

1. Arrange to observe an early childhood classroom. Make notes about the environment, the classroom climate, and the literacy activities in which the students engage. Your observation summary should be as objective as possible. Compare your experience with those of others in your class, and include in your discussion your personal reactions to the classroom you observed.

2. Interview an early childhood educator. Ask this teacher how she decides on changes in curriculum she needs to make. Which is the most potent factor in changing a classroom practice for this teacher: (1) what research says; (2) what other teachers say; or (3) what the teacher observes?

3. Make a sketch of an ideal classroom, showing the arrangement of furniture, equipment, materials, and storage space that best suits what you believe to be a comprehensive literacy environment. Compare your sketch with the diagram of a literacy classroom in this chapter. How is yours different? Why? Share your sketch with others in your class, discussing the benefits and drawbacks of each design.