Pretend Play Performance Rubric

LEVEL	NAME	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
0	No pretend play	• No evidence that child is in a make believe/pretend play episode.
1	Playing Alone: Being Someone Else or Objects Become Something Else	• Child is playing alone. • Child announces that he/she is a particular character or declares an object is something other than what it is (e.g., a pencil is a shovel for digging a hole). • Child may add a few gestures to portray the character he/she is pretending to be or to the object he/she pretends to have. • Child manipulates objects (e.g., blocks, beads, clay) and names them or otherwise indicates that the object is something else, a pretend something. • Child may play with words, rhythm, or rhyme of several words, for example, "Wishy washy, dishy dashy, swishy swashy!" • Play might last a short time or carry on for a good long while.
2	Becoming Someone Else with Another Child	• Child announces that he/she is a particular character or declares an object is something other than what it is (e.g., a block is a baby's pillow). • Children are largely in parallel play – 2 scenes unfolding alongside each other. Although playing alongside another, little or no evidence of creating a shared narrative script. • The other child names who and what he/she is doing. The pretend play with another is brief, lasting no more than a minute or two, while the play of each child may continue as in Level 1. • Content of pretend play may shift frequently without elaboration. • Child may add some gestures to the role she or he is enacting. • Children may include a few objects to represent something in the pretend episode (large buttons may become money to pay the grocer, food to feed the baby, or gold that bad guys steal).
3	First Extended Pretend Scenarios with Others	• Child engages in pretend play situation in a role with one or more children. • The use of objects and/or gestures signal the pretend world where the play is taking place (e.g., two girls pretending to be sisters taking care of their sick babies • The verbal exchanges reflect the children's efforts to establish characters and describe the pretend play scene. • The shared pretend play episode with another child is relatively short, perhaps lasting 2–5 minutes.
4	Sustaining Pretend Play Alongside Another	• Child participates in developing a play episode with at least one other child where they begin to coordinate characters and their actions at least some of the time. • Play episode lasts 5+ minutes minimum. • There is verbal interaction among the actors describing what is happening and directing the unfolding story.

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5	Developing Interactive Play Skills	• Child participates in setting up and carrying on pretend play situation with at least one other child. • The play episode lasts for 10–15 minutes. • Verbal interaction is moderate both in deciding roles and plot, and in carrying out the story line. • Gestures, movement, and talk are in sync with the pretend setting and its unfolding story line. • Child readily adapts and improvises his or her pretending to new twists and turns in the story line. • Child asserts her or his wishes and when there is no compromise, gets help from a teacher.
6	Interactive Pretend Play	• Child is present and participating in sustained and elaborate pretend play with at least two other children. • Child contributes verbally to elaboration of the pretend play scenario. • Every object, gesture/movement, sound, and utterance reflect the pretend play world. • Play episode lasts for more than 20 minutes. • The child can resolve moments of tension in the play to keep the scene moving; child can help repair disagreements, seeks compromises.