

The ECLS Approaches to Learning Items

Tip Sheet

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS) Program

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The Approaches to Learning scale items were developed specifically for the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 (ECLS-K) to capture children's learning-related behaviors. The individual items were used to create an Approaches to Learning composite score for each round of data collection in which they were fielded.

The Approaches to Learning items were included with other items tapping socioemotional constructs within one battery called the ECLS Social Rating Scale (SRS). Teachers in the kindergarten through fifth-grade rounds of data collection and parents in the kindergarten and first-grade rounds of data collection rated study children on these behaviors in both the ECLS-K and ECLS-K:2011 studies.

Many of the items included in the SRS were taken directly or adapted from the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS) (Gresham and Elliott 1990)¹ and are copyright protected. The Approaches to Learning items and scale are not copyright protected. However, the entire SRS, including the Approaches to Learning items, was redacted from publicly available instruments for the ECLS-K and some rounds of the ECLS-K:2011. Starting with the release of the ECLS-K:2011 spring first-grade documentation, the teacher and parent instruments containing the Approaches to Learning items were made available online with more precise redaction. Specifically, the copyright-protected items in the SRS are still redacted in these instruments, but the full text for the Approaches to Learning items is visible and presented as the items were fielded (which includes the full instructions, item stem, and scale response options). The Approaches to Learning items are also shown below.

Researchers interested in obtaining access to the copyright-protected items in the SRS must seek permissions following the guidelines outlined on the study webpages for the ECLS (<https://nces.ed.gov/ecls/kinderinstruments.asp>) and for the ECLS-K:2011 (<https://nces.ed.gov/ecls/instruments2011.asp>).

Approaches to Learning Item Descriptions and Wording

Teacher Social Rating Scale (SRS)

For this set of items, teachers were asked to think about the study child's behavior during the past month or two and decide how often the child demonstrated the behavior described. For each item, teachers marked one of the following responses:

Never—Child never exhibits this behavior.

Sometimes—Child exhibits this behavior occasionally or sometimes.

Often—Child exhibits this behavior regularly but not all the time.

Very often—Child exhibits this behavior most of the time.

No opportunity—No opportunity to observe this behavior.

The following table identifies the Approaches to Learning items in the Teacher SRS as well as the ECLS-K and ECLS-K:2011 data collection rounds in which they were included:

¹Gresham, F., Elliott, S., (1990). *Social Skills Rating System*. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service. The *Social Skills Rating System* (SSRS) is an NCS Pearson copyrighted instrument and has been adapted and used with permission.

Teacher SRS Approaches to Learning Items	ECLS-K Data Collection Rounds	ECLS-K:2011 Data Collection Rounds
11. Keeps belongings organized. 14. Shows eagerness to learn new things. 15. Works independently. 21. Easily adapts to changes in routine. 23. Persists in completing tasks. 24. Pays attention well.	Teacher Questionnaire (Part C): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall kindergarten • Spring kindergarten • Spring first grade • Spring third grade Reading Teacher Questionnaire (Child Level): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring fifth grade 	Teacher Questionnaire (Child Level): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall kindergarten • Spring kindergarten • Fall first grade • Spring first grade • Fall second grade • Spring second grade • Spring third grade Reading Teacher Questionnaire (Child Level): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring fourth grade • Spring fifth grade
25. Follows classroom rules.	Teacher Questionnaire (Part C): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring third grade Reading Teacher Questionnaire (Child Level): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring fifth grade 	Teacher Questionnaire (Child Level): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall first grade • Spring first grade • Fall second grade • Spring second grade • Spring third grade Reading Teacher Questionnaire (Child Level): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring fourth grade • Spring fifth grade

To view the Approaches to Learning items within the data collection instruments (i.e., the teacher questionnaires) and see how they were fielded to teachers in the first-grade through fifth-grade rounds, see the Social Skills section beginning in the ECLS-K:2011 fall first-grade Teacher Questionnaire (Child Level) available here: <https://nces.ed.gov/ecls/instruments2011.asp>. These items are still redacted in the data collection instruments posted online for the ECLS-K and earlier rounds of the ECLS-K:2011.

Note that only the first six Approaches to Learning items in the teacher instruments were included in the Teacher SRS in the kindergarten rounds in both the ECLS-K and ECLS-K:2011 and in the first-grade round of the ECLS-K. The seventh Approaches to Learning item, “follows classroom rules,” was added in the third-grade round of the ECLS-K but was determined to be age-appropriate for the first-grade round of the ECLS-K:2011.

Parent Social Rating Scale (SRS)

In the Social Skills, Problem Behaviors, and Approaches Toward Learning (SSQ) section of the parent interview, respondents were asked to indicate how often their child demonstrated the behavior described in each of the Approaches to Learning items.

The response options were:

- 1 NEVER**
- 2 SOMETIMES**
- 3 OFTEN**
- 4 VERY OFTEN**

The response options (“Would you say never, sometimes, often, or very often?”) were read to the parent respondent after the first item. Response options were only repeated thereafter at the request of the parent and when the interviewer felt repeating the options was helpful to prompt the parent’s response.

The following table identifies the Approaches to Learning items in the Parent SRS as well as the ECLS-K and ECLS-K:2011 data collection rounds in which they were included:

Parent SRS Approaches to Learning Items	ECLS-K Data Collection Rounds	ECLS-K:2011 Data Collection Rounds
How often does {CHILD}: SSQ010j. Keep working at something until {he/she} is finished? SSQ010m. Show interest in a variety of things? SSQ010o. Concentrate on a task and ignore distractions? SSQ010r. Help with chores? SSQ010v. Eager to learn new things? SSQ010x. Creative in work or in play?	Parent interview: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall kindergarten • Spring kindergarten • Spring first grade 	Parent interview: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall kindergarten • Spring kindergarten • Spring first grade

To view the Approaches to Learning items within the data collection instruments (i.e., the parent interviews) and see how they were fielded to parents in the kindergarten and first-grade rounds, see the SSQ section of the ECLS-K:2011 spring first-grade Parent Interview available here: <https://nces.ed.gov/ecls/instruments2011.asp>. These items are still redacted in the data collection instruments posted online for the ECLS-K and earlier rounds of the ECLS-K:2011.

Accessing the Approaches to Learning Item-Level Data

- For the **ECLS-K:2011**, these data are available on the main public-use and restricted-use files.
- For the **ECLS-K**, these data are available on a supplementary public-use file found here: <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2010070>.

For more information, please visit the [ECLS program website](#) or email us at: ecls@ed.gov.

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