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BEING A SKILLED RESEARCHER (2)

ECAD7004

AIMS OF THE SESSION

To consider:

* Research tools:

- observation
- the mosaic approach

* Reliability and validity of research tools

* Assignment preparation





OBSERVATION

Definition:

Observation can be defined as the systematic process of recording the behaviour patterns of people, objects and occurrences.

Observations supply data.

Observer as participant OR non-participant

Facts:

Observation guides help you record data in an organised way.

- Event sampling
- Checklist
- Rating
- Frequency

Examples

Classroom observation when you are not the teacher.
Complete observer - observe without participating

Non-examples

Complete participant – observed are unaware
Participant = group member

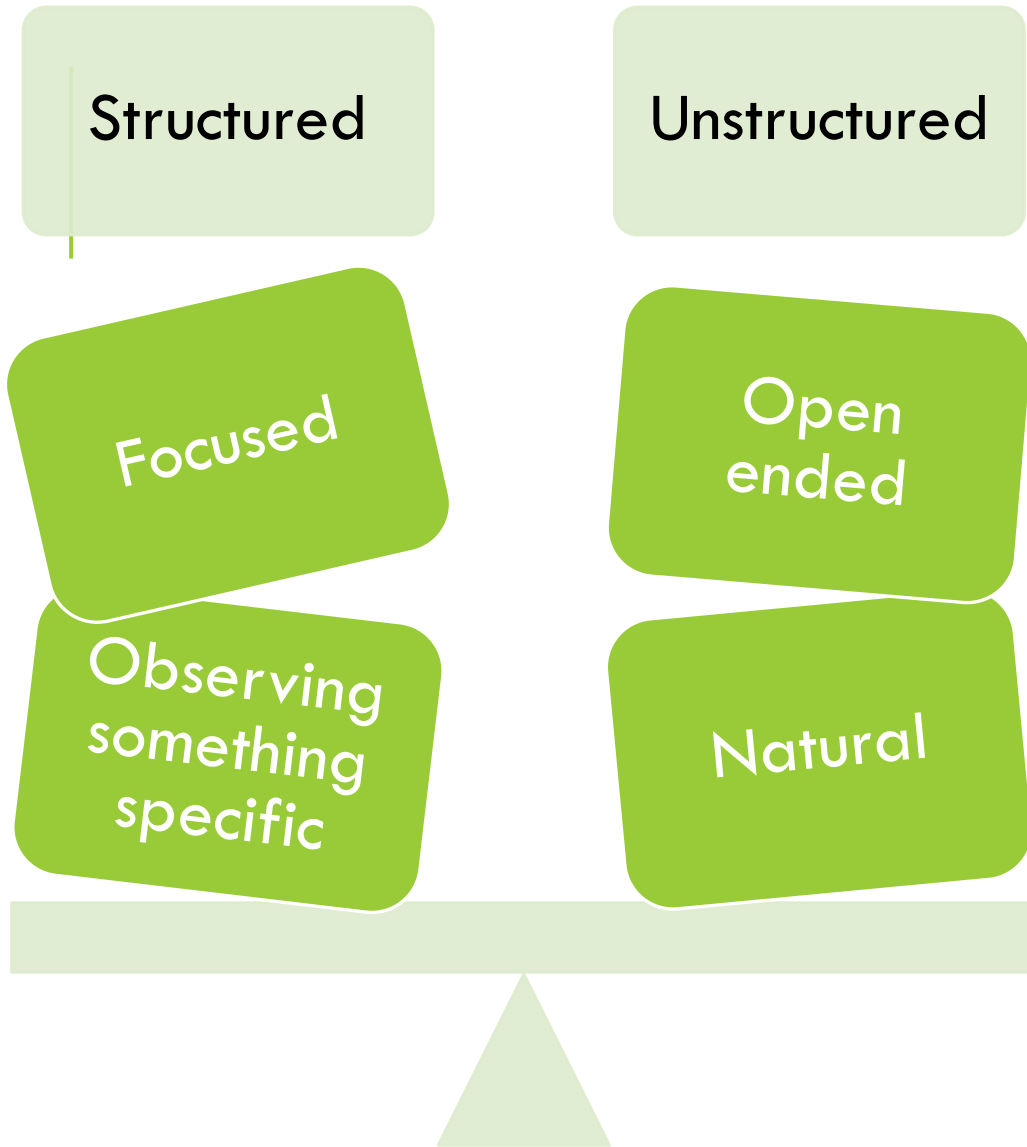
WHAT CAN BE OBSERVED?

