

PN-ACK-344

STEP BY STEP EVALUATION PROJECT

DATA COLLECTOR MANUAL

IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL QUALITY (IEQ II) PROJECT

American Institutes for Research
in collaboration with

Educational Development Center
Juárez and Associates Inc.
Academy for Educational Development
and
University of Pittsburgh

Contract Number: HNE-I-00-97-00029-00

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DATA COLLECTOR MANUAL

A. General Guidelines for School and Class Visits

As the Data Collector, you will represent the study and the Improving Educational Quality (IEQ II) Project in the schools you visit. It is important to follow a few guidelines that will make your role in the school one of a professional, caring, interested learner.

Gaining Entrance

It is important to obtain permission and schedule school and classroom visits in advance, through the school principal or other “gatekeeper”.

Explain the purpose of the study, the procedures to be used, and the confidentiality of information gathered. (These need to be agreed-upon during training so that all Data Collectors provide the same information.)

Offer to share the results at the end of the study.

Establishing Rapport

A first step in working in classrooms is to establish rapport with teachers and children, and to put them at ease. Both teachers and children are sometimes apprehensive about outside observers. You will need the support of teachers and children as partners in data collection who can assist you in gathering data and learning about their programs.

Explain the purpose of the study, the procedures to be used, and the confidentiality of information gathered.

Assure teachers that you are not evaluating them, but rather collecting information to assess different pre-school programs.

Demeanor

Your attitude counts! Be respectful, considerate, and sensitive to the concerns of teachers and children. Be unobtrusive in observing classes and in testing individual children.

Confidentiality

Instruments and observations are strictly confidential, in addition to anything you see or hear in the classroom.

Do not use names on the instruments, only code numbers.

Do not provide feedback to teachers on children's performance or classroom observations.

Do not pass on information about anything you see or hear in the classroom, whether it is related to the study or not.

Do not provide feedback to the principal or answer questions about teachers. If you are asked for such information, explain that you all information is strictly confidential and that you will be happy to see that they get a copy of the overall results of the study at the end.

Do not give copies of the instruments to teachers or others who may ask.

Emergency Phone Numbers

If in doubt about any aspect of the study, or as questions arise, you should have emergency contact numbers for your Research Coordinator.

Write that number here: _____

Organizing Data

As you collect data, be sure all instruments are coded. Clip all information for one child together, all information for one teacher together, by classroom and by school.

Keep an inventory of what you have and what remains to be collected.

Security of Data

As you collect data, be sure to keep it in a safe place. Do not let anyone have access to the data.

Turning in Data

Work out careful procedures for how and when you will get completed data to your Research Coordinator. Write those instructions here:

B. Classroom observations

[RAY TO SUPPLY]

C. Child assessments

You will be administering these child assessments:

- _____ Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT), 3rd Edition
- _____ Emergent Literacy Assessment
- _____ Test of Early Mathematics Ability (TEMA)
- _____ Torrance Tests of Creative Ability (TTCT)

Copies of all child assessment instruments, descriptions, instructions, and recording forms are included in your packets. These are divided by morning and afternoon administration.

Test batteries require approximately a one-hour session each. If a child is tested in the morning for the first session, schedule the second session for an afternoon.

If only one Step by Step classroom in a school meets the criteria for participating in the study (initial Step by Step classrooms must have children who have been in Step by Step programs for at least 2 years, preferably 3; the lead teacher must have been in Step by Step for at least 2 years, preferably longer):

Use the one classroom but test up to 14 children in the one class.

From the sample of 20 classrooms (10 initial Step by Step and 10 traditional), seven children must be tested in each classroom. If less than seven of the original children selected are available, select additional children using the selection criteria for the child sample.

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Children in the sample can be tested in any order. If the first child on your list is not available, go to the next. Only work with the children on your list.

Parents have the option of deciding that their children will not participate.

Fill out cover sheets as instructed and find a quiet, well-lighted place (not in the classroom) to administer the tests before meeting with the child.

Talk with the teacher and child before the testing session to explain what will happen and let them become comfortable with you. Take the child to the testing location.

Take time to establish rapport with the child before you begin to test.

Follow test instructions carefully, so that you obtain valid and reliable data.

Remember that test data is confidential. Do not discuss the results with the teacher, parents or other adults, or the child. Instead, offer to provide a copy of the report at the end of the study, if requested.

After the tests are complete, package the recording forms as instructed and return to the Research Coordinator.