Notice the math, not just the finished object

PRIVATE PARENT OBSERVATION SHEET · ANY READINESS BAND

Project: _____ Date (optional): _____

One math idea we chose: _____

What the learner showed or said before help:

What happened next? Circle one for each attempt: modeled together / with a prompt / independently / not tried. Record the actual example—not a grade.

Example and learner's explanation	Support used and what changed
First example:	
Another example:	

Access supports used: read aloud / pointing / parent writing / visible steps / calculator / other: _____

Next time: keep this support / use fewer objects / model again / try a new example / pause. Specific next step:

Physical PILOT notes: preparation/build time actually observed, materials, unclear directions, fit or stability problems and reason for stopping:

Example note: "Counted four cards after I moved the first one; said four altogether. Next time try three without my model." This describes one observation, not a learning gain, diagnosis or mastery result. Do not remove access supports to make an attempt look independent; note any math hints separately.

Keep this sheet at home; no child name, photo, account or upload needed. Original editorial tool informed by Frye et al. (2013), recommendation 3 (minimal evidence, ages 3–6). Use at other ages is an adaptation, not validation. Evidence and limitations.

Turn a note into one next step

PARENT DECISION GUIDE · NOT A PLACEMENT TEST

Choose **one** idea. Invite an explanation by speaking, pointing, drawing or arranging. Keep access supports; record math hints separately. If the task is frustrating, pause or simplify. The examples below are invented teaching illustrations—not observations of real learners.

Count one object once · Often 5–7

Notice: a learner touches one of four paper cards twice and says five. **Model:** move each card into a counted row, saying one number per card; four cards means four altogether. **Next:** offer three cards in a new arrangement. Answer: 3. Record whether your movement cue was needed, not “cannot count.”

Measure the interval · Often 8–10

Notice: a strip starts at 2 cm and ends at 9 cm; the learner says 9 cm long. **Model:** count the seven 1 cm spaces, then connect them to 9 − 2 = 7 cm. **Next:** draw a segment from 3 cm to 8 cm. Answer: 5 cm. A parent may draw or hold the ruler; that is different from giving the subtraction.

Separate area from volume · Often 11–13

Notice: a 4 cm × 3 cm base is described as 12 cm³. **Model:** its area is 12 cm²; an ideal prism 2 cm high has volume 12 cm² × 2 cm = 24 cm³. **Next:** keep the base and change the height to 3 cm. Answers: area still 12 cm²; volume 36 cm³. These are geometric calculations, not tested container capacities.

Check a scale direction · Often 14–18

Notice: at 1:10 drawing-to-real scale, a learner multiplies a real 60 cm length by 10. **Model:** 1 cm on paper represents 10 cm real, so 60 ÷ 10 = 6 cm on paper; check 6 × 10 = 60. **Next:** a real 90 cm length becomes 9 cm. Allow a calculator when scale reasoning, not arithmetic, is the goal.

Return later: try a different example with the same access supports. Note what was explained before math hints. One correct answer, a finished object or a harder example does not establish mastery or a learning gain.

Selected-source basis: Frye, Baroody, Burchinal, Carver, Jordan & McDowell (November 2013), *Teaching Math to Young Children*, NCEE 2014-4005, recommendation 3, pp. 36–41: observe, record and adjust instruction; **minimal evidence**, school settings, ages 3–6. This is an original parent adaptation, not a systematic review. Age 7 and older examples are editorial extensions, not evidence of effectiveness at those ages or for dyscalculia. This sheet neither diagnoses difficulties nor replaces professional assessment.