Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and the Pyramid Model

The CLASS Pre-K (ages 3 to 5) tool assesses teacher–child interactions through a 2- 3 hour observation cycle. The observation starts at the beginning of the school day and uses 3o minute cycles to observe and rate several different activities throughout the morning. The goal is to observe at the minimum 4 cycles to have a picture of the relationships and instruction occurring in a classroom. Each dimension is rated on a scale of 1-7 (high, middle and low range) and a manual with expected behaviors described at each range is used during the observation. Then at the end of the observation the scores are totaled for each cycle and then averaged for combined score across the different domains and dimensions.

The CLASS Pre-K:

- **assesses three key domains of teacher–student interaction**: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support
- **provides developmentally appropriate descriptions** of what effective interactions look like in pre-K classrooms
- **gives a picture of the classroom interactions** through short, repeated observation and scoring cycles
- **highlights areas of strength and areas for growth** in classrooms to encourage professional development in developmentally appropriate teaching strategies
- **identifies important information related to programs' most urgent needs**: accountability, professional development, and research

The CLASS Pre-K dimensions & the Pyramid Model

The CLASS Pre-K observation tool measures 10 dimensions that fall under the three domains. Each domain represents concepts that are incorporated in the different tiers of the Pyramid Model framework. Training of the Pyramid Modules and implementation of the Pyramid Model framework in classrooms will give teachers knowledge of social-emotional development, building relationships, teaching social-emotional skills and creating high quality classroom design. Each of these areas' will enhance their classroom and the relationships they have with their students, in turn learning the skills needed to strengthen their CLASS scores.

The following chart shows how the CLASS Pre-K and the Pyramid Model relate to each other. It is divided by domains and then each dimension for that domain is listed. A brief description of the domains and dimensions are given as well. The Pyramid Model Tiers are connected with each domain and the separate Pyramid Model tier components are connected to each domain.

Pianta, R.C., LaParo, K.M., & Hamre, B. K. (2008) Classroom Assessment Scoring System Manual: Pre- K. Baltimore: Brookes.

CLASS and The Pyramid Model:

CLASS Pre-K	Descriptions	Pyramid Model
CLASS Pre-K Domain		**Tiers and Concepts**
Emotional Supports	The teachers ability to support social and emotional functioning	Nurturing and Responsive Relationships – High Quality Supportive Environments – Targeted Social Emotional Supports
Dimensions		
• positive climate	Emotional connection, respect & enjoyment between teacher and students	Building Positive Relationships
• negative climate	Level of expressed anger, hostility or aggression by teacher and/or students	Directions & Feedback Emotional Literacy Teaching Anger Management & Problem Solving Skills
• teacher sensitivity	Awareness & responsivity to students' academic and emotional needs	Building Positive Relationships Emotional Literacy Directions & Feedback
• regard for student perspectives	Interactions with students & class activities that emphasis students' interest, motivation & point of view	Building Positive Relationships Emotional Literacy
CLASS Pre-K Domain		**Tiers and Concepts**
Classroom Organization	The process of organization & management of students' behavior, time & attention	Nurturing and Responsive Relationships – High Quality Supportive Environments – Targeted Social Emotional Supports – Behavior Interventions
Dimensions		
• behavior management	How effectively teachers monitor, prevent, and redirect behavior	Behavior Expectations & Rules Directions & Feedback Teaching Anger Management Teaching Problem Solving Teaching Friendship Skills
• productivity	Maximizing learning time through use of routines, organized activities & directions	Schedules & Routines Directions & Feedback
• instructional learning formats	Provides interesting activities & materials that keep students engaged and have lots of learning opportunities	Classroom Design Schedules & Routines
CLASS Pre-K Domain		**Tiers and Concepts**
Instructional Supports	Effective support of cognitive & language development	Nurturing and Responsive Relationships – High Quality Supportive Environments – Targeted Social Emotional Supports
Dimensions		
• concept development	Use of instructional discussions & activities to encourage use of higher-order thinking skills instead of rote instruction	Emotional Literacy Teaching Anger Management Teaching Problem Solving Teaching Friendship Skills
• quality of feedback	Teachers extend learning through their responses to students' ideas, comments and work	Directions & Feedback
• language modeling	Facilitating and encouraging student language	Emotional Literacy Teaching Problem Solving Teaching Friendship Skills