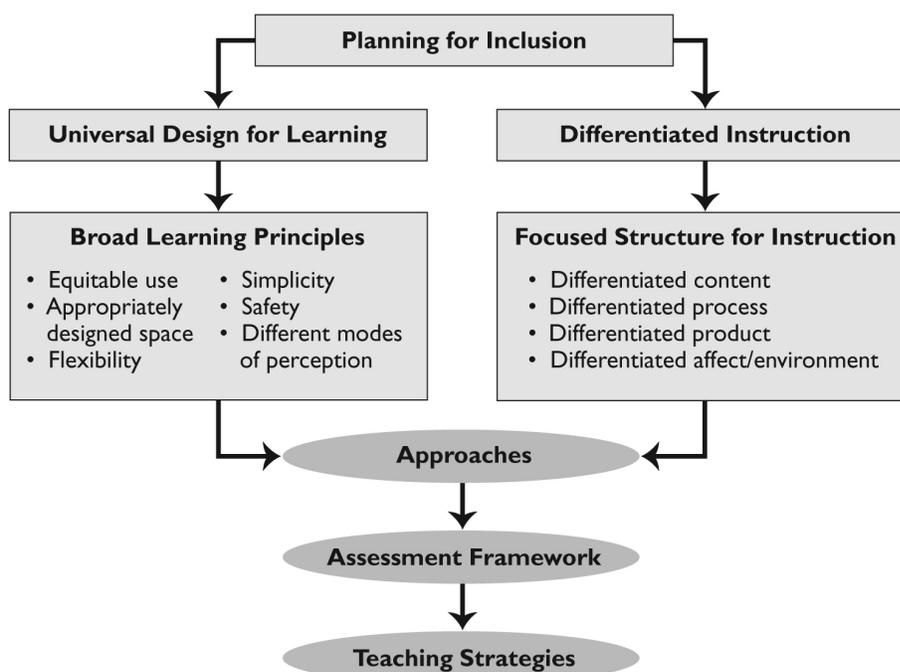
Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Differentiated Instruction

The following information on UDL is taken from *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Instruction and Assessment for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12*, Ministry of Education, Ontario, 2011, p.11-20. http://www.ontariodirectors.ca/L4All/L4A_en_downloads/LearningforAll%20K-12%20draft%20J.pdf

UDL was inspired by work in architecture on the planning of buildings with a view to accessibility for people with physical disabilities (Turnbull et al., 2002). Architects observed that the added improvements facilitated access for all users, not just people with physical disabilities. An access ramp, for instance, provides a person using a wheelchair with easier access to a building, but it also makes it easier for a parent with a child's stroller, a cyclist, or someone using a walker.

This notion soon found its way into education. Instruction that both responds to the characteristics of a diverse group of students and is precisely tailored to the unique strengths and needs of each student can be achieved using the principles and guidelines associated with three instructional approaches:

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- differentiated instruction, and
- the tiered approach to prevention and intervention



Used in combination, *UDL* and *differentiated instruction* enable educators to respond effectively to the strengths and needs of all students. UDL provides educators with broad principles for planning instruction for a diverse group of students, whereas differentiated instruction allows them to address specific skills and difficulties (Raynal & Rieunier, 1998). The two approaches overlap, sharing certain goals and strategies, such as providing a range of instructional strategies, resources, activities, and assessment tools in order to meet the different strengths, needs, readiness, and learning styles or preferences of the students in a class.

The chart below highlights places in this video where connections to UDL can be seen in the practices of the educator teams. You may wish to read the chapter(s) cited before viewing the video, or as part of your follow-up discussions after viewing.

Time	Topic	Connections to Learning for All (Draft 2009)
3:35	Using observation and analysis of documentation to plan learning	Chapter 4: Planning Assessment and Instruction-Knowing your Student/Child
5:40	How observations inform learning	Chapter 4: Planning Assessment and Instruction
6:00	Incorporating the principles of Universal Design and differentiated learning	Chapter 3: Assessment <i>for</i> Learning Chapter 4: Planning Assessment and Instruction
8:00	Thinking and learning can be made visible in a variety of ways	Chapter 3: Assessment <i>for</i> Learning Chapter 4: Planning Assessment and Instruction
9:30	Thinking and learning can be made visible in a variety of ways	Chapter 3: Assessment <i>for</i> Learning Chapter 4: Planning Assessment and Instruction
13:00	Documenting learning and making learning visible	Chapter 2: Universal Design for Learning/ Differentiated Instruction
16:16	When children revisit the documentation of learning, teams discover even more about the learning that took place	Chapter 3: Assessment <i>for</i> Learning Chapter 4: Planning Assessment and Instruction
21:45	Documenting and making thinking and learning visible over time allows teams to see what learning has taken place and where learning has stalled	Chapter 2: Universal Design for Learning/ Differentiated Instruction

Considerations for Viewing

The following considerations are provided to inform and focus your thinking as you view the videos.

Numbers of Children

The groups of children seen in the classrooms may not be representative of the numbers of actual children in the class. Children present in the video had written parental permission to be filmed.

