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## Examining the Practices and Quality of Preschool Teachers' Practices Managing the Challenging Behaviors of Young Children

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Dr. Melinda Ault, Director of Graduate Studies

Examining the Practices and Quality of Preschool Teachers' Practices Managing the  
Challenging Behaviors of Young Children

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THESIS

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education in the  
College of Education  
at the University of Kentucky

By

Cameron A. Tyrrell

Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Jennifer Grisham-Brown, Professor of Interdisciplinary Early Childhood  
Education

Lexington, Kentucky

2020

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## ABSTRACT OF THESIS

### EXAMINING THE PRACTICES AND QUALITY OF PRESCHOOL TEACHERS' PRACTICES MANAGING THE CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

All teachers have to manage a classroom environment and meet the needs of their students. In early childhood educational settings, challenging behaviors have been found to be a significant responsibility. The variables involved in effectively intervening in challenging behavior, and developing behavior support plans, are often determined by various factors. Previous research into challenging behaviors of young children have focused on the effectiveness of certain behavioral interventions, professional development opportunities, and curriculum such as the Pyramid Model. This proposed qualitative study centered the practices teachers reported using interceding in problem behavior, and inquired about the influences behind why teachers used certain classroom management practices. A multi-case study design across four classrooms within one type of educational facility sought depth of understanding about potential links between the practices teachers reported using and the quality of the classroom environment, using the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) as an additional procedure in data collection.

**KEYWORDS:** Challenging Behavior, Preschool Teacher, Early Childhood Education, Behavioral Interventions, Young Children, Professional Development

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Cameron A. Tyrrell  
*(Name of Student)*

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4/28/2020

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Date

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PRACTICES MANAGING THE CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS OF YOUNG  
CHILDREN

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In addition to the academic guidance provided by those above, I would like to recognize the assistance from those who are important to me and this process. To my parents, who gave me every opportunity, and told me to help others in this dark world, I say thank you. I want to also thank my friend Aaron Harvey for our long conversations on intellectual matters, even though we may not see eye to eye on a lot of things. Lastly, I would like to thank my younger brother, Aaron, for always making me laugh but somehow always picking the worst movies to watch. You all have my gratitude.

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## **Introduction**

My thesis research project sought to use two different forms of data collection to learn more about how preschool teachers manage the challenging behaviors of their students. As a result of being unable to conduct that research project this semester, this document lays out what I had intended to pursue the study. This summative document is split three sections. The first section places my research design and analytic to similar research conducted by Branson and Demchak (2011). The second section explicitly addresses the procedural and methodological sequencing of my thesis, including research questions, units of analysis, instruments used, and data collection strategies. The third section contains a professional development training for the Teaching Pyramid Model Observation Tool (TPOT) to train early childhood educators and support staff.

## **Chapter 1: Research Design Comparison Against Branson and Demchak (2011)**

### *1.1 Differences in Data*

Branson and Demchak (2011) used a case study approach to assess the classroom quality of four toddler classrooms. Two classrooms were in Early Head Start (EHS) sites, one was at a private child care facility, and one was a community college lab preschool. Branson and Demchak used an explanatory design in their mixed-methods approach, placing their emphasis on analyzing both of their datasets, the Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS) and the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT), while placing “an emphasis on the quantitative data” (Branson & Demchak, 2011, p. 197). My study diverges from their methods. I chose to use a similar method for data collection, but my analytic methods would use a convergence triangulation methodology and not privilege one set of data over another. The research questions for this project, found in Figure 1.1, would be better answered by comparing the qualitative data, comprised of the interviews and the TPOT to one another (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2006). The TPOT may be considered quantitative, as it generates scores on set indicators. However, the tool quantifies scores based on what I would perceive in the classroom, meaning it is a subjective metric and thus qualitative. The data collection would use a qual-qual sequential explanatory design of preschool teacher practices managing the challenging behaviors of children, the influences that guided those practices (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006). I wanted to discover how the different forms of data compared when investigating a similar phenomenon from two different approaches. The sequence of exact data collection practices is laid out thoroughly in Figure 2.

### *1.2 Research Questions*

Branson and Demchak's (2011) research questions concerned what practices associated with the Pyramid Model were being used in toddler classrooms. Further, they asked if there was a relationship between the teachers' use of the Pyramid Model, measured by the TPOT, and classroom quality, measured by the ITERS (Harms, Cryer, Clifford, & Yazejian, 2017; Hemmeter, Fox, & Snyder, 2014). In Branson and Demchak's design, the ITERS was chosen as a metric of environmental quality, whereas my focus is specifically on the quality of the social-emotional interactions between teachers and children (Branson & Demchak, 2011; Smith & Fox, 2003). Research has found that environments with rich, nurturing teacher-child interactions have less instances of problem behaviors and a reduction in challenging behaviors when the Pyramid Model has been implemented by teachers with fidelity (Dunlap et al., 2006; Fox & Hemmeter, 2014; Fox, Smith, Hemmeter, Strain, & Corso, 2015; Miller, Bonahue-Smith, & Kemple, 2017). My research questions concerned what teachers did and what influenced their practices. Questions 1 and 2 of my thesis dealt with what and how teachers came to use certain practices managing challenging behavior in young children. Question 3 examined the relationship between what practices teachers reported using to manage challenging behaviors and if the TPOT found their classroom to have a rich social-emotional atmosphere. The observation of teacher practices in the classroom, from Question 3, made administration of the TPOT an essential part of my data. More of the rationale behind the research questions will be gone over in my procedures and methods section. Next, I will go over the difference in participant recruitment between the article and my thesis project.

### *1.3 Sampling and Recruitment*

Branson and Demchak (2011) used purposive sampling and settled on four participants. I decided to cap my thesis project at that same number of participants. Branson and Demchak's sampling sought to recruit teachers who "had previously expressed an interest in learning how to prevent challenging behavior in their classrooms" and "teachers from programs that varied on variables associated with classroom quality (e.g. adult: child ratio, teacher education and training, and funding source)" (Branson & Demchak, 2011, p.197-198). The size of our respective samples was similar, but our sampling methods were not. Branson and Demchak (2011) recruited four toddler teachers: two who worked in an Early Head Start setting, one at a privately owned for-profit preschool, and one who worked at a community college lab preschool. My sampling strategy differed because one of the strengths of qualitative research is its ability to achieve depth of inquiry into different phenomena. I chose an explanatory design because my main research focus was on teacher practices and the influences that informed those practices. I thought it was unproductive, given my design, to have as much classroom variability across participants in my sampling as Branson and Demchak (2011) had, as I thought teacher practices in a similar type of classroom in a homogenous setting might yield depth of data about classroom practices in a particular preschool setting. My sampling criteria for participants were that they be: 1) a lead teacher in a classroom of young children ages 3-5, and 2) at least 18 years of age. I thought having a more open sampling criteria within a single setting allowed for a variety of participants. Feasibility was part of consideration given the narrow time frame of IRB approval for a thesis project. Next, I will go over the measures of data collection Branson and Demchak (2011) used in comparison to mine.

#### *1.4 Data Collection Measures*

Branson and Demchak (2011) used two quantitative tools to measure classroom quality and teacher implementation of the Pyramid Model, in addition to structured interviews. My thesis design placed emphasis on conducting semi-structured, as opposed to structured, interviews. Semi-structured interviews allow for participants to go more in-depth on topics that arise, and follow-up questions and member-checks can lead to more rich data being generated (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2010). The semi-structured interviews were to be followed by my administering the TPOT in each participant's classroom. The TPOT contains a truncated interview, Items 9-14, but it is structured and one can only score what the teacher self-reports (Hemmeter, Fox, & Snyder, 2014). Given my main research questions concerned the what and the how teachers came to use the practices managing challenging behaviors, I opted to sequence the qualitative interview before using the TPOT. I chose to do so because my research questions were better answered if the data collection were sequenced whereby teachers could speak on their own behalf prior to the observation necessitated by the TPOT. Next, I will go over my methods in comparison to Branson and Demchak's.

#### *1.5 Methodological Differences*

Using a qual-qual sequential approach provided an opportunity to query teachers on the influences of their practices. Identifying influences is important as preschool teachers have identified that receiving help with the challenging behaviors of their students was one of the most needed parts of their jobs (Fox & Hemmeter, 2014; Madill, Blasberg, Zaslow, & Epstein, 2016), Teachers also report decreased job satisfaction if they feel they cannot adequately manage the behaviors of their students (Dunlap et al.,

2006; Miller, Bonahue-Smith, & Kemple, 2017).). Given that some teachers report receiving insufficient help and professional development opportunities about social-emotional development, I thought it important to put teachers' voices at the center of this project (Madill, Blasberg, Zaslow, & Epstein, 2016). Branson and Demchak used their qualitative data, their interviews and field notes, as a secondary unit of analysis in comparison to their ITERS and TPOT data. Using a qualitative, teacher-centered, approach, along with the TPOT, to gauge teacher classroom practices was an approach that similar research had not done before.

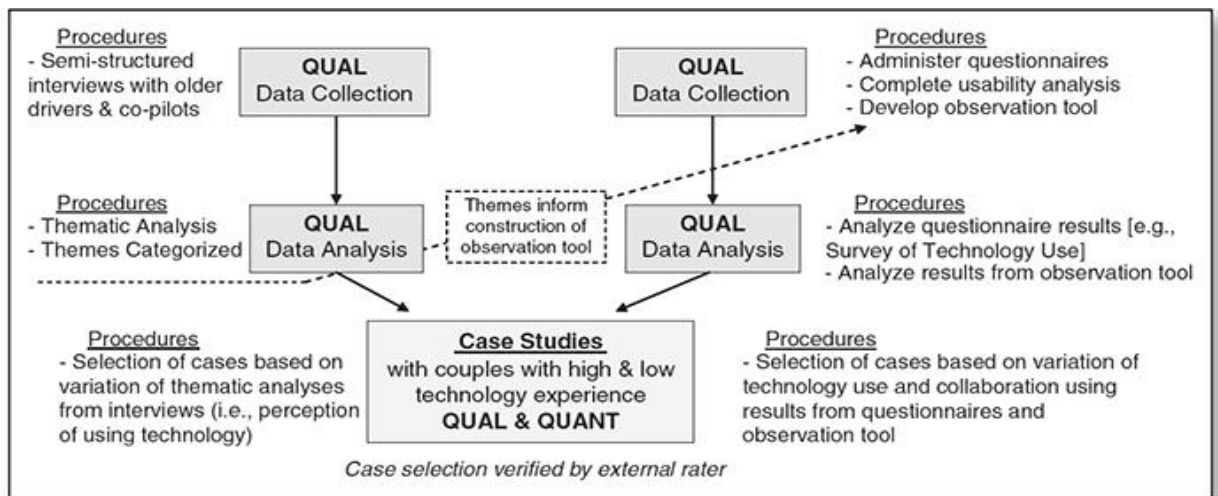
### *1.6 Conclusion*

Now that I have completed the comparison the research designs, the next chapter will explicitly detail the procedures, design, and methodology I planned on using for my thesis project.

