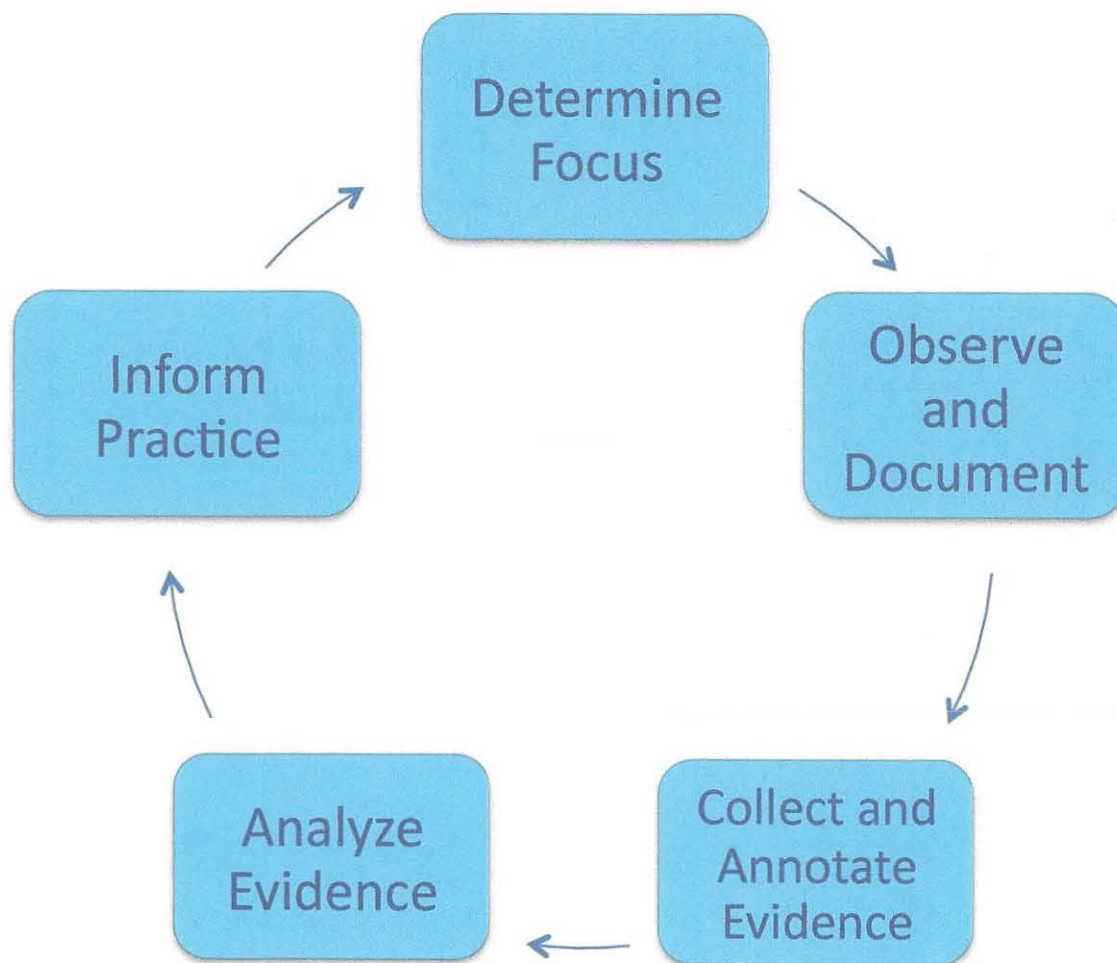


# A Data Cycle



## Powerful Questioning

**What do you notice?**

**How did you figure that out?**

**How are they the same/ different?**

**What does \_\_\_\_\_ remind you of?**

**How did you feel when \_\_\_\_\_?**

**Why do you think that happened?**

**What would happen if \_\_\_\_\_?**

**What could you do to \_\_\_\_\_?**

**Tell me about \_\_\_\_\_.**

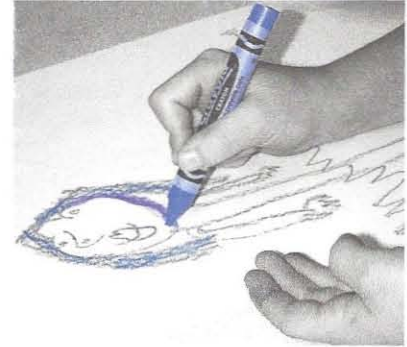
Post on the wall of your room to inspire high quality interactions with your students.



