

**FOCUS ON K2 CENTERS: WHAT TO LOOK FOR**

**Introduction to Centers**

Activity	What to look and listen for	Observations	Related NAEYC Accreditation Criteria
Highlight 1-2 centers	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● have materials prepared and at hand</li> <li>● model activities</li> <li>● ask guiding questions</li> <li>● might pose a challenge</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● may demonstrate a project</li> <li>● ask clarifying questions</li> </ul>		<p>2.A.08/e Materials and equipment. e. Provide for children’s safety while being appropriately challenging</p> <p>3.G.01/a Teachers have and use a variety of teaching strategies that include a broad range of approaches and responses.</p> <p>3.G.07 Teachers use their knowledge of content to pose problems and ask questions that stimulate children’s thinking.</p> <p>3.G.08/a Teachers help children identify and use prior knowledge. They provide experiences that extend and challenge children’s current understandings</p>
Use key vocabulary	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● embed, define and reinforce key words</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● use key vocabulary meaningfully</li> <li>● restate new vocabulary in own words</li> </ul>		<p>2.D.04 Children have varied opportunities to develop vocabulary</p> <p>2.G.08 Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that help them learn and use scientific terminology and vocabulary associated with the content areas.</p> <p>2.J.04 Children are provided varied opportunities to learn new concepts and vocabulary related to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. art</li> <li>b. music</li> <li>c. drama</li> </ul>

			<p>d. dance</p> <p>3.G.01/a Teachers have and use a variety of teaching strategies that include a broad range of approaches and responses.</p>
Connections to content	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● pose guiding questions to focus work in centers</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● recall previous experiences, articulate connections</li> </ul>		<p>3.G.01/a Teachers have and use a variety of teaching strategies that include a broad range of approaches and responses.</p> <p>3.G.07 Teachers use their knowledge of content to pose problems and ask questions that stimulate children’s thinking. Teachers help children express their ideas and build on the meaning of their experiences.</p> <p>3.G.08/a Teachers help children identify and use prior knowledge. They provide experiences that extend and challenge children’s current understandings</p>
Children plan for their work	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● provide a clear structure for children’s planning</li> <li>● model expectations for planning</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● articulate a plan through “turn and talk”</li> <li>● choose centers to begin work</li> </ul>		<p>3.D.03 Teachers provide time and materials daily for children to select their own activities.</p>

## Managing and Engaging in Centers

Activity	What to look and listen for	Observations									
<p>A variety of centers are available</p>	<p>Centers are clearly defined and open to children:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Art Studio</td> <td>STEM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Blocks</td> <td>Dramatization</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Listening Center</td> <td>Math</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Word Work</td> <td>Library</td> </tr> </table>	Art Studio	STEM	Blocks	Dramatization	Listening Center	Math	Word Work	Library		<p>2.E.05/a Writing materials and activities are readily available in art, dramatic play, and other learning centers.</p> <p>9.A.04 A variety of age- and developmentally appropriate materials and equipment are available indoors and outdoors for children throughout the day. This equipment includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. dramatic play equipment</li> <li>b. sensory materials, such as sand, water, play dough, paint and blocks</li> <li>c. materials that support curriculum goals and objectives in literacy, math, science, social studies, and other content areas</li> </ol> <p>9.A.12 Indoor space is designed and arranged to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. accommodate children individually, in small groups, and in a large group.</li> <li>b. divide space into areas that are supplied with materials organized in a manner to support children's play and learning.</li> </ol>
Art Studio	STEM										
Blocks	Dramatization										
Listening Center	Math										
Word Work	Library										
	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● encourage children to self-select, may pose ideas</li> <li>● create structures such as Turns List, "I will be right back sign," "Work in progress"</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p>		<p>3.D.03 Teachers provide time and materials daily for children to select their own activities</p> <p>2.A.08/h Materials and equipment h. are organized to promote independent use</p> <p>3.G.01/a Teachers have and use a variety of teaching</p>								

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>plan their activities, considering intent, space, materials, whether to work independently or in a group</li> </ul>		strategies that include a broad range of approaches and responses.
Intentional Interactions	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>listen and discuss children’s work</li> <li>reinforce key concepts and vocabulary</li> <li>ask critical thinking question and/or open ended questions</li> <li>foster problem solving</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>converse about projects using key vocabulary</li> <li>pose questions of peers and adults</li> </ul>		<p>2.D.04 Children have varied opportunities to develop vocabulary through</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conversations</li> <li>experiences</li> <li>field trips</li> <li>books</li> </ol> <p>3.F.07/b Teaching staff engage in sustained conversation with children about their experiences</p> <p>3.G.07 Teachers use their knowledge of content to pose problems and ask questions that stimulate children’s thinking. Teachers help children express their ideas and build on the meaning of their experiences.</p> <p>3.G.09 Teachers engage in collaborative inquiry with</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>individual children</li> <li>small groups of children</li> </ol> <p>3.G.10a/b/ Teaching staff join children in learning centers to extend and deepen children’s learning. They:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>observe children</li> <li>engage children in conversations</li> </ol> <p>3.E.03 Teachers use children’s interest in and curiosity about the world to engage them with new content and developmental skills.</p>
Adaptation for different	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>observe and document learning to inform future work</li> </ul>		<p>3.E.04 Teachers use their knowledge of individual children to modify strategies and materials to</p>