- Human behaviour and physical actions
- Verbal behaviour
- Expressive behaviour
- Spatial relations and locations
- Temporal patterns
- Physical objects
- Verbal or pictorial records





HOW CAN WE OBSERVE?



TYPES OF OBSERVATION

Observing what does not happen may be as important as observing what does happen.

YOUR ROLE IN OBSERVATION

Non-participant observation.

- Researcher is not part of the activity taking place, but simply observes. May be identified as observer/research.

Participant observation.

- Researcher takes part in community, organisation, or activity.
- Researcher attempts to learn what it is like to be part of the community, organization, or participate in the activity.

If you select observation as a research tool, you will need to decide how you will go about carrying out the observation. Will you video a lesson and watch it later in order to make observational notes? If so, you would be a non-participant observer, but you would be **overt** – a ‘fly-on-the-wall’ – as pupils would be aware of the camera.

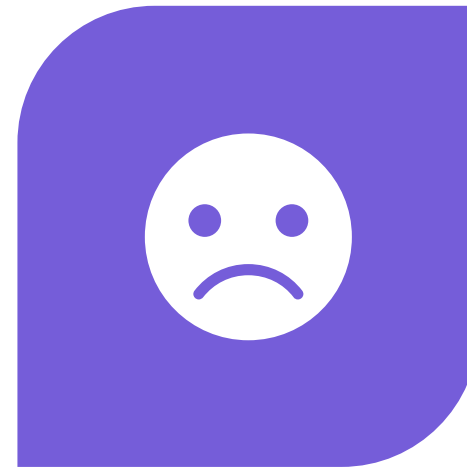
Variations in Approaches to Observation

Role of the Observer			
Full-participant observation	Partial participation	Onlooker; observer is an outsider	
How the Observer Is Portrayed to Others			
Participants know that observations are being made and they know who is making them.	Some but not all of the participants know the observer.	Participants do not know that observations are being made or that there is someone observing them.	
How the Purpose of the Observation Is Portrayed to Others			
The purpose of the observation is fully explained to all involved.	The purpose of the observation is explained to some of the participants.	No explanation is given to any of the participants.	False explanations are given; participants are deceived about the purpose of the observation.
Duration of the Observations			
A single observation of limited duration (e.g., 30 minutes).		Multiple observations; long-term duration (e.g., months, even years).	
Focus of the Observations			
Narrow focus: Only a single element or characteristic is observed.		Broad focus: Holistic view of the activity or characteristic being observed and all of its elements is sought.	

OBSERVATION



POSITIVE POINTS?



NEGATIVE POINTS?

OBSERVATION

Strengths

Limitations

IS OBSERVATION...

Reliable?

Valid?

To what extent does your observation enable you to demonstrate a representative sample?

Can you generalise your results?

- the application of research results to cases or situations beyond those examined in the study

Generalisation

- the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results.

