

Eighth Edition

# Assessment in Early Childhood Education

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# About the Authors

**SUE CLARK WORTHAM** is Professor Emerita of Early Childhood and Elementary Education at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Prior to beginning a teaching career in higher education in 1979, she taught prekindergarten through second grade in public schools, worked as a school district administrator, and was a consultant at an education service center.

She has authored numerous texts, including *Early Childhood Curriculum: Developmental Bases for Learning and Teaching* (5th ed., 2010), Pearson. She coauthored *Play and Child Development* (4th ed., 2012) with Joe Frost and Stuart Reifel, also published by Pearson. Organizational publications include *Childhood 1892–2002*, published by the Association for Childhood Education International, and *Playgrounds for Young Children: National Survey and Perspectives*, coauthored with Joe Frost, published by the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD).

In 1992, she served as a Fulbright Scholar in Chile. She was president of the Association for

Childhood Education International (ACEI) from 1995 to 1997. Since retirement, she has been very active in the development of the Global Guidelines for Early Childhood Education and Care that resulted from an international symposium held in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, in 1999. Subsequently, she has a leadership role in the development, validation, and implementation of the ACEI Global Guidelines Assessment adapted from the original guidelines. She edited *Common Characteristics and Unique Qualities in Preschool Programs: Global Perspectives in Early Childhood Education* for Springer in 2013, which reported on the use of the *Global Guidelines Assessment* in countries around the world.

Dr. Wortham served as volunteer director of educational programs for World Children's Relief and Volunteer Organization, a small nongovernmental organization (NGO), from 2001 to 2011. She engaged in training teachers and principals in Haiti, Senegal, Burkina Faso, and Sierra Leone.

**BELINDA J. HARDIN** is an Associate Professor Emerita in the Department of Specialized Education Services at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Dr. Hardin completed her PhD in Early Childhood, Families, and Literacy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Prior to entering higher education in 2004, she was a public school kindergarten and special education teacher, a Head Start director, and the Director of the Special Projects Division at Chapel Hill Training-Outreach Project.

Her research includes cross-cultural studies investigating the effectiveness of services for young children with and without disabilities in the United States and other countries, particularly in Latin America. She is especially interested in measures of program quality with global applicability and how they are informed by sociocultural context. She served as the Co-Principal Investigator of three national studies in the United States that investigated the reliability and validity of Learning Accomplishment Profile assessment instruments, including a dual-language sample

of 2,099 children (half English speakers and half Spanish speakers) to norm the Learning Accomplishment Profile-Diagnostic Edition.

Additionally, Dr. Hardin completed studies investigating the referral, evaluation, and placement of preschool children with disabilities who are English Language Learners and is currently developing a family report questionnaire on preschool language development in English and Spanish. Dr. Hardin has conducted research and professional development activities with professionals and Spanish-speaking families in North Carolina, Guatemala, and the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico. She was the Co-Principal Investigator of three international studies investigating the reliability and validity of the ACEI Global Guidelines Assessment in multiple countries around the world. Dr. Hardin has served on the Board of Directors for the Association of Childhood Education International and participated in two initiatives spearheaded by UNICEF to improve services for young children in inclusive early childhood settings worldwide.



# Preface

Students preparing to become teachers of young children from infancy through the early primary grades must be prepared to measure or evaluate children who are in the period of development called *early childhood*. Tests and other types of assessments designed for young children are different from those intended for children in later grades in elementary school. Because infants and children under age 8 have developmental needs different from those of older children, a textbook that includes discussion of assessment in the early childhood years must be written from a developmental perspective.

In the second decade of the 21st century, early childhood educators have been challenged in their efforts to assess very young children using the most important strategies for their ongoing development. As a result, it is especially important that future teachers and teachers who are struggling with these issues be fully informed about the range of assessment possibilities and when they are the most beneficial for young children.

