

HighReach Learning Curriculum Using Assessment for Planning

The assessment crosswalk documents have been prepared to support teachers, coordinators, managers, trainers, and administrators in making informed decisions while utilizing data for curriculum planning. The focus on making data-driven decisions leaves the teacher in the uniquely challenging position of balancing multiple pieces of information (standards, objectives, assessments, lesson plans, etc.) for the best possible outcome. This document is intended to provide an easy-to-use guide to developmental goal setting and curriculum planning, thus alleviating some of the burden on teachers to “figure it out.”

Because each state, center, or home is distinct in its expectations and needs for ongoing assessment and monitoring of child progress, we have chosen to highlight two options deemed compatible with the HighReach Learning curriculum: LAP-3 and the Work Sampling System. Each of these tools provides a wide range of support for ongoing assessment, including validity information, training options, record-keeping programs, and easy-to-use reporting mechanisms.

With these two assessment options, individual programs can make the decision about which to use in order to best meet their individual performance measurement needs.

The crosswalk documents to follow demonstrate:

- How HighReach Learning curriculum objectives are addressed within each tool (Appendix 5 – Work Sampling; Appendix 6 – LAP-3)
- The comprehensive scope and sequence of the HighReach Learning curriculum

Work Sampling System

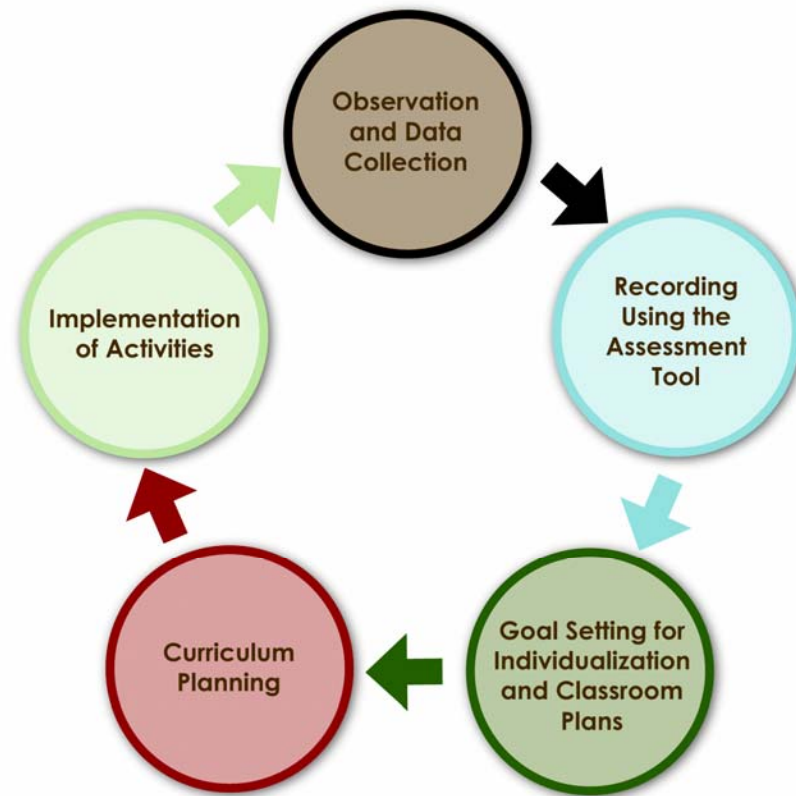
The Work Sampling System (WSS) is a performance-based assessment instrument designed to help classroom teachers document and evaluate children's development and accomplishments. The WSS is based on national and state standards and has been customized to conform to the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework. This system reaches across a wide variety of curriculum areas and developmental domains. It is an authentic assessment that documents activities in which children engage on a daily basis. Children are observed during regular classroom activities and their progress is recorded three times a year with a Developmental Checklist, a portfolio collection, and a summary report. This type of authentic assessment through careful observation and documentation gives teachers in-depth knowledge of children, which helps to plan instruction that is more responsive to individual children as well as to the class as a whole.

LAP-3

The LAP-3 is a criterion-referenced tool that assesses children from birth to 72 months of age. This crosswalk document (Appendix 6) demonstrates an alignment between the LAP-3 and the HighReach Learning curriculum, focusing on the range of 36–60 months of age. By including a broad range of development, individual learning trajectories can be better accommodated. Additionally, in the areas of Math and Literacy, the trajectory has been expanded to 72 months of age, in order to place emphasis on emergent skills and exhibit the flexibility of HighReach Learning curriculum within a diverse group of learners. This approach also takes into consideration the necessary precursor skills which are fundamental to school readiness. The LAP-3 is typically administered three times per year – beginning, middle, and end. Teachers are encouraged to make decisions using data from generated reports to set child development goals, individualize instruction, and plan for groups of children on an ongoing basis.

The HighReach Learning Curriculum System: Planning Cycle

The planning cycle for the HighReach Learning curriculum follows:



Observation and Data Collection

Using both formal and informal methods of observation, the teacher begins the planning cycle by becoming familiar with the developmental profile of each child. The developmental checklists, HighReach Learning curriculum objectives, and observation documentation are designed to guide and support the teacher during observations. Additionally, the HighReach Learning curriculum crosswalks provide a pathway for thinking about how to address developmental growth and needs comprehensively.

Recording Using the Assessment Tool

After collecting data (observations, work samples, or one-on-one information), the next step in the process is to record the information for use in generating a report, either by class or individual child. Interpretation of these reports is critical to a dynamic planning process, as this step in the cycle leads to expanded ways of thinking about children's growth and needs. It is at this point that analysis can reveal the need for further evaluation for children who may not be developing as expected. Analysis may also highlight the professional development and training needs of teachers, identify gaps in planning, and draw attention to strengths of the children as well as areas in need of further instructional focus.

Goal Setting for Individualization and Classroom Planning

After looking at how children are progressing on the assessment and analyzing the information for class trends and individual growth patterns, individual and group learning goals can be set. These goals serve as the overarching guidance for use of the curriculum objectives.

Curriculum Planning

Knowledge of children's unique learning goals allows for a focus on planning the daily curriculum using the HighReach Learning curriculum objectives as insurance that each area of development is covered. Additionally, the cross-referenced Scope of Sequence at the back of each Field Guide (for a sample, see *Reaching and Relating*) provides additional planning support focused on the objectives covered in each activity. A lesson plan grid and travel stamps are included in each kit to simplify lesson planning. There is one stamp for each of the activities in the Field Guide. In order to integrate across domains and areas in the classroom, stamps should be used flexibly (e.g., a stamp for music might be used as a small group, center, or large group activity depending on the needs of the group and the teacher's preference).

Implementation of Activities

The HighReach Learning curriculum is carefully and thoughtfully planned using data based on children's development. Experiences are fun as well as cognitively challenging because they are based on the children's interest, prior knowledge, and patterns and levels of development. The assessment information provides teachers with the knowledge needed to maintain the cycle of observation, record keeping, and implementation throughout the year. Thus, as teachers continue to assess children's progress, their knowledge of each child's developmental needs increases and they are able to update their records and improve their implementation strategies. Using this cycle, teachers can teach with confidence having utilized valid assessment information as their foundation.