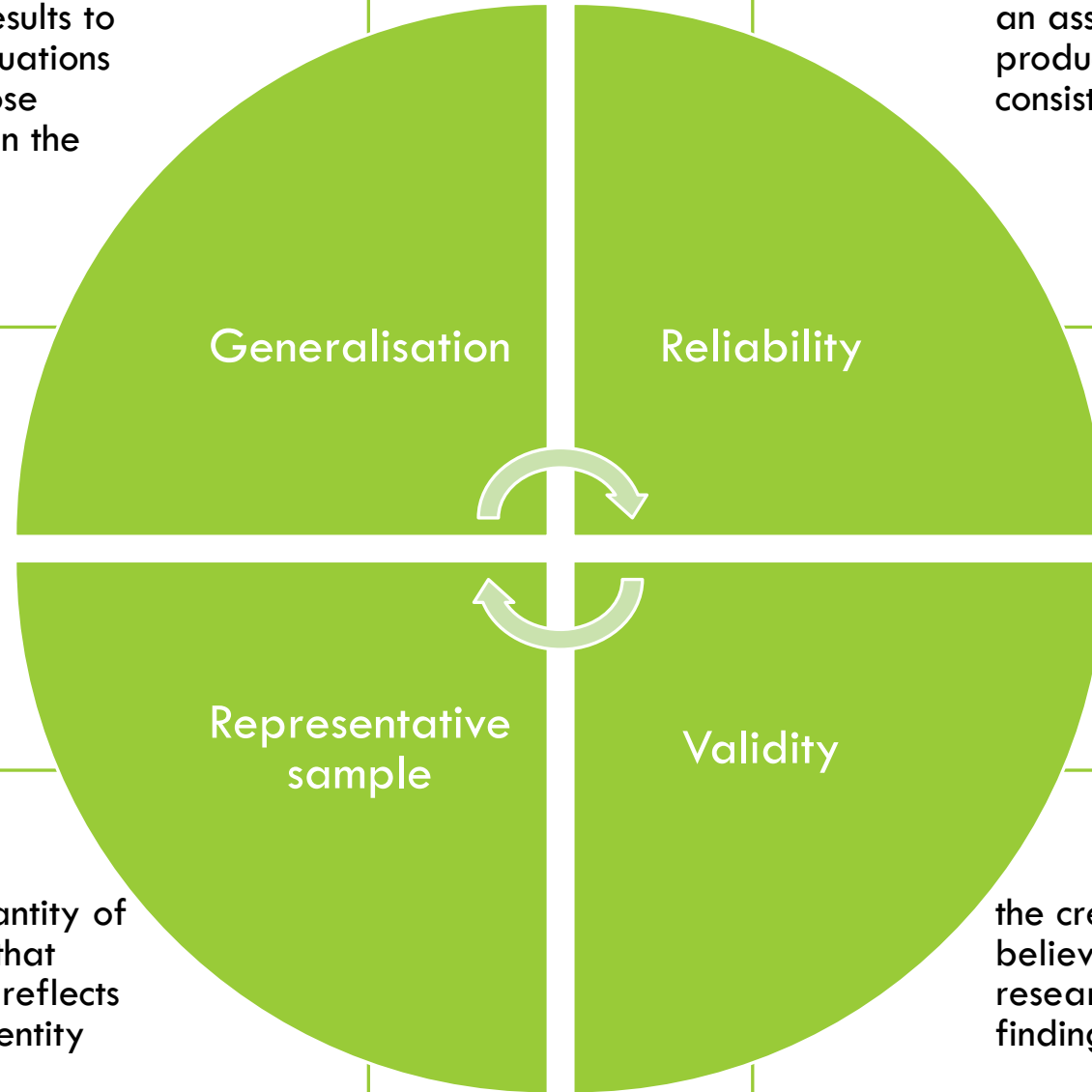
Reliability

Representative sample

- a small quantity of something that accurately reflects the larger entity

Validity

the credibility or believability of the research. Are the findings genuine?



ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Implications for power/
dominance in the voices being
heard

Ensure that the learner's voice is
heard, valued and significant

Assent and consent

Anonymity, confidentiality, non-
intrusion, honesty, respect,
awareness.



A photograph of four young children of diverse backgrounds sitting at a table, focused on playing with clay. From left to right: a girl with blonde hair in a pink shirt, a girl with dark curly hair in a blue shirt, a boy with blonde hair in a green shirt, and a girl with dark curly hair in a green shirt. They are all looking down at their hands, which are covered in clay. The table is covered with a blue cloth and has various clay pieces and tools. In the background, there are white shelves with colorful plastic cups (yellow, pink, green) and other toys. The overall atmosphere is one of creative play and learning.

