

The Rhode Island Early Learning Standards



Self-Assessment for Practitioners: Differentiated Teaching and Learning

Practitioners engaged in implementing a Standards-based program begin their journey during participation in the Early Learning Standards professional development and continue improving their early childhood practice over time. As a practitioner, you will want to continually step back from your day-to-day work with children to assess your own progress in meeting each of the four Practitioner Standards associated with implementing a Standards-based program. You will then use the information from this self-assessment to identify your strengths and the individual professional development goals you will pursue to achieve new levels of competency and improve your practice with children.

Standard 3: Practitioners recognize children’s individual learning styles, interests and developmental levels, and use effective strategies to implement learning opportunities that support each child’s growth towards the Standards.

Four Key Areas to Consider:

1. I utilize child assessment information to determine the developmental levels of children in all areas of the Standards.
2. I have skills and competencies that I use to identify the learning styles (multiple intelligences) and interests of children.
3. I plan and implement multi-level learning opportunities using various methods of instruction to support each child’s learning based on their development levels, learning style, and interests.
4. I work to improve my practice in the area of differentiated teaching and learning on a continuous, ongoing basis.

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Instructions:

This self-assessment is designed to focus on Standard 3: Practitioners recognize children’s individual learning styles, interests and developmental levels and use effective strategies to implement learning opportunities that support each child’s growth towards the Standards. Standard 3 is divided into four key areas as described above.

As you proceed through the self-assessment, you will use three different methods to gather information regarding your current practice. This multi-method approach allows you to obtain a more complete and accurate picture of your current practice. These methods include:

- **Self-Observation**

The statements in the self-observation sections encourage you to engage in critical-thinking to analyze your own teaching practices. Self-observation, by its very nature, is often difficult for practitioners. You may want to consider asking for input from a peer or colleague to assist you in obtaining an honest appraisal of your skills and practices in each area.

- **Documentation**

Focus your review on the following documents to help measure your progress in implementing a quality curriculum aligned with the Standards:

- *Your Practitioner Professional Portfolio including previous self-assessment, goals, artifacts, and reflections*
- *Written curriculum, Lesson Plans and/or Activity Plans*
- *Family interviews, questionnaires, or surveys*

- **Reflective Questioning**

These questions encourage you to think about and analyze your teaching practices to monitor your own performance.

After considering your responses, use the three columns in the middle section of each page to identify your areas of strength, areas that are somewhat strong, and areas where you intend to focus your improvement efforts. Use the NOTES column to provide examples or evidence to justify your responses. Use the artifacts and reflections you have collected for your Practitioner Portfolio as a source of evidence for many of these items.

The key to self-assessment is to remain objective and honest with yourself as you reflect on your current practice and determine your strengths and the areas where you want to grow and improve.

Once you have completed the assessment, use the Next Steps section to take stock of your responses, identify your strengths and accomplishments in the area of differentiated teaching and learning, and identify goals to move forward in this area.

The goal chart on the final page provides space for you to document your plan for achieving your professional development goal(s) in the area of differentiated teaching and learning. Complete the chart by identifying your goal(s), strategies, and time frames. Use the right hand column to record progress along the way.

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Area 1. I utilize child assessment information to determine the developmental levels of children in all areas of the Standards.				
	1. Place a checkmark (√) to indicate if each item is an area of strength, an area that is somewhat strong, or an area that needs improvement 2. In the NOTES column, provide an example or evidence to justify your choice. Use the contents of your Practitioner Portfolio as a resource.			
	Strong	Somewhat Strong	To Be Improved	NOTES
A. Self-Observation 1. I have a strong knowledge and understanding of typical developmental levels of children in all areas so that I can connect each child’s level of development to the Standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I coordinate with special education to ascertain the developmental levels of children with disabilities. • I appreciate how to assess the developmental levels of children with cultural and linguistic differences. • I possess knowledge of the successive developmental steps preceding and succeeding the Standards. 2. I understand that the expectations listed in the Standards are “examples” and I can use my own knowledge of developmental levels to augment that list. 3. I plan the collection of authentic assessment information to ensure that I know and understand each child as an individual. 4. I organize and plan for assessment in order to effectively track children’s learning throughout the entire year.				

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<p><i>B. Documentation</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My lesson/activity plans reflect that I have knowledge about the different developmental levels of the children in my program. 2. I have recorded assessment information that reflects each child's most current developmental level in all areas of the Standards. 				
<p><i>C. Reflective Questions</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do I have a system for child assessment that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allows for multiple sources of information which describe children's abilities? • assesses the quality and depth of each child's knowledge and skills? • provides me with information about each child's strengths as well as the supports they need? • allows for flexibility in the manner in which children are assessed? 2. Do I review my assessment information regularly so that I remain current and knowledgeable about each child's developmental levels? 3. Do I utilize the knowledge of other early childhood professionals and specialists to help me assess children with special needs? 4. Does my practice reflect an understanding of different developmental levels within each child in the domains and learning goals? 				

