



Preparing for Your CLASS® Review Event

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Welcome to this overview training module on the CLASS® Review Event. CLASS®, which stands for Classroom Assessment Scoring System®, is designed to assess the quality of interactions between children and teachers.

We want to ensure you have the information you need to help make that event successful. In this module, we will introduce you to the methodology associated with this type of review event. By the end of this module, you will be better prepared for when your program undergoes its very own CLASS® review event.

Let's get started.

What Is CLASS®?

CLASS® was developed to assess the quality of interactions between children and teachers.

All observations are conducted by CLASS® certified Reviewers using a representative sample of preschool center-based classrooms and combination classrooms.

The CLASS® instrument provides a standardized mechanism to observe the quality of interactions in three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support.

The result of this review event is a numerical score that reflects the grantee's overall performance. To give you a complete understanding of a typical CLASS® review event, we will explore the who, where, when, what, and how of a CLASS® review event.

Who Is Involved In a CLASS® Observation?

Because CLASS® is designed to evaluate teacher-child interactions, it is critical that the classroom is as close to a regular classroom environment as possible when it is under observation. For example, observations should NOT be conducted if someone other than the primary teaching staff are leading lessons.

A lead teacher is required to be present during at least one complete observation. In addition, regular members of the classroom should be present for the observation. This includes assistants, volunteers, and other adults who are involved in the classroom from day to day.

Adults such as administrators, support staff, or volunteers who do not participate in the classroom as a part of the regular classroom schedule should not be part of the observation.

Each CLASS® Reviewer observes and scores the interactions between children and teachers. The Reviewer should not interfere with any of the activities of the classroom.

Where Do CLASS® Review Events Take Place?

Now we will address the question of where reviews will take place and in which classrooms. For starters, CLASS® reviews take place in preschool center-based classrooms and/or combination option classrooms.

The software uses data from the Head Start Enterprise System (or HSES) to select a random, representative sample of classrooms for observation.

Because the HSES plays such an important role in assigning classes for observation, please be sure to keep the information in the system as accurate and up-to-date as possible. This ensures that Reviewers will observe a sample of your population and, therefore, produce more accurate review event results.

If the CLASS® certified Reviewers cannot observe a class due to logistical or methodology reasons, then the software will assign a replacement class. The grantee is not permitted to alter the list of classrooms to be observed.

This should explain where CLASS® reviews take place, so now let's look at when the observations can occur.

When Can Observations Occur?

Reviewers must observe only at appropriate times to ensure that the CLASS® instrument is used in a valid and consistent way across all grantees. Examples of appropriate times for observations include:

- During teacher or child initiated activities
- During large and small group times
- During meals/snacks
- During transitions or routines
- During indoor and outdoor activities
- When a substitute, assistant, or new teacher has been in the lead position for 10 or more consecutive days
- Over both sessions of a double-session classroom

The times when observations cannot occur include:

- During times when fewer than 50% of the enrolled children are present in the classroom; e.g., arrival or departure times
- During unstructured gross motor activities
- During naptimes
- During special events
- While the class is being led by an individual other than the regular primary teaching staff
- When the CLASS® Reviewer is not fluent in the primary language(s) of instruction

What Do Reviewers Evaluate?

Let's get into the details of what is being evaluated during a CLASS® review.

CLASS® focuses on the quality of teacher-child interactions. This is different from other tools that focus on the content of the physical environment, available materials, or a specific curriculum.

CLASS® is organized to assess three broad domains of interactions among teachers and children. These domains include Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. Each domain includes several dimensions.

Emotional Support

- Positive Climate
- Negative Climate
- Teacher Sensitivity
- Regard for Student Perspectives

Classroom Organization

- Behavior Management
- Productivity
- Instructional Learning Formats

Instructional Support

- Concept Development
- Quality of Feedback
- Language Modeling

Collectively, these dimensions assess the extent to which teachers are effectively supporting children's development, both social and academic.

Clearly, all of these criteria are very important to understanding the quality of interactions between teachers and children. But how does a Reviewer assess each of these dimensions?

How Does a Reviewer Conduct a CLASS® Observation?

For each classroom selected for observation, CLASS® Reviewers will conduct two consecutive, 35-minute observation cycles. Each observation cycle includes a 20-minute observation followed immediately by 10 minutes of scoring, and then 5 minutes of completing background questions.

Sometimes, events occur where the observation period is cut short. As long as the Reviewer was able to observe for 10 minutes or more, the observation is valid. If the reviewer observed for less than 10 minutes, the observation is invalid.

The CLASS® methodology requires that the two observation cycles within each classroom must be consecutive.

CLASS® Reviewer Reliability

The OHS maintains a reliability system to ensure all CLASS® Reviewers are implementing the tool and the methodology correctly. Each CLASS® Reviewer must pass two tests of reliability. We briefly mentioned the first test when we introduced the role of the CLASS® certified Reviewer. This is the Teachstone recertification process, which all CLASS® Reviewers must pass annually.

The second reliability test is called dual coding. During dual coding, the CLASS® Reviewer and qualified CLASS® Dual Coder will simultaneously code in the same classroom while following the standardized CLASS® methodology. The Dual Coder will be the primary coder for the review event, with scores counting towards the review. This process is important to ensure grantees receive fair CLASS® assessments and that Reviewers maintain reliability.

What Is the Grantee's Role In the CLASS® Review Event?

Now you understand the who, where, when, what, and how of the CLASS® review event. The last topic we will cover in this training module is your role and responsibilities in a CLASS® review event.

A CLASS® Support Lead will contact you prior to your review event to plan your CLASS® review and discuss logistics.

He or she will want you to verify that there have been no changes to your daily classroom schedules and discuss any out-of-the-ordinary events or substitute teachers in classrooms during the review period.

That covers your responsibilities before the CLASS® review event. Now, let's take a look at what you will need to do during the event itself.

On the first day of the review, the grantee will participate in an introductory meeting with the onsite Reviewer.

As you might remember from the “Intro to Your Review Event” module, the Reviewers cannot discuss the results of the CLASS® review with grantee staff. You can refer any questions you or your staff have to the CLASS® Support Lead during your daily touch point.

If you want more information about how CLASS® fits into the OHS monitoring process, you can visit the [CLASS® website](#) on the OHS home page.

Thank You for Taking This Course

Thank you for participating in this training module designed to help you prepare for a CLASS® review event. Take your knowledge to the next level by visiting another training module in the Virtual Expo. You can do this by visiting the Expo Directory for a list of topics.