OBSERVATION TRAINING

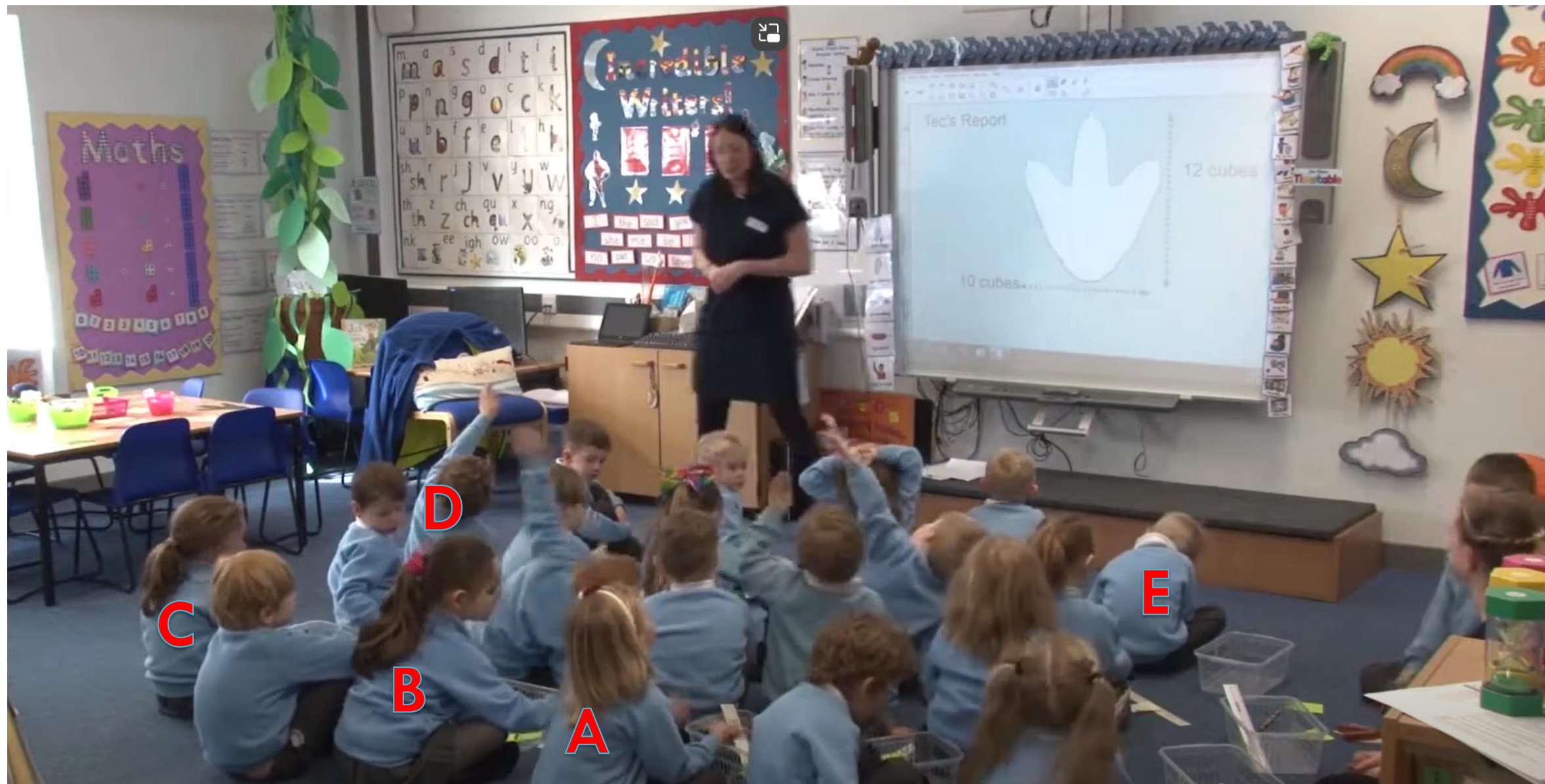
Introduction to organised
data collection

THE LEUVEN SCALE

The Leuven Scale is a method of observation created by Ferre Laevers in order to observe **wellbeing** and **involvement**.

We will use this to test whether each observer has the same understanding when observing the same thing.

With a partner, choose one of the children on the following slide to observe.



OBSERVATION TRAINING — USING THE LEUVEN SCALE

On the next slide, you will find a version of the Leuven Scale for involvement.

