

Teacher Technology Assessment

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This checklist is excerpted from "Educating Early Childhood Teachers About Computers," pages 26–30 of the May 2004 issue of *Young Children*.

Basic operation of the computer and related components

- Do you know how to turn everything on and off?
- Can you make the computer do what you want it to do?
- Do you know how to troubleshoot solutions when a problem occurs?
- Can you use software shortcuts that save you time?

Choosing appropriate software for young children

- How does the software support children's age-appropriate developmental skills?
- In what ways does the software reflect your organization's curriculum goals and objectives?
- How does the software avoid gender, racial, and ethnic stereotypes?
- Will the software easily integrate with ongoing curriculum activities and materials?
- What characteristics does the software share with other quality early childhood materials?
- How does the software serve as a learning tool, rather than as an electronic worksheet?
- How does the software support English-language learners?

Using the computer for instruction with young children

- How does your current curriculum support learning with computers?
- What would you say if a parent or colleague asked about controversial issues regarding technology and children, such as teaching toddlers about computers?
- How does the physical environment affect children's social, emotional, and cognitive development when they use computers: Does the arrangement and location of the computer center support peer learning and teaching? Can children easily collaborate with each other?
- Are you familiar with basic research related to young children's learning with computers?
- What strategies do you use to effectively introduce the computer to young children so that it becomes an ongoing and independent learning center?
- How do you plan and implement curriculum activities based on the computer?

Using computers for instructional support

- Do you know how to make instructional materials (labels, games, pictures, newsletters, stories, and so forth)?
- Can you keep records and create reports about the children or classroom activities?
- How does your computer help you assess children's learning?
- Can you communicate with parents and/or other professionals via e-mail?
- Can you locate Internet resources for lesson planning and ideas for best teaching practices?
- Can you create or add educational information to a classroom-based Web site?
- Can you develop and print photographs from digital cameras?

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