

happened right before the event, such as Sarah's observation as told to Jerry that there were brand new markers in the writing center. Second is the event itself. Third is what happened after the event, such as Sarah's statement that there were many markers.

Time Sampling

Time sampling does not tell a story; therefore, it is a non-narrative form of observation. **Time sampling** allows teachers to observe small samples of a child's behavior. It is useful in guiding children because teachers often use it for recording children's interactions. Time sampling is different from event sampling because it does not record every instance of a behavior, but instead records only a *sampling* of the behavior.

Figure 6.6 shows a time sampling form. The observer has to choose the total amount of time for observing then divides the total time into equal intervals. The observer also decides the length of each interval. Finally, the observer chooses how long he will observe during the interval, for example, the first or last minute of a 3-minute interval.

There are benefits in time sampling. It requires observers to write less than in anecdotal or running records or even event sampling. Observers do not have to record every example of the behavior, only those behaviors that occur in the designated interval. A disadvantage is that some of the target behaviors do occur, but outside the interval designated for monitoring.

Time sampling

Observes for a limited time period; focuses on a precisely defined behavior; records whether that behavior occurred

The next section focuses on portfolios, not an observational strategy, but a way of storing what has been observed and documenting development and learning.

FIGURE 6.6 Time sampling form

Observer's name: C Sandal		
Child's name: Jerry		
Date: May 20		
Start time: 8:00 a.m., beginning of center time		
Behavior observed: Positive nonverbal interactions with another child, for example, smiles, nods, thumbs-up, waves		
Total Observation Time: 15 Minutes	How Long Is Each Interval? 5 Minutes	When and for How Long Will I Observe in the Interval? 1½ Minutes at the Beginning of the Interval
Interval	Did the behavior occur (yes if the behavior occurs; no if it does not); number of times that it occurred	Total number of times that the behavior occurred for this observation time period
Interval 1	Yes, one time in the 1½ minute interval	
Interval 2	Yes, one time	
Interval 3	No	
Summary: Jerry showed positive nonverbal interaction with another child two times during the first 15 minutes of center time.		