

PQA

Preschool Program Quality Assessment

Second Edition

The
all-in-one
program
assessment
system!

Form A — Classroom Items

SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

Observe and/or interview as appropriate. (Sections I–III are designed to be completed mainly through observation, while Section IV is interview-based.) Record supporting evidence in the spaces provided in each row of boxes.

What you see, hear, and write down provides the evidence for the level of quality you select in step 3. Much of your evidence will come from direct observation, but sometimes you will need to ask program staff (for example, teachers, early childhood specialists, or directors) for additional information to supplement what you observe. Use the standard questions, which appear above the indicators, to elicit information from staff as needed. Supporting evidence for the indicator level you choose includes any of the following, as needed, for each item:

- Anecdotes: brief notes on what children and/or staff actually do and/or communicate
- Quotes: what children and/or staff actually say
- Materials lists
- Diagrams of the room, space, area, and/or outdoor play yard; sketches and notations
- Sequences of daily events and routines
- Answers to questions (see specific wording of questions under relevant items)

Training results in the most effective use of the Preschool PQA. To arrange Preschool PQA training for staff members or independent raters who will be completing this instrument, please contact the Training Coordinator, HighScope Educational Research Foundation, 600 North River Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48198-2898; Phone: 734-485-2000, extensions 224, 237; FAX: 734-485-4467; e-mail: training@highscope.org. Or visit the HighScope Web site—www.highscope.org—for more information on training programs or to register online.

Read each row of indicators. Check one box per row.

Once you have gathered supporting evidence for an item, read the rows of indicators that follow it. Based on the evidence you have gathered in Step 1, place a checkmark (✓) in one and only one box (1, 3, or 5) of each row of indicators. Try to complete every row for every item. Ask teachers and/or program staff for additional information to supplement what you observe as needed. If a row of boxes does not apply (for example, if it is a half-day program without naptime), make a note to that effect next to the row and do not check any boxes in that row.



Determine the quality level. Circle the corresponding level at the top of the form: 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5.

Determine the quality level for the item using the following criteria:

For items with **three or more rows of boxes**

Level 1: Half or more of the level 1 boxes are checked (regardless of the level 3 or level 5 boxes that may be checked).

Level 2: Fewer than half of the level 1 boxes are checked, and some of the level 3 and/or level 5 boxes are checked.

Level 3: Half or more of the level 3 boxes are checked, and no level 1 boxes are checked.

Level 4: Fewer than half of the level 3 boxes are checked, and the remaining boxes are checked at level 5.

Level 5: All the level 5 boxes are checked, and no level 1 boxes or level 3 boxes are checked.

For items with **two rows of boxes**

Level 1: Both level 1 boxes are checked.

Level 2: One level 1 box and either one level 3 box or one level 5 box are checked.

Level 3: Both level 3 boxes are checked.

Level 4: One level 3 box and one level 5 box are checked.

Level 5: Both level 5 boxes are checked.

If a row of boxes is “not applicable” or cannot be observed or determined by interview, compute the quality level based on the number of rows that are completed for that item. If and only if no rows are completed in the item, check “Not observed or reported” and enter “NR” on the Summary Sheet.

For additional instructions on administering the Preschool PQA, see the **Preschool PQA Administration Manual**.

I. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

I-A. The classroom provides a safe and healthy environment for children.

Circle one indicator level for this item based on the scoring rules on page 4.

1 2 3 4 5

☐ Check here if not observed or reported.

