

WaKIDS Introduction 101: Teachers' Check List

After WaKIDS 101, we know teachers can feel, well . . . a bit overwhelmed. "Where do I begin?" This guide is intended to help you plan each step.

Before School Starts

- **Get to know the *GOLD™* by Teaching Strategies® Objectives and Dimensions for WaKIDS.** Spend some time reading through the *GOLD™* Objectives for Development and Learning for WaKIDS. Pay particular attention to the indicators (the bold type) at the levels right before the purple band, as this is where students' entering skills, knowledge, and behavior are likely to be (but not necessarily). How do you currently observe these skills in your classroom environment? What curricular opportunities could you offer to be able to observe all six areas of learning and development? Think about the examples in the Progressions of Development & Learning, and come up with your own ways that you currently observe these skills, knowledge, and behavior.
- **Visit the WaKIDS and Early Learning websites:** <http://www.k12.wa/wakids> and <http://www.k12.wa.us/EarlyLearning/FullDayKindergartenResearch.aspx>
Become familiar with the requirements of state-funded full-day kindergarten. Do your homework with the resources available to plan your learning environment and learning centers. Help your team plan for any professional development you need to become more familiar with child development of incoming kindergartners.
- **Plan ahead with your principal, teaching team, and specialists.** Observational assessment works best when teachers use the classroom intentionally in their instructional decisions to meet the developmental needs of their students. Use the WaKIDS Pacing Guide to think ahead about which observations you will conduct in the first weeks of school and which you will observe after you are familiar with your new students.
- **With your principal, plan ahead for Family Connection.** Principals and teachers decide how to set up and conduct Family Connection meetings. (See the Family Connection Guidelines, *Introducing Me!*, and Principal Series #2.)
- **Check to see if your administrator has uploaded student names.** OSPI provides instructions to all District Assessment Coordinators to do a bulk upload of student names to *GOLD™* no later than September 15. As this upload requires student SSID numbers, administrators are best equipped to maintain current class lists.

**GOLD™ Objectives for Development & Learning: Birth Through Kindergarten* © 2010. Bethesda, MD: Author. Objectives and screen captures from *GOLD™* reprinted with permission of Teaching Strategies, LLC.

During the First Few Weeks of School

- **Use the first weeks to get to know your students and establish routines.** Teachers benefit from observing students' abilities to take care of their own needs, follow directions, and follow routines and procedures in the first weeks of school. See the Kindergarten Guidelines for tips on adjustments to the classroom schedule during this transitional year.
- **Observe and gather evidence.** Think about the ways you will observe and document activities that combine more than one skill. Offer students a range of developmentally designed choices for their learning, combining more than one skill with each activity. Use devices to take photos and record videos of up to one minute. Use post-it notes to keep short anecdotal records.
- **Organize evidence.** Many teachers use a binder with a laminated page for each student to organize daily and weekly observations. Teachers plan what observational opportunities to include each day and store the evidence in a combination of ways, including electronic and paper files. Consider uploading evidence in *GOLD™* to organize by objectives and dimensions and students, and assign preliminary checkpoint levels to each piece of evidence. Review the evidence each week, use *GOLD™ Individual Child* and *Class Profile* reports with preliminary levels, and plan for the following week.
- **Build in planning time to meet with your grade level team.** Your teaching team should work together to build strategies to observe children's skills, knowledge, and behavior. Give yourself time to learn new skills and acknowledge your accomplishments as a team.
- **Check on your Documentation and Assessment Status.** If you have uploaded documentation, use the *Documentation by Objective and Dimension* (on the Documentation tab) to monitor how much evidence you have collected for each student. Once you have entered preliminary and final assessment checkpoint levels, use the *Assessment Status Report* under the Checkpoint tab of *GOLD™* to monitor which areas you have finalized, and what observations you need to plan.
- **Run preliminary reports of your preliminary and final data.** To find out what you are learning from the evidence about individual students and groups of students, use the Reports tab to run *Individual Child* and *Class Profile* Reports. What new questions do you have about your students' development and learning? Continually update your plan to respond to emerging questions and gather evidence to guide your instructional decisions each week.
- **Reach out to your district's WaKIDS lead and/ or ESD for coaching and assistance.** Your ESD is part of a regional support system to help you set up your classroom, identify strategies and activities in all six areas of learning, and to make use of your evidence and data.

**GOLD™ Objectives for Development & Learning: Birth Through Kindergarten* © 2010. Bethesda, MD: Author. Objectives and screen captures from *GOLD™* reprinted with permission of Teaching Strategies, LLC.

After the Whole Child Assessment

- **Review and analyze final data.** *GOLD™* provides several useful reports to understand your students (*Individual Child, Class Profile, and Comparative Report*).
- **Share information with families.** Share what you have learned about the students' strengths with parents and guardians. Several districts use the *GOLD™* reports in fall family conferences, including the *Development and Learning Report* and *Family Conference Form*.
- **Connect with Early Learning teachers.** Follow your district's and ESD's lead in getting together with early learning professionals to share what you know about entering kindergartners and learn new skills together in offering developmentally appropriate activities for the range of learners and families in your school and community.

**GOLD™ Objectives for Development & Learning: Birth Through Kindergarten* © 2010. Bethesda, MD: Author. Objectives and screen captures from *GOLD™* reprinted with permission of Teaching Strategies, LLC.