Natural Instruction

This checklist includes naturalistic instructional practice characteristics that can practitioners and parents can use to support and strengthen child learning and development while a child is engaged in everyday home, community, or classroom activities.

Use these practices when a child is already participating in an activity and practitioner or parent behavior is used to sustain engagement, provide opportunities for child learning, and to encourage child behavior elaborations. The practices are child-centered, and are used in response to child-initiated activities of high interest to the child.

DEC Recommended Practices: Instruction 1–5, 7

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ecta Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center

Practitioner

Child

Date

Instructions

Rate how often you used each practice characteristic:

1. Seldom (0–25%)
2. Sometimes (25–50%)
3. Often (50–75%)
4. Almost always (75–100%)

Practice Characteristics

	1	2	3	4
1. Follow the child's lead while they are engaged in everyday activities.	○	○	○	○
2. Pay particular attention to the child behavior used in an everyday activity.	○	○	○	○
3. Provide natural consequences in response to child-initiated behavior.	○	○	○	○
4. Respond positively to the child's attempts to repeat or practice the same behaviors or to try something new or different.	○	○	○	○
5. Provide any necessary supports, accommodations, or adaptations to maintain child engagement in the activities.	○	○	○	○
6. Encourage continued child engagement in adult-child interactions by engaging in turn taking and other joint attention activities.	○	○	○	○
7. Encourage child behavior elaborations by modeling new ways of doing things during the child's everyday activities by asking inferential questions (for example, open-ended questions) or by prompting child behavior competence.	○	○	○	○