

Behavioral Observation of Classroom Executive Function (BOCEF) Guide

The BOCEF is designed to simultaneously measure: 1) student behaviors that demonstrate EF skills and 2) teacher behaviors that support these skills. Observations should be conducted of one student at a time, over 15-20 minutes, ideally in an academic subject (i.e. reading, math, etc.), and not while students are doing purely individual work, such as taking a test. Observations may be conducted in specials (i.e. art, music, etc.) if this is not possible. The observation should include at least one transition, either from one activity to another or one setting to another. Observers should position themselves in the classroom where they can see/ hear the student but without having the student know why they are there. If asked why they are there, observers should answer “to observe the class” or similar. Teachers should be rated based on their actions with the target student, other individual students, or the class as a whole. Below are some tips for the individual items that comprise the tool and the observation process overall.

Student behaviors:

Each behavior will be marked as a YES or NO at the end of the observation.

1. Reciprocity: create a small tally mark in YES column every time you see the student go back-and-forth appropriately with a peer or adult, and a small tally mark in NO column every time you see the student fail to do so; at end of observation mark YES if there was more reciprocity than not, or mark NO if there were more examples of non-reciprocal interactions (or it was even)
2. Follows rules: if you observe even one instance of student being reprimanded for not following a rule or obviously violating a classroom rule, mark a NO
3. Transitions: if you observe even one instance of student struggling with transition, as described on the form, mark a NO
4. Stuck: if you observe even one instance of student getting stuck on any idea, activity, etc. as described on the form, mark a YES
5. Negativity: if you observe even one instance of student expressing frustration/overwhelm as described on the form, mark a YES
6. Participation: compare student to peers in classroom; if student appears to be as involved in activity as majority of peers, mark a YES

Teacher behaviors:

1. Praise-to-correction: create a small tally in YES column every time you hear praise and small tally in NO column every time you hear a correction; at end of observation mark YES if there were more praise statements or mark NO if there were more corrections (or it was even)
2. Priming: if you observe even one direction for students to transition between activities, locations, etc., without any advanced warning, mark a NO
3. Flexibility: if you observe even one example of teacher modeling/labeling flexible behavior, mark a YES
4. Planning/organization: if there appears to be a plan for the class, i.e. students know what they are supposed to be doing throughout the observed period, mark a YES

5. Clear instructions: create a small tally mark in YES column every time you hear a clear instruction and small tally mark in NO column every time you hear a vague instruction; at end of observation mark YES if there were more clear instructions or mark NO if there were more vague instructions (or it was even)
6. Active use of visual supports: if you observe even one example of teacher using visual supports, mark a YES
7. References rules: if you observe even one example of teacher stating a rule, pointing to a rules list, or similar, mark a YES
8. Reward system: if you observe even one example of a behavioral reward being earned by any student in classroom during observation, mark YES

Overall Tips:

- Make sure you are able to observe a transition. Transitions can be between classes as well as between activities. You may have to follow the student/class briefly out of the classroom, down the hall, etc.
- If you do not know which student you are observing prior to arriving in the classroom, have the teacher discretely point out who they are.
- Try to complete ALL fields of the form.
- Write notes, as needed, for any behaviors that may be ambiguous or you want to discuss with other coders later.
- If there are multiple teachers in the classroom, code anything you see and hear, as if you were the student.
- Try not to interpret the behaviors. Code exactly what you see and not why you saw it.