

# Getting to Know the ITERS-3



As we navigate the transition to a new scale, it's natural to feel a mix of emotions about the changes and uncertainty about what steps to take next. Keep in mind that many of the core principles in the ITERS-3 and ITERS-R are the same but simply show up in different items and indicators, or at different quality levels.

The scoring system continues to use the same 7-point scale where quality builds from the 1 level to the 7 level. Both scales emphasize developmentally appropriate practices and aim to promote enriching experiences for young children by offering a framework that supports teachers and programs in creating nurturing environments. The ITERS-3 continues to evaluate how the environment, including teachers, impacts children's daily experiences. Aspects of the indoor and outdoor space, materials, health and safety practices, language and interactions, and the structure of daily events are still considered. While the phrase "much of the day" is not used in this scale, children still need much access to a variety of materials throughout the observation. Accessibility requirements focus on the experience and developmental needs of each age group enrolled in a classroom.

## Key Differences

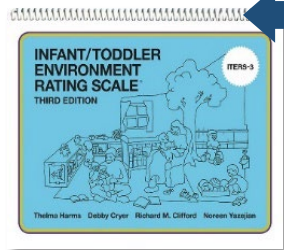
There is greater focus on responsive, intentional teaching and language interactions with children as they use materials.

There is no interview, scores are based on a time-limited 3-hour observation.

The ITERS-3 has an expanded age range and is used to assess classrooms for children from birth until they turn 3 years old.

## Getting started

- Ensure you have the correct version of the scale. The third edition is spiral bound along the top.
- Read through the scale becoming familiar with the terms and definitions that begin on page 11.
- Review individual items and indicators paying attention to the Notes for Clarification as the notes provide additional information about requirements.
- Consider the "why" behind the various requirements to increase motivation for building upon what's already in place and developing new habits or strategies.
- Spend time reflecting on current practices and environments, and how these relate to different items/indicators. A few examples are shown on the next page, but there are many other options and areas of the scale to consider.



**The Environment Rating Scales are tools that can help establish foundational daily practices in a classroom to support teachers and children. Change takes time, but ultimately practices that benefit children also benefit teachers, and are worth the effort.**

# Using the ITERS-3 to Build Upon Current Practices

Note that the left-hand column of this page describes differences in the ITERS-3 subscales as compared to the ITERS-R subscales. The right-hand side provides reflection questions to think about your current practices as they relate to the subscales. This is a great way to see how your current practices align with newer items and indicators.

In **Space and Furnishings**, requirements for soft furnishings and a cozy area appear in the Furnishings and Room arrangement items. Display for children includes more details about using the display to support learning and positive relationships.

Write down ways the space and arrangement foster learning and growth.

How do furnishings in the classroom support children's development and independence?

How is the display used with the children?

The **Personal Care Routines** subscale consists of 4 items, and nap practices are included in the Health item. In addition to sanitation practices, there is more of a focus on positive interactions during routine care such as talking with children about the handwashing process and other health practices.

During routines, what interactions occur?  
How are conversations and teaching included?

How do children learn about safety?

Review sanitation requirements and current practices including supervision.

In **Language and Books**, two items focus on how staff and children use books. Four other items have details to support and stimulate children's communication skills, language awareness, and vocabulary development. The use of nurturing, responsive interactions is emphasized.

What types of meaningful conversations occur?  
What about with non-verbal children?

Are new and interesting words used frequently?

What happens when children use books independently?

How do you use books with children each day?

Many items in the **Activities** subscale have requirements for interactions with children as they use specific materials. In addition, sand and water is now part of the Nature/science item and there is a new Math/number item.

How do you ensure children, including those who are non-mobile explore all play areas and use a variety of materials?

What types of interactions occur while children use materials?

Is there an area or certain materials that are used less? Why is this?

In the **Interaction** subscale, there are two new items, Supervision of gross motor play, and Providing physical warmth/touch. The other items in this subscale include familiar requirements with some additional updates.

How is peer interaction promoted as children learn to interact?

Is the language used with children frequently positive and respectful?

How is gross motor play promoted?

For **Program Structure**, the Schedule and transitions item includes additional considerations for an effective and appropriate daily schedule. Considerations for children with disabilities are captured in other items but there is no longer a separate item.

Can children choose materials that interest them every day, indoors and outdoors?

If group play activities are used, are these positive and engaging?

Are there activities for children who are not interested in group activities?