## Chapter Two: Procedures and Methods for Thesis Project

For my thesis, I opted to use a multiple case study design. In Table 1, my research questions lay out and inform the methods I chose case study formats allow for in-depth understanding of multifaceted issues in the everyday context they take place in (Baxter & Jack, 2008). My methodological approach, when it comes to putting the pieces of data into conversation with one another, is visualized in Figure 1. Next, I will detail the exact methods I would use to answer the research questions I proposed.

### 2.1 Linking Methods to Research Questions



Source: Vrkljan, 2009.

**Figure 2.1** Qual-Qual Sequential Explanatory Research Design.

My thesis project contained two different forms of data generation. The first was a sixty to eighty-minute semi-structured interview with each teacher participant. The questions in the interview concerned practices teachers used to manage challenging behaviors, and what influenced which practices teachers used. The semi-structured interviews dealt with my three research questions, but directly dealt with Research Questions 1 and 2. Some of those questions included: 1) what experience do you have working with children who present challenging behaviors? 2) do you consider the



practices you do to manage challenging behavior to be effect? Why or why not? 3) is there any particular type of challenging behavior that is more common in the age group you teach? The interviews played a role in answering Question 3 (see Table 1). Next, I will go over the sampling and recruitment process of my research.

Question	Variable	Data Source	Analysis
1) What do teachers do to manage the challenging behaviors of young children?	Teacher practices related to managing challenging behavior	Semi-structured interviews  Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (Hemmeter, Fox, & Snyder, 2014)	Thematic analysis; closed code, break data into themes  Descriptive summary of scores
2) What influences the practices, related to managing challenging behavior, that teachers use in their classroom?	Where teachers learn the practices they use to manage challenging behavior	Semi-structured interviews	Thematic analysis; closed code, break data into themes
3) Is there a relationship between the practices teachers report in dealing with challenging behaviors and classroom quality as rated by the TPOT?	Teacher practices related to managing challenging behavior  Quality of practices assessed by the TPOT	Semi-structured interviews  Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (Hemmeter, Fox, & Snyder, 2014)	Thematic analysis; closed code, break data into themes  Descriptive summary of scores

**Figure 2.2** Research Questions and Analytic Methods Structure borrowed from Branson and Demchak (2011).

## 2.2 Sampling and Recruitment

The population I wanted to use for my thesis was preschool teachers of children ages 3-5. I planned to have all participants be employed at single early educational facility. My criteria were limited since I wanted to be purposive in recruiting participants from a homogenous population to get more data from a specific type of program (i.e. private for-profit, publicly funded Head Start, non-profit, etc.). My criteria were that participants be a lead teacher in a preschool classroom of children ages 3-5, that they be employed at the participating research site, and that they be at least 18 years of age. The

administrator of the participant site would furnish the email information of all employed school teachers, and I would independently reach out to each one who was a lead teacher in a preschool classroom at that site. The email would contain information on the project, what participation would entail, and the potential benefits to research on challenging behavior. Choosing that I have at least four preschool teachers meant that many sites would be excluded from participation, since many facilities might not have more than two or three preschool classrooms with children ages 3-5. I was intentional about having loose criteria for sampling because of the diversity of professional experiences and educational attainment for most preschool teachers; many preschool teachers only possess a high school education, for instance (Madill, Blasberg, Zaslow, & Epstein, 2016). In the following paragraph, I will go over my data collection procedures and strategy.

### *2.3 Data Collection Strategy, Procedures, and Rationale*

My data collection strategy was intentionally sequenced into phases. Phase one consisted of the semi-structured interview with participants. Phase two consisted of a priori coding, analysis, and reaching agreement on each interview transcript from phase one with a research assistant. Phase three consisted of administering the TPOT the first time in each classroom. Phase four would be the second administration of the TPOT in each participant's classroom, followed by averaging the scores from both Phase three and four. Phase five would be where both datasets were compared to attempt to answer the research questions. More details on comparing the datasets can be found below in the section on triangulation.

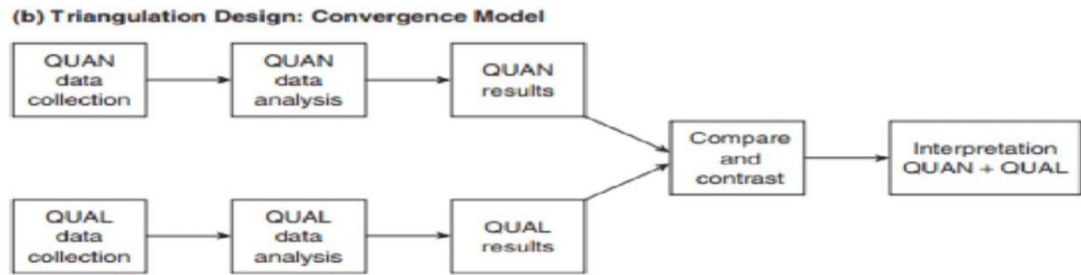
My rationale for those five sequenced phases arose from concern that conducting the semi-structured interview first may inform or bias the administration of the TPOT, and thus the scoring. An issue could arise where, if a teacher scored particularly low in a section of the TPOT, that may have informed how I coded and analyzed the interview transcript having that information in mind. I considered that participants might be more comfortable with an observer in their classroom space if they had gotten to speak about their experiences and influences as a teacher beforehand, mitigating some of the difficulty around access inherent in the researcher/researched paradigm (Wanat, 2008). The data collection staggered the interview and the first administration of the TPOT in the classroom environment, to allow time for transcription and analysis of the interview to be separate from administering the TPOT. I will go over this more in the data analysis part of this section. The administration of the TPOT would have taken place two weeks after the semi-structured interview, and the additional administration of the TPOT, the one for reliability purposes, would be conducted two weeks after that. The scores would then be averaged together in case a particular day observed was not representative of a typical day in each classroom. Next, I will lay out how I planned to analyze the semi-structured interviews the collected for the project.

#### *2.4 Data Quality and Analytic Procedures*

As a qual-qual sequential explanatory design, having the datasets be separate was essential prior to putting the pieces together. While Figure 1 displayed the research design, Figure 3 displays the proposed data collection and analysis process for this project. I wanted to manage data quality to be applied to both parts of the data collection and analysis processes. I have gone over how the TPOT would ensure, but I planned a

similar approach for the interviews. I requested and received funding for a research assistant with experience doing qualitative analysis for an archival project at the University of Kentucky library system. For each interview, guided by the research questions, we would use a closed-coding process to break down the interview transcripts into themes. The themes would be inductively aligned with the main subjects of the project: 1) teacher practices, and 2) influence on teacher practices, using an a priori coding strategy (Elliott, 2018). Once the first interview was transcribed, the research assistant and I would go over that interview together and I would go over how to identify and reduce the data into themes under the two main subjects, and see if any others emerged that were of note. Once we both came to agreement, a codebook informed by the first interview analysis would be used for each subsequent interview, and we would each separately analyze and attempt to reach a threshold of coding agreement of 80% or greater (DeCuir-Gunby, Marshall, & McCulloch, 2010; MacQueen, McLellan, Kay, & Milstein, 1998; Roberts, Dowell, & Nie, 2019). Using multiple coders and inter-rater agreement has been found to be effective at team-based approaches to analyzing qualitative data (Guest & MacQueen, 2008). The following paragraph will describe how I planned to triangulate the qualitative data for analysis.

### *2.5 Triangulating the Qual-Qual Datasets*



**Figure 2.3** Convergence Model of Triangulation for Data Analysis. Note that upper column, saying quantitative, should instead be considered the other prong of qualitative data to be collected. From Creswell & Plano Clark (2006)

Following transcription, the semi-structured interviews would be meta-analyzed by myself and the research assistant. Meta-analysis in qualitative research analysis can be a method to “function aggregate findings and identify patterns across primary studies, but their aims, procedures, and methodological considerations may vary” (Levitt, 2018, p.1). The purpose of meta-analyzing the interviews was to pull out the “big picture” information related to the research questions and that resulted from the a priori coding performed by the research assistant and myself (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Once all four interviews were meta-analyzed, the TPOT scores averaged, I would begin to look at the datasets together. Figure 2 displays how both data results are generated sequentially, and separately, prior to being compared to one another. Note that, although Figure 2 displays quantitative data in the upper column, consider the model an illustration for how both qualitative datasets will be analyzed using the convergence design. The structure of my analytic methods would be informed by the research questions. I would have organized the datasets into parts related to each research question and followed a step-by-

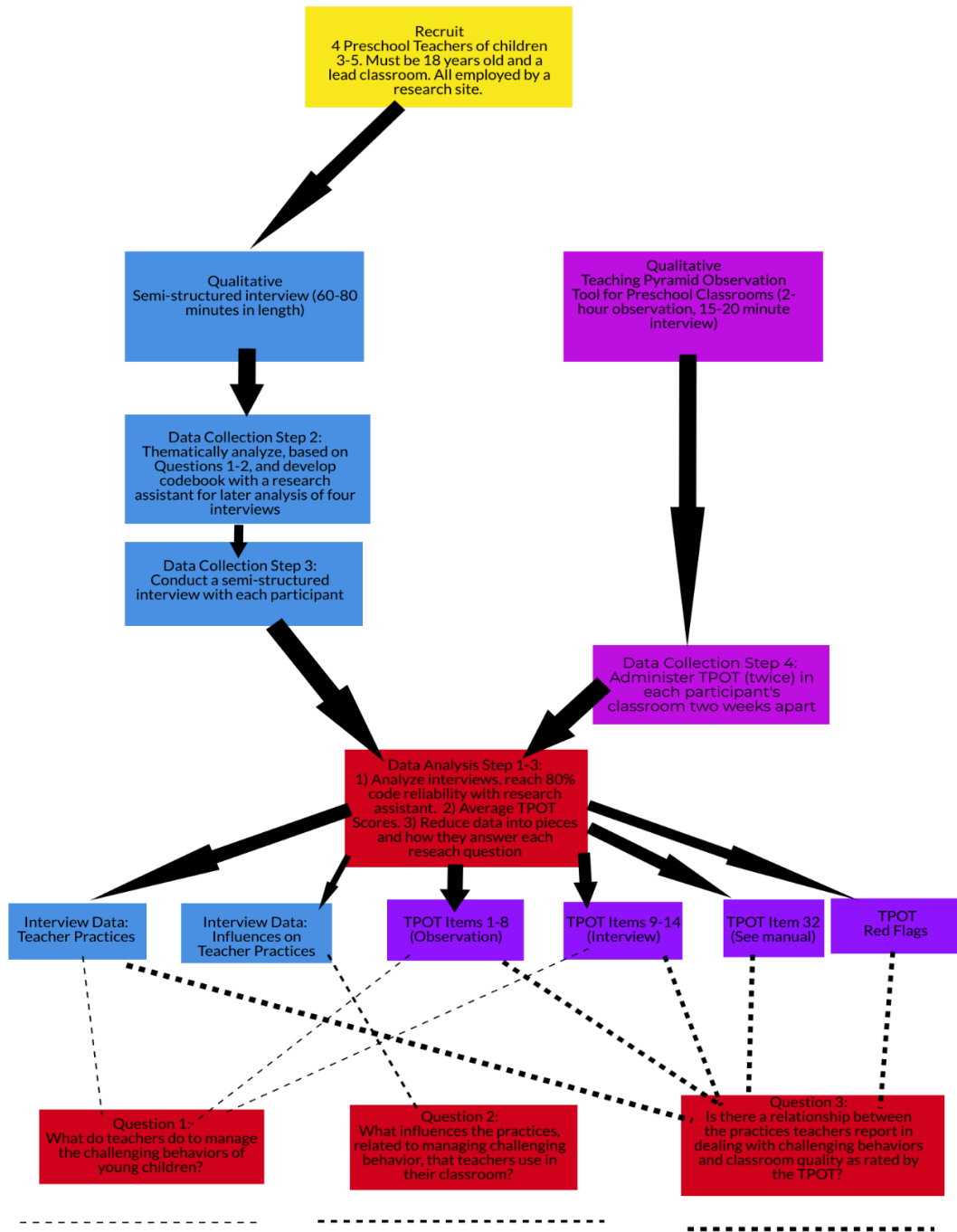
step process. The following section contains how the data segments would be put into conversation with one another, step-by-step.

