Teachstone

CLASS ENVIRONMENT™ AND ECERS-3

Pre-K/K CLASS Environment and ECERS-3

The CLASS Environment takes a unique approach to environments in that it is anchored in the research-based dimensions of the CLASS tool.

In Teachstone's development process, we used the domains of the Pre-K/K-3 CLASS (Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support) to organize the scoring of elements of the classroom environment that could support effective teaching and learning. Teachstone closely collaborated with experts representing diverse backgrounds to develop the CLASS Environment. In effect, the measure supports educators working with a diverse classroom community, including dual- language learners (DLLs) and children with disabilities. Our goal is to support positive outcomes for these children by helping educators to optimize the spaces where they interact with children.

Teachstone®

The CLASS Environment is observed - by the same observer - during a CLASS observation window, and adds approximately 15 minutes to the total observation time. CLASS Environment focuses purely on the elements of the environment that most directly influence teaching and learning across 29 high-level items that are scored individually, while the classroom interactions that are at the heart of children's learning and development are comprehensively captured by the Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS®). Finally, Teachstone worked with experts in equitable and culturally responsive education. Throughout the measure, relevant items reflect the most important ways the environment can support children by providing equitable, diverse, and inclusive materials, displays, and arrangements.

The Pre-K/K CLASS Environment and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, 3rd Edition (ECERS-3) are two common tools that examine the classroom environment. The CLASS Environment uses a 3-point scale to support educators' ability to engage in effective interactions and children's ability to make the most of their classroom experiences.   ECERS-3, in contrast, is observed on its own during a minimum 3-hour observation period. The ECERS-3 registers 6 subscales with a total of 37 items on a 7-point scale that include both aspects of the environment and interaction, in order to come to both subscale and overall composite scores. Across tools, although the classroom elements are "counted" in different ways, both examine similar types of environmental features that can support children's outcomes.

This crosswalk considers the alignment between the Pre-K/K CLASS Environment items and the ECERS-3 indicators and items. The items below represent CLASS Environment items that map onto the ECERS-3, but do not represent the entirety of the items found on the CLASS Environment or on the ECERS-3. Overall, this crosswalk does not indicate a perfect alignment between the two tools in a given area. For example, CLASS Environment was not designed as a comprehensive measure of all elements of the environment and does not measure elements such as health and safety that are typically assessed as a part of licensing, while many ECERS-3 items do pertain to health or safety concerns. ECERS-3 analyzes the environment in much deeper detail (for example, counting the number of books or art materials available during a given time period) than the CLASS Environment, which is intended to provide a higher-level view of how the environment can be best leveraged to support research-proven, effective interactions.

Subscale: Space and Furnishings

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Indoor Space *Is it safe, sufficiently clean, well lit, and ventilated?*	• **Sightlines** The room is arranged so that teachers can position themselves for clear lines of sight to observe children in all areas of the learning setting. • **Condition of Materials** Materials are in good condition for play and learning. • **Tidiness** The learning setting is generally orderly and free from physical clutter. • **Freedom from Background Noise** The learning setting is free from constant or excessive non-child background noise.
Furnishings for Care, Play and Learning *Safe, sufficient, clean, convenient, accessible to children with disabilities*	• **Space for Cooperation** Arrangements allow children to interact in close proximity with educators and each other. • **Adult Furniture** Adult furniture allows educators to participate comfortably alongside children at their physical level. • **Adaptive Materials** There is adaptive furniture or materials as necessary to support all children's participation. • **Materials for All Children's Verbal Expression** Materials and/or displays that support children's verbal expression in any language are available in the learning setting.

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Varied for different activities (soft area, sand play, water table)	• **Purposeful Spaces** The room is arranged with clearly defined areas where children know how to focus their time or attention. • **Sensory Materials** There are messy/sensory play options available. • **Art, Music, or Dance Materials** Materials for children to engage in art, music, or dance experiences are available in the learning setting.
Room Arrangement For Play and Learning *Independent child use of materials, easy teacher supervision, no overcrowding*	• **Space for Cooperation** Arrangements allow children to interact in close proximity with educators and each other. • **Adult Furniture** Adult furniture allows educators to participate comfortably alongside children at their physical level. • **Child-Accessible Materials** A variety of materials are available.
Quiet and loud areas separate	• **Space for Child Privacy** Children have access to a space for individual play, learning, silence, or calming time.
Arranged into interest centers	• **Purposeful Spaces** Learning areas are arranged so that children know how to focus their time or attention.