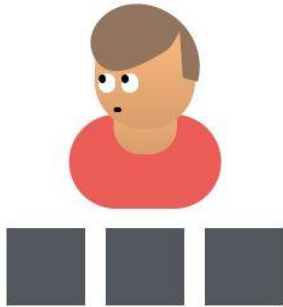
This scale is often used to judge a child's involvement or engagement in a task.

The Leuven Scale for Involvement (in learning)

It's time for an honest observation of your students

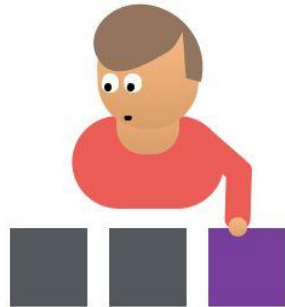
Based on: <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/documents-ldtoolkit/leuven.pdf>

Let's hope teachers are designing and evaluating classroom activities with an aim that every learner might reach a state of **flow**.



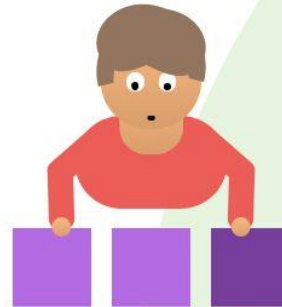
Extremely low

Activity is simple, **repetitive** and passive. The child seems **absent** and displays no energy. They may stare into space or look around to see what others are doing.



Low

Frequently interrupted activity. The child will be engaged in the activity for some of the time they are observed, but there will be **moments of non-activity** when they will stare into space, or be distracted by what is going on around.



Moderate

Mainly continuous activity. The child is **busy** with the activity but at a fairly **routine** level and there are few signs of real involvement. They make some progress with what they are doing but don't show much energy and concentration and can be easily



High

Continuous activity with **intense moments**. The child's activity has intense moments and at all times they seem involved. They are **not easily distracted**.



Extremely High

The child shows **continuous and intense activity** revealing the greatest involvement. They are concentrated, creative, energetic and persistent throughout nearly all the observed period.

By Richard Wells
Twitter: @iRedWells

Look out for: focused concentration on the present moment; loss of

OBSERVATION TRAINING – USING THE LEUVEN SCALE

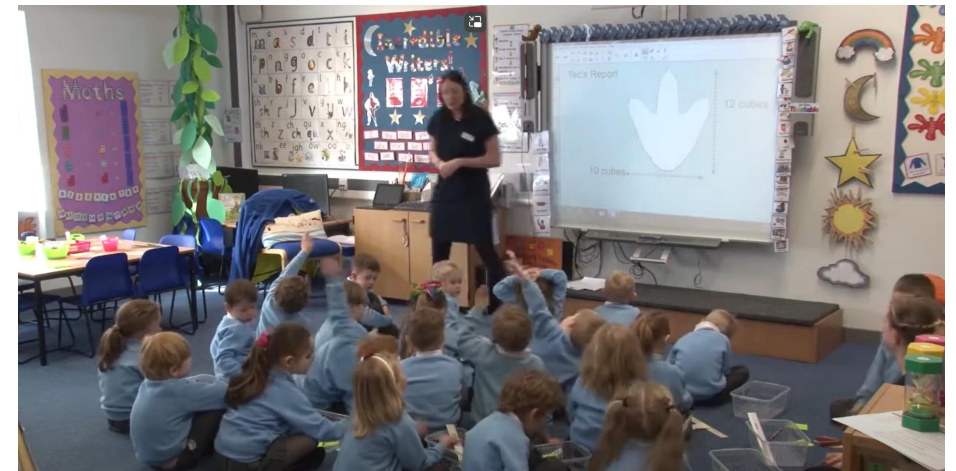
Work with a partner.

Use the Leuven Scale (copy on Moodle) to judge the involvement or engagement of your chosen child during this video.

Both partners should choose a point on the scale independently.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=GAxKpWpAo9w

Watch from 0.58 to 1.40



OBSERVATION TRAINING — USING THE LEUVEN SCALE

Did you agree? Why?/Why not?