<p>kinds of learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>differentiate in interactions and in small group pullout</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are engaged</li> <li>feel successful, challenged, and supported</li> </ul>		<p>enhance children’s learning</p> <p>3.E.08 Teachers use their knowledge of children’s</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>social relationships</li> <li>interests</li> <li>ideas, and skills</li> </ol> <p>to tailor learning opportunities for groups and individuals</p> <p>3.E.09/a Throughout the day, teaching staff actively seek out children’s ideas and discern how they understand things by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>observing</li> </ol> <p>3.G.02/b/c/d Teachers use multiple sources (including results of informal and formal assessments as well as children’s initiations, questions, interests, and misunderstandings) to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adapt curriculum and teaching to meet children’s need and interests</li> <li>foster children’s curiosity</li> <li>extend children’s engagement</li> </ol>
<p>Evidence of classroom culture</p>	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support child-directed learning</li> <li>offer materials when needed</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>self regulate</li> <li>take steps to solve conflicts</li> </ul>		<p>3.D.03 Teachers provide time and materials daily for children to select their own activities</p> <p>1.B.08 Teaching staff support children’s competent and self-reliant exploration and use of classroom materials</p> <p>1.C.04 Teaching staff assist children in resolving conflicts by helping them:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. identify feelings</li> <li>b. describe problems</li> <li>c. try alternative problems</li> </ul> <p>1.D.02 Teachers provide children opportunities to develop the classroom community through participation in decision making aboclassroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. rules</li> <li>b. plans, and</li> <li>c. activities</li> </ul> <p>2.D.06/a Children have varied opportunities and materials that encourage them to have discussions to solve problems that are interpersonal</p>
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## Thinking and Feedback

Activity	What to look and listen for	Observations	
Established routine for gathering and preparing to share work	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● offer support for organized clean up</li> <li>● sit with children as members of the group</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● respond purposefully to clean up prompts and gather for meeting</li> <li>● sit in a circle</li> </ul>		<p>1.D.05/c Teaching staff promote pro-social behavior by interacting in a respectful manner with all staff and children. They</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. engage children in the care of their classroom</li> </ul> <p>3.G.13 Teachers promote children’s engagement and learning by guiding them in acquiring specific skills and by explicitly teaching those skills.</p>
Established protocol	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● articulate rules for giving and receiving feedback</li> <li>● provide visual support</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p>		<p>1.D.05/a/e Teaching staff promote pro-social behavior by interacting in a respectful manner with all staff and children. They</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. model turn taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors</li> <li>e. encourage children to listen to one another</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● adopt habits and language of protocol</li> <li>● take leadership to enforce protocol</li> </ul>		<p>1.F.01</p> <p>T e a c h i n g s t a f f a c t i v e l y t e a c h c h i l d r e n</p> <p><b>a</b> social, <b>b</b> communication, and <b>c</b> emotional regulation skills.</p>
<p>Classroom community is engaged</p>	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● listen and observe</li> <li>● participate with children</li> <li>● provide scaffolds for participation as needed</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● reflect on their own and others' work,</li> <li>● share their ideas,</li> <li>● ask questions of peers,</li> <li>● make suggestions,</li> </ul>		<p>1.B.04 Teaching staff encourage and recognize children's work and accomplishments.</p> <p>1.D.05/d/e Teaching staff promote pro-social behavior by interacting in a respectful manner with all staff and children. They</p> <p>d. Ensure that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group</p> <p>e. encourage children to listen to one another</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● articulate inspirations and plans</li> </ul>		<p>1.F.02/h Teaching staff help children manage their behavior by guiding and supporting children to..</p> <p>d. learn about self and others</p> <p>3.B.11 Teaching staff create a climate of mutual respect for children by being interested in their</p> <p>a. ideas b. experiences c. products</p> <p>3.D.11 Teachers create opportunities for children to engage in group projects and to learn from one another.</p>
Intentional guided questions	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● model questions toward productive conversation</li> <li>● connect today's planning and tomorrow's work</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● maintain focus on work at hand</li> <li>● build on proposed ideas and provocations</li> </ul>		<p>2.A.11/a The schedule provides children learning opportunities, experiences, and projects that extend over the course of several days</p> <p>3.G.07 Teachers use their knowledge of content to pose problems and ask questions that stimulate children's thinking. Teachers help children express their ideas and build on the meaning of their experiences.</p>
Evidence of classroom culture	<p><i>Adults:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● use language that fosters engagement</li> </ul> <p><i>Children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● accept and offer feedback in positive and productive ways</li> <li>● appreciate the ideas of others</li> </ul>		<p>1.D.0/e Teaching staff promote pro-social behavior by interacting in a respectful manner with all staff and children. They</p> <p>e. encourage children to listen to one another</p> <p>1.F.01 T e a</p>



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- a social,
- b communication, and
- c emotional regulation skills.

2.B.06/a/b/

Children have varied opportunities to

- a. interact positively, respectfully, and cooperatively with other
- b. b. learn from one another

2.B.07

Children have varied opportunities to learn to understand, emphasize with, and take into account other people's perspectives.

3.D.11

Teachers create opportunities for children to engage in group projects and to learn from one another.

			2.J.07 Children have opportunities to respond to the art of other children and adults.
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