### *2.6 Step-by-Step Data Triangulation*

I would have followed a systematic process for how I triangulated the datasets from this study. The process would be guided by the three research questions. The first action would be to examine the portions of the semi-structured interview identified under the first research question to describe what practiced teachers reported. The second action would be to supplement the qualitative data from the semi-structured interview with whether the practices reported by teachers were supported by the interview portions of the TPOT (Items 9-14), the section where teachers report practices they use that might not be seen during the two-hour observation. The third action would bring in the data from the TPOT Items 1-8, to see if what teachers said they did was backed by what they were observed doing in the classroom. The scoring guidance of the TPOT allows scoring No on items where teachers are observed doing practices counter to best practice (Hemmeter, Fox, & Snyder, 2014). To manage the data pursuant to Question 2, I would use the data from the semi-structured interview to examine what teachers said informed their practices. For instance, did they report learning behavioral intervention practices as part of an undergraduate education degree or from a professional development training? The next paragraph will go over how the dataset would be compared to attempt to answer Question 3.

Finally, to attempt to answer question 3, I would have used the averaged TPOT scores, and examined the Red Flags section along with Section 32, which concerns if teachers use effective strategies to respond to challenging behavior (Hemmeter, Fox, &

Snyder, 2014). The Red Flags section includes practices in a classroom that are against best practice for social-emotional learning (Hemmeter, Fox, & Snyder, 2014). Section 32 requires documentation of each witnessed instance of challenging behavior and how caregivers, and the lead teacher, respond (Hemmeter, Fox, & Snyder, 2014). The TPOT scores, and the Red Flags and Section 32 scores, would then be analyzed alongside the reported practices of each participant. Comparisons would allow insight into the possible connection between reported teacher practices and the quality of the classroom they taught in. For example, if a teacher scored low on the TPOT, and reported using practices that were not evidence-based or developmentally appropriate, that relation between practices and classroom quality could inform administrators to require training on subjects like the Pyramid Model to assist teachers in dealing with challenging behavior. Now that I have gone over my research design in a comparative analysis and gone over my methodology step-by-step, I will conclude in the next paragraph.



**Figure 2.4** Diagram of Research Sequence for Data Collection and Analysis



## *2.7 Conclusion*

The first section of this paper went over my proposed thesis research design in comparison to one study completed by Branson and Demchak (2011). The second section reviewed my research methodology, including the data collection and analytic strategies, for my thesis project. The challenging behavior of young children is a phenomenon many preschool teachers will have to face during their professional lives, and more research needs to be done to examine the relationship between teacher practices and quality classroom environments.

## Chapter Three: Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT): An Overview

### 3.1 Overview

This chapter consists of slides from a PowerPoint presentation meant for teachers and service providers of young children. The presentation goes over the Teaching Pyramid Model Observation Tool (TPOT), which was a central component of answering my third research question. The TPOT measures the quality of interactions between caregivers and children and provides scores to how well interactions speak on things such as social-emotional intelligence, problem-solving skills, and how challenging behavior is managed (Hemmeter, Fox, & Snyder, 2014).

0:00:07 10:34 PM

SHOW TASKBAR DISPLAY SETTINGS END SLIDE SHOW

TEACHING PYRAMID  
OBSERVATION TOOL (TPOT)  
AN OVERVIEW  
Cameron Tyrrell  
University of Kentucky  
Department of Early Childhood Education

Next slide

Measuring Quality

Teacher Cognition

Classroom Environment

Introductions:  
Background of person giving training;  
participants introduce themselves, the site they  
work at, what goals they have for training and  
using the TPOT.

Structure:  
This is to be a hands-on training. Meaning that  
I don't want to stand up here and read a  
presentation to you. Please speak up if you're  
struggling to understand anything. Also, please  
speak up if you have any questions or  
comments throughout. If necessary, we will  
take a 5 minute break in the middle.

Slide 1 of 42

Figure 3.1 Slide 1

SHOW TASKBAR    DISPLAY SETTINGS ▼    END SLIDE SHOW

0:00:12    10:34 PM

### Measuring Quality

```

    graph LR
      TC((Teacher/Caregiver)) --> CE((Classroom Environment))
      CE --> TC
  
```

**Teacher/Caregiver**

- Relationships to children
- Relationships to one another
- Using evidence-based practices

**Classroom Environment**

- Environmental arrangement
- Visual cues, supports, and rules to support all children in the classroom

Next slide

What is quality? Other tools, such as the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, or ECERS, or the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) look at the quality of the content being taught, the overall environment, neither of them specifically assess the scaffolded learning of social and emotional concepts, teaching, or evidence-based practices like the TPOI does.

If you look up at this diagram, we see the Classroom Environment and the Teacher/Caregiver. These arrows go back and forth to create a feedback loop meaning that the quality of the classroom environment is informed by the teacher/caregiver and that the teacher/caregiver informs the quality of the classroom environment. If these things are not aligned, then we can count on having children learn or feel supported. We've failed.

Slide 2 of 42

Figure 3.2 Slide 2

SHOW TASKBAR    DISPLAY SETTINGS ▼    END SLIDE SHOW

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### Measuring Quality

```

    graph LR
      TC((Teacher/Caregiver)) --> CE((Classroom Environment))
      CE --> TC
      TC --- CE
  
```

**Teacher/Caregiver**

- Relationships to children
- Relationships to one another
- Using evidence-based practices

**Classroom Environment**

- Environmental arrangement
- Visual cues, supports, and rules to support all children in the classroom

**Children's Social Emotional and Academic Development**

FAIL

FAIL

Next slide

That looks like a pretty big fail to me.

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Figure 3.3 Slide 3

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## Measuring Quality

**Teacher/Caregiver**

- Relationships to children
- Relationships to one another
- Using evidence-based practices

**Classroom Environment**

- Environmental arrangement
- Visual cues, supports, and rules to support all children in the classroom

**Children's Social Emotional and Academic Development**

Next slide

How do we measure the quality of a classroom?

- Classrooms are complicated
- To measure quality, we need a tool to help us look at different aspects of a classroom
- The tool we choose will influence what we see

We want it to look like this. Everything looks supporting and feeding back into each other aspect.

Slide 4 of 42

Figure 3.4 Slide 4

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## How do we measure the quality of a classroom?

- Classrooms are complicated
- To measure quality, we need a tool to help us look at different aspects of a classroom
- The tool we choose will influence what we see

Next slide

How do we measure the quality of a classroom?

- Classrooms are complicated
- To measure quality, we need a tool to help us look at different aspects of a classroom
- The tool we choose will influence what we see

You all know that classrooms can be hectic, fun, and messy places. There are a lot of things to pay attention to, and the tool you choose will give you one way to look at the classroom. The TPOT is one tool to measure the quality of a classroom environment, but any one tool cannot capture the essence of any one classroom.

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Figure 3.5 Slide 5

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## The Pyramid Model

- The Pyramid Model is a framework of evidence-based Practices to promote healthy social and emotional Development in young children.
- The Pyramid Model provides guidance for:
  - Families
  - Early educators
  - Families
  - Early childhood educational personnel
  - Other professional

Next slide

The Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children was developed from research in early intervention.

The Pyramid structure is based on a public-health prevention model to social and emotional learning.

The Pyramid model was developed by two federally funded national research and teaching center: The Center for the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) and Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI).

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Figure 3.6 Slide 6

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## The Pyramid Model

Next slide

The Pyramid Model contains three Tiers. You may recognize Tiers as similar to the conceptual design of practices such as Response to Intervention (RTI).

The 1<sup>st</sup> tier of the Pyramid is Universal promotion, which includes nurturing and responsive relationship and high quality environments for all children. The universal level includes "any practices needed to ensure the promotion of the social development of all children."

Tier 2 includes Preventive practices. These are "targeted social emotional strategies to prevent problems. This tier level "includes the provision of targeted supports to children at risk of challenging behavior."

Tier 3 includes intervention practices. These are "practices related to individualized intensive intervention." This level "describes the need to provide individualized and intensive interventions to the very small number of children with persistent challenges."

