




What does ACCESS mean in the ITERS-3 scale?

ACCESSIBLE means that, during the observation, children can reach and use the required material or equipment. A material simply being present in the classroom does not necessarily mean that it is “accessible.” Depending on the ages of the children, access looks slightly different.

	3 (Minimal)	5 (Good)	7 (Excellent)
Mobile Children: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have a <u>few</u> long lapses or <u>many</u> short lapses* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>No</u> long lapses • Only a <u>few</u> short lapses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>No</u> lapses (unless involved in an engaging activity)
Older Non-mobile Children: 6-11 months (can sit unsupported) * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access can be sporadic, but without <u>many</u> long lapses when awake and ready to play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some lapses allowed (of any kind), but <u>most</u> of the time is spent with access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Few</u> if any short lapses • Access is provided <u>almost all of the time</u> (unless involved in an engaging activity)
Youngest Non-mobile Children: 0 – 5 months (cannot sit unsupported) ** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No credit is given if infants are <u>routinely</u> left in restrictive furnishings for <u>long periods</u> with no access to any toys for <u>most of the observation</u> • Children should spend <u>little</u> of their time with nothing to do but watch the happenings around them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular, substantial access is provided • May have a <u>few</u> long spans in restrictive furnishings BUT are also given access to materials or held/interacted with during observation • <u>No</u> child is left in restrictive furnishings with little holding/interaction or access to toys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Little to no</u> time in restrictive furnishings with no access to toys • Only a <u>few</u> short lapses • General practice= much holding/interacting and materials to experience

*For older non-mobile infants, access to more materials is required, so staff should either bring materials to the children or move the children to within reach of the materials. It is not required that non-mobile infants’ access match that of mobile children.

** For young infants, the requirements for “accessible” are less demanding than they are for older children. However, some access to appropriate materials with caregiver assistance should be observed for even the youngest children, even if all of them do not have access to every material.

*** In mixed-aged groups, consider each age group separately. For credit at each level, access requirements are expected for each age group in the classroom.



A LAPSE is when children:

- Must wait for **longer than 3 minutes** without anything meaningful to do and cannot play (Examples: waiting on other children to be diapered, waiting in line for hand washing, waiting to go outside while others put on jackets, or waiting for lunch to be served or for others to finish eating).
- Are in one or more group times totaling longer than **20 minutes** (even when engaged).
- Are in group activities, of any length, which 2 or more children are not engaged for more than a few minutes, or any child is upset and is not soothed and re-engaged quickly.
- Are in overly long routines when not actively engaged in the routines themselves
- Spend more than **an hour** outside without required materials available in the outdoor space.
- Are placed in restrictive furnishings without materials or interactions.

REMEMBER: “A lapse that causes problems for children may be short in minutes but long in terms of how children respond to it” –Debby Cryer

NOT a lapse:

- One or more group times that children are engaged in that last a total of 20 minutes or less.
- Routines that children are actively engaged in themselves (eating, sleeping, toileting/diapering, hand washing).
- Outdoor play that lasts an hour or less.
- When non-mobile children are being held and interacted with.
- When children are not “ready to play” (sad, upset, hungry, tired, needing personal space or extra teacher attention).



How to avoid and minimize lapses by individualizing routines:



- Complete diaper changes individually during free play, ideally with an additional teacher to engage in play.
- Split large groups when returning indoors for hand washing.
- Sing songs or do finger plays while children are in line for hand washing.
- Assist children in cleaning up as free play occurs to avoid long clean up transitions when free play is finished.
- Allow children to wash hands and move on to the next activity when they are finished eating.
- Use restrictive furnishings for short periods, only for the youngest infants, when no other option is practical, and the child is content.
- Provide materials and interactions when restrictive furnishings must be used.
- Avoid placing children in highchairs or calling them to the table until food is prepared, and the teacher is ready to help them.
- Make group time optional and keep it short (or skip it altogether as it is not necessary for infants and toddlers).
- If conducting group activities, pay attention to the children’s levels of engagement and move on to another activity, such as free play, if children are not engaged.