

General Education Observation Report – RVCC Children's Campus 223 (2's & 3's Classroom)

Observation Report Form for ART-CC
Introduction to Teaching at Raritan Valley Community College
Dr. Kathryn Suk – Fall 2025

Observer: Seema Goel
Date of Observation: December 3, 2025

1. Type of Classroom Setting Observed:

- General Education Early Childhood Classroom
- Mixed-age group of **2-year-olds and 3-year-olds**
- Play-based, developmentally appropriate early childhood setting

2. Context of the Setting Observed

A. Setting:

Suburban community setting, family-oriented, located within RVCC's Children's Campus. The campus serves as both a childcare center for local families and a laboratory preschool for early childhood education students.

B. School Level:

Early Childhood Education – Preschool (Ages 2–3)

C. Type of School:

Campus-Based Early Learning Center

- Follows developmentally appropriate practices (DAP)
- Play-based curriculum
- Emphasis on social-emotional development, language, exploration, and sensory learning

D. Number and Type of Educators Present:

- **Lead Teacher:** Early childhood educator with experience working with toddlers
- **Assistant Teacher:** Supported activities, behavior guidance, and transitions
- **Floating Support Teacher:** Entered intermittently to help supervise and assist with transitions or activities

Number of students present: 10

- 4 two-year-olds
- 6 three-year-olds
- Varied developmental stages regarding language, motor skills, behavior regulation

E. Date & Time of Observation:

Wednesday, December 3rd
9:00 AM – 11:15 AM

Observation Overview

During my time in the classroom, I observed **arrival routines, free-play center time, morning meeting, sensory exploration, snack, toileting routines, and music-and-movement time**. The environment was lively yet calm, designed to support young children's independence, self-regulation, and exploration.

The observation revealed a classroom deeply rooted in early childhood best practices, with teachers balancing structure and flexibility, allowing children to feel safe while exploring freely. I will reflect on the environment and teaching practices using **Domains 2 and 3 of the Danielson Framework**.

Domain 2: Learning Environments

Ratings: US – Unsatisfactory | B – Basic | P – Proficient | D – Distinguished

2a. Cultivating Respectful and Affirming Environments – D

The classroom environment was warm, nurturing, and emotionally attuned to toddlers' needs.

Evidence & Examples:

- Upon arrival, each child was greeted individually—some with hugs, some with enthusiastic “Good morning!” greetings, and others with a gentle hello depending on their comfort level. The teachers made the effort to match the energy and temperament of each child.
- The teachers used **emotionally supportive language** frequently:
 - “You look a little sad today. Do you want to sit with me for a minute?”
 - “Thank you for using gentle hands.”
 - “You’re working so hard. I’m proud of you.”
- The children’s **family photos** were displayed at eye level. Several children referenced them during the morning, pointing to their pictures for reassurance.
- Conflicts were handled with empathy and respect. When a child snatched a shovel from a peer, the teacher calmly narrated what happened:
 - “It looks like you both want the shovel. Jacob, you can say, ‘Can I have a turn?’ and Sofia is using it right now.”

This reinforced language, social skills, and emotional regulation.
- No child was ever scolded harshly. Redirection was always gentle, and emotional needs were prioritized.

Summary:

This classroom modeled respect through tone, body language, and interaction. Children felt valued, safe, and heard—hallmarks of a distinguished early childhood environment.

2b. Fostering a Culture of Learning – D

The physical environment communicated that learning happens everywhere—in choice time, routines, play, and interaction.

Evidence & Examples:

- The walls contained developmentally appropriate visuals: simple color charts, emotion faces, photos, labeled shelves, and picture schedules.
- Learning centers invited exploration:
 - **Block Area:** Soft blocks, big wooden blocks, trucks, people figurines
 - **Pretend Play Area:** Kitchen utensils, pretend food, dolls, dress-up scarves
 - **Library Corner:** Pillows, board books, laminated story cards
 - **Sensory Table:** Pom-poms, cups, tweezers, scoops
- Teachers seamlessly integrated learning into play. For example:
 - “You put two pom-poms in the cup. Can we try for three?”
 - “That scarf is *blue*. Can you find another blue one?”
- Peer modeling was encouraged, especially during cleanup and shared activities.
- Children were celebrated for effort rather than correctness:
 - “Wow, you tried to zip it again! Keep going—you’re getting it!”
 - “You stacked them high! Let’s count together.”

Summary:

Learning was deeply embedded into the fabric of the classroom, fostering confidence, curiosity, and independence.

2c. Maintaining Purposeful Environments – D

The environment was intentional, carefully organized to meet toddlers’ needs.

Evidence & Examples:

- Materials were placed in open bins at toddler height, allowing children to self-select and self-return items.
- Centers were clearly defined with rugs, furniture placement, and shelving. This allowed even very young children to understand where certain types of play belonged.
- Children transitioned using familiar songs (“Clean-up, clean-up...”), making the environment predictable and calming.
- The teacher rotated sensory materials to keep engagement high, which is essential for short attention spans.
- The design encouraged independence:
 - Step stools near sinks
 - Small cubbies
 - Child-height coat hooks

Summary:

The classroom was purposeful and structured in a way that promoted exploration, agency, and comfort.

2d. Supporting Positive Student Behavior – D

Behavior management aligned with toddler development and was proactive, gentle, and effective.