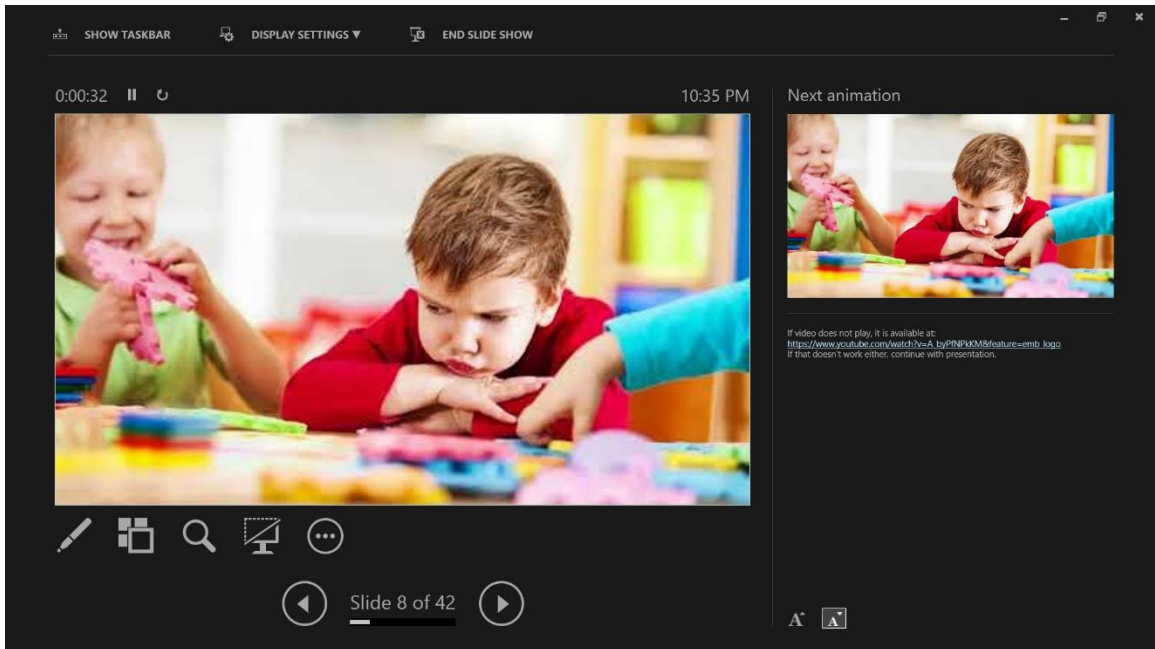
Any level of the Pyramid Model cannot be implemented without an effective workforce, which is why it forms the bottom of the Pyramid.

Now we'll watch a short video on the Pyramid Model and then talk more about research that supports its use and implementation, along with the TPOI.

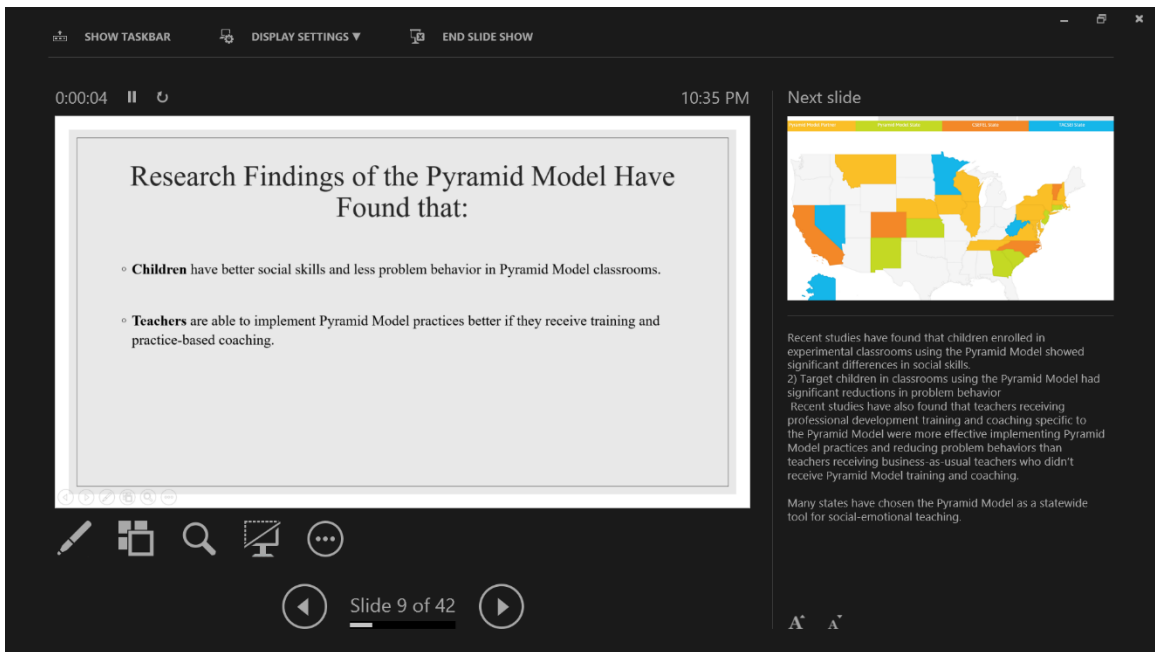
Click onto next slide to begin video.

Slide 7 of 42

Figure 3.7 Slide 7



**Figure 3.8 Slide 8**



**Figure 3.9 Slide 9**

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Pyramid Model Partner    Pyramid Model State    CSEFEL State    TACSEI State

Next slide

The Pyramid Model Consortium, which promotes the Pyramid Model in early childhood education, currently operates in some capacity in 29 states.

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Figure 3.10 Slide 10

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Next slide

The TPOT (What's In it?)

Scoring booklet

- Classroom information
- Schedule of classrooms during observation
- Items indicators
- Space for notes

Manual

- Defaults
- Items

Partnership with states can be adopting the Pyramid Model as curriculum, working with the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, which has partnered with the states in blue to develop trainings for early education, healthcare, and early care professionals in their state to implement the Pyramid Model. The CSEFEL is funded by the Office of Head Start and Child Care Bureau to disseminate research and evidence-based practices to early childhood programs throughout the United States.

The Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children, is a five-year grant from the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs housed in the Department of Education. The grant takes research on evidence-based practices related to social emotional outcomes for young children who have a disability or delay, or at risk of one, and creates free resources to help caregivers and service providers to apply in their everyday work.

The state Partnership Model convenes an interagency team to write policies and procedures to enact, assessment, and maintain the Pyramid Model in states. This leads to trainers and coaches to build up the workforce of a state to use the Pyramid Model with Fidelity, and then selecting 3 local programs to be example sites for effectiveness of the Pyramid Model. Pyramid Model states are those that have taken part in the Pyramid state partner program and who continues to use the Pyramid model as a statewide professional development tool and resource for those who work with young children. Now that we've gone over the Pyramid Model, let's go over the TPOT.

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Figure 3.11 Slide 11



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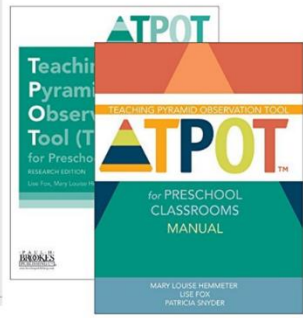
## The TPOT (What's In it?)

**Scoring booklet**

- Classroom information
- Schedule of classroom during observation
- Items/indicators
- Space for notes

**Manual**

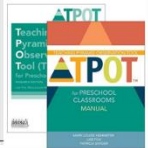
- Definitions
- Items



**Next slide**

The TPOT (How To)

- Two hour observation
- 15-20 minute interview with lead teacher
- 30-45 minutes to score assessment



The TPOT has a scoring booklet for each time you conduct the assessment and manual, which provides you definitions of things such as challenging behavior and a section on how to score each item.

Slide 12 of 42

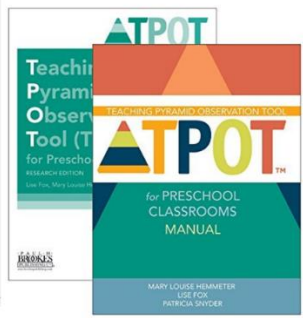
Figure 3.12 Slide 12

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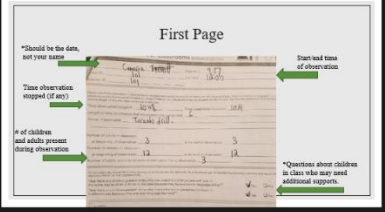
## The TPOT (How To)

- Two hour observation
- 15-20 minute interview with lead teacher
- 30-45 minutes to score assessment



**Next slide**

First Page



The TPOT is used to identify evidence-based practices associated with the prevention of challenging behaviors and to assess the fidelity of teacher and caregiver implementation of the Pyramid Model.

The TPOT assessment consists of 3 parts: 1) a two-hour observation, 2) a 15 to 20 minute interview with the lead teacher of the classroom, and 3) 30-45 minutes to score the assessment in the scorebook that comes with the manual. The authors recommend that you observe both a small-group and a large group activity or period of instruction during your observation period.

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Figure 3.13 Slide 13



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**First Page**

\*Should be the date, not your name

Time observation stopped (if any)

# of children and adults present during observation

\*Questions about children in class who may need additional supports.

**Keeping Track of Time**

Write the activity

Start/End Time

Total number of children in the classroom

Any notes that arise

Slide 14 of 42

Next slide

Once you open up your scoring booklet, you will notice that Page one has some information to fill out. Please turn to page 1 and look it over for a minute. This is an example from when I myself administered the TPOT. You will note my name is written at the top, which is actually where the date is supposed to go, the start and end times of the observation, the time where the observation stopped, it at all, and how many children are in the room throughout the observation. The most important part of this page is towards the bottom. The two questions "Are there any children present today who are unable to communicate with you in the same way as other children in the class because they have a severe language delay?" and "Are there any children present today who need information presented to them in a different way because they are dual-language learners?" Both of these questions should be asked of the teacher prior to beginning your observation. Having a Yes marked for either of these will inform practices in each item that evaluate how a teacher implements Tier 2 and Tier 3 practices of the Pyramid Model during the observation. Now, let's talk about the schedule page and how that is to be filled out when doing an observation.

Figure 3.14 Slide 14

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**Keeping Track of Time**

Write the activity

Start/End Time

Total number of children in the classroom

Any notes that arise

**Completed Schedule Page**

Free Play	9:37	10:08	31	
Free Play	10:15	10:30		
Transition	10:32	10:37	5	
Circle Time	10:41	10:48	4	
Measurement	10:48	10:55	7	
Transition	10:55	10:59	4	To lunch
Lunch	11:11	11:45	20	
Reading Time	11:50	11:55	5	
Transition (back)	11:55	12:00	5	

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Next slide

During the observation, one of the very first pages looks like the one above. This is how you'll keep track of the time during the observation. To help you go back and score it later, be sure to write down the time that you start observing, and the time that you stop observing. The stop time and start times are important because they allow you to see what times transitions are taking place, if an activity is going on for too long, or if there is a period when you need to stop doing the observation. The TPOT instructs that you stop observation when a majority of the children present are engaged in an activity that is not part of the classroom routine. For instance, when the children go outside to recess, go to specials, a majority of children are receiving services outside of the room or an activity such as picture day or a tornado drill occur, you can stop taking observation data. If the class is eating lunch, for instance, inside of the classroom, and less than a majority of the children are eating lunch, then you can still be doing your observation. The administrators of the assessment claim that a majority is considered 50% or more, so if at least half the children are engaged, consider that a majority. For additional information on scoring criteria, Chapter 4, or pages 29-60, in the scoring manual have detailed examples of what constitutes an instance occurring or not.