Classroom Space

The space allotted to Kindergarten classes varies from school to school. The classrooms shown represent this variation. The organization of some of the physical environments shown is indicative of the rethinking and removing that has been done.

Resources

The classrooms shown depict a wide variation in resources. The materials and equipment in the classrooms vary based on local contexts and decision making.

Community Partnerships

Many Board teams benefit from community partnerships with organizations such as faculties of education, community colleges, and parent volunteers. Additional adults in the classrooms reflect these partnerships.

Safety

Educators are responsible for ensuring the safety of children, and for encouraging and motivating children to assume responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others. Educators must ensure that children acquire the knowledge and skills needed for safe participation in all learning opportunities both inside the school and in the outdoors. Children must be aware of any required safety procedures and of ways of interacting with each other to ensure that they are not putting themselves or their peers in danger.

Sample Questions for Educator Teams

These sample questions can be used to guide reflection and discussion about observation, documentation, and analysis. You may wish to reference *The Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten Program (Draft 2010)* (page 28), which focuses on making learning visible through observation, documentation, and analysis.

Before viewing the video

What are some strategies you use to observe children?

How does documenting children’s learning support your team planning?

How do you engage the children in documenting?

While viewing the video

Notice how educator teams are:

- rethinking observation, documentation, and analysis
- using documentation, observation, and analysis to plan learning
- engaging the children in documenting
- using documentation to make learning visible to the children and to others
- using a variety of media to make learning visible to the children and to others
- engaging families in observation, documentation, and analysis

After viewing the video

How might educators rethink differentiated observations?

How did the educator teams use observation and documentation to inform planning for children who might have required more time and/or support in specific areas of learning?

Sample Questions for Administrators

These sample questions can be used to guide reflection and discussion about observation, documentation, and analysis. You may wish to reference *The Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten Program (Draft 2010)* (page 28), which focuses on making learning visible through observation, documentation, and analysis.

For additional support, administrators can reference resources from the Ministry's Administrators Leadership Development site at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/leadership/principalsWanttoKnow.html>

Before viewing the video

What comes to mind when you hear the term “observation?”

What comes to mind when you hear the term “documentation?”

While viewing the video

Notice how educator teams are:

- rethinking observation, documentation, and analysis
- using documentation, observation, and analysis to plan learning
- using documentation to make learning visible to the children and to others
- using a variety of media to make learning visible to the children and to others
- engaging families in observation, documentation, and analysis

After viewing the video

How might educators rethink differentiated observations?

How did the educator teams use observation and documentation to inform planning for children who might have required more time and/or support in specific areas of learning?

In what ways can you support your educator team(s) to further engage families in observation, documentation, and analysis?

What are the courageous conversations you would facilitate with teams:

- whose practices related to play-based learning are not aligned with practices presented in the video, (e.g., “Reflecting upon your own practices and those practices in the video, what aspect of your current practices are you going to rethink, repeat, and remove?”)?
- whose play-based learning practices are aligned with practices presented in the video, (e.g., “Reflecting upon your own practices and those practices in the video, what aspect of your current practices are you going to rethink?”)?

Sample Questions for Parents and Community Members

These sample questions can be used to guide reflection and discussion about observation, documentation, and analysis. You may wish to reference *The Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten Program (Draft 2010)* (page 28), which focuses on making learning visible through observation, documentation, and analysis.

Before viewing the video

What observations about your child do you feel are important to share with the educator team?

What do you want to know about your child’s learning and development?

While viewing the video

Note: These elements from the video are not intended to be presented to parents in isolation from a facilitated discussion, as many of the terms may be new to parents (e.g., scaffolding, co-constructing). They are intended as a guide for facilitators working with parents.

Notice how educator teams are:

- rethinking observation, documentation, and analysis
- using documentation, observation, and analysis to plan learning
- using documentation to make learning visible to the children and to others
- using a variety of media to make learning visible to the children and to others
- engaging families in observation, documentation, and analysis

After viewing the video

In what ways does the documentation shown in the video help families to better understand how and what children are learning?

What aspects of observation and documentation might be applicable at home as well as at school, (e.g., using a variety of media to make learning visible)?

Acknowledgements

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch, Ministry of Education, would like to thank the Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten teams, the school administrators, the Board Program Leads, the parents/guardians and the Full-Day Kindergarten children in the following Boards and schools, for allowing us to visit and film in their classrooms, and for sharing their learning with others across the province.

Greater Essex County District School Board
Belle River Public School

Halton Catholic District School Board
St. Luke Elementary School

Halton District School Board
Mohawk Gardens Public School

Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
St. Lawrence Elementary School

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
Prince of Wales Elementary School

Lakehead District School Board
Westmount Public School

Kenora Catholic District School Board
St. Louis School

Near North District School Board
Marshall Park Public School

Ottawa Catholic District School Board
Our Lady of Wisdom School St. Elizabeth School

Peel District School Board
Marvin Heights Public School

Rainbow District School Board
Landsdowne Public School
Princess Anne Public School

Sudbury Catholic District School Board
St. Raphael School

Toronto District School Board
Pape Avenue Junior Public School

Waterloo Region District School Board
Floradale Public School

