

FIGURE 6.2 Running record format

Context/Background/Time	Intensive Observation	Comments/Reflections
Focus: Jerry/social development S = Sarah Date: May 15 J = Jerry		
8:02 a.m. Arrival time: children arrive, put things in cubbies, and then go right to a chosen center. Today, the teacher had placed a very large piece of paper on a wall—a mural-size piece of paper.	S & J put things in cubbies, S surveying the room. J continued to organize his cubby. S, “O-o-o . . . look, J! A BIG piece of paper.” J glanced at the paper as S speed-walked to the paper, set up for mural drawing. S looked at the baskets on the floor, picked up a marker, and ran her hands over it, smiling. S dropped the marker, and scurried back to Jerry.	S indicates that she wants to play with J.
8:06 a.m.	S whispered to J, “I saw <i>new</i> markers in the art center. They’re big and fat! Let’s go <i>there</i> .” S hurried back and grabbed a marker. J walked slowly to the mural, watching S for about 15 seconds. He moved closer and looked in the basket of markers. S looked up at him, “See? Really fat markers!” She held one out to him. J <i>smiled at her, nodded</i> , and then slowly folded a hand around the marker. S smiled back, relinquished the marker, picked up another, saying, “Come on. Let’s draw!”	J seems curious. As usual, is cautious. J’s smile/nod: nonverbal positive interaction. Tentative in accepting even S’s offer. S responds positively. Issues another invitation to work together.

*Do not feel obligated to comment on every item.

plate over to his spot at the table, seized the remaining fruit, popped it into his mouth, and turned to John, grinning. He said, “Two points!”

This record gives better data. We have a better picture of Sammy’s actions and words. The observer has not stated an opinion. However, we still do not have enough data to make conclusions. We would need more data, such as what happened before snack time, whether John had done something that upset Sammy before snack, and whether Sammy does this sort of thing with other children and in various places. One observation, however clearly written, is not enough data for making judgments.

The third column, Comments/Reflections, is for brief comments and reflections *after* completing the intensive observation. It is not necessary to comment on or interpret every observation. Writing comments or reflections is very helpful if we detect a pattern, but even then your comment must be made with utmost care. Even though you might think that you have enough information and know the facts, you might have missed valuable information. Regarding Hector, Mr. Russo commented, “Same thing yesterday . . . lots of children greeted him [Hector] . . . demonstrated good social skills.” For the apple episode, the teacher simply said nothing in the reflection column but vowed to observe further.