

# Reading the portfolio

11 June

Writer: Pam

Cameron sat on the floor for 15 minutes till tidy-up time, looking at his folder. He turned the pages right to left and most of them one at a time, although not always. When a photo was on a different angle, he turned the page to look at it. He leaned over photographs he specially wanted to look at, saying "Ooh, ooh" at photos



of him with babies. He verbalised while he looked – sometimes babbling as he pointed to photos – but he also pointed at the written words and moved his finger from left to right across the page. When he finished the book, he turned it over and started again – over and over again till he was satisfied and tidy-up time started.

## What's occurring here?

Cameron loves looking at the story told in pictures of himself. He has the ability to stay concentrating for a long while. He can turn

pages correctly and seems to have some idea that the words accompany spoken language and that when you speak the words, you point to the page.

## What's happening here?

Cameron reads his portfolio, looking intently at pictures of himself interacting with a visiting baby. Often his interest in activities is short-lived, but this time, he becomes completely involved in what he is doing, displaying great concentration.

## What aspects of inclusive assessment does this exemplify?

Cameron's education support worker recorded this assessment and took photographs of him reading his portfolio. Cameron's voice is here, too – the expressive photographs show the value of this learning moment to Cameron himself as he concentrates on his portfolio.

One of the important reasons for documenting this story was that it illustrates skills and a level of concentration that Cameron was not thought to possess. (In formal testing, Cameron did not seem to retain an interest in or memory of objects once they were out of his sight.) Consequently, the documentation interests and challenges members of Cameron's early intervention team.

## How might this assessment contribute to this child's learning and development?

This assessment particularly interested Cameron's early intervention teacher because she wondered whether her own assessment had underestimated Cameron's skills. She retested very carefully, ensuring she had his attention, but got similar results. This does not mean that the information from either of these assessments is "wrong". It means that on this occasion and with this content – lots of pictures about himself – Cameron becomes absorbed in an activity that is an important learning experience for him. From here, his teachers could build on similar experiences, perhaps reflecting what he is doing each day and showing him photographs of this. Such documentation may also provide opportunities for Cameron and other children to look at his portfolio together.

## What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

Cameron's education support worker noticed that he was absorbed in his portfolio and recognised the early literacy skills he demonstrated, particularly in the way he handled a book.

# "I can't tell you how amazing it is!"

Child: Kian  
Date: 5/6  
Writer: Sue

## A learning story

<b>TAKING AN INTEREST</b>	<p>Kian is on a resonance board surrounded by rattly things and a blue cheerleader's pompom. The gold mobile is hanging above him within reach. Kian is enjoying touching the pompom and the strands of the gold mobile. He has his boots on but is not making any movement with his legs to make noise contact with the board.</p> <p>I start to stimulate some movement by creeping my fingers down his leg from the hip and finish with lifting his foot a little, then dropping it onto the board so his boot makes a noise. As I do this, I'm chanting "Kian lifts his foot and goes crash." I time the word "crash" with the boot landing on the board. I <b>wait</b> for him to copy. After three repeats, with waiting time in between, Kian lifts his leg himself and crashes his boot onto the board. He smiles at me. I leave Kian to a few minutes of exploring on the board. He lifts and kicks his boot one more time and smiles.</p>
<b>BEING INVOLVED</b>	
<b>PERSISTING WITH DIFFICULTY</b>	
<b>EXPRESSING AN IDEA OR A FEELING</b>	
<b>TAKING RESPONSIBILITY</b>	

## Parent's voice

Today a staff member recorded this learning story about your child. It captures a part of your child's day. We invite you to make a comment about this story. We will include this story and your comments in your child's folder, which will be given to you to keep when your child leaves our centre. We would love to hear about your child's experiences at home too.

It is amazing how the smallest thing can be amazing. I was so excited with Kian's story that I went out and bought a bottle of wine to celebrate.

I can't tell you how amazing it is to have someone else tell you what your child "can" do instead of all of the "can'ts".

The processes that the centre uses to encourage Kian to communicate are very good, and since learning these things, I am looking at Kian in a different light and attempting to talk with him rather than at him.

Thank you so much, Sue, for taking the time to write down Kian's experience.