OBSERVATION SCHEDULES

The Leuven scale is an example of rating observed behaviour in order to log it in a table/schedule.

Observation schedules include a combination of

- Event sampling (at different periods of the lesson)
- Checklist
- Rating
- Frequency

OBSERVATION TRAINING 2

For this task, you will need access to 'Examples of observation schedules' (Moodle)

Choose **three** (or more) of the documents provided.

Ignore the **content** of the boxes on the schedules. Focus on the **structure**. (e.g. how many boxes are there?, what type of information is required within them?, what is the layout?)

In your group:

Note positives and negatives – in which context would each type of observation schedule be useful.

Compare and contrast

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

If you select observation as a research tool, you will be required to create an **observation schedule** for use during your lessons.

Your observation schedule **could** include the Leuven Scale if this is suitable for your needs (but it does not have to).

Your observation schedule **could** include elements of **some or all** of the observation schedules that you used in the Observation Training 2 task.

NB The phrase 'observation schedule' **does not** mean a timetable of events.

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Consider:

what you need the observer to observe in order to answer your research question;

how the observer might best make these observations;

the observation schedule structure that enables the observer to note their observations;

whether or not you need some kind of scale to follow;

the number of boxes that would be reasonable for the observer to fill within a typical lesson in your year group.

THE MOSAIC APPROACH



THE MOSAIC APPROACH

This is a **qualitative, multi-method** research methodology.

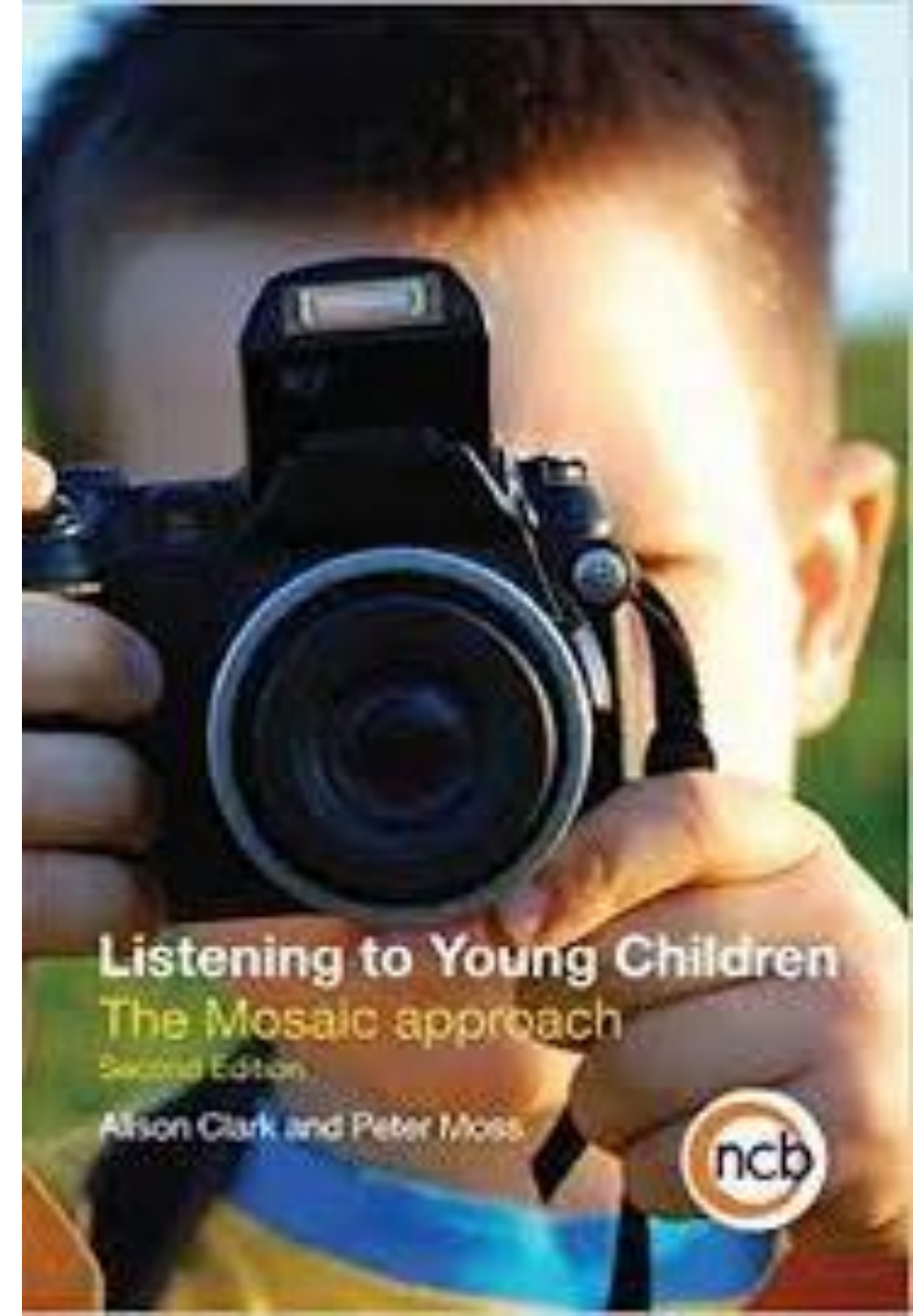
Developed by Alison Clark and Peter Moss for use with young children in early years settings.