## A Parent Guide to Understanding Authentic Assessments for Young Children

### What are Authentic Assessments?

Authentic assessments are tools that teachers use to understand what children know, how they are developing, and what they can do better to guide curriculum and instruction. Authentic assessments give a picture of how your child is growing and learning based on expected growth for children the same age. Evidence for authentic assessments is collected in natural contexts throughout the year. Teachers collect children's work, photographs of children and observation notes during every day classroom activities and experiences (e.g. like center time, outdoors, small groups). Teachers then use this information to determine children's progress in all domains of development.



At home, you assess things every day. You check to see if your child is feeling well enough to attend school. You observe how they are getting along with friends when you go to the playground or if they are interested in books. In each situation, you are taking stock by gathering information and using that information to make a decision about how to go forward. Authentic assessments are used the same way in your child's education.

### How is information from authentic assessments used?

Authentic Assessments are used to understand children's thinking, development and learning. They are helpful to parents, teachers and programs in different ways.

*Parents* can use data from your child's authentic assessments to:

- Understand how to best help your child.
- Understand how your child learns best.

*Teachers* can use authentic assessment data to:

- See what your child can do and decide what they need to teach or re-teach your child for them to progress.
- Plan daily activities based on your child's skills.
- Select specific books for story time or in class libraries to help your child understand a particular skill, concept or understand information.
- Choose particular games during outdoor time that encourage your child to use skills to work with others in a fun way.
- Lead discussions on topics that will help your child develop needed knowledge and skills such understanding why friendships are important, how others feel and how to work with others.

*Programs* can use authentic assessment data to:

- Order materials to support the learning needs of children.
- Hire personnel to support children and learning.



## What are the domains of development that are typically assessed?

- *Approaches to Learning* - How children become involved in learning and acquiring knowledge
- *Physical Development and Health* - Children's physical health and ability to engage in daily activities
- *Social and Emotional Development* - The emotional competence and ability to form positive relationships that give meaning to children's experiences in the home, school and larger community
- *Communication, Language and Literacy* - Children's understanding, creating, and communicating meaning
- *Cognition and Knowledge of the World* - What children need to know and understand about their world and how they apply what they know.

It is important for teachers to assess all of these areas so that they can understand your child's development holistically.

