



Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan

Reflect on the following skills and strategies. Mark each strategy as *consistent* (i.e., a practice that is a fluent part of your teaching and used regularly), *inconsistent* (i.e., a practice that you implement sometimes or without regularity), or *not yet* (i.e., a practice you are not currently using in your classroom). When a practice contains a bolded **‘and’** this indicates that both items must be present. If the practice contains a bolded **‘or’** this indicates either one or the other must be present. Following the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) observation mark each strategy in the TPOT column as + (strategy/practice implemented during the TPOT observation) or – (strategy/practice not implemented during the TPOT observation). This checklist will be used to help the teacher and the coach identify the focus for implementing Preschool Pyramid Model strategies. Use the notes column to document discussion of the self-assessment and TPOT observation.

Key: C = Consistent I = Inconsistent NY = Not yet TPOT: + = Yes – = No

Schedules, routines, and activities	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher has a posted classroom schedule of daily activities.					
2. Posted schedule is at children’s eye level and includes visual representation of daily activities.					
3. Teacher-directed activities are 20 minutes or shorter.					
4. Both large and small group activities occur throughout the daily routine.					
5. Teacher reviews the posted schedule with children and refers to it throughout the day.					
6. Teacher structures activities so that there is a clear beginning, middle, and end.					
7. A balance of child-directed and teacher-directed activities occur throughout the day.					
8. If needed, the teacher prepares children when changes are going to occur within the posted schedule.					
9. Teacher only continues with a specific teacher-directed activity when the majority of children are actively engaged and interested.					



Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan

Schedules, routines, and activities	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
10. Children who need extra support are prepared for activities using an activity schedule or individualized cues at the beginning of activities.					

Transitions	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher supports children’s transitions.					
2. Whole-class warnings are provided prior to the majority of transitions (i.e. give a verbal 5 minute warning and set a timer. “When the timer goes off it is time to clean up,” five fingers countdown).					
3. Teacher has transition strategies that ensure children are actively engaged in the transition (i.e. sing songs while moving between activities; provide books/games that reinforce academic concepts while waiting).					
4. Teacher explicitly teaches children the steps and expectations of transitions.					
5. Teacher provides positive, descriptive feedback to children who engage in a transition appropriately.					
6. Instruction to begin the transition is provided to a child in an individualized way.					
7. Teacher effectively guides individual children who need extra support during the transitions.					
8. During transitions, the majority of children are actively engaged, including children who are waiting for the next activity.					



Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan

Supportive Conversations	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher acknowledges children's communication.					
2. Teacher greets/calls children by name.					
3. Teacher has brief conversations with children (3 turns).					
4. Teacher joins in children's play and engages in brief conversations about their play.					
5. Teacher generally uses a positive, calm and supportive tone in conversations with children.					
6. Teacher responds to children's comments and ideas by asking questions and making comments.					
7. Teacher often uses positive descriptive feedback for children's skills, behaviors, and activities.					
8. Teacher Joins in children's play to expand their interactions and ideas with other children.					
9. Teacher has extended comfortable and positive conversations with children during activities and routines about their interests and ideas.					
10. Teacher uses alternative strategies when communicating with children who are nonverbal, language delayed, or dual-language learners.					
Engagement	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher offers general guidance to children to select activities or use materials to promote engagement.					



Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan

Engagement	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
2. Teacher provides developmentally appropriate activities that will support the engagement of almost all the class.					
3. Teacher communicates at eye level with the children almost all of the time (i.e. in close proximity to children and actively engages in activities with them).					
4. Teacher-directed large-group activities (i.e. circle) are structured so that children have opportunities to be actively engaged almost all of the time.					
5. Teacher assists individual children in selecting center activities and becoming actively engaged (i.e. get the attention of a child who is not cleaning by inserting his or her name into the Clean-up Song, provide a visual cue to prompt them to pick up toys).					
6. Teacher provides children with multiple opportunities to make choices during large-group, small-group, and center activities.					
7. Teacher frequently comments positively on children who are engaged in activities.					
8. Teacher assists individual children who are exhibiting challenging behavior within an activity to become actively engaged.					
9. Teacher modifies instruction or activity when children lose interest in large-group or small-group activities (i.e. teacher adds visual representations of characters in the story).					

Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan



Providing Directions	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher uses directions that are short, simple and specific (i.e. "Use safe feet").					
2. Teacher uses directions that tell children what to do rather than what not to do.					
3. Teacher consistently provides positive descriptive feedback to children who follow directions.					
4. Teacher describes the activity expectations to children prior to or at the beginning of the activity.					
5. Teacher redirects children who are withdrawn, distracted, or off-task to more productive activities (i.e. use rhymes such as "Hocus, pocus, everybody focus" to bring attention back to teacher/activity).					
6. Teacher checks in with children to make sure they understand the directions (i.e. ask children to repeat directions or give the directions to another child).					
7. Teacher individualizes directions for children who need more support (i.e. additional prompt, nonverbal prompt along with verbal direction, picture prompts).					

Collaborative Teaming	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. All adults engage with children during activities/routines.					
2. Adults use positive tone with one other.					



Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan

Collaborative Teaming	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
3. The classroom runs smoothly with all adults knowing what they are supposed to be doing throughout the day.					
4. All adults entering the classroom engage with children.					
5. All interactions between adults are related to children or classroom activities.					
6. Roles are shared among adults in the classroom.					
7. All adults provide instruction.					
8. Adults give positive feedback to each other about things that are going well with the children or in the classroom.					
9. Children initiate positive interactions with all adults in the classroom.					

Behavior Expectations	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher has posted behavior expectations or rules that are positively stated, include a visual and are limited in number.					
2. Posted behavior expectations or rules are reviewed with children during large-group or small-group activities.					
3. Children are reminded of posted behavior expectations or rules throughout the day.					
4. Teacher provides instruction or reminders on posted behavior expectations or rules to individual children, during play or within small-group activities.					



Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan

Behavior Expectations	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
5. Teacher comments on appropriate child behavior, linking the behavior to the posted classroom rules or expectations.					
6. Teacher provides specific positive feedback to children on meeting posted behavior expectations or rules.					
7. Teacher uses naturally occurring opportunities to facilitate discussions which will allow children to think critically about behavior expectations or rules and why they are important in the classroom.					

Teaching Social-Emotional Competencies	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher uses naturally occurring opportunities to teach social skills or emotional competencies throughout the day.					
2. Teacher provides children with planned opportunities or activities to practice friendship skills (i.e. working together, role playing).					
3. Teacher uses a variety of strategies to teach social emotional skills (i.e. role playing and acknowledging children using appropriate social emotional skills).					
4. Teacher uses small-group or large-group activities to teach social skills or emotional competencies (i.e. friendship skills, problem solving, emotional literacy).					
5. Teacher models expected social skills and emotional competencies while describing the behavior.					



Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan

Teaching Social-Emotional Competencies	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
6. Teacher comments positively and descriptively on children who are using social skills and expressing their emotions in appropriate ways.					
7. Teacher facilitates children’s reflection on their use of social skills or emotional competencies either individually or in groups.					
8. Teacher Individualizes instruction of social skills or emotional competencies based on children’s developmental needs.					

Teaching Friendship Skills	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher encourages children to play together.					
2. Teacher comments positively and descriptively on children who are working together, helping each other or engaging in other friendship behaviors.					
3. Teacher uses a variety of strategies and materials (discussion, puppets, books) in small-group or large-group activities to teach friendship skills (helping others, taking turns, organizing play).					
4. Teacher provides children with planned opportunities to practice friendship skills (i.e. working together, role playing).					
5. Teacher explicitly teaches or prompts individual children how to initiate and respond to peers.					



Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan

Teaching Friendship Skills	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
6. Teacher provides individualized assistance to help children maintain interactions (multiple interaction exchanges) with their peers.					
7. Teacher uses a variety of strategies to supports peers in helping their friends learn and practice social skills (peer buddies, play routines and roles).					
8. Teacher models friendship skills in interactions with children and other adults.					
9. Teacher supports children in reflecting on interactions with their peers with children doing most of the talking.					

Teaching Children to Express Emotions	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher uses a variety of strategies to teach emotion words.					
2. Teacher teaches about a variety of both positive and negative emotions					
3. Teacher uses a variety of strategies (books, puppets, games etc.) to teach children how to recognize emotions in themselves and others.					
4. Teacher validates children's emotions by labeling them and helping children talk about emotions.					
5. Teacher provides children with strategies to use when they are angry in order to calm down.					
6. Teacher models or labels own emotions or appropriate ways to express emotions.					



Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan

Teaching Children to Express Emotions	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
7. Teacher uses a variety of strategies to teach children how to respond to others' emotions.					
8. Teacher individualizes instruction on emotions based on children's developmental needs. Procedures and materials vary across children.					

Teaching Problem Solving	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher supports children as they work through the problem-solving process in naturally occurring situations.					
2. Teacher engages children in generating solutions to common classroom problems.					
3. Teacher explicitly teaches problem-solving steps using visuals.					
4. Teacher provides visual reminders about problem-solving steps and possible solutions.					
5. Teacher notes problem situations and uses those as examples during group situations to talk about how to problem solve.					
6. Teacher comments on and recognizes children who have been "good problem solvers."					
7. Teacher facilitates children's reflection on their own use of problem solving skills.					
8. Teacher individualizes instruction and uses different procedures and materials to teach problem solving based on children's individual needs.					



Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan

Teaching Problem Solving	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
9. Teacher uses problem solving in interactions with children and models problem-solving steps.					

Challenging Behavior Interventions	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher initiates functional assessment process for children who have persistent challenging behavior (refers to team, starts taking data).					
2. Teacher participates in the development of a behavior support plan by providing functional assessment data to team members.					
3. Teacher contributes classroom strategy ideas for the behavior support plan.					
4. Teacher implements individualized behavior support plan strategies.					
5. Teacher collects data to monitor child progress.					



Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan

Connecting with Families	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher offers families ongoing opportunities to visit classroom.					
2. Teacher sends home periodic information from the school/program or teacher (i.e. newsletter, open house, parent conferences).					
3. Teacher ensures families are represented in the classroom (i.e. family photos, family book, bulletin boards).					
4. Teacher regularly provides families with information on what is occurring in the classroom.					
5. Teacher has a system for regular communication with families that includes celebrations of children's accomplishments.					
Connecting with Families	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
6. Teacher connects with families, has personal knowledge of family situations and an appreciation for families.					
7. Teacher uses different methods of communication with different families (i.e. home visits, newsletter, texts).					
8. Teacher offers bi-directional communication systems (families have a space to write back).					
Supporting Family Pyramid Use	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
1. Teacher provides information to families on the importance of social-emotional development.					
2. Teacher provides families with community resources for social-emotional development and challenging behavior.					



Teacher Skills and Strategies Checklist/Implementation Plan

Supporting Family Pyramid Use	C	I	NY	TPOT	Notes
3. Teacher provides families with practical strategies that they can use during every day routines and activities to support their children’s social-emotional development and prosocial behavior.					
4. Teacher works with families to develop home strategies to address challenging behavior.					
5. Teacher works with families to collect information on a child’s challenging behavior or social emotional development to determine if there is a need for more intensive support or planning.					
6. Teacher involves families in the process of developing a support plan for addressing challenging behavior at school.					
7. Teacher works with families to develop strategies that they can use at home to address their concerns about their child’s social-emotional development.					

Material has been adapted from the following sources:

Instructional Practices Checklists; <http://modules.nceln.fpg.unc.edu/foundations/module-intro>

Center for Social Emotional Foundations of Early Learning; <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu>

Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT), (Lise Fox, 2014)