Figure 3.15 Slide 15

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### Completed Schedule Page

Free Play	9:37	10:08	31	
Transition To no outside	<del>10:08</del>	10:14		
Free Play	10:15	10:52	37	
Transition	10:52	10:57	5	
Circle Time	10:57	11:08	11	
Movement	11:08	11:15	7	
Transition	11:15	11:19	4	To lunch
Lunch	11:19	11:45	26	
<del>Transition</del>	<del>11:45</del>	11:49	4	
Reading Time	11:50	11:55	5	
Transition (outside)	11:55	12:00	5	

Next slide

### The Types of Items on the TPOT

- Items 1-8 are observation items
- Items 9-11 are interview and observation items
- Items 12-14 are Interview only items
- Red Flags Section (Items 15-31)
- Section 32

A completed schedule and transition page will look something like this. Notice how the observer made notes on what time each activity began and ended, and included transitions. The scheduled time for Lunch was included in the schedule even though the observer was not scoring the observation at that point. Having a completed schedule will help you go back and score after you've completed both the observation and the interview. It is important that you score the assessment as soon as you complete the interview and observation, so that your memory is fresh of what you saw. Taking notes in the margins or on notebook paper is encouraged to record what you witness during the observation period.

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Figure 3.16 Slide 16

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### The Types of Items on the TPOT

- Items 1-8 are observation items
- Items 9-11 are interview and observation items
- Items 12-14 are Interview only items
- Red Flags Section (Items 15-31)
- Section 32

Item	Indicator	Yes	No	Notes
181	Teacher has a posted classroom schedule of daily activities.			
182	Posted schedule is at children's eye level and includes most or a number of daily activities.			
183	Teacher-directed activities are 20 minutes or shorter.			
184	Both large AND small group activities occur during the observation.			
185	Teacher reviews the posted schedule with children AND refers to it throughout the observation.			
186	Teacher structures activities so that there is a clear beginning, middle, AND end.			
187	A balance of child-directed AND teacher-directed activities occur during the observation.			
188	If needed, the teacher prepares children when change is going to occur within the posted schedule. (Give 10) If you have no opportunity to interview.			
189	Teacher only continues with a specific teacher-directed activity when the majority of children are actively engaged AND interested.			
1913	Children who need extra support are prepared for activities using an activity schedule OR individualized list on the beginning of activities.			

Next slide

### Scoring Items 1-8

Before going into how to score the TPOT, we will go over the sorts of items it assesses. The TPOT is divided into different sections for scoring purposes. During the two hour observation period you are free to write down notes, in the margins or on notebook paper, and record what you see. Following the observation, there is Items 9-14, or the Interview section, which is to be scored about teacher practices you may not be able to witness during the observation. The Red Flags section, towards the back of the book, are items scored if the classroom environment runs counter to the goals implementing the Pyramid Model. The last section, Section 32, deals with how teachers and caregivers deal with challenging behavior when they occur in the classroom. Now we will go over how to score the TPOT.

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Figure 3.17 Slide 17

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### Scoring Items 1-8

Item	Indicator	YES	NO	NOTES
1	Teacher supports children's transitions.	✓		
2	While class warnings are provided prior to the majority of transitions.	✓		
3	Teacher has transition strategies that ensure children are actively engaged in the transition.	✓		Clean-up songs
4	Teacher explicitly teaches children the steps AND expectations of transitions.	✓		
5	Teacher provides positive, descriptive feedback to children who engage in transitions appropriately.	✓		
6	Instruction to begin the transition is provided to a child in an individual and way.	✓		
7	Teacher effectively works individual children who need extra support during the transition.	✓		
8	During transitions, the majority of children are actively engaged, including children who are waiting for the next activity.	✓		
TOTAL		7	1	

Next slide

### Not Observed

Here is an example of a scored section of the TPOT. The image is a little hard to see in detail, but you can see all of the score indicators listed at Item 2 in your scoring booklet.

Starting from the top of the page, you will see the section title that is being scored. The far left column tells you the Items with abbreviations for the section being scored along with a number. These are aligned with the Tiers of the Pyramid Model. For instance, Items 1, 2, 3 are typically associated with Universal practices, while Items 4 and 5 typically Preventive Practices, and those above that, Items 6 or higher, are usually Intervention practices.

The indicator lays out what you are to look for when scoring that particular item. If the criteria, laid out in detail in your scoring guidance from pages 29-60, or Chapter 4, in your TPOT manual, score Yes if it was observed, and No if it was not. Write any relevant notes on the right hand margin, and total the number of Yes and No answers and move on to score the next item.

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Figure 3.18 Slide 18

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### Not Observed

Item	Indicator	YES	NO	NOTES
1	Teacher offers ongoing, consistent, positive feedback to children to prompt activities or use transitions to promote engagement.	✓		
2	Teacher provides developmentally appropriate activities that will support the engagement or interest of all of the class.	✓		
3	Teacher moves, circulates with children in eye level across all of the time.	✓		
4	Teacher models and large group includes (e.g., circle time) structured so that children have opportunities to be actively engaged during all of the time.	✓		
5	Teacher selects materials at all times or during center activities and teaching activity whenever appropriate.	✓		Baby-play with dolls
6	Teacher provides children with multiple opportunities to be able to choose when to begin group, small group, AND center activities in the classroom.	✓		Pick her own large group
7	Teacher frequently comments positively on children who are engaged in activities.	✓		pick her own large group
8	Teacher assists individual children who are exhibiting challenging behavior within an activity to become actively engaged. (Score N/O if you have no opportunity to observe).	✓		child not engaged in ALL instances observed
9	Teacher models, instructs OR actively when children take interest in large group OR small group activities.	✓		
TOTAL		7	2	

Next slide

### Items 9-11

Some Items on the TPOT will allow for a Not Observed, or N/O function. For Item Eng 8, under Promoting Children's Engagement, the Item reads "Teacher assists individual children who are exhibiting challenging behavior within an activity to become actively engaged (Score N/O if you have no opportunity to observe). So, if you didn't see this occur during your observation period, you would check the N/O column and this Item wouldn't count towards the totals at the bottom, and it would be out of 8 possible items instead of 9.

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Figure 3.19 Slide 19

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### Items 9-11

Next slide

### Scoring Items 9-11

Items 9-11 are scored based on your observation and the interview you conduct with the teacher after the observation period. You can turn to page 12 of your scoring booklet to read along, as this picture isn't of the best quality. In the interview, the manual states that you are to ask the question specifically as written. For instance, for Item 9, Teaching Friendship Skills, you can only phrase the question as: "Tell me how you teach or help children learning how to be friends." If the teacher asks a follow-up question, you are not permitted to elaborate. Page 12 gives you space to answer to write down what they say. Some items such as the bottom question "How do you individualize instruction around friendship for specific children? Please give me a few examples." There is a prompt you are permitted to give, but only when it is written in italics. In this instance, "if clarification is requested, you might say, 'how do you provide individualized instruction about friendship skills for a child who needs extra help?'" Next, we will go over how to score Items 9-11.

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Figure 3.20 Slide 20

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### Scoring Items 9-11

Next slide

### 5-Minute Break

You can turn to page 13 of your scoring booklet, since this image isn't the best quality. You can see it has the same item and indicator at the left-hand side, the totals at the bottom, and the no and notes columns.

If you are scoring the Items in this section as Yes, you are given the opportunity to Mark R or O, or both. If the scoring guidance, and you witnessed or write down from the interview align with the item, score Yes. Then, indicate with a check mark or X under R if the teacher reported using practices that align with that item, or O if it was observed during the observation of the classroom. Mark both R and O to indicate that the teacher reported practices in the interview aligned with the practice and you observed practices aligned with it during the classroom observation.

Next, we will take a five minute break and then come back and talk about Items 12-14