Standard Question

I. Do you have a first-aid kit? Where is it located?

Level 1 Indicators	Level 3 Indicators	Level 5 Indicators	Supporting Evidence/Anecdotes
☐ Classroom space is crowded, not permitting children and adults to move, play, and work freely whether alone or with others.	☐ Some classroom space permits children and adults to move, play, and work freely, whether alone or with others.	☐ Classroom space is ample (at least 50 square feet per child) and permits children and adults to move, play, and work freely, whether alone or with others. [Divide the total area by the maximum allowable enrollment of children.]	
☐ There are safety and health hazards (e.g., broken toys, unmopped spills, unsanitary toilet facilities, uncovered electrical outlets).	☐ There are minor safety and health problems (e.g., dirty toys or floors, wobbly furniture).	☐ The room is free of health and safety hazards.	
☐ The classroom lacks adequate ventilation, lighting, or temperature control.	☐ Ventilation, lighting, or temperature control is sometimes adequate.	☐ Ventilation and lighting are adequate; a comfortable temperature is consistently maintained throughout the day (e.g., individual thermostat and/or windows and doors that can be opened to regulate the temperature in the room; window coverings that can be adjusted for light and air.	
☐ The classroom is used to store nonprogram materials (e.g., broken or unused equipment).	☐ Some nonprogram materials are stored in parts of the classroom.	☐ Nonprogram materials are stored in spaces other than in the classroom.	
☐ There is no first-aid kit in the classroom.	☐ A first-aid kit is available in the classroom.	☐ A first-aid kit is easily accessible and available in the classroom.	
☐ No evacuation plans are posted.	☐ Evacuation plans are posted.	☐ Clear evacuation plans are visibly posted.	

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Form B — Agency Items

SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1

Conduct interview with the program director or other knowledgeable staff members. Record supporting evidence in the spaces provided in each row of boxes.

What you see, hear, and write down provides the evidence for the level of quality you select in step 3. Use the standard questions, which appear above the indicators, to elicit information. Supporting evidence for the indicator level you choose includes any of the following, as needed, for each item:

- Anecdotes: brief notes on what children and/or staff actually do and/or communicate
- Quotes: what children and/or staff actually say
- Materials lists
- Diagrams of the room, space, area, and/or outdoor play yard; sketches and notations
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Step 2

Read each row of indicators. Check one box per row.

Once you have gathered supporting evidence for an item, read the rows of indicators that follow it. Based on the evidence you have gathered in Step 1, place a checkmark (✓) in one and only one box (1, 3, or 5) of each row of indicators. Try to complete every row for every item. If a row of boxes does not apply (for example, if it is a half-day program without naptime), make a note to that effect next to the row and do not check any boxes in that row.

Step 3

Determine the quality level. Circle the corresponding level at the top of the form: 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5.

Determine the quality level for the item using the following criteria:

For items with **three or more rows of boxes**

Level 1: Half or more of the level 1 boxes are checked (regardless of the level 3 or level 5 boxes that may be checked).

Level 2: Fewer than half of the level 1 boxes are checked, and some of the level 3 and/or level 5 boxes are checked.

Level 3: Half or more of the level 3 boxes are checked, and no level 1 boxes are checked.

Level 4: Fewer than half of the level 3 boxes are checked, and the remaining boxes are checked at level 5.

Level 5: All the level 5 boxes are checked, and no level 1 boxes or level 3 boxes are checked.

For items with **two rows of boxes**

Level 1: Both level 1 boxes are checked.

Level 2: One level 1 box and either one level 3 box or one level 5 box are checked.

Level 3: Both level 3 boxes are checked.

Level 4: One level 3 box and one level 5 box are checked.

Level 5: Both level 5 boxes are checked.

If a row of boxes is “not applicable” or cannot be observed or determined by interview, compute the quality level based on the number of rows that are completed for that item. If and only if no rows are completed in the item, check “Not observed or reported” and enter “NR” on the Summary Sheet.

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V. PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND FAMILY SERVICES

V-A. The program provides a variety of opportunities for parents to become involved in the program.

Circle one indicator level for this item based on the scoring rules on page 4.

1 2 3 4 5

☐ Check here if not observed or reported.

Standard Questions

1. Are parents informed about and involved in program activities? (If yes) How?
2. Does the program encourage parent participation? (If yes) How?

Level 1 Indicators

- ☐ There are no activities or materials to help parents become involved in the program.

Level 3 Indicators

- ☐ The program provides some parent-oriented activities or materials to help parents become involved in the program.

Level 5 Indicators

- ☐ There are many parent involvement options consistent with a variety of parent interests and time constraints, e.g., parents may
- Volunteer in the classroom
 - Bring in materials
 - Attend parent meetings and workshops
 - Serve on parent advisory councils
 - Meet with teachers to discuss children's progress
 - Support children's learning at home
 - Read or contribute to a parent newsletter

Supporting Evidence/Anecdotes

- ☐ The program does not encourage parent participation.

- ☐ The program sometimes encourages parent participation.

- ☐ The program encourages parent participation (e.g., providing child care, arranging transportation, scheduling events at times convenient for parents, making reminder phone calls the day before, networking parents with one another).