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Accessible to kids with disabilities	• **Adaptations For All Children's Participation** Furniture and/or materials are adaptive as necessary to support all children's participation. • **Materials For All Children's Verbal Expression** Materials and/or displays that support children's verbal expression in any language are available in the learning setting.
Space for Privacy *Children have an area to play or work alone*	• **Space for Child Privacy** Children have access to a space for individual play, learning, silence, or calming time.
Child-Related Display *Displays are mostly child-created, appropriate, eye-level, and talked about*	• **Displays of Children or Their Work** Displays of children include images of current children and their families, their pets, or peers. • **Displays of Children's Writing and Dictation** Displays present children's unique writing (including pre-writing) attempts and dictations in any language. • **Child-Level Displays** Visual displays are at eye level for children. Children can easily see and touch displays. • **Representation of Diversity** Materials and/or displays represent people of a variety of races, cultures, languages, abilities, ages, or gender roles.

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Space for Gross Motor *Space and equipment for gross motor play is accessible (push/pull, swing, catch, ball in hole/basket, throw, kick, pedal, jump, climb, steer)*	• **Quantity of Materials** The quantity of materials allows for consistent child engagement. Children do not have to wait for long periods to use materials. • **Child-Accessible Materials** A variety of materials are available.
Gross Motor Equipment *Varied, children use it indoors and outdoors for large parts of the day, limited wait times, safe, challenging*	• **Space for Cooperation** Arrangements allow children to interact in close proximity with educators and each other. • **Quantity of Materials** The quantity of materials allows for consistent child engagement. Children do not have to wait for long periods to use materials.

Subscale: Personal Care Routines

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Personal Care Routines *Meals/Snacks (Safe, Clean, Healthy, Pleasant) Toileting, Health Practices, Safety Practices*	• **Displays of Routines and Transitions** Displays show routines and transitions of the learning setting. The displays are illustrated for preliterate children to understand.

Subscale: Language and Literacy

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Language and Literacy	• **Literacy Materials** Materials and/or displays that promote literacy skills are available in the learning setting.

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Helping Children Expand Vocabulary *Variety of words, specific words, new words with context, add info and ideas to children's words*	• **Displays of Children's Writing and Dictation** Displays present children's unique writing (including pre-writing) attempts and dictations in any language. • **Materials for All Children's Verbal Expression** Materials and/or displays that support children's verbal expression in any language are available in the learning setting.
Encourage Children to Use Language *Open ended questions, respond positively to children's comments, casual and academic bi-directional conversations, extension and support of children's speech*	• **Materials for All Children's Verbal Expression** Materials and/or displays that support children's verbal expression in any language are available in the learning setting. • **Materials for Imaginary Real-World Play** Materials allow children to create scenes from their own experiences and imagination, and take on roles from the real world. • **Open-Ended Materials** Materials that encourage open-ended exploration are available in the learning setting.
Staff Use Books With Children *Staff read books in a way that captures children interest in formal and non formal setting, discuss books together during reading, use books to answer children's questions* *Books relate to classroom themes*	• **Literacy Materials** Materials and/or displays that promote literacy skills are available in the learning setting.

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Encouraging Children Book Use *Variety of books accessible to children, some related to current classroom themes, displayed to children can easily see and choose them*	• **Literacy Materials** Materials and/or displays that promote literacy skills are available in the learning setting. • **Child-Accessible Materials** A variety of materials are available.
In good condition	• **Condition of Materials** Materials available in the learning setting are in good condition and allow for play and learning.
Staff encourage use	• **Purposeful Spaces** Learning areas are arranged so that children know how to focus their time or attention.
Becoming Familiar with Print *Print related to current classroom themes* *Staff write down children ideas and comments in a deliberate way* *Staff point out letters, sounds, as they read*	• **Literacy Materials** Materials and/or displays that promote literacy skills are available in the learning setting. • **Displays of Children's Writing and Dictation** Displays present children's unique writing (including pre-writing) attempts and dictations in any language.

Subscale: Learning Activities	
ECERS-3	**CLASS Environment Pre-K/K**
Staff use images/print to accompany written instructions	• **Visible Community Expectations** Displays show positive community expectations. Community expectations are at child-level. Written community expectations are accompanied with pictures or visuals that preliterate children can understand. • **Displays of Routines and Transitions** Displays show routines and transitions of the learning setting. The displays are illustrated for preliterate children to understand.
Fine Motor	• **Condition of Materials** Materials available in the learning setting are in good condition and allow for play and learning.
Variety, accessible, good condition	• **Child-Accessible Materials** A variety of materials are available.
Staff talk with children about what they are doing with fine motor materials	• **Open-Ended Materials** Materials that encourage open-ended exploration are available in the learning setting.
Art *Available, variety, accessible*	• **Art, Music, or Dance Materials** Materials for children to engage in art, music, or dance experiences are available in the learning setting.