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Figure 3.21 Slide 21



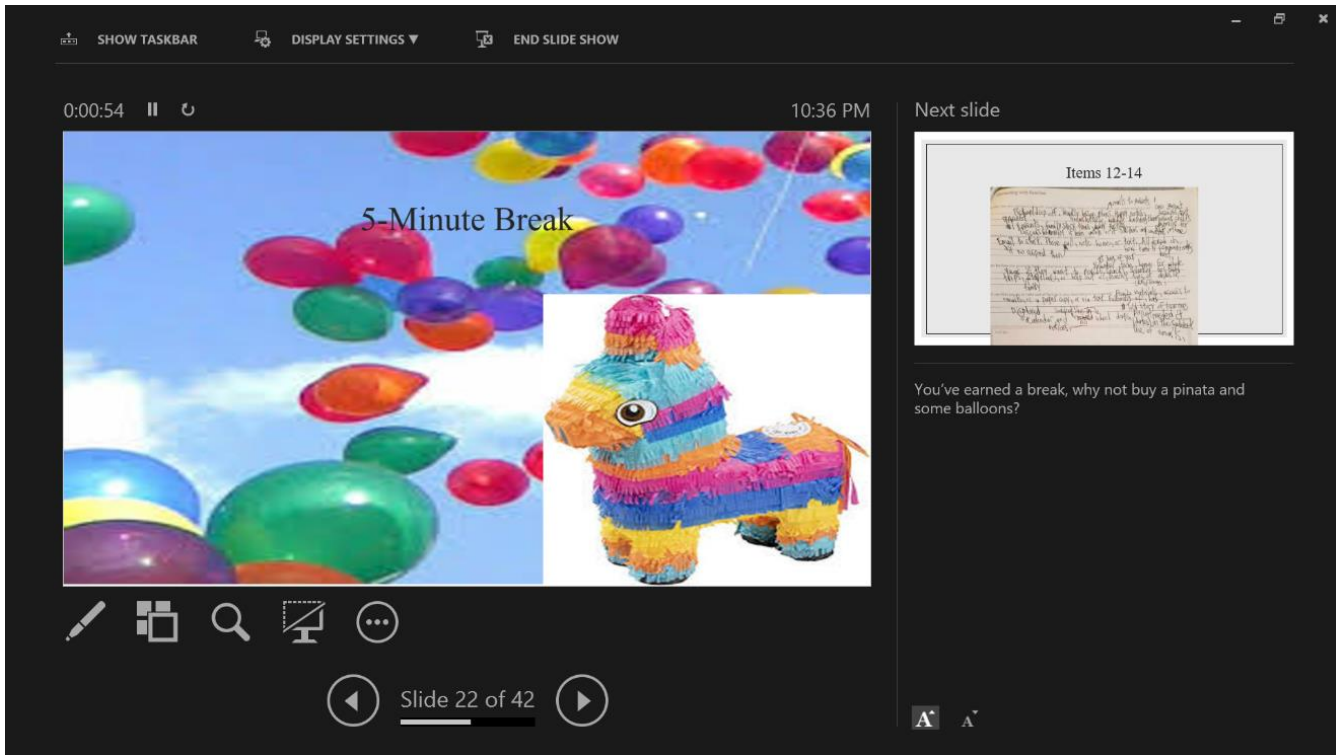


Figure 3.22 Slide 22

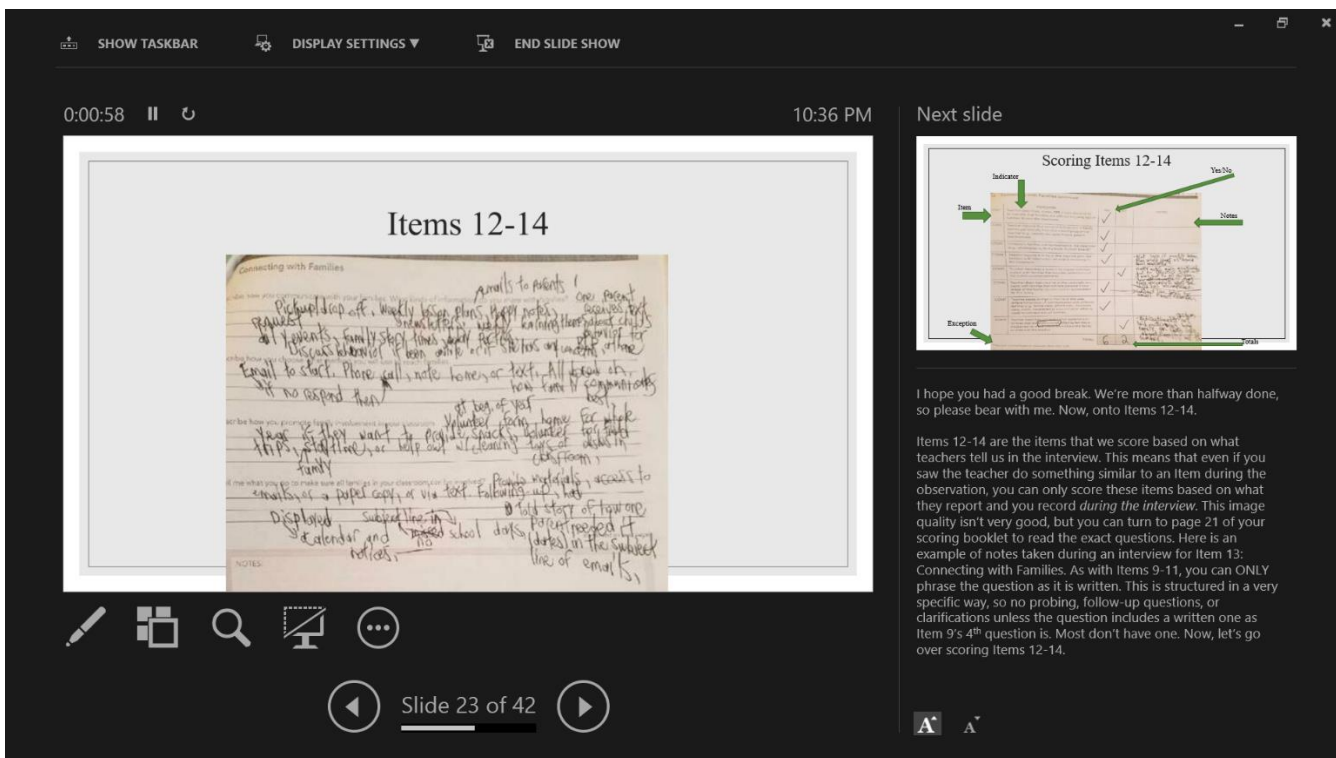


Figure 3.23 Slide 23

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### Scoring Items 12-14

Item    Indicator    Yes/No    Notes

Exception

Totals

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Next slide

### Red Flags

Practices    Item    Yes/No    Totals

This is an example of Item 13, which is Page 22 of your scoring booklet. The quality of the image isn't great, so if you want to read each indicator you can look through that now.

Note how the layout is the same, with items, indicators, scoring columns, and totals being calculated the same as previous sections.

There is one exception in Items 12-14 for using classroom observation. In Item 13, Com 3, the indicator reads: "Children's families are represented in the classroom (e.g. photographs, family book, bulletin board)." The exception is also noted in the bottom left-hand corner of Page 22. Any questions?

Ok, now we've got an activity for you all. We've printed out copies of page 19-20 of the scoring booklet. You're going to pair up, and each of you will get ten minutes to ask the questions of your partner as listed on page 19. This is for practices, so report based on practices you use on an average day in your classroom. Then, you will each time to score. Be sure to take notes when you are interviewing to help you score. Once we are finished scoring and interviewing, we will move on and talk about the Red Flags section.

Figure 3.24 Slide 24

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### Red Flags

Practices    Item    Yes/No    Totals

### Challenging Behavior

"Challenging behavior" is defined as "any repeated pattern of behavior...that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with the child's optimal learning or engagement in prosocial interactions with peers and adults" (Smith & Fox, 2003, p. 6)

This picture isn't the best, so you can turn to page 25 of your scoring booklet to read each individual practice that is listed. This is similarly structured to the other sections, but in this case No is the indicator of quality. For instance Practices such as Practice 22 "Teacher tells children mostly what **not** to do rather than what to do." The scoring criteria for these are laid out in Chapter 4 of the TPOT manual, but you'll have a sense after being in the classroom and the interview with the teacher if these are Yes or No. When in doubt, look back at the scoring manual. Red Flags are essential for the TPOT because they indicate practices that run counter to implementing the Pyramid Model, and the research has shown that implementing the Pyramid Model with fidelity gets results in social-emotional outcomes to young children. Next, we will go over Item 32, the section dealing with effective strategies to deal with challenging behavior.

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Figure 3.25 Slide 25


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## Challenging Behavior

- “Challenging behavior” is defined as “any repeated pattern of behavior...that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with the child’s optimal learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults” (Smith & Fox, 2003, p. 6)

Next slide



Before going over Item 32, I want to discuss challenging behaviors. We’ve all encountered children who may present problem behaviors, but the TPOT has a specific definition and way to measure when a challenging behavior occurs. Please turn to Page 26 of your scoring booklet and read through the first paragraph at the top of the page.


If you ever have any questions about a definition in the TPOT, be sure to refer to the key definitions section of the Manual from pages 26-28. We’re going to watch a short video on challenging behavior before going over Item 32, just to give us all a refresher.

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**Figure 3.26** Slide 26


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Challenging Behavior in Young Children

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If the video does not work, it is located online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8eCfnrGu5xo>

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**Figure 3.27** Slide 27

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## Item 32: Using Effective Strategies to Respond to Challenging Behavior

**Item** →

**Summary strategy score** →

**Column for addition strategies** →

Columns for each instance of challenging behavior observed

\*All E.S. must be scored Yes to get a Yes on the Final Score

Final Score of all Observed Instances

Slide 28 of 42

Next slide

### Item 32: Using Effective Strategies to Respond to Challenging Behavior

Item 32 is a little complicated. Let's start with the basics. Turn to page 27 in your scoring booklet to be able to read this a little more clearly. It has each item and strategy listed in the left-hand side. To the right of that you have columns for each observed instance of challenging behavior during the two-hour window when administering the TPOT. The observer who conducted this interview wrote down CB1 for the first instance and CB5 for the second observed instance. CB1 refers to physical aggression, and CB5 refers to running that poses a safety risk for the child or others or elopement from the classroom. Using these numbers next to each observed instance, especially if there are many, can be a useful shorthand for when you go back to score this section.

The three strategies SCB 1, 2, 3 are all necessary for the summary to be scored Yes. Take a moment to read over each one. When observing, it is encourage that you make copies of page 27 of your workbook in case many instances of challenging behavior occur. Each instance gets its own column to determine if all essential strategies are used during each instance of challenging behavior observed.

Figure 3.28 Slide 27

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## Item 32: Using Effective Strategies to Respond to Challenging Behavior

**Item** →

**Summary strategy score** →

**Column for addition strategies** →

Columns for each instance of challenging behavior observed

\*All E.S. must be scored Yes to get a Yes on the Final Score

Final Score of all Observed Instances

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Next slide

### Item 32: Using Effective Strategies to Respond to Challenging Behavior

Once all incidents of challenging behavior have been scored, if all essential strategies, or SCB Items 1, 2, and 3 are scored yes for all incidents, you score the Summary Strategy Score and can mark Yes on the final score listed at the bottom. Note that if even one instance of challenging behavior has less than three essential strategies used, the summary score, and the final score are to be marked No. In order to score yes, all essential strategies must be used in every incident of challenging behavior that occurs during the observation period. Note that the Final Score allows for an Not Observed option. Only mark this if no challenging behaviors are observed when administering the TPOT.

There is another aspect to go over, so take a moment to read over the Additional Strategies, Items A, B, and C. These additional strategies are practices that can be used by teachers when incidents of challenging behavior occur, but whether or not they are used does not count against scoring the incidents of challenging behavior. The TPOT is used for professional coaching in many instances, and giving teachers additional strategies to manage the challenging behavior of their students is a part of creating a high-quality learning environment for all children, even when many instances of challenging behavior occur.

Figure 3.29 Slide 29



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### Item 32: Using Effective Strategies to Respond to Challenging Behavior

Annotations on the slide:

- Item
- Summary strategy score
- Column for addition strategies
- Columns for each instance of challenging behavior observed
- \*All E.S. must be scored Yes to get a Yes on the Final Score
- Final Score of all Observed Instances

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Next slide

### Scoring Summary Profile

Annotations on the slide:

- Details of TPOI Observation
- Each TPOI Item
- Portion for Item 12
- Percentage of Yes (Column A/Column C\*100=Score)
- Red Flag score
- # of C.B. incidents
- E.S. Used

As this is the most complex portion of scoring the TPOI, be sure to take plenty of notes, particularly the time of each incident of challenging behavior, as the duration of each behavior may illustrate a lack of an essential strategy. Take a moment to turn your manuals to pages 58, and read through the scoring guidance on Item 32. Let me know if you have any questions.

Ok, now that we've gone over Item 32, we will go over scoring the entirety of the assessment.

