

THE DTRITS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHER EVALUATION

DEVELOPMENTAL THERAPY INSTITUTE, INC., 2013-14 RATING INVENTORY OF TEACHING SKILLS (DTRITS)

After DTORF-R Assessments ...

Match Your Teaching Strategies to Students' Stages of Development

What is the DTRITS?

An inventory of widely used teaching practices that matches classroom practices to students' stages of development. There are four forms: *Stage One* (59 items for infants-toddlers), *Stage Two* (82 items for preschool), *Stage Three* (84 items for primary grades), *Stage Four* (78 items for upper elementary and middle school). After DTORF-R assessments, the DTRITS outlines appropriate teaching strategies for each stage of development.

Purposes

Used since 1982 to self-monitor and guide classroom practices for teachers and paraprofessionals, it is also used to assess the quality of teachers' classroom performance.

Standards

- Ratings are based on observation of performance with students.
- Competencies are defined and adult roles are specified.
- Behavior management practices are positive and developmentally appropriate.
- Reliability and validity have been reported in numerous field research studies
- Both high inference and low inference rater judgments are included.
- Results provide qualitative and quantitative information of observation.

History

Developed in 1982 as a doctoral dissertation by J. S. Robinson to evaluate teacher performance of recommended practices for instruction and therapeutic intervention. Content validity was established in a study by expert instructors and supervisors judging if each item was essential to effective, developmentally based teaching. If an item was judge ambiguous or less than essential it was eliminated or rewritten. A series of studies between rater pairs established inter-rater reliability (.89) and item-by-item agreement (75%).

Steps Before an Observation

1. Review rating form with teachers prior to observation.
2. Plan at least one hour of observation.
3. Schedule to see several linked lessons/activities including an introduction, step-by-step procedures, ending, and transition.
4. Have copies of students' current DTORF-R ratings or a completed group-DTORF-R.
5. Provide students with a brief introduction to the observer and a place away from instruction areas.
6. Limit exchanges between students and observer.
7. Plan for post-observation feedback to team.

While Observing

- An observation and DTRITS rating involves the full teaching team --recognizing that lead and support teachers each have team responsibilities as a team effort.
- Consider the ages of the students and the overall DTT stage of the group (by age and by DTORF-R ratings).

- Check the DTORF-R ratings: Current? Accurate? (If no student ratings are available, make a judgment about which DTRITS form to use.)
- Focus observations on the group, each individual student, and the teaching team. Take notes using all three categories.
- Complete the cover page fully, using only first names of students. (Also make identifying notes by each name such as “curly hair,” “blue stripes” etc. These can be helpful later during post-observation feedback).
- Note students who are absent as they may be present at a subsequent observation.
- Make notes directly on the form while observing, but do not complete the rating until after the full observation.
- Take notes with sufficient detail to give specific examples later.
- Consider classroom tone: Safe? Positive? Secure? Comfortable?
- Note schedule, transitions, group structure, teachers’ expectations, timing, length of activities, interactions of adults, organization of materials, age-stage appropriateness of materials and instructional methods.

Post-Observation

- Take time to complete the rating before meeting with the teaching team.
- When meeting, affirm the team and their willingness to enhance their skills on behalf of their students.
- Acknowledge their skills and contributions toward positive change.
- Be positive and connect feedback to specific practices for that stage, including materials and activities, schedules, team interactions, use of space, and behavior management strategies.
- Connect DTORF-R objectives to your observation feedback.
- Make suggestions related directly to specific practices and stage of the students.
- Suggest up to three recommendations to give the team focus for improvement.
- Focus on teaching skills to maintain or increase student participation.
- Emphasize student motivation, what they value, and stage of personal responsibility.

Scoring

A percentage effective score is the total number of items rated “Yes” ÷ (“Yes” + “No” + “Partial”) multiplied by 100. [Not Needed (NN) and Not Seen (NS) are not included in the score.]

$\frac{Y}{Y + N + P} \times 100 = \% \text{ Effective}$ <p style="text-align: center;"> <i>> 95 = Highly Effective</i> <i>71 - 94 = Effective</i> <i>51 - 70 = Adequate</i> <i>31 - 50 = Less than Adequate</i> <i>< 31 = Poor</i> </p>

Staff Development Plan

Your local system for staff development and evaluation should consider the ways DTRITS ratings can be used. One method is to ask team members to do individual self-ratings at the beginning of a school year, understanding that at a future time, they will be observed and rated on the same form. Teams should be able to review their completed ratings after the post-observation feedback.