

Direct observation

Direct observation student performance should be conducted within the natural or school employment, postsecondary, or community setting (Sitlington, Neubert, & Leconte, 1997). Sometimes called "situational assessment" (Sitlington & Clark, 2001), direct observations are often done by an "expert" in the environment such as a job coach, coworker, recreation specialist, and/or general/vocational educator. However, in keeping with a self-determined philosophy, students should be taught to record their own (performance) data. Direct observation data typically includes task analytic data of steps in completing a task, work behaviors (e.g., on-task, following directions, getting along with co-workers), and affective information (e.g., is student happy, excited, frustrated, or bored?). For example, if (you are) observing at a worksite, and a student quickly and accurately completes her tasks, interacts well with co-workers, and appears happy, this could provide evidence that this type of job is one that the student likes. However, after visiting a community residential setting a student appears withdrawn, this may be an indication that the particular situation may not be suitable (for her)" (Test, Aspel, & Everson, 2006, pp. 74).