



# Authentic Assessment in Early Intervention Facilitator's Guide

Developed by the Early Intervention-Early Childhood Professional Development Community of Practice - EI Curriculum Workgroup

## About the Module

The ***Authentic Assessment in Early Intervention*** module was developed by a national workgroup that formed out of the Early Intervention-Early Childhood Professional Development Community of Practice. Members of the workgroup have extensive experience developing and delivering early intervention training. This module is one part of a Universal Online Part C Early Intervention Curriculum that may be used to support quality early intervention practices.

***Authentic Assessment in Early Intervention*** is comprised of an introduction and four lessons. It is available in two formats: 1) Self-paced asynchronous online format developed in  with embedded audio, video clips and interactive learning activities  2) PowerPoint presentation with slide notes and links to video clips illustrating key aspects of authentic assessment.

## Use of the Module

The information in this module is applicable to every Part C program. Trainers may choose to integrate state-specific information into the PowerPoint presentations or may want to use state-specific information as extension activities. The module can be viewed by an individual or in groups for training purposes. Although the module is designed to be viewed online, trainers may choose to use the PowerPoint presentations without the recorded audio to present the module in a face-to-face or webinar format. Trainers will still have access to the slide notes regardless of the format in which they choose to present.

Each of the lessons that make up this module may be used without charge for instructional purposes but may not be used for commercial gain. Trainers may choose to use all or part of the presentations. Whether you choose to use all or part of the presentation, you **must** credit the work in the following manner: Early Intervention-Early Childhood Professional Development Community of Practice. (2018). Authentic Assessment in Early Intervention. Retrieved from: <http://universalonlinepartceicurriculum.pbworks.com>.

Citation of the work should not suggest that the developers of the Universal Online Part C Early Intervention Curriculum endorse you or your use of the work.

## Authentic Assessment in Early Intervention

Facilitator's Guide materials are included for each of the lessons.



**Video Clips:** The clips include links to the videos published in the modules as well as other video clips that can be used to augment the modules.



**Discussion/Reflection Questions:** The discussion and reflection questions are provided to help facilitate discussions that could take place in face-to-face group activities, small group discussions, or electronically via a listserv, discussion boards, or blogs.



**Guided Practice Activities:** The practice activities include those embedded in the published modules (embedded activity) as well as others that can be used to augment the modules (bonus activity). You may also choose to modify or administer these activities in another format that best serves your learners.



**Learner's Guide:** The Learner's Guide is a companion tool for the ***Authentic Assessment in Early Intervention*** module. It includes key definitions and concepts, space to document notes and reflections, key resources, and references found within the module.



**Extra Resources:** Additional online resources that expand upon or augment the content covered in the module.



**References:** The references include citations from the modules.

## Use of the Facilitator's Guide

This Facilitator's Guide is a tool to support individuals and/or organizations providing training for early intervention personnel. The guide is intended to be used in conjunction with the online module, ***Authentic Assessment in Early Intervention***. It is not a "stand alone" resource for distribution. Facilitators using this guide are expected to have content knowledge of the information in this module as well as skills needed for group facilitation. The role of the facilitator using this guide is to provide support, stimulate discussion, and answer questions from participants navigating through the ***Authentic Assessment in Early Intervention*** module.

## Introduction

The "Introduction" orients the participant to the ***Authentic Assessment in Early Intervention*** module. It reviews the features within the module and corresponding online toolkit including; slide navigation, the Learner's Guide, the Facilitator's Guide, and the Check for Understanding questions. It also provides an overview of the different lessons included in the module and the learning objectives. Additionally, it introduces the participant to the evidence base used to develop the module content, including the Division for Early Childhood Recommended Practices.

# Lesson 1 - What is Authentic Assessment?

## Video Clips:

### **What is Authentic Assessment?** (Extra Resource) -

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/resultsmatter/whatisauthenticassessment-player>

Colorado Department of Education Results Matter Video Library

Teachers, parents, and early intervention providers describe what authentic assessment is, how information from authentic assessment is used, and why authentic assessment is beneficial.

### **Authentic Assessment in Early Intervention** (Extra Resource) - <https://youtu.be/CjE3tSxhDDg>

Colorado Department of Education Results Matter Video Library

Physical therapist, Megan Klish Fibbe, describes and illustrates how authentic assessment practices enhance her early intervention work with children and their families, including the use of observation, conversations with families, and video.