## How can you help with authentic assessments?

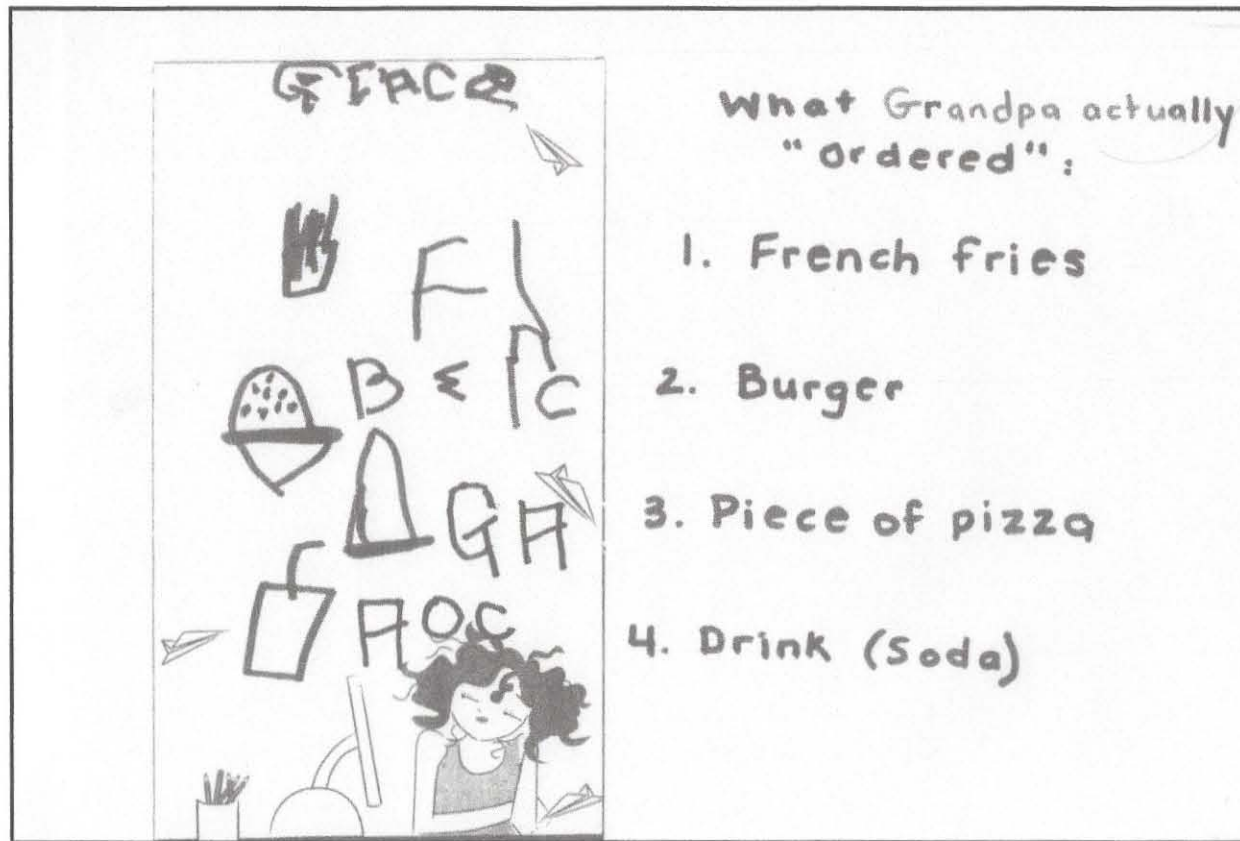
- You can provide information about your child to the teacher.
- You can find out about your child's development by talking with the teacher. This helps you and your child's teacher to work together to help your child improve.
- If concerns are brought to your attention, try to listen closely and find out what should happen next. It might be a referral to someone or somewhere to help you gather more information to help your child. Take the time and find out.
- If there are concerns about your child, it is wise to look into them early.

Learn more about how to support your child's learning by reading our other parent guides including our "Learning at Home and On the Go" series. There are many great resources and help for families. Don't be afraid to find out early how you can help your child.

Brought to you by The Division of Early Childhood Education  
[www.nyc.gov/schools/earlychildhood](http://www.nyc.gov/schools/earlychildhood)  
Tel: 212-374-0351  
Email: [earlychildhood@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:earlychildhood@schools.nyc.gov)  
You can find information about Pre-K programs on our website.  
<http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/PreK>

