

Chapter 2

Objectives



- Define the types and purposes of assessment
- Describe the evolution of traditional and contemporary approaches to assessment
- Summarize the limitations of traditional models of assessment
- Introduce a framework for alternative assessment models

Chapter 2

Approaches to Assessment



Quantitative perspective

Assessment is viewed as an objective measurement process that results in a numerical representation of children's behaviors and abilities.

Qualitative perspective

Assessment is viewed as the documentation of more broadly defined behaviors as they occur in natural environments and provides information on qualitative aspects of behaviors.

Chapter 2

Formal and Nonformal Assessment



- **Formal assessments** are tests that yield specific defined information on preset content and have specified guidelines for administration. Information is usually collected on a one-time basis and compared with normative data. Standardized tests belong to this category.
- **Nonformal assessments** consist of structured and systematic observations of behaviors within meaningful, context-bound activities. Categorical, narrative, and descriptive tools fit into this category.

Chapter 2

Nonformal Observational Tools



- **Categorical tools** have predetermined categories into which all events and behaviors are coded during the observation (e.g., rating scales, checklists).
- **Narrative tools** are systematic and detailed written descriptions of behaviors (e.g., journals, running records, anecdotal notes of observations of critical incidents, ethnographic notes).
- **Descriptive tools** are verbatim accounts of actual language use and provide a detailed record of behaviors in various contexts (e.g., language transcripts).

Chapter 2

A Framework for Alternative Assessment Models