## Discussion/Reflection Questions:

- What are the differences between authentic assessment and conventional, standardized or norm-referenced testing?
- What kinds of decisions can be made with information gathered from authentic assessment?
- Why should providers use objective and descriptive statements when documenting their authentic assessment observations?
- Why is it important to gather information from family members and other caregivers during authentic assessment?

## Guided Practice Activities

### **Subjective or Objective? (Embedded Activity)**

Review each statement and determine if it is objective or subjective.	Objective	Subjective
Arman appeared bored and just wandered around the playroom		X
Betsy didn't like the meal that her caregiver gave her		X
Denny held the 4 oz bottle using both hands	X	
Steven grasped the crayon between his thumb and index finger and made a mark on the paper	X	

## Which example best represents the DEC Recommend Practices?

### Example 1

The educator and speech language pathologist met together with Shalonda's parents to complete their parts of the evaluation. The physical therapist returned to Shalonda's home a week later to complete the gross motor part of the evaluation.

### Example 2

During the assessment, the occupational therapist, the service coordinator, Saul's father, and Saul's child care provider talk about concerns related to Saul's eating. Since it is lunchtime, the occupational therapist asks if she can watch Saul eat some baby food and then observes him drinking from his bottle.

## Bonus Activity

Visit the *Early Intervention Strategies for Success* Blog. Read the "[Enhancing Quality Functional Assessments for Each Individual Family](#)" blog post and respond to the questions.

Source: Terry, Lisa. "Enhancing Quality Functional Assessment for Each Individual Family." *Early Intervention Strategies for Success*, 28 November 2017.



## Learner's Guide Activities

### DEC Recommended Practices - Review the "Assessment-Related" Practices - (<https://divisionearlychildhood.egnyte.com/dl/tgv6GUXhVo>)

The participant is directed to review the DEC Recommended Practices and identify what stands out to them within the practices related to assessment.

### Pause & Reflect:

The participant is directed to reflect on the quote and questions below.

*"Authentic assessment captures real-life behavior in everyday settings and routines. It has the flexibility to accommodate the functional limitations of children with various disabilities. It enables children to show what they can really do in a way possible, not merely the way prescribed by the test."* - Source:  
<http://archive.brookespublishing.com/author-interviews/bagnato-70472-interview.htm>

On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being very confident), reflect on the following statements as they relate to your ability to perform and participate in authentic assessment activities in early intervention. There are no right or wrong answers, just your honest opinion of your skills, strengths and areas you'd like to develop.

Reflection Statements	1 (not confident at all)			5 (very confident)	
How confident am I in writing objective and descriptive observation statements?	1	2	3	4	5
How confident am I in gathering information from family members and other caregivers?	1	2	3	4	5
How confident am I in observing children in routines and activities (i.e. meal time)?	1	2	3	4	5
Skills I'd like to practice and/or seek support related to objective observations, writing objective and descriptive statements and/or gathering information from family members and other caregivers:					
Questions I have for a peer or supervisor who might help me work on these skills:					

 Extra Resources and  References

Extra Resources and References can be found on pages 15-17.

## Lesson 2 – Understanding Why

### Video Clips:

**Meet Vladi:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feWu4VxcRU8>

This video introduces Vladi. The participant is directed to use this clip to practice his/her observation and authentic assessment skills.

### Discussion/Reflection Questions:

- Why is it important to consider the child’s development as a whole instead of just focusing on each developmental domain?
- Why is it important to develop strength based intervention strategies and supports?
- How can an EI provider use authentic assessment on an ongoing basis?



### Learner’s Guide Activities

#### **Activity: Authentic Assessment to Functional Outcomes - Bennie**

Imagine you are with the family and an IFSP team working to develop a functional IFSP outcome. Use the authentic assessment information provided below and develop a possible IFSP outcome for Bennie and his family. **Remember, outcomes are never written by any one individual and are always written with the IFSP team.** Tips for writing good outcomes can be found on the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) website (<http://ectacenter.org/topics/ifsp/ifsp.asp>). When finished, please return to the presentation and press play.

#### Functional Abilities: (objective/descriptive observation)

Bennie sits at the table in the childcare center during lunchtime and watches the other children pick up their spoons. He then picks up his spoon with a wide handle and scoops his food independently from the three section plate.

#### Family Priority:

Bennie’s parents would like him to feed himself with a spoon, like he does at childcare, so they don’t have to feed him or clean up the mess he makes with his hands.