Evidence:

- Teachers reinforced positive behavior constantly:
 - “I love how you waited.”
 - “You shared your block—that was kind.”
- When behavior challenges occurred (crying, grabbing, pushing), the teachers guided children without shaming:

- “I won’t let you hit. Let’s use gentle hands.”
- Teachers used **emotion coaching**, helping children identify feelings and acceptable ways to express them.
- The classroom used **simple rules** (walking feet, gentle hands, listening ears) repeated visually and verbally.
- Behavioral expectations were consistent between lead teacher and assistant teacher, creating a stable environment.

Summary:

Children were never punished for developmentally normal behaviors. Instead, they were supported, redirected, and coached with patience and warmth.

2e. Organizing Spaces for Learning – D

The physical environment was exceptionally well-organized, safe, and accessible.

Evidence:

- Soft rugs created defined zones and reduced noise.
- Shelving units doubled as dividers between centers.
- A quiet nook with pillows provided a place for children needing regulation time.
- Teachers maintained a clutter-free environment, resetting spaces after activities for clarity.
- Toileting and diapering spaces were clean, private, and efficient.

Summary:

The classroom layout supported safe exploration and developmentally appropriate independence, meeting toddlers exactly where they are.

Domain 2 Overall Summary

Domain 2 was executed at a **Distinguished** level. The classroom provided emotional warmth, physical safety, meaningful structure, and thoughtfully designed learning opportunities. Every interaction and every part of the environment reflected intentional planning rooted in early childhood developmental knowledge. Children moved confidently throughout the space, felt emotionally supported, and demonstrated natural curiosity. The environment successfully balanced structure with freedom, ensuring that children felt secure while being encouraged to explore the world around them.

Domain 3: Learning Experiences

Ratings: US – Unsatisfactory | B – Basic | P – Proficient | D – Distinguished

3a. Communicating About Purpose and Content – D

Despite the children's young age, teachers communicated routines, expectations, and activity purposes clearly.

Evidence:

- Picture schedule cards were referenced throughout the morning.
- Teachers consistently narrated transitions:

- “After we clean up, we’re going to circle.”
- “First we wash hands, then we have snack.”
- Directions were simple, repeated, and accompanied by gestures.
- Teachers prepared children for changes:
 - “In two minutes, we’re putting the blocks away.”
- Language was tailored to toddlers, using short phrases and visual cues.

Summary:

The communication style supported comprehension, participation, and emotional security.

3b. Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques – P

Toddlers require simplified questioning strategies, but the teachers used developmentally appropriate prompts effectively.

Evidence:

- Teachers practiced open-ended questioning within toddlers’ capabilities:
 - “What are you making?”
 - “Do you want the red one or the yellow one?”
 - “Can you show me?”
- Children were encouraged to point, gesture, or try new words.
- Teachers used descriptive language to expand vocabulary:
 - “You’re scooping the tiny pom-poms!”
- Peer interactions were encouraged, with teachers narrating social exchanges.

Summary:

Discussion was meaningful and supported language development, though naturally limited by age.

3c. Engaging Students in Learning – D

Engagement in this classroom was exceptionally high.

Evidence:

- Sensory play held children’s attention for long periods, supporting fine-motor development and exploration.
- Music-and-movement involved scarves, instruments, body movement—capturing the entire group with enthusiasm.
- Teachers noticed children’s ideas and followed their lead.
- Activity lengths matched developmental needs: short, varied, and hands-on.
- Children remained emotionally regulated and eager to participate.

Summary:

The lesson design was energetic, sensory-rich, and deeply aligned with toddler learning needs.

3d. Using Assessment for Learning – P

Assessment was informal but embedded constantly.

Evidence:

- Teachers took anecdotal notes on tablets.
- They observed skills such as turn-taking, hand strength, vocabulary use, color recognition, and emotional regulation.
- Assessment informed instructional decisions in real time—for example, adding larger scoops when fine motor frustration was noticed.
- Teachers quietly checked developmental milestones while interacting naturally.

Summary:

Assessment was ongoing, purposeful, and subtle, informing instructional decisions without interrupting play.

3e. Responding Flexibly to Student Needs – D

Flexibility was a defining strength of the classroom.

Evidence:

- A child overwhelmed by circle time was allowed to sit slightly outside the circle with a soft toy, with teachers respecting his need for space.
- Teachers used individualized strategies such as hand-over-hand assistance, visual prompts, or modeling.
- Language differences, developmental delays, and sensory sensitivities were handled with patience and inclusion.
- Teachers adjusted the pace of activities based on children's cues, slowing down or shifting focus as needed.

Summary:

Children's needs—emotional, developmental, sensory, and social—were met moment by moment without disruption.

Domain 3 Overall Summary

Domain 3 also reflected a **Distinguished** level of practice. Learning experiences were thoughtfully structured yet flexible, developmentally appropriate, and emotionally responsive. Engagement was high, communication was clear, and informal assessments were used effectively to guide instruction. Teachers demonstrated extensive understanding of early childhood development, modifying activities, expectations, and interactions to meet the needs of each individual child.

Final Summary

The observation of RVCC Children's Campus 223 (2's and 3's classroom) demonstrated a profoundly effective early childhood education environment. The teachers displayed deep knowledge of toddler development, fostering independence, emotional expression, social growth, curiosity, and motor development. The classroom environment encouraged exploration, supported safety, and promoted meaningful learning through play.

From arrival to music and movement, every moment was filled with opportunities for connection, learning, self-expression, and discovery. The educators' practices aligned exceptionally well with early childhood standards and the Danielson Framework, reflecting a warm, structured, and inclusive learning community.