Brings together a **wide range of methods and tools**, which can be used in combination to gain an understanding of children's views and experiences of their environments.

Recognises that some tools will be more suitable to use with individual children than others but assumes that all children's views and experiences are valuable.

Examples of tools:

- observation
- interviews
- child-led tours of their environment
- children taking pictures (e.g. of things that are important to them)



THE MOSAIC APPROACH - THEORY

Read:

Clark, A. (2005) Listening to and involving young children: a review of research and practice, *Early Child Development and Care*, 175:6, 489-505.

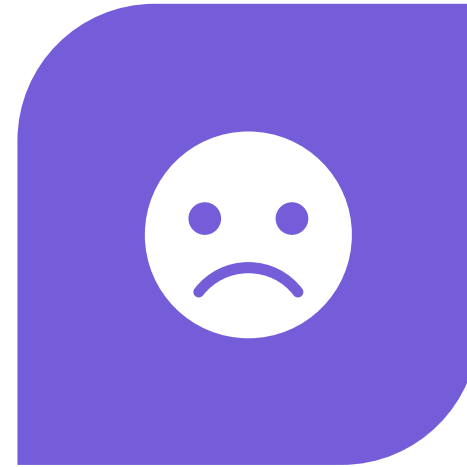
DOI: [10.1080/03004430500131288](https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430500131288)



MOSAIC APPROACH



POSITIVE POINTS?



NEGATIVE POINTS?

MOSAIC APPROACH

Strengths

Limitations

- the application of research results to cases or situations beyond those examined in the study

Generalisation

- the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results.