Possible Functional IFSP Outcome: (\*\* Please check with your program if you are uncertain about the level of details that need to be included in functional IFSP outcomes within the EI System you work.)

**Activity – Practice what you learned in Lesson 1 & 2 with Vladi**

Vladi is learning to use his legs and his mother is trying to help him practice his skills so he can crawl and reach to get to something he wants on his own. Vladi’s mother decided to video tape an activity she has been working on with him. She is requesting feedback from her team members so she can help him be more independent as he explores new toys and objects at home.

Consider what you have learned from lesson 1 and lesson 2 and use the space below to document your descriptive observations, any follow up questions you have for the family, and strategies you might consider if you were providing EI for Vladi and his family.

When you are ready, click the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feWu4VxcRU8> to watch the first 4 minute video of Vladi which will open in a new window.

What do you see Vladi doing?
What do you observe Vladi’s mother doing?
How are Vladi’s siblings involved in the activity?
What are some of Vladi’s “functional abilities?”
What questions do you have for Vladi’s mother?
What EI implementation strategies might you suggest based on what you observed?

The participant is directed to reflect on the differences between the “Get’s It” team and the “Missed It” team.

<b>Missed-It Team</b> 	<b>Gets-It Team</b> 
<b>Outcome:</b> Vladi will increase his leg and core strength.	<b>Outcome:</b> Vladi will participate in playtime with his siblings by moving in a crawling motion to get things.
<b>Intervention Strategy:</b> Exercises to build muscle strength.	<b>Intervention Strategy:</b> Teach Vladi’s brother and sister how they can move his favorite bear toy just out of reach and encourage Vladi to move toward it.
<b>Intervention Strategy:</b> Five practice intervals to use his legs to push off therapist’s hands when in prone.	<b>Intervention Strategy:</b> Vladi’s family will put one hand near his feet to push off as he tries to move toward a favorite toy.

Now consider the outcomes and implementation strategies and activities that you develop with families and other team members.

Do they look more like the “Missed-It Team,” the “Gets-It Team” or somewhere in between? If they look more like the “Missed-It Team” or somewhere in between, what will you try to bring you closer to the “Get’s-It Team”?

### **Pause & Reflect**

The participant is directed to reflect on the quote and questions below.

*“Professionals on assessment teams often have two choices. They can rely solely on what they observe during the child’s performance of assessment tasks prescribed by the tool they are using. Or, they can integrate these observations with what they learn from talking with caregivers about the child’s abilities and challenges in everyday life. Relying on the child’s performance alone can be necessary, depending on the tool being used, but it is always important to remember that one tool, or even a child’s performance of discrete tasks, can never truly tell you all you need to know about a child’s abilities.” – Source:*

<http://veipd.org/earlyintervention/2017/03/30/dec-recommended-practices-assessment-part-2/>

How can you improve your skills focusing on each child’s functional abilities? Are your IFSP outcomes written to reflect functional abilities? What skills would you like to practice during early intervention sessions to build on those functional abilities?

### **Extra Resources and References**

Extra Resources and References can be found on pages 15-17.

## Lesson 3 – Who, What, Where, and Within

### Video Clips:

**Functional Assessment at the Initial/Intake Visit** (Extra Resource): <https://unc-fpg-cdi.adobeconnect.com/a992899727/m2t2ainvideo>. This video provides an example of the types of questions a service coordinator may ask while completing an authentic assessment during the initial or intake visit. There is also a checklist to use with the video: <https://unc-fpg-cdi.adobeconnect.com/a992899727/wapdfm2t2applyitnow/>

Source - Washington State Department of Early Learning. Module 2: Initial and Ongoing Functional Assessment. Content hosted by the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center.

### **Child Outcomes Step-by-Step**

<http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/videos.asp>

This video describes and illustrates the three child outcomes adopted by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and reported on by all state early intervention (Part C) and preschool special education (Part B/619) programs as part of their Annual Performance Report (APR).

Edelman, L. (Producer). (2011). *Child Outcomes Step-by-Step* (Video). Published collaboratively by Results Matter, Colorado Department of Education; Desired Results Access Project, Napa County Office of Education; and Early Childhood Outcomes Center.

### Discussion/Reflection Questions:

- How can you collect information about the child’s functioning across settings and in situations that involve a variety of people?
- What are some examples of everyday activities that you typically ask families about?
- Are there any activities that you don’t typically ask about that could provide valuable information?
- How can authentic assessment be used to support findings from standardized testing?
- Why is it important to have ongoing authentic assessment throughout all early intervention activities?

