



Birth–12 Months

Cognitive: Object Inquiry¹

WHEN INTRODUCED: Block 1

BEHAVIORS TO OBSERVE

- Uses one or more senses to explore an object(s)
- Uses a simple action to make something happen with an object(s)

EXAMPLES OF OBSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

Behaviors may be observed during a care routine, such as a mealtime or a diaper change; playtime; or during a guided activity, including a book sharing. Pertinent ELM activities (Cognitive) are cited in parentheses.

Uses one or more senses to explore an object(s)

Looks at

- a mobile and/or other objects during a caregiver-guided tour of the room (Block 1, Option 1)
- caregiver-described objects and activities seen through a window (Block 2, Option 1)
- a caregiver-manipulated fish (Block 15, Option 1)
- two similar dolls wrapped in fabrics of contrasting colors (Block 18, Options 1 and 2)
- high contrast colors, such as black and white picture cards (Block 23, Option 1)
- pictures, such as book illustrations of ducks (Block 23, Option 2)
- a food item, cup or dish, or a utensil during a mealtime
- a diaper or other item used during a diaper change

Looks at and touches/feels/manipulates

- toys (Block 1, Option 2; Block 4, Options 1 and 2)
- water on a tray (Block 2, Option 2)
- floating balls (Block 2, Option 3)
- nonbreakable bottles containing different types of objects (Block 4, Option 3)
- nesting cups (Block 5, Options 1 and 3)
- different types of objects, such as small toys and a basket (Block 5, Option 2) or objects with different textures (Block 8, Option 3)



- different types of objects that are initially together, such as a silky scarf placed in the hole of a ball (Block 8, Option 2)
- large snap beads of different colors (Block 18, Option 3)
- toys that are different in size (Block 7, Option 2; Block 22, Options 1 and 2) or shape (Block 7, Option 3)
- a food item, cup or dish, or utensil during a mealtime

Uses a simple action to make something happen with an object(s)

- watching a food item, cup or utensil fall to the floor when it is dropped or pushed off a table during a mealtime
- pushing on a water mat and watching objects move (Block 12, Option 1)
- putting a ball in the box of a toy dump truck and then lifting the box so the ball falls out (Block 12, Option 2)
- shaking a rattle and listening to its sound (Block 25, Option 1)
- manipulating an object that makes a sound, such as shaking a rattle (Block 10, Option 2) or squeezing a ball that makes a crinkling sound (Block 10, Option 1)
- pushing a button on a pop-up toy that makes something move (Block 10, Option 3)
- pushing a button on a toy telephone that makes a sound or lights up when pushed (Block 25, Option 2)
- pushing over a block tower and watching the blocks fall (Block 25, Option 3)

EXAMPLES OF FOLLOW-UP LEARNING SUPPORTS

Reintroduce

Uses one or more senses to explore an object(s)

- Secure a cloth book with different colors and textures, such as *Dazzle Dots and the Missing Spots: A Taggies Adventure* by Mary Meyer. Share the book with an infant by talking about the images, textures, and colors. Invite the infant to feel prominent features of the book. Describe the infant's gaze and touch. Example: "You are looking at a monkey. Our book is about Dazzle. Dazzle is a monkey!" If the book has tabs, draw attention to the tabs by touching a tab to the infant's hand. Encourage the infant to touch and move the tabs.
- Engage an infant in guided play with two similar toys of different sizes (Block 7, Option 2; Block 22, Option 1).
- Offer a hard toy and a soft toy. Describe major differences between the toys as you and/or the infant touches or manipulates each (Block 7, Option 1).

Guide for Observing and Individualizing



- Offer three different types of balls. Describe major differences between the balls as you and/or the infant touches or manipulates each (Block 15, Option 2).
- Repeat the Block 1, Option 1 guided tour of the room, with opportunities to look at a mobile and other specific objects in the room. Describe what the infant looks at while the infant is looking.

Uses a simple action to make something happen with an object(s)

- Repeat Block 1, Option 3. Point to your ears when you talk about a bell making a noise. Example: "Our bell makes a noise when we shake it."
- Draw attention to how we see a different picture(s) when an infant turns the page of a book.
- Explore the characteristics of a rattle with an infant. Draw attention to its shape, especially its handle, and the noise it makes when shaken. Encourage the infant to hold and shake the rattle, and listen to its sound (Block 19, Option 1; Block 25, Option 1).
- Emphasize how a mealtime item, such as a piece of food or bottle, falls to the floor when an infant drops it or pushes it off the table.
- Repeat the Block 12, Option 1 activity in which an infant pushes on a water mat. Draw attention to how things move in the water when the mat is pushed.

Reinforce

Uses one or more senses to explore an object(s)

- Engage an infant in guided play with different sizes of stacking rings (Block 22, Option 2).
- Encourage an infant to put a small object inside a cup (Block 16, Option 1). Emphasize the object is little and the cup is big.
- Provide and draw attention to an actual object and a picture of a similar object, such as a toy car and a book picture of a toy car (Block 19, Option 2).
- Repeat the Block 23, Option 1 activity in which an infant looks at black and white images.
- Repeat the Block 15, Option 3 activity with a toy inchworm. Encourage the infant to touch the toy's eyes and to squeeze the toy.
- Provide opportunities to touch, hold, and manipulate toys of different textures (Block 8, Option 1).

Uses a simple action to make something happen with an object(s)

- Provide a dump truck with a box that moves and different small objects that can be put in the box, one or two at a time. Encourage the infant to lift the box and watch the object(s) fall out (Block 19, Option 3).
- Offer guided support for removing a partially-visible ball from a cup (Block 24, Option 1) and taking apart a stacking ring (Block 17, Option 1). Emphasize how the object changes when the infant removes something (the ball or a ring).



- In the Block 15, Option 3 activity with an inchworm suggested earlier, draw attention to the squeak noise the inchworm makes when squeezed.
- Adapt the Block 25, Option 3 block tower building activity to show how removing one of the blocks at the bottom of the tower causes the tower to fall over.

EXAMPLES OF PORTFOLIO ENTRIES

I have taken Lucas on two different tours of our room. I carry him in my arms and pay close attention to what he looks at. On both tours his eyes opened wide when we stood in front of the mobile hanging in the corner of our room. I think he likes to hear me talk about the colors in our mobile. I will provide other opportunities to talk with Lucas about things he looks at in our room.

Twice last week I watched Angie play with a rattle. She smiles when she shakes the rattle and it makes a noise. She is learning how a rattle works. I will offer some different types of rattles for Angie to explore and also a bell if she is interested.

Endnotes

- 1 The categories and behaviors to observe are informed by the following source: Bricker, D., Capt, B., & Pretti-Frontczak, K. (2002). *Assessment, evaluation, and programming system for infants and children, 2nd ed., Vol. 2: Test, birth to three years and three to six years*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.