**Objective vs. Subjective**

**Subjective vs Objective-** From The Developing Child Text, Helen Bee 2012
Rachel and Todd were watching the children in a center from a corner of the room. As they observed, a scene involving two children unfolded. Later, Rachel and Todd finalized their notes on what they saw. Study carefully what each of them said:

*Rachel:* "Sherise got angry and stood up. Her face became red. She turned to Felipe and said in a harsh tone, 'Those are my crayons! You can't use them.' She grabbed a crayon from Felipe's hand and sat back down to continue working on the picture she was drawng. Felipe walked away without a word."

*Todd:* "Sherise suddenly displayed aggressive behavior as she confronted Felipe over the use of materials at the art table. Felipe was pretty meek about it. Sherise showed that she is a domineering child."

Todd and Rachel wrote in very different ways about what they observed. One wrote objectively and one, subjectively. An ***objective expre***ssion uses facts without the interference of personal feelings or prejudices. A ***subjective expression***, on the other hand, reflects personal judgments. Which of these terms describes the way Rachel handled her observations? If you said "objective," you are right. Rachel described what happened without interpreting and evaluating. Note how Todd conveyed his opinion, not just what he saw, when he reported on the scene.

When you observe children, use Rachel's example. You should write objectively. ***Objective observations*** do not reach conclusions. they simply record facts that can later be interpred by professionals who have the necessary expertise. Often professionals, those well trained in child development, medicine, psychiatry, or psychology, use many observations to reach conclusions about a child. Only when they have carefully documented observations that are truly objective can they reach accurate conclusions.

Can you recognize objective writing? Read the following statements and decide which is objective and which is subjective.

Tim was afraid to enter the child care center.
Tim had a look of fear on his face as his father led him through the door of the center.

If you said the first statement was subjective then you are correct. It is our interpretation that he is afraid. Objectively you are telling what expression appeared on his face. Let's try another.

Lee grabbed the clay from Marta's hands.
Lee showed his nasty nature while sitting next to Marta during the art activity.

I hope you said that the first statement was objective. What you saw was a child take something. This is objective.

Other Resources on the Subject

<http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/829/1800>

<http://www.getreadytoread.org/screening-tools/supportive-materials-for-elors/assessment-in-early-childhood>

<http://issuu.com/naeyc/docs/appropriate_and_meaningul_assessmen>