

Identity and community - social

Early Years Assessment and Learning Tool Fact Sheet

- ✓ This fact sheet supports educators' understanding of the Early Years Assessment and Learning Tool (the Tool). It highlights assessment as an everyday practice using a case study. It builds on the ideas explored in the [Assessment and the planning cycle practice videos](#).
- ✓ The Tool helps teachers and educators track and understand children's learning and development in a dynamic and consistent way.
- ✓ It supports educators working with the [Early Years Planning Cycle](#) and their assessment of children's learning. The Tool guides observations of play-based learning and generates Learning Reports from educator observation.
- ✓ Analysis of the information educators collect (e.g., via observations) informs their teaching practice (Plan, Act, Reflect). Over time, educators observe, document, and assess each child's progress against the five [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework \(VEYLDF\) Learning Outcomes](#).
- ✓ The 8 Tool modules align with the VEYLDF Learning and Development Outcomes *and* the Assessment for Learning and Development Practice Principle of the VEYLDF.
- ✓ The Tool's suggested teaching strategies have been designed to support children's learning trajectories and can be adapted to your service's resources and context.

Tool module: Identity and community - social and the VEYLDF

The Tool fosters strength-based assessment approaches. Through everyday observations in play-based learning environments, educators reflect on what the child can typically do with consideration to the child's cultural context and experiences. The Tool generates a Learning Report that allows educators to consider what the child is ready to learn next and offers targeted learning experiences to scaffold their learning (Plan/Act). This module, *Identity and community – social*, aligns with the following VEYLDF Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- ✓ Children feel safe, secure and supported.
- ✓ Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency.
- ✓ Children develop knowledge and confident self-identities.
- ✓ Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

Outcome 2: Children are connected with, and contribute to, their world

- ✓ Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active civic participation.
- ✓ Children respond to diversity with respect.
- ✓ Children become aware of fairness.
- ✓ Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.

For the *Identity and community – social* module, educators observe and reflect on the child's progression of skills to support social interaction, social responsibility, and their capacity to engage in a range of social situations. For each module, educators respond to a series of questions which draw on their existing knowledge of the child. When completed, the Tool gives teachers and

educators a Learning Report which provides them with a picture of the child's strengths and interests related to the particular module.

Case study

Remy participates in a four-year-old kindergarten program in outer Melbourne. In a group weaving experience, Remy is very focused and connects closely with his educator, who notices he is trying his best to move the grass under and through the structure. He is gaining confidence to initiate and negotiate in his interactions with the other children. His educator also notices that he responds positively to verbal encouragement from his peers, smiling broadly when another child encourages him to "do your greatest one, Remy!". Noticing this interaction, his educator considers other observations she has made of Remy and this peer playing together and how the dynamic between them can shift depending on the activity.

Collect information

Based on multiple observations, collected over time and with added perspectives from his parents, other educators, and early years professionals, Remy's educator completes the *Identity and community - social* assessment module, noting he:

- enthusiastically takes part in his preferred activities (e.g., exploring natural materials)
- undertakes familiar activities (e.g., seeking out preferred areas in the learning environment)
- is developing an understanding of roles and relationships in groups (the role of a learner and the role of a teacher).

Question / Analyse

For the Learning Report in this module, the 'nutshell' and Learning Outcome Statement provides a summary of Remy's learning progression and describes how he:

- participates in familiar and/or preferred social activities with increasing self-reliance
- is developing an understanding of fair play and contributing to a group
- is gaining an awareness of the needs and rights of others.

The report suggests intentional teaching strategies to advance Remy's learning based on where he is currently at, for example:

- intentionally teach problem-solving strategies that start to include new or unfamiliar social situations
- set aside some time with colleagues for a review of the day and their social interactions with the child
- encourage the child's positive participation and perseverance in group work or play
- discuss strategies to help the child negotiate friendship difficulties (e.g., taking some time out to think about the problem, discussing without raising their voice with their friend)
- support children to engage in cooperative experiences. During these experiences engage children in talking about shared experiences and discuss issues or plans that arise during play.

Remy's educator reflects on the information and suggested teaching and learning strategies the report provides. This report guides their consideration, together with colleagues, of the most suitable resources and possible integrated teaching and learning approaches (see below) to advance Remy's learning. Remy's educator plans accordingly.



FIGURE 4: INTEGRATED TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES

Plan

Following a review of the Tool's suggested teaching strategies, Remy's educators add extensions to his educational program.

Remy's educators plan for him to:

- take part in diverse activities
- share, cooperate, and collaborate with the group
- begin to negotiate roles and relationships in group activities.

Act / Do

Remy's educators draw his attention to the appropriate ways he initiates joint activities with preferred materials and support him to extend this to include his peers in imaginative play. They utilise different materials that Remy is drawn towards, to support him to practice sharing resources and share his skills. His educators deliberately model positive behaviours like trying different turn taking of roles in play, and model phrases such as "I like your idea to X" and "How about we try it my way"? They also intentionally provide Remy with plenty of opportunities to practice 'having a go' at various activities with small groups of children. They explicitly plan for and engage in sharing and turn taking games, pointing out the positive aspects of these behaviours when they take place. His educators also talk with Remy about trying new things, and use role play or texts to assist.

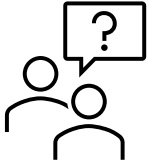


Early Years Planning Cycle (EYPC)

Reflect / Review

The plan for Remy guides reflection and review. Remy's educator takes note of his reactions and responses with others during the intentional learning experiences and notes his developing ability to acknowledge the feelings of others. The educator then celebrates Remy's improved ability to communicate with other children in the program by reinforcing with Remy the specific actions he took. Remy's educator shares their insights with colleagues, and they agree on consistent strategies and will continue to reflect on the planned learning experiences delivered in the program.

Identity and community – social: reflective questions



- How is children's learning assessed in your service and how is the information interpreted?
- How are observations made and recorded in the day-to-day (routine, play, transitions, child collaboration)?
- How do educators at your service work together to support children's social interactions and provide opportunities for children to engage in a range of social situations?
- What resources, intentional teaching practices (interactions / experiences), and environments might support use of the *Identity and community - social* module?

References

Early Years Assessment and Learning Tool

<https://www.vic.gov.au/early-years-assessment-and-learning-tool>

VEYLDF Illustrative Map Community

<https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/earlyyears/veyldf/veyldf-illustrative-maps/Pages/Community.aspx>

VEYLDF Illustrative Map Identity

<https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/earlyyears/veyldf/veyldf-illustrative-maps/Pages/Identity.aspx>