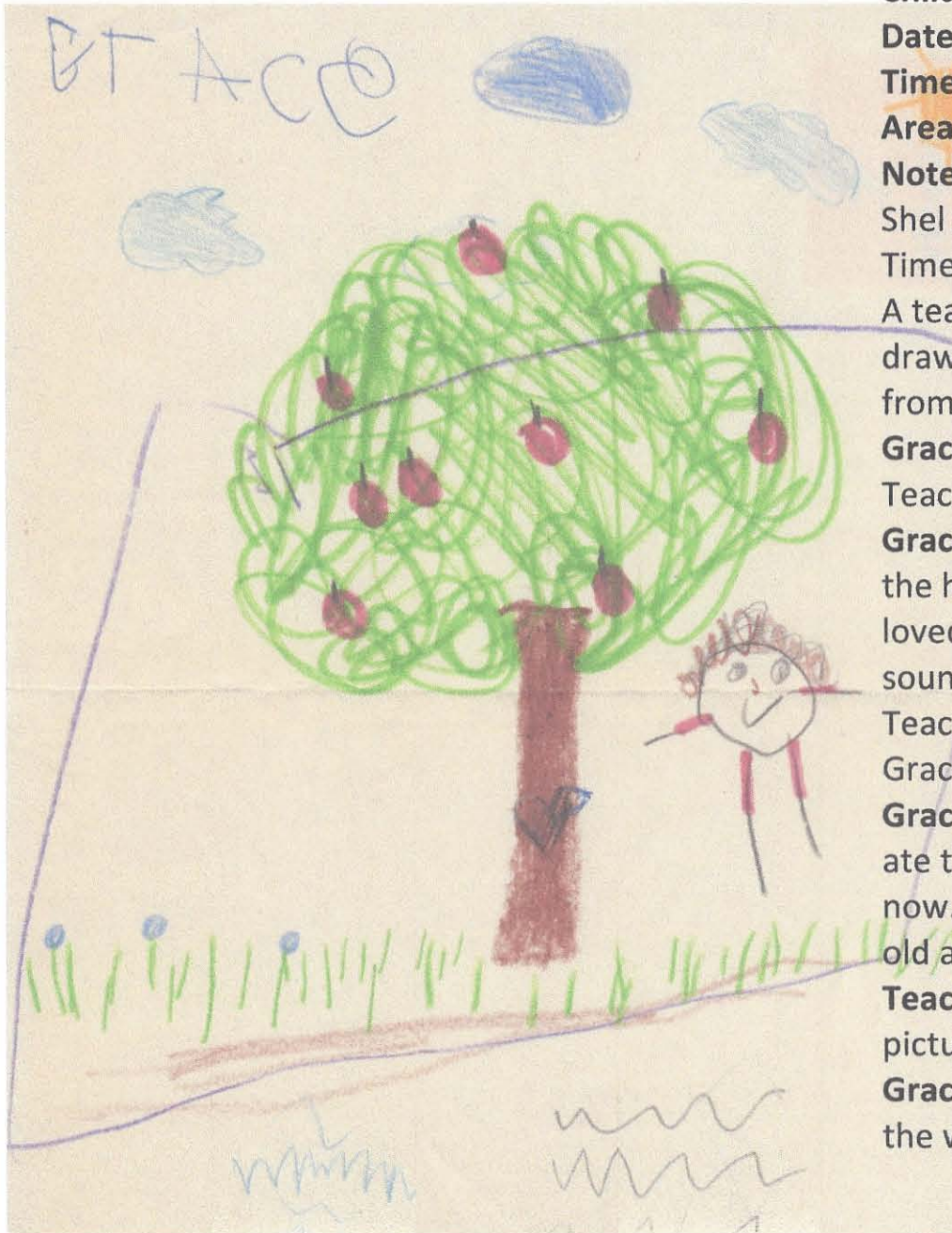
Child's Name: Grace

Date Collected: 12/5/13



**Teacher's Notes:** Grace was playing restaurant in the dramatic play area with Ethan and Olivia during the morning center time (10:00 a.m.). When I began observing, I noticed that Grace was pretending to be the waiter, Ethan was pretending to be the Grandpa, and Olivia was pretending to be the granddaughter. The "customers" sat at the table in the dramatic play area. Grace said, "What do you want to order?" Ethan ordered French fries, a burger, a piece of pizza, and a soda. Grace used a pad from the dramatic play area to write down the order. She drew pictures and used letters to represent the items that Ethan ordered. She then walked to the kitchen and found pretend food to represent each item of food/ drink that he ordered.





**Child's Name:** Grace

**Date Collected:** 9/25/13

**Time:** Center Time

**Area:** Writing/Drawing

**Notes:** After a group reading of The Giving Tree, by Shel Silverstein, the children transitioned to Center Time. Grace chose the Writing area with 1 other child. A teacher was sitting in this area and asked the girls to draw a picture about something they remembered from the book.

**Grace:** Now this is the brown tr... tr... you know.

**Teacher:** Trunk?

**Grace:** Yea! The brown trunk for the tree. And here's the heart. The boy drew this on the tree. He really loved that tree. Mwah! Mwah! Mwah! (makes kissing sounds.)