### Guided Practice Activities

#### **Bonus Activity**

Visit the *Early Intervention Strategies for Success* Blog. Read the “[Ongoing Assessment Occurs Naturally](#)” blog post and respond to the questions.

Source: Terry, Lisa. “Ongoing Assessment Occurs Naturally.” *Early Intervention Strategies for Success*, 9 January 2018.



## Learner's Guide Activities

Pause and reflect for a moment on the authentic assessment activities you engage in during intake visits with families. For service providers who may not perform “intake” activities you may reflect on the tools, questions and strategies you use to help to get to know families during your initial contact with them.

1. What questions do you ask? Are they open-ended questions that allow families to share or elaborate on information?
2. What other ways do you collect information, review and act on what you've learned from the family and through your observations?
3. Do you observe the child and family interacting in daily routines/activities that they are seeking support with during this visit?
4. How do you share the information you have gathered with other team members?

### **Family Centered Functional Outcomes (IFSP Outcomes)**

Take a moment now to pause and reflect on a recent IFSP meeting you participated in and consider how you may have used authentic assessment to help inform and develop IFSP outcomes.

What strategies do you use to connect authentic assessment and development of IFSP outcomes?

### **Pause & Reflect**

The participant is directed to reflect on the quote and questions below.

“One-time observations even in the natural context, are insufficient and often misleading”

(Bagnato, Neisworth, Pretti-Frontczak, 2010)

How does your early intervention program determine who will be involved with authentic assessment? Are there times and places within the IFSP process that you are using authentic assessment and never realized that was indeed what you were doing? Where within the early intervention process might you add more authentic assessment?

### **Extra Resources and References**

Extra Resources and References can be found on pages 15-17.

## Video Clips:

**Vladi's Functional Abilities:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXzQLsm0EpE>

This video illustrates how Vladi functions in his natural environment.

## Discussion/Reflection Questions:

- What practices do you find helpful during ongoing assessment?
- If you are already using authentic assessment, are there additional times during the early intervention process when you could use authentic assessment?
- How can family videos provide additional information as you review, reflect and consider actions within the EI process?



## Learner's Guide Activities

The participant is directed to reflect on the following:

### Reflection – Learner's Guide

To learn about a child's functional strengths and needs	To learn about a child's functioning in specific routines/activities	To gather information to assist the team with eligibility determination
To learn about a family's concerns and priorities	To learn about a child's progress	To problem-solve ways to help a child



Learner's Guide

Based on all this information you've learned on authentic assessment, think about your work every day with children and families. Have you used, or how could you use, authentic assessment during any of these activities?

What tools do you use to expand information gathered and observed? How can family videos provide additional information as you review, reflect and consider actions within the EI process?



As you watch this [video](#), use the space provided to record your objective observations, Vladi's functional abilities, questions you might ask for review, and next steps.

Record your objective observations. What information did you gather?

What functional abilities did you observe? How might this tie to family priorities which could lead to an outcome?

What would you review/reflect on with the family? What questions would you ask?

Within which step(s) of the EI process might a video like this occur? What actions might need to be considered?

### **Pause & Reflect:**

The participant is directed to reflect on the quote and questions below.

Bronfenbrenner notes that assessment should NOT be:

"...the science of strange behavior of children in strange situations with strange adults for the briefest possible periods of time."

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*. Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press. p. 19

How will you use your newly gained information on authentic assessment? Document two changes in your practice you would like to make regarding authentic assessment.

- 1.
- 2.

### Extra Resources and References

Extra Resources and References can be found on pages 15-17.

Division of Early Childhood Recommended Practices, 2014. Select ASSESSMENT tab. Available at:  
<http://ectacenter.org/decrp/decrp.asp>

ECTA Center was charged with assisting the Division for Early Childhood with developing products that would promote the use of the DEC Recommended Practices. The ECTA DEC Recommended Practices (RP) products illustrate how practitioners and parents can use the different RPs. These are the Checklists and Practices Guides for providers and families related to **Assessment**.