## Traditional and Authentic Assessment Strategies

This book is written for future teachers and current teachers of young children. It includes information about standardized tests and, more importantly, other types of assessments that are appropriate for young children, such as screening tools, observations, checklists, and rating scales. Assessments designed by teachers are explained both for preschool children and for kindergarten and primary-grade children who are transitioning into literacy. With the ever-growing trend toward performance assessment, portfolios, and other methods of reporting a child's performance, chapters describing these strategies have been expanded and enhanced. The approach of this edition is the development of an assessment system that includes traditional as well as authentic assessment strategies in a comprehensive plan. Thus, in this new edition, we seek to inform the reader about all types of assessments and their appropriate use.

## New to This Edition

- Search and Share activities in each chapter give students an opportunity to identify pertinent information from the web for further understanding and discussion.
- Chapter 3, Communicating with Families, was previously located as Chapter 11 and has now been moved forward and expanded to increase the role of the family-professional relationship. Parents are recognized as equal partners with their child's teacher.
- Chapter 4, How Standardized Tests Are Used, Designed, and Selected, includes new information about current editions of screening and assessment instruments.
- Chapter 6, Data-Driven Decision Making, Assessment and Documentation, changes the emphasis from classroom assessments in general to specific information on how data from assessments are used to make instructional decisions.
- Relevant information about the Common Core State Standards and Early Learning Standards has been integrated where appropriate throughout the text.
- Expanded information on children with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs) appears in all chapters throughout the text.

## How to Assess Young Children

Earlier editions of this book were developed in response to the expressed needs of teachers and graduate students who must understand and use current trends in assessment and put them into perspective within the reality of public schools that are required to focus intensively on standardized tests. Fortunately, commercial publishers of curriculum kits and textbooks for public schools are increasingly including performance assessments along with traditional assessments in their guides for teachers. Portfolios are becoming common as well. Nevertheless, teachers still need help in maintaining a balance between these new strategies and standardized testing.

An important factor in the assessment of young children is determining when and how they should be measured. This is a controversial issue. The strengths and weaknesses of each type of assessment presented are discussed, as is research on the problems surrounding testing and evaluation in early childhood. Because many sources in the literature and other textbooks do not include the limitations in addition to the merits of assessment techniques, this text provides an objective perspective on issues surrounding the efficacy and effectiveness of assessment strategies.

## Organization

The book is divided into three parts. Part I provides an introduction to assessment in early childhood in **Chapters 1 and 2**. **Chapter 3** addresses the partnership between families and school professionals. Part II is devoted to standardized tests and how they are designed, used, and reported in **Chapters 4 and 5**. Classroom assessments are discussed in Part III. **Chapter 6** is a new chapter that focuses on data-driven assessment and documentation, while **Chapter 7** includes expanded information on observation. Checklists, rating scales, and rubrics are covered in **Chapter 8**. **Chapter 9** discusses teacher-designed strategies, while **Chapter 10** focuses on performance-based assessment strategies. Finally, **Chapter 11** brings all the assessment strategies together into a portfolio system.

## Pearson Enhanced eText

The Pearson Enhanced eText includes the following interactive content that furthers student engagement and comprehension:

- Video links that make it possible for students to see real-life examples of the content in each chapter have been expanded.
- Formative and summative assessments for students include Self-Checks within major sections

of each chapter so that students can gauge their understanding as they read and study the material, and an end-of-chapter quiz supports student learning and knowledge retention.

- Application Exercises in each chapter provide practice applying chapter concepts for deeper understanding.

## Instructor Supplements

The supplements for this edition have been revised, upgraded, and made available for instructors to download on [www.pearsonhighered.com/educators](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/educators).

- Instructor's Resource Manual This manual contains chapter overviews and activity ideas to enhance chapter concepts.
- Test Bank. The Test Bank includes a variety of test items, including multiple-choice and short-answer items.
- PowerPoint Slides. PowerPoint slides highlight key concepts and strategies in each chapter and enhance lectures and discussions.

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