**Teacher:** Oh, wow. That's a good idea. Very nice, Grace.

**Grace:** Thanks. But here's the apples now. Too bad he ate them all. Aww...poor tree will be sad. And now...the boy! This is the young boy though, not the old and wrinkly boy.

**Teacher:** (when finished) So Grace, what's your picture?

**Grace:** It's the boy standing next to his favorite tree in the whole wide world. But the picture is when the boy



**Child's Name:** Grace

**Date Collected:** 11/10/13

**Time:** Choice time (9:45 a.m.)

**Area:** Blocks

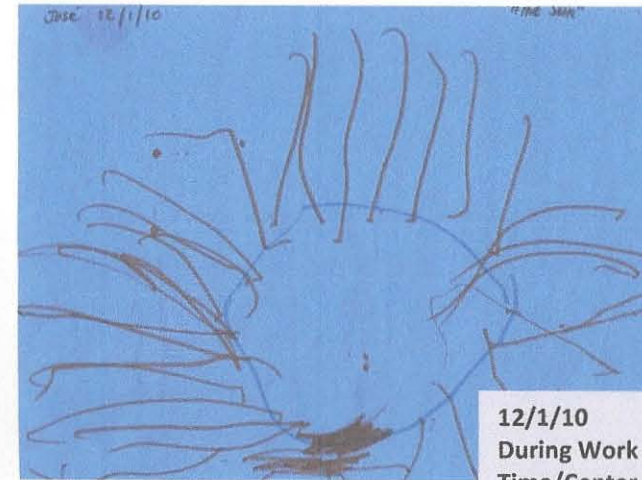
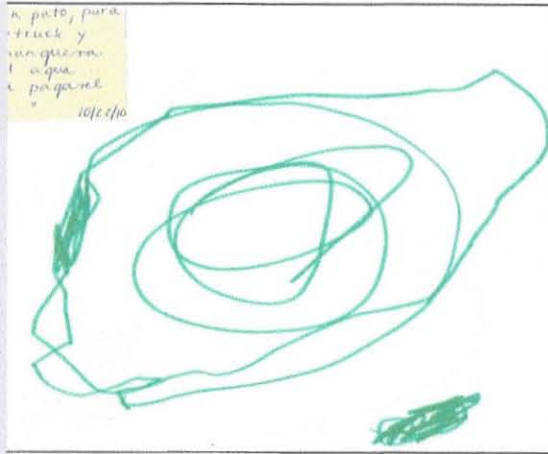
**Teacher's prompt:** "Grace, I noticed that you have been working over here for a long time! Can you tell me about your building?"

Grace said she was building a house with three floors, like the building she lives in. Every time she tried to balance the top "floor," the building fell down. On the fourth try, it stayed up, and she began to place plastic figures on the floors.



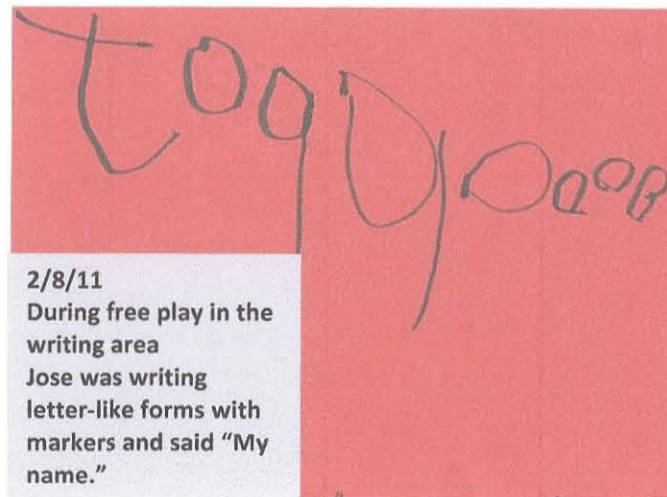
10/22/10

During Work  
Time/Center time in  
the Writing Area  
Jose was drawing a  
picture with markers  
alone. (Child  
initiated activity).  
Jose: "Un pato, para  
el firetruck y una  
manquera, para el  
aqua...para a  
paqarel fuego." He  
explained his  
drawing in Spanish.



