Observing Child Development

*Note:* This lesson draws on what you have learned in all lessons in this unit.

One of the best ways to understand early child development is to observe it in action. For this activity, you will choose two children to observe in their natural environment. If possible, try to choose two children who are at different developmental stages, such as an infant and a preschooler. If you are not currently working in an early childhood setting, you may choose to observe children of friends or family. In either case, make sure that you have the permission of the child’s teacher and/or parent before beginning your observation.

Observe each child for at least 40 minutes. Choose an unobtrusive place in the classroom (or other setting) from which you can clearly observe the child, and use the worksheet below to record your observations. For each child, describe some of the behaviors that you observe across each of the developmental domains. After completing both observations, answer the reflection questions at the end of the worksheet.