- [Engaging Families as Partners in Their Child's Assessment Checklist](#)
- [Informed Clinical Reasoning Checklist](#)
- [Authentic Child Assessment Practices Checklist](#)
- [Building on Child Strengths Practices Checklist](#)
- [Engaging Families as Assessment Partners](#) (Practice Guide)
- [Authentic Child Assessment](#) (Practice Guide)
- [Building on Child Strengths](#) (Practice Guide)
- [Identifying Child Strengths](#) (Practice Guide)
- [Family Member Roles in Informed Clinical Reasoning](#) (Practice Guide for Families)
- [Partnering with Your Child's Assessment Team Members](#) (Practice Guide for Families)
- [Everyday Child-and-Family Activities](#) (Practice Guide for Families)
- [Building on My Child's Strengths](#) (Practice Guide for Families)
- [Seeing My Child's Strengths](#) (Practice Guide for Families)

Division for Early Childhood, Early Intervention Special Interest Group. **Web Discussion - Assessment**.

April 6th, 2016 \*To view the archived version of this web discussion, click [here](#) to register. Once you register, you will be able to open the archived web conversation. [Download related resources here](#).

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. **Resources for Writing Good IFSP Outcomes**.

<http://ectacenter.org/topics/ifsp/ifsp.asp>

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. **Questions for Eliciting Family Interests, Priorities, Concerns & Everyday Routines and Activities**.

<http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/knowledgepath/ifspoutcomes-iepgoals/QuestionsEverydayActivities.pdf>

Early Intervention Strategies for Success Blog: <http://veipd.org/earlyintervention/>

[Functional AND \(not or\) Traditional Assessment](#)

[DEC Recommended Practices: Assessment \(Part 1\)](#)

[DEC Recommended Practices: Assessment \(Part 2\)](#)

Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia. **The Decision Tree: Child Indicator Seeds for Success - Functional Assessment**

[http://www.veipd.org/main/pdf/functional\\_assessment\\_11.2014\\_decision\\_tree.pdf](http://www.veipd.org/main/pdf/functional_assessment_11.2014_decision_tree.pdf)

Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia. **Asking Good Questions**

[http://www.veipd.org/main/pdf/Quik\\_Ref\\_Guide-Asking\\_GOOD\\_Questions\\_June\\_2013.pdf](http://www.veipd.org/main/pdf/Quik_Ref_Guide-Asking_GOOD_Questions_June_2013.pdf)

Washington State Department of Early Learning. **Module 2: Initial and Ongoing Functional Assessment.**

<http://ectacenter.org/wamodules/functional.asp>. Content hosted by the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center.

Case Story: <https://unc-fpg-cdi.adobeconnect.com/a992899727/wapdfm2t3hien/>

Planning for Functional Assessment worksheet: <https://unc-fpg-cdi.adobeconnect.com/a992899727/wapdfm2t3applyitnow231blank/>

Answer Key: <https://unc-fpg-cdi.adobeconnect.com/a992899727/wapdfm2t3applyitnow231/>

Additional Questions focused on IFSP development: <https://unc-fpg-cdi.adobeconnect.com/a992899727/wapdfm2t3applyitnow232blank/>

Answer Key: <https://unc-fpg-cdi.adobeconnect.com/a992899727/wapdfm2t3applyitnow232/>

Workgroup on Principles and Practices in Natural Environments, OSEP TA Community of Practice: Part C Settings. (2008, February). **Agreed upon practices for providing early intervention services in natural environments.** Retrieved from

[http://www.ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/families/AgreedUponPractices\\_FinalDraft2\\_01\\_08.pdf](http://www.ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/families/AgreedUponPractices_FinalDraft2_01_08.pdf)

Workgroup on Principles and Practices in Natural Environments, OSEP TA Community of Practice: Part C Settings. (2008, March). **Seven key principles: Looks like / doesn't look like.** Retrieved from

[http://www.ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/families/Principles\\_LooksLike\\_DoesntLookLike3\\_11\\_08.pdf](http://www.ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/families/Principles_LooksLike_DoesntLookLike3_11_08.pdf)

\*Key principles #4 and #5 are especially relevant for authentic assessment.

## References:

Bagnato, S., Goins, D., Pretti-Frontczak, K. (2010). LINKing Authentic Assessment and Early Childhood Intervention: Best Measures for Best Practices, Second Edition. Baltimore, MD. Brookes Publishing.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design. Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press. p. 19.

Brookes Publishing. Author Q & A: What are the Advantages of Using Authentic Assessment for Early Childhood Intervention? <http://archive.brookespublishing.com/author-interview/bagnato-70472-interview.htm>.

Childress, D.C. "DEC Recommended Practices: Assessment (Part 2)" Early Intervention Strategies for Success, 30 March 2017, <http://veipd.org/earlyintervention/2017/03/30/dec-recommended-practices-assessment-part-2/>