12/1/10

During Work  
Time/Center Time in  
the Writing Area  
Jose was drawing a  
picture with markers  
alone (child-initiated).  
Jose: "The sun," he  
told me and pointed  
to his drawing



2/8/11

During free play in the  
writing area  
Jose was writing  
letter-like forms with  
markers and said "My  
name."



**Teacher's Notes:**

Winter

Took his time drawing- adding details.

Very quiet.

Is that a skateboard? (nods yes). And a giraffe? (nods). Is that you? (nods yes).

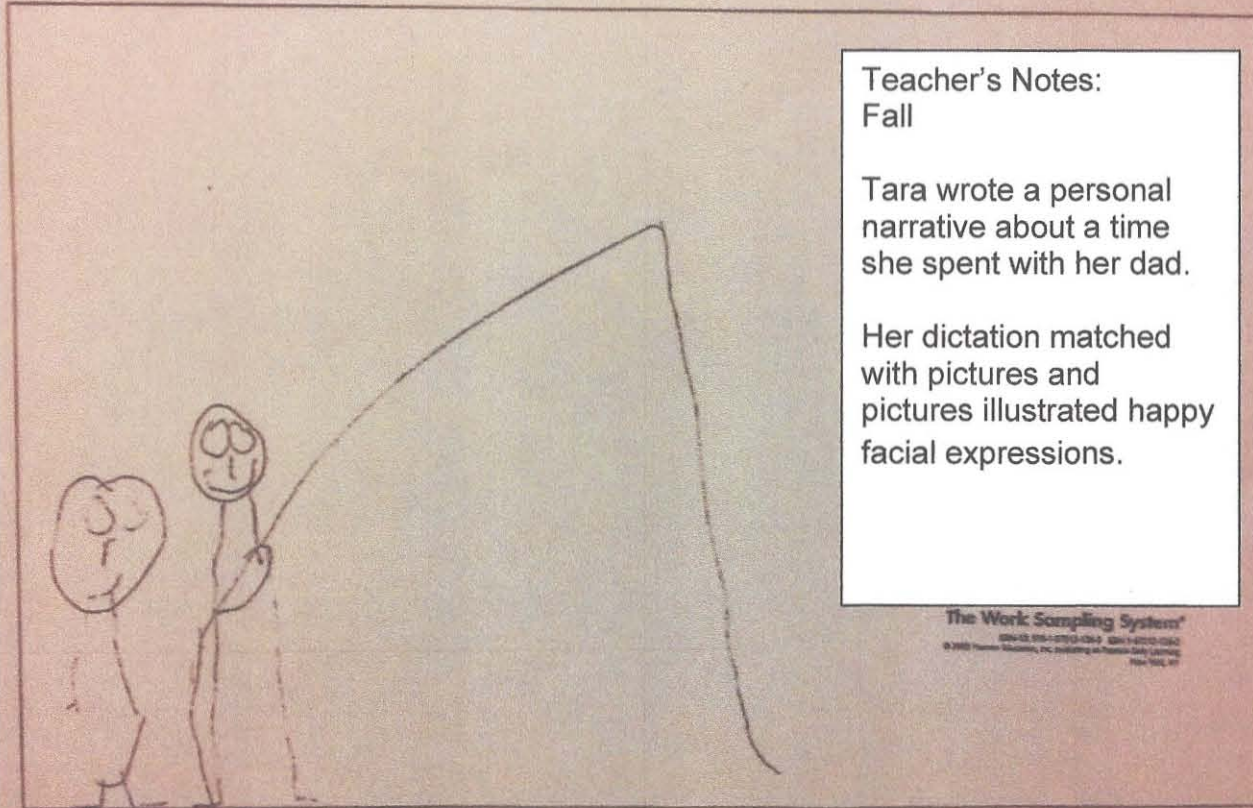
Do you like to draw? (nods yes).

Writes name with a mix of upper and lower-case letters.



TARA

10-13-11



Teacher's Notes:  
Fall

Tara wrote a personal narrative about a time she spent with her dad.

Her dictation matched with pictures and pictures illustrated happy facial expressions.

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Me and my daddy climbed a mountain!  
I love to climb mountains!