



Thinking More about Language and Books

FCCERS-3

Purpose: This document addresses many of the requirements found in the Language and Books subscale. The focus is primarily on indicators at the 3, 5, and 7 level. It is important to review each item entirely to ensure that no indicator at the 1 or “inadequate” level apply to the space(s) for childcare. Answering the questions and referring to the FCCERS-3 will build familiarity with requirements, while reflecting on current practices and situations.

Preparation: Refer to the FCCERS-3 (spiral binding on the top, published in 2019) when completing the questions. To better understand the scale format and structure, review the Scoring System on page 11. It will also be helpful to refer to a copy of the most current NC Additional Notes (available at ncrlap.org). There are many questions, so completing them all will likely take several reflection/review sessions.

The items in this subscale consider many aspects related to promoting children’s understanding and use of language. Using varied and new vocabulary, responding to children’s verbal and non-verbal communication, engaging in conversations, as well as using books, all work to expand children’s developing language skills. Attention is given to the ways adults introduce new words and ideas, support children in responsive, engaging interactions, read books and talk about the text and pictures, and promote children’s use of books.

Tips:

- If you are confused about a question, look at the Item in the FCCERS-3 and check any Notes for Clarification and/or NC Additional Notes to identify the specific indicator and requirement to which it refers.
- Describe current practices when answering questions. Remember, this is not about a “right answer,” but rather a way to build understanding about what occurs every day.
- Using the worksheet on an ongoing basis can help verify that the required literacy materials are present as the environment changes over time, and that positive interactions promoting children’s language, communication skills, and literacy are a focus each day.
- Answering the questions with someone else (other FCCH providers, technical assistance specialists, health consultants, etc.) promotes sharing of perspectives and may draw attention to different details.

Date(s) completed: _____ Ages enrolled: _____

Worksheet completed by: _____

Item 9 Talking with children (p. 32-33)

Hint: Before answering these questions, review the section, "Interactions: Negative, Positive, or Neutral" on p. 13 of the FCCERS-3.

Do adults frequently talk to children during both routine care and play activities throughout the day? **Y / N**

Is the tone used with children consistently positive or neutral? **Y / N** Consider any times when adults might use phrases that include negative language rather than telling children what they should do. How can the following phrases be reworded to offer positive guidance?

"Uh-uh, not in your mouth" _____

"We don't hit" _____

"We are not playing with blocks now" _____

Is guidance consistently offered in positive terms throughout the day and by all adults? **Y / N**

Thinking about interactions with the children, consider the following questions:

Is communication individualized for each child, such as by being aware of which children need less stimulation or a quieter voice, of attention spans, and of children seeking interaction? **Y / N**

Do adults use a pleasant tone with children throughout the day? **Y / N**

Is much of the talking personalized and one-to-one between adults and children? **Y / N**

Is talking to children done in a playful way (e.g., verbal play)? **Y / N** If **yes**, describe at least three recent playful verbal interactions: _____

Item 10 Encouraging vocabulary development (p. 34-35)

Thinking about interactions with the children, consider the following questions:

Do adults frequently name people, places, objects, and actions? **Y / N**

Do children experience these words in routine care and play, throughout the day? **Y / N**

Do certain words get repeated throughout the day for emphasis? Consider when this occurs in routine care and play, and provide examples: _____

Does adult talk include references to the materials used, the display, and activities being done? **Y / N** If **yes**, list two recent examples: _____

Does adult talk include references to the past or future, in addition to present experiences? **Y / N** If **yes**, list two recent examples: _____

Do adults check if new words are understood (e.g., watch for child's response, encourage child to use word too)? **Y / N** If **yes**, describe a recent example: _____

After naming an object, do adults ever provide more information/details about it? **Y / N** If **yes**, describe a recent example: _____

When children use words, do adults ever provide more information or details about them? **Hint:** See the Notes for Clarification for indicator 7.4 on p. 34 for examples. **Y / N** If **yes**, list a recent example: _____

Item 11 Responding to children's communication (p. 36-37)

Children communicate non-verbally and verbally in many different ways (e.g., babbling, words, crying, pointing, gestures, nodding, facial expressions). Think about all the ways children communicate and consider the following questions:

Do adults usually understand what children are trying to communicate? **Y / N**

Are the responses to children's communication quick and positive? **Y / N**

Do responses usually address the child's need or interest? **Y / N**

How do adults respond when:

A child cries while their bottle warms up or a child asks to eat: _____

A child cries after another child stepped on their hand: _____

Are all responses to children's communication positive, even during more stressful parts of the day? **Y / N**

In addition to responses for children who are upset, are there many interactions for children when content?
Y / N

Do adults add words to describe what a child is expressing? **Hint:** See indicator 5.4 for examples. **Y / N** If **yes**, describe two recent examples: _____

Are adults tuned in to more subtle communication from children (e.g., notice hunger or fatigue signs before crying, end activity for toddlers or twos prior to them disengaging or walking away, checks in with quiet school-ager)? **Y / N**