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Area 2. I have skills and competencies that I use to identify the learning styles (multiple intelligences) and interests of children.

	Strong	Somewhat Strong	To Be Improved	NOTES
<p>A. Self-Observation</p> <p>1. I understand the individual learning styles of children.</p> <p>2. I offer activities that address a variety of learning styles and interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The activities I provide offer children the opportunity to work and play in natural settings • The activities allow me to identify the learning styles and interests of each child. <p>3. I can offer concrete example of ways I identify the learning styles and interests of children.</p>				
<p>B. Documentation</p> <p>1. I document the learning styles and interests of each child so I can use the information to meet their individual needs.</p> <p>2. My records reflect that I use family input to help determine children's learning styles and interests.</p> <p>.</p>				
<p>C. Reflective Questions</p> <p>1. Do I make a point of identifying the learning styles and interests of each child?</p> <p>2. Do I use my knowledge of children's learning styles and interests to make decisions about the way I set up activities, environment, and materials?</p>				

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Area 3. I implement multi-level learning opportunities using various methods of instruction to support each child’s learning based on their development levels, learning style, and interests.

	Strong	Somewhat Strong	To Be Improved	NOTES
<p>A. Self-Observations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I can describe the different methods of instruction I use to support each child’s learning based on their development levels, learning style, and interests. 2. My space, materials, and activities are organized in such a way as to offer all children learning opportunities which reflect their learning style and interests. 3. I offer children choices and the opportunities to learn on their own, using what they know to build new knowledge and skills. 4. I offer activities which encompass a variety of learning styles and interests. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The activities I offer children provide opportunities to build upon and enhance their learning styles. • The activities also allow children opportunities to discover other learning styles. 				
<p>B. Documentation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My activity and lesson plans demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • which Standards are being addressed • alignment between the activities and the Standards • a multi-leveled approach • multiple ways of learning 2. My activity/lesson plans demonstrate that I use a combination of large group, small group, and individual learning opportunities according to the levels and learning styles of the children. 				

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C. *Reflective Questions*

1. Do I effectively support children learning at different rates and at varying developmental levels?
2. Do I react responsively to the language and cultures of children in my program?
3. Do I have knowledge of a wide variety of instructional approaches and teaching strategies that I can use to support **each** child's growth towards the Standards?
4. Do I create multi-level learning opportunities in response to the varying developmental levels, learning styles, and interests of children?
5. Do I use my knowledge of each child, their interests, and learning styles, to help create a sense of community?
6. Am I flexible in my approach to teaching?
 - Do I adjust the curriculum and the presentation of information to the children based on what I know about their developmental levels?
 - Do I incorporate appropriate types and levels of supports and modifications for children with special needs?
7. Do I have the support I need to:
 - Provide inclusionary environments that meet the needs of children with disabilities?
 - Provide individual learning experiences appropriate for children with linguistic or cultural differences.

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Area 4. I work to improve my practice in the area of differentiated teaching and learning on a continuous, ongoing basis.

	Strong	Somewhat Strong	To Be Improved	NOTES
<p>A. Self-Observations</p> <p>1. I commit time and energy towards improving my practice in the area of differentiated teaching and learning.</p>				
<p>B. Documentation</p> <p>1. My Professional Portfolio includes artifacts and reflections demonstrating my professional growth in the area of differentiated teaching and learning.</p> <p>2. My Professional Portfolio includes ongoing self-assessment, professional development goals, and documents progress towards attaining goals.</p>				
<p>C. Reflective Questions</p> <p>1. How will I ensure that I will review my Professional Portfolio on an on-going basis?</p> <p>2. What will I pledge to do to guarantee that I will update and periodically review my Portfolio?</p>				

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Name: _____

Date: _____

Next Steps

I. Take stock of your responses to the self-assessment as well as the documentation in your Professional Portfolio to determine your strengths and progress in practicing differentiated teaching and learning.

My strengths include:

-
-
-
-

II. Next, determine the goals you want to achieve to improve your skills and competencies in the area of differentiated teaching and learning.

My professional development goal(s):

-
-

III. Transfer your goal(s) onto the attached goal sheet and develop a specific plan for accomplishing each goal by identifying strategies and time frames. Space is provided on the goal sheet to evaluate and record your progress along the way.

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Name: _____

Date: _____

Differentiated Teaching and Learning

Standard 3: Recognizing children's individual learning styles, interests, and developmental levels and using effective strategies to implement learning opportunities that support each child's growth towards the Standards.

Professional Development Goals

GOAL:		
Strategies	Time Frame	Progress

GOAL:		
Strategies	Time Frame	Progress

Date I will evaluate progress and reassess goals: _____