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Individual expression encourages, staff facilitation to use more complex materials	• **Open-Ended Materials** Materials that encourage open-ended exploration are available in the learning setting.
Music and Movement *Point out rhyming words, repetition*	• **Art, Music, or Dance Materials** Materials for children to engage in art, music, or dance experiences are available in the learning setting.
Blocks	• **Math Materials** Math materials and/or displays are available in the learning setting
Staff facilitate, point out math concepts (compare, count)	• **Open-Ended Materials** Materials that encourage open-ended exploration are available in the learning setting
Dramatic Play *Accessible, varied, represent diversity*	• **Materials for Imaginary Real-World Play** Materials allow children to create scenes from their own experiences and imagination, and take on roles from the real world. • **Representation of Diversity** Materials and/or displays represent people of a variety of races, cultures, languages, abilities, ages, or gender roles. • **Real-World Multicultural Materials*** Real-world objects from a variety of cultures and traditions are available.

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Staff incorporate print and numbers talk into dramatic play	• **Math Materials** Math materials and/or displays are available in the learning setting. • **Literacy Materials** Materials and/or displays that promote literacy skills are available in the learning setting.
Nature/Science *Varied materials, accessible*	• **Open-Ended Materials** Materials that encourage open-ended exploration are available in the learning setting.
Staff use materials to talk to children about sorting, comparing, measuring, predicting	• **Math Materials** Math materials and/or displays are available in the learning setting.
Animal or plant for children to care for	• **Materials from Nature** Materials from the natural world are available in the learning setting.
Math Materials and Activities/Math in Daily Events/Understanding Written Numbers	• **Math Materials** Math materials and/or displays are available in the learning setting.
Variety of math materials from a variety of categories	• **Open-Ended Materials** Materials that encourage open-ended exploration are available in the learning setting.

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Staff facilitate use of math materials, encourage finger counting, relate math activities to real life, ask basic and reasoning math questions during play *Staff use math talk with non-math materials* *Connect shapes or numbers to real life (count the number of days until a child's birthday, identify shapes of bus wheels on a toy)* *Staff help children attach meaning to print numbers with play materials, staff talk about the meaning of printed numbers*	• **Real-world Multicultural Materials** Real-world objects from a variety of cultures and traditions. • **Recycled Materials** Recycled materials that are used in children's home lives are available in the learning setting for educators and children to repurpose.
Promoting Acceptance of Diversity *Multiple examples of racial/cultural/gender diversity shown in a positive* *Staff talk about differences positively*	• **Real-world Multicultural Materials** Real-world objects from a variety of cultures and traditions.

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Appropriate Use of Technology *Less than 30 minutes of use total in the day, encourages creativity or vigorous movement, support and extend classroom themes and activities*	• **Effectiveness of Screen Time** Screen time is interactive, requiring children's engagement through clicking, tapping, dragging, or interactions with educators. Screen time is facilitated by educators to enhance play and/or learning.

Subscale: Interaction

It's important to note that while CLASS Environment has items that align to ECERS-3 subscale: Interaction, the CLASS Environment is a supplement to the comprehensive CLASS tool. The CLASS tool is designed to comprehensively measure the quality of educator-child interactions that are proven by research to impact children's development and learning. The design of both tools allows for a streamlined observation that captures the quality of both the environment and the interactions, thus providing a more holistic view of how educators can improve their practice to most positively impact children's development and learning. For example, educators who are working to grow professionally in the domain of Instructional Support, might look at corresponding CLASS Environment item scores in that domain and make intentional shifts to their environment and to their daily plans to focus on using the environment in ways to better support quality interactions specific to Concept Development.

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Supervision of Gross Motor	• **Sightlines** The room is arranged so that teachers can position themselves for clear lines of sight to observe children in all areas of the learning setting.
Peer Interactions	• **Space for Cooperation** Arrangements allow children to interact in close proximity with caregivers and each other.
Staff-Child Interaction	• **Adult Furniture** Adult furniture allows caregivers to participate comfortably alongside children at their physical level.

Subscale: Program Structure

ECERS-3	CLASS Environment Pre-K/K
Discipline	• **Visible Community Expectations** Displays show positive community expectations. Community expectations are at child-level. Written community expectations are accompanied with pictures or visuals that preliterate children can understand.
Transitions and Waiting Time *Gradual, individual, or efficient transitions, clear routines and facilitation, little waiting time*	• **Displays of Routines and Transitions** Displays show routines and transitions of the learning setting. The displays are illustrated for preliterate children to understand. • **Quantity of Materials** The quantity of materials allows for consistent child engagement. Children do not have to wait for long periods to use materials.
Free Play *Wide variety of materials available covering wide range of interests*	• **Open-Ended Materials** Classroom materials encourage open-ended exploration.
Provisions for Children with Disabilities *Children with disabilities have necessary modification to fully participate in most activities*	• **Adaptations for All Children's Participation** Furniture and/or materials are adaptive as necessary to support all children's participation.

Subscale: Parents and Staff	
ECERS-3	**CLASS Environment Pre-K/K**
Parents and Staff *Provisions for personal needs of staff*	• **Adult Furniture** Adult furniture allows educators to participate comfortably alongside children at their physical level.