Item 12 Encouraging children to communicate (p. 38-39)

Consider the types of back-and-forth communication that occur between adults and children (even when children are non-verbal):

Do adults initiate conversations with children (e.g., back and forth babble with infants, copy sounds, simple conversations with toddlers, more complex conversations with older children)? **Y / N**

Does this type of communication happen frequently throughout the day? **Y / N**

Are children asked questions and do adults wait for a response (verbal or non-verbal)? **Y / N** If children do not, or are not able to respond, do adults respond for them? **Y / N**

Does this type of communication happen throughout the day in routines and play? **Y / N**

Do conversations include topics outside the child care environment (e.g., family, community, school, etc.)? **Y / N**

Are children helped to communicate with one another? **Y / N** If **yes**, describe two recent examples: _____

Are questions/conversations personalized for each child? **Y / N** Describe ways that adults make interactions personal to each child: _____

Do adults use questions that require more complex answers from children? **Y / N**

Item 13 Provider use of books with children (p. 40-41)

Books are offered to a child/children showing interest _____ times in a typical day and include:

- Reading the text
- Talking about the story or pictures
- Following text with finger while reading

Are there ways the provider makes books times more interesting to children? **Y / N** If **yes**, what are some strategies used? _____

If children are not interested in books times, they can: _____

Are there ways adults show they enjoy reading or talking about books? **Y / N** If **yes**, what are some ways children see this? _____

Are children actively involved in the use of books? **Hint:** See the indicator for examples. **Y / N** If there are different ages enrolled, list ways different ages are encouraged during use of books: _____

Do adults extend ideas in books while reading? **Y / N** If **yes**, describe how this occurs: _____

Item 14 Encouraging children's use of books (p. 42-43)

Refer to the Notes for Clarification and the indicators for information about books in good repair, appropriateness, and the total number of books. Information about time requirements for materials, including books, can be found in the "Accessibility and time requirement" section of the Thinking More about Activities worksheet and the definition of "Accessible" on page 12-13 of the FCCERS-3. **Hint:** There should be no long lapses in each child's access to books.

For each age group enrolled, fill in the number of accessible age-appropriate books in good condition:

Infants/toddlers: _____ **NA** Twos: _____ **NA** Preschool/kindergarten: _____ **NA** School-age: _____ **NA**

The total number of books accessible to children is: _____

Do almost all these books meet requirements for appropriateness and good repair? **Y / N**

Do the accessible books include both fiction and factual information? **Y / N**

Are the books are gathered together and stored for children's easy access? **Y / N**

Are books rotated? **Y / N** If **yes**, how often? _____

Do mobile children show independent interest in books? **Y / N** Do non-mobile children show independent interest in books? **Hint:** Think about book location and how adults facilitate children's access. **Y / N**

Does the provider provide extended positive interactions when a child uses a book independently? **Y / N** If **yes**, describe a recent example: _____

Reflection for future planning: After completing this worksheet, it can be helpful to go back and think more about the answers. Were there any questions that were answered "no" instead of "yes"? Were there any questions where you struggled to provide written examples, or where the specific interactions considered do not occur daily, throughout the day? If so, this could help identify areas to work on. It can also be helpful to break bigger topics into smaller steps so that changes and progress can be easily recognized. Hopefully, this worksheet was a helpful tool in an ongoing self-study practice and will be useful in continuing with an action plan after completing the reflection questions below.

List areas where strengths were noted in language and books:

List areas where improvements could be made or there are new ideas to think about:

Are there any issues you will work to change right away? Describe how so:

Are there issue that will take more time to change? What were these and what resources/support may be needed?

Want to find out more?

Not all FCCERS-3 indicators are covered in this worksheet, so review the FCCERS-3 carefully and seek out other resources, as needed, since relying on these questions alone to prepare for an assessment will not be sufficient. We encourage you to review other resources on the ncrlap.org website to stay informed about any updates and to continue to build your understanding of the FCCERS-3 and the assessment process.

Register for free online training webinars. Some are live webinars; others are pre-recorded and offer training credits (contact hours). Call 1-866-362-7527 or register online at ncrlap.org.

Look for general information about the assessment process and specific ITERS-3 resources. These resources may offer ideas about what to focus on or to supplement ideas you were already considering. Check out the answers to the Frequently Asked Questions or send a new question to ncrlap@uncg.edu

When planning for program enhancement, always consider the unique features of the program such as ages and abilities of the children enrolled, the provider(s), and overall goals and/or philosophy. Programs may also seek advice from their DCDEE Child Care Consultant, local CCR&R and/or Smart Start Partnership TA specialists, a Child Care Health Consultant, or other child care agencies.



References:

Harms, T., Cryer, D., Clifford, R., & Yazejian, N. (2019). Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale. (Third Edition). New York, NY. Teachers College Press.

NC Additional Notes (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.ncrlap.org>.