Figure 3.30 Slide 30

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### Scoring Summary Profile

Annotations on the slide:

- Details of TPOI Observation
- Each TPOI Item
- Portion for Item 32
- Percentage of Yes (Column A/Column C\*100=Score)
- Red Flags score
- # of C.B. incidents
- E.S. Used
- A.S. Used

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Next slide

### Scoring Summary Profile

Annotations on the slide:

- Details of TPOI Observation
- Each TPOI Item
- Portion for Item 12
- Percentage of Yes (Column A/Column C\*100=Score)
- Red Flag score
- # of C.B. incidents
- E.S. Used

Take a moment to turn to Page 28 of your scoring booklet. You will see that each section has four items in each column. Columns A through C are lined up next to each item of the TPOI. For instance, Item 1 Schedules, Routines, and Activities, is at the top. In Column A for Item 1, this observer found 8 indicators present in the observation, and Column B found 1 No. The Item is out of a total of 9 possible indicators. To calculate Column D, or the percentage, you divide Column A by Column C, or 8 divided by 9, which comes .889, multiplied by 100 is 88.9% for Item 1. Do this for Items 1-14 and move onto Red Flags for Items 15-31. In column A you would write each red flag observed, Column B all indicators scored no, and then divide the total from column A by 15, the total possible, and in this case it was 0% of Red Flags were observed.

Figure 3.31 Slide 31

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### Scoring Summary Profile

Details of TPO Observation →

Each TPO Item →

Portion for Item 32 →

A) # of indicators scored Yes  
B) # of indicators scored No  
C) Total of possible indicators

Percentage of Yes (Column A/Column C\*100=Score)

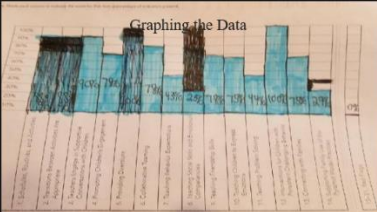
Red Flags score

# of C.B. incidents

E.S. Used

A.S. Used

Next slide



Subscale 3, for Item 32, you would write the number of incidents of challenging behavior observed, in this case 2. You would mark the summary score from Item 32, or if all essential strategies used in each incident were not used during any incident of challenging behavior, mark No. If no instances of challenging behavior were observed, mark N/A on the right. At the bottom, you will mark the number of additional strategies used.

We're almost done. Let's go over graphing, and then draw this training to a close.

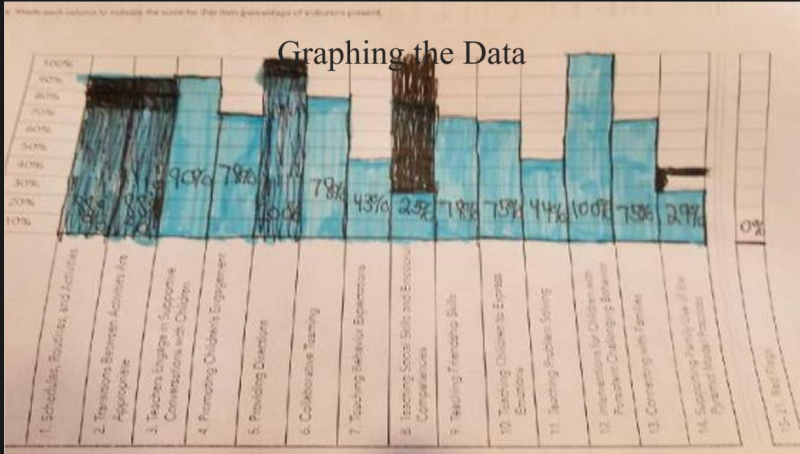
Slide 32 of 42

Figure 3.32 Slide 32

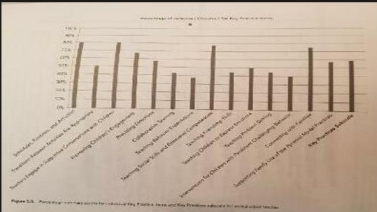
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### Graphing the Data



Next slide



This part is fairly simple. Once you have the values calculated on page 28, you can graph it on page 29, similar to how this observer did it. This displays the raw data and score of each item in a way that teachers being observed can witness and see firsthand. It also makes it easier for you to not have to go back and go through each section to see what the score was.

There are also ways to get creative and enter the TPO data into software or Microsoft Excel, where data can be graphed in a more visually appealing way, or even in comparison to other administrations of the TPO, if it is used as a quality metric much like how the CLASS assessment is used for classroom quality scoring in Head Start programs.

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Figure 3.33 Slide 33

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Figure 3.33. Percentage summary scores for individual Key Practice Areas and Key Evaluation rubric's 101 in total valid teachers.

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Figure 3.34 Slide 34

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Next slide

Figure 3.4. Percentage summary scores for individual Key Practice Areas and Key Evaluation rubric's 101 in total valid teachers.

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**TPOT™ Scoring Spreadsheet**

Home > Download your materials > TPOT™ Scoring Spreadsheet

Once you've completed your TPOT™ observation, capturing results is easy with the Teaching Practice Observation Tool (TPOT™) for Preschool Classroom Scoring Spreadsheet.

The spreadsheet lets you enter results for up to three TPOT observations for a total of 20 teachers.

As you enter your data, the scoring spreadsheet automatically creates a summary page for district aggregate scores and graphs for every teacher's TPOT scores.

**System Requirements**

- PC
- Microsoft Excel/Office 2010
- Microsoft Excel/Office 2010 x64/62
- MAC
- Microsoft Office for Mac 2011

**Benefits**

- Saves you time—no manual calculation needed
- Provides handy graphs on each teacher page
- Includes a related summary page for the entire program or school

Complete form below to get your free download of the TPOT Scoring Spreadsheet. Download these [step-by-step instructions](#) for using your spreadsheet.

No Notes.

Figure 3.35 Slide 35

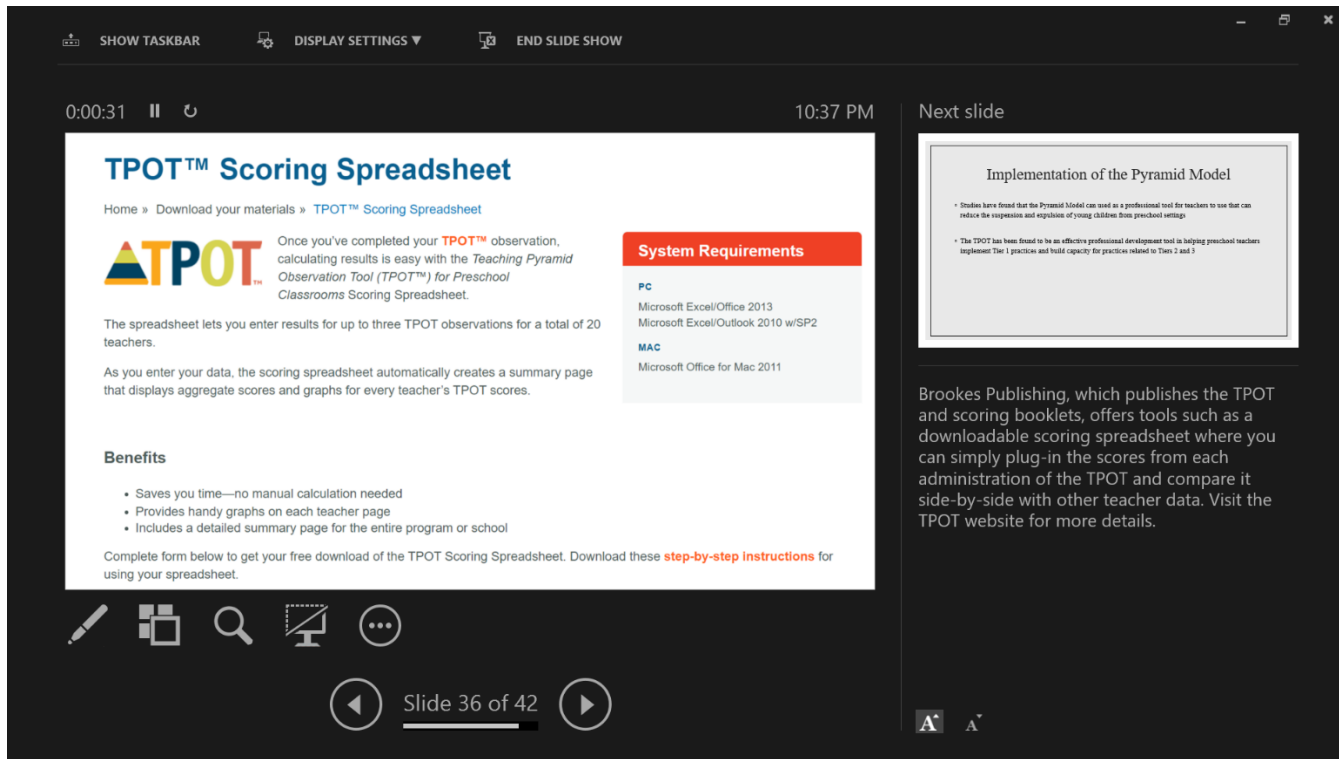


Figure 3.36 Slide 36

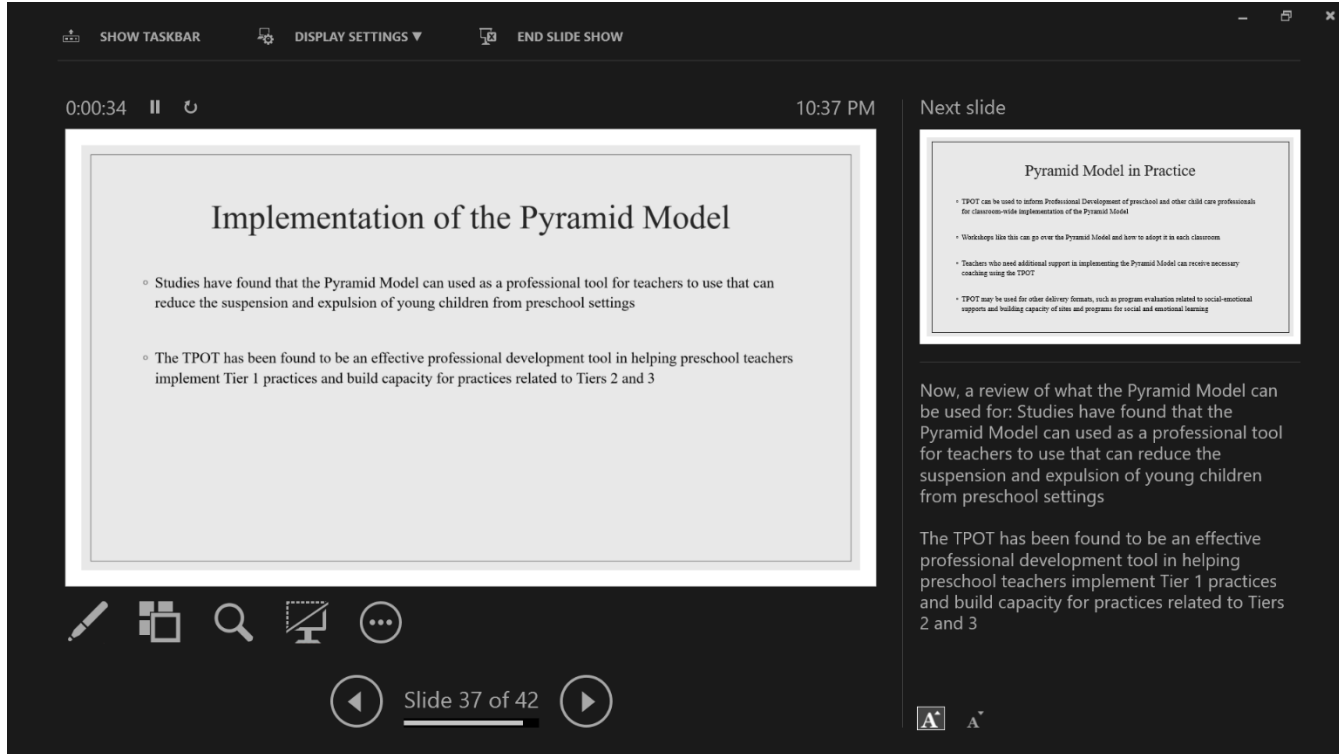


Figure 3.37 Slide 37

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## Pyramid Model in Practice