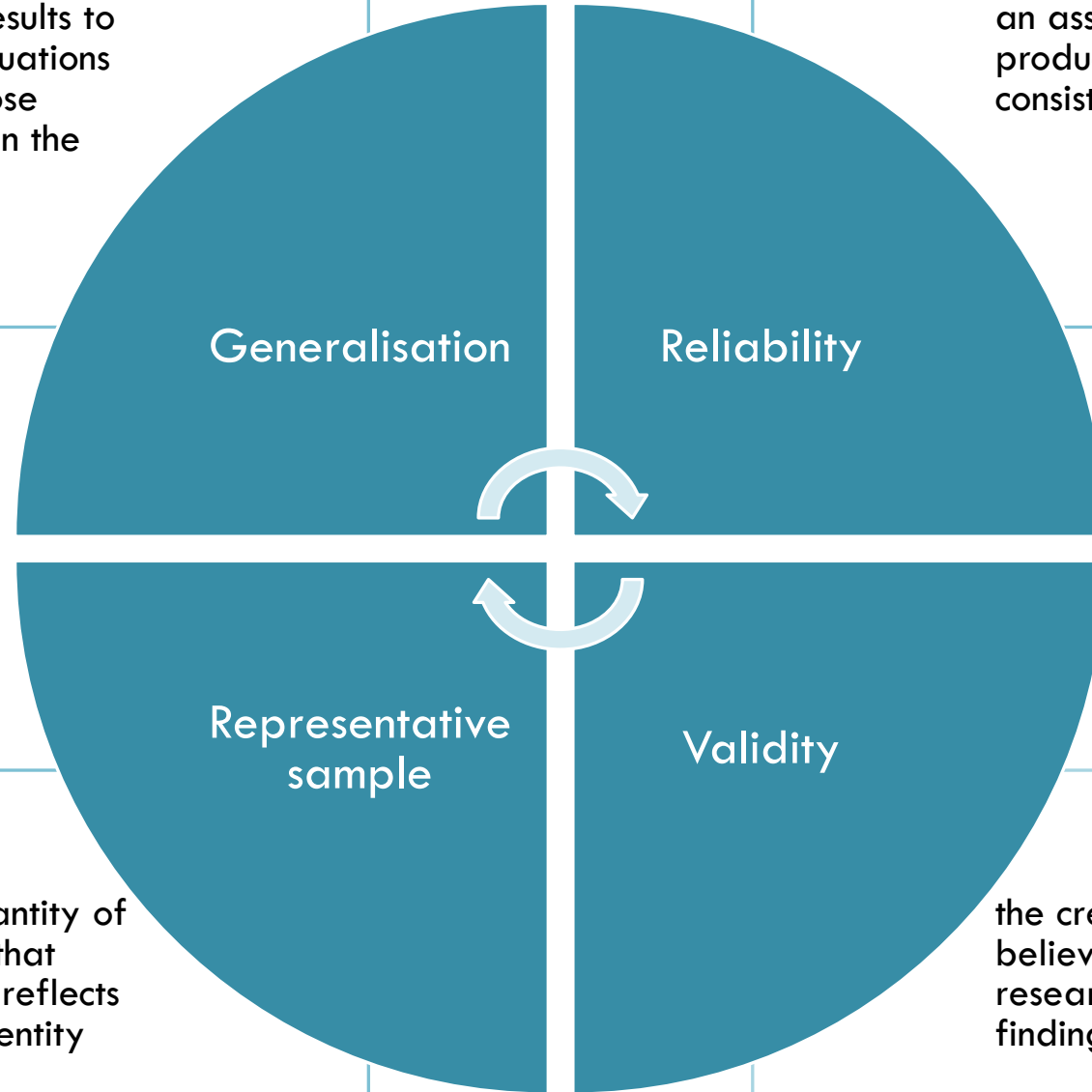
Reliability

Representative sample

- a small quantity of something that accurately reflects the larger entity

Validity

the credibility or believability of the research. Are the findings genuine?





ASSIGNMENT PREPARATION |

ETHICS FORM PREPARATION

Once you have undertaken some reading, you should start drafting a section on your chosen methods for inclusion on your ethics form:

+	(this box should expand as you type)
8	Proposed methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed.
9	(this box should expand as you type)

ASSIGNMENT PREPARATION

Research methods Write about the research methods that you chose to include in your research study; e.g. observation, interview, questionnaire, another method. For each method, discuss these points: • What does the literature tell us? • What are the strengths and limitations of the method? • Explain your observation schedule / interview questions / questionnaire questions / other method. Have you used a specific structure? (closed or open questions, tick boxes etc.); a specific scale? (e.g. Leuven) • Discuss any information that had an impact on the research method, e.g. the age or attainment of pupils. • Refer back to the literature wherever possible. • Remember to refer to your research tools, which you should label individually (Appendix 1, Appendix 2 etc.) and include these in your appendices.	1000
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REFERENCES

Clark, A. (2005) 'Ways of seeing: using the Mosaic approach to listen to young children's perspectives', in Clark, A., Kjørholt and Moss, P. (eds.) *Beyond Listening*. Children's perspectives on early childhood services. Bristol: Policy Press, pp. 29–49.

Ponizovsky-Bergelson, Y., Dayan, T., Wahle, N. & Roer-Strier, D. (2019) 'A Qualitative Interview With Young Children: What Encourages or Inhibits Young Children's Participation?' *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 18, pp1-9.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1609406919840516>