

Environment Inventory: Elementary

This form, derived from the *Developmental Environment Rating Scale (DERS)*, enables observers to reflect on the physical attributes of the Prepared Environment. As each item is linked to outcomes in Executive Functions, Cultural & Linguistic Fluency, and Social Fluency & Emotional Flexibility, observers may use this to pinpoint areas in need of attention and/or intervention. Items marked with an * are behaviors we look to diminish while the others are those we look to increase.

DATE:	PRESENT/ NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
ACCESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children have access to the entire environment and all materials in it. 		
ANIMALS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The environment contains live animals. Materials for animal care are available to children. There is evidence that animals are integrated into science and/or language instruction/learning; children may observe, classify, or socialize animals. 		
BIG WORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Room arrangement supports collaborative work, with a range of spaces for groups of children to gather. There are ample materials to support student-generated research projects, including reference books, writing tools, and judiciously used digital technology. Children have ongoing access to art materials. 		
CHILD SIZED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials and furnishings are appropriately sized for use by children. This includes tables, chairs, didactic materials, kitchen tools, and implements for caring for the environment. 		
CLEANLINESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelves and tables free of dust. All surfaces (including whiteboard/chalkboard) are clean. Garbage has been emptied. 		
CLUTTER* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over-stimulating wall decoration. Inadequate storage leads to supplies, materials, and other items cluttering the environment. Misplaced items accumulate, creating clutter on flat surfaces. 		*want to see none/little
CURATED DÉCOR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wall décor is carefully selected with emphasis on art rather than commercial posters or student work. Décor reflects a variety of cultures and heritages. Décor creates a warm, comfortable, and welcoming environment. 		
DIRECTED CHILD INTERACTION* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children broken into age or grade-level groups. Children assigned seats. Whole group time, including circle or snack, exceeds 15 minutes per work period. 		*want to see none/little
EASY ACCESS TO NATURE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The classroom provides direct access to nature via a door opening to an outdoor space. Children pass freely between indoor and outdoor spaces without adult mediation or permission. 		
EXCESSIVE RELIANCE ON DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children receive instruction or assessment via computers. Whole group instruction is delivered with the aid of computers and/or SmartBoards. Classroom time is taken up with individual, computer based activities. 		*want to see none/little
FOOD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children primarily prepare, serve, and clean up snacks and/or meals with minimal help from adults. Individual food preparation activities are present where children are preparing, consuming, and cleaning up the activity independently. Snack is provided for children to serve themselves and is taken in small, rather than whole, groups. 		

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LANGUAGE RICH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversation is ongoing and children move easily between social and academic topics. • High-interest print material (books, magazines and other physical texts) are available at all times, as distinct from leveled readers and other didactic texts. • The environment contains a cozy reading area, with a chair and a selection of texts culturally representative of the classroom community. 		
LINKS TO WIDER COMMUNITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials and décor reflect the children's ethnic/cultural backgrounds. • There is evidence that children have access to the world beyond the classroom—through field study, "going outs," and outreach to the wider community as connects to classroom research. 		
MATERIALS READY FOR USE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencils are sharpened. • Consumables are stocked. • All areas of the classroom are orderly and prepared for children. 		
MIXED AGE GROUPING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are in mixed-age groups. 		
NATURAL MATERIALS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials, furniture, and containers intended for children's use are made of wood, glass, fiber, metal. 		
PLANTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The environment contains live plants. • Materials for plant care are available to children. • There is evidence that plants are integrated into science and/or language instruction and learning; children may experiment with, measure, describe, or classify plants. 		
PRUDENT USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital technology is present as a support for research and communication but not delivery of instruction. • Children use digital tools to develop and deliver presentations. 		
REAL TOOLS AND REAL WORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have access to working, child-sized, real-life tools (e.g., hammers, rakes, shovels, brooms, knives). • Children participate in activities requiring the use of real tools (gardening, washing, ironing, sweeping, sewing, handcrafts, food preparation). 		
UNINTERRUPTED WORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have access to the entire environment for at least two and a half hours per day. 		

GENERAL COMMENTS