- TPOT can be used to inform Professional Development of preschool and other child care professionals for classroom-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model
- Workshops like this can go over the Pyramid Model and how to adopt it in each classroom
- Teachers who need additional support in implementing the Pyramid Model can receive necessary coaching using the TPOT
- TPOT may be used for other delivery formats, such as program evaluation related to social-emotional supports and building capacity of sites and programs for social and emotional learning

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Next slide

### Barriers

- Training teachers in Tier 2 and 3 interventions can require an amount of coaching that isn't feasible
- Difficulty of measuring fidelity in implementing each tier

Let's review and go over what the Pyramid Model can do, and has done, in practice.  
 TPOT can be used to inform Professional Development of preschool and other child care professionals for classroom-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model

Workshops like this can go over the Pyramid Model and how to adopt it in each classroom

Teachers who need additional support in implementing the Pyramid Model can receive necessary coaching using the TPOT

TPOT may be used for other delivery formats, such as program evaluation related to social-emotional supports and building capacity of sites and programs for social and emotional learning. Next, we'll go over some barriers

**Figure 3.38** Slide 38

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## Barriers

- Training teachers in Tier 2 and 3 interventions can require an amount of coaching that isn't feasible
- Difficulty of measuring fidelity in implementing each tier

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### Resources

Pyramid Model Overview

Basics | Tools | Research | Resources

Pyramid Model Basics Resources

- Recommended Practices
- Guidance to Effective Implementation Practices
- Videos & Webinars
- General Resources

[Previous Page](#)   [Return to Pyramid Model Menu](#)

Some barriers in using the TPOT and the Pyramid Model are:  
 Training teachers in Tier 2 and 3 interventions can require an amount of coaching that isn't feasible for many organizations.

There is a difficulty in measuring fidelity in the implementation of each tier  
 However, the Pyramid Model Consortium offers many free resources, even if the TPOT doesn't seem right for you. They will offer trainings, readings you can inform yourself with, and opportunities to learn more about how they partner with states and organizations to help the social-emotional development of all young children.

**Figure 3.39** Slide 39



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Pyramid Model Overview Resources

Basics Tiers Research Resources

Pyramid Model Basics Resources

- Recommended Practices
- Roadmap to Effective Intervention Practices
- Videos & Webinars
- General Resources



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Next slide

Conclusion. Thank you.

<https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/resources/index.html>



The Pyramid Model Consortium makes free resources available for teachers, parents, early interventionists, and others working with young children. They include social stories, activities to do with your child or class, or lessons like Tucker the Turtle that teach children how to calm their bodies. Visit their website at <https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/resources/index.html> to learn more about their offerings, resources, or any questions you have on the Pyramid Model. This last slide will list their website if you wanted to write it down. I'm free to answer any questions you may have now that we're done. Thank you so much for attending. Have a great day.

Figure 3.40 Slide 40

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Conclusion. Thank you.

<https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/resources/index.html>

References

You can now go out into the world, and use a hula-hoop, or have a pizza party, or even a root beer.

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Figure 3.41 Slide 41

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End of slide show

No Notes.

Figure 3.42 Slide 42

## APPENDIX

### APPENDIX 1. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

I want to take this time to thank you for agreeing to participate today. I know that your time is valuable, and I want to take this time to detail how this interview will unfold.

I have a few main questions to ask you. I've observed your classroom twice using the Teaching Pyramid Model Observation Tool, or TPOT, for reliability purposes. The scores from those visits will be a part of our interview. During our conversation, I may come up with follow-up questions. Please note that your participation is voluntary and, if, at any time, you do not wish to answer a question, or would like to terminate the interview, please let me know. I anticipate that our conversation will last no longer than sixty to eighty minutes and may end up being shorter.

Before we jump in, would you verbally affirm that you have received, read over, and signed the consent form given to you and that you recognize that this interview will be recorded and transcribed for data analysis for this study? (Pause) Thank you. Since the purpose of this study is about challenging behavior, I want to define so that we're on the same page. Scholars define it as "any repeated pattern of behavior, or perception of behavior, that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with optimal learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults" (Smith and Fox, 2003, p. 7).

You should also be aware that I will be taking notes during this interview, just to document anything relevant or that I may want to ask about further. Any questions?

#### Main Interview

- 1) What previous experience do you have teaching in early childhood?



- a) What type of degree do you have? Where from? When did you finish it?
- 2) What experience do you have working with children who present challenging behaviors?
  1. How many children in your class typically exhibit such behavior?
- 3) What is your typical response to a child that is exhibiting challenging behavior?
  - a. For instance, what if a child was physically harming another?
  - b. Are there different responses to different types of disruptions?
  - c. What does your response look like when the child is a disturbance to the learning environment and their peers? How does that affect your response?
- 4) What are some barriers that might stop teachers from being effective at reducing challenging behaviors?
  - a. What are some key factors that influence the classroom environment in dealing with challenging behaviors?
- 5) Is there any particular type of challenging behavior that is more common in the age group you teach?
- 6) What role have families played in regulating the challenging behaviors of students in your classroom?
  - a. Did you develop an intervention plan? Was it successful?
- 7) Given that research shows that early childhood is such an influential time for children to develop as individuals, what additional supports, education, or resources could be provided to teachers to help them build up this skill more?
- 8) Are you required to take any professional development (PD) hours in your position? How many?

- a. Do you find those activities to support you as a teacher?
  - b. Have any of them focused on interventions for challenging behaviors? If so, were they helpful to you?
- 9) Is there anything about what's worked for you in regulating the challenging behaviors of young children that you would want to share with other teachers?
- a. Why is that an important thing for them to know?
- 10) Do you consider the practices you do to meet challenging behaviors to be effective? Why or why not?

*Segue to portion of interview involving TPOT scores.*

- 11) Is there anything about these scores that surprises you? Why?
- 12) Were either of the occasions you were observed times you consider to be an outlier to your typical classroom?
- 13) Looking at these scores, is there anything you would change, or consider changing, about your classroom or how you interact with the students in your classroom?
- 14) Is there anything you would want people in power to be aware of that might make this aspect of your job easier? If so, what would it be? How would it make your job easier?

TPOT Portion of Interview (To be completed following administration of each round of the TPOT).

Please note that the first portion of this interview consists of questions taken from the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (or TPOT), and will be referred to like that in

shortened form throughout this process. Once we've finished the first portion of the interview from the TPOT we will transition to questions more specific to this study.

### **From Section 9: Teaching Friendship Skills**

- Tell me how you teach or help children learn how to be friends
- What skills do you teach?
- What strategies and materials do you use?
- How do you individualize friendship skills for specific children? Please give me a few examples. (If clarification is requested, you might say, "How do you provide individualized instruction about friendship skills for a child who needs extra help?")

### **From Section 10: Teaching Children to Express Emotions**

- Tell me how you teach or help children recognize and deal with emotions. Give me some examples of the range of emotions you teach or help children learn. (If clarification is requested, you can say, "What are examples of the emotions you help children learn?")
- What strategies do you use?
- What materials do you use?
- Tell me how you teach or help children deal with anger. (If clarification is requested, you can say, "What do you do to help children when they feel angry?")
- What strategies do you use?
- What materials do you use?

- How do you individualize instruction around emotions for specific children?  
Please give me a few examples. (If clarification is requested, you can say, “How do you provide individualized instruction about emotions for a child who needs extra help?)

### **From Section 11: Teaching Problem-Solving**

- Tell me how you teach or help children learn how to solve common social problems in the classroom (e.g. when one child has a toy that another child wants or when a child wants a turn at the computer but another child is there).
- What strategies do you use?
- What materials do you use?
- Describe what you teach children to do when they have a social or emotional problem.
- How do you individualize instruction around problem-solving for specific children? Please give me a few examples. If clarification is requested, you might say, “How do you provide individualized instruction about problem-solving for a child who needs extra help?)

### **From Section 12: Interventions for Children with Persistent Challenging Behavior**

- What do you do when children have severe and persistent challenging behavior?
- What steps do you go through to get support or these children?
- What is your role in the process of developing a behavior plan for these children?
- What is your role in implementing the plan? Tell me how you know if the plan is working.

### **From Section 13: Connecting with Families**

- Describe how you communicate with your families. What kinds of information do you share with families?
- Describe how you choose what method you will use to reach families.
- Describe how you promote family involvement in your classroom.
- Tell me what you do to make sure all families in your classroom can be involved?

### **From Section 14: Supporting Family Use of the Pyramid Model Practices**

- What type of information do you provide to families about supporting their children's social-emotional development at home?
- What type of information do you provide to families about addressing challenging behavior at home?
- Tell me about the role that parents play in supporting their children's social-emotional development at school.
- Tell me about the role that parents play in addressing children's challenging behavior at school.

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- Graduate Preschool Teaching Assistant, Early Childhood Laboratory, University of Kentucky. (Fall 2018-Spring 2020).
- Preschool Classroom Assistant, Early Childhood Laboratory, University of Kentucky (Fall 2017-Fall 2018).
- Graduate Instructor for the Department of Gender and Women's Studies, University of Kentucky. (Fall 2016-Spring 2017).
- Graduate Teaching Assistant for the Department of Gender and Women's Studies, Minnesota State University- Mankato. (Spring 2016).
- Graduate Assistant to the Department of Gender and Women's Studies, Minnesota State University- Mankato. (Fall 2014-Fall 2015).

#### Awards for Scholarship and Service

- Minnesota State University-Mankato College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Award for Community Service (2015, awarded to the entire GWS graduate cohort for their project "To Protect and Serve: Examining State Sanctioned Gender and Racial Violence")