

Jack explores space

Child: Jack

Teacher: Sue

18 March

Jack was sitting in the block corner stacking Duplo blocks on top of one another. He then reached for the train and tried to stand a piece of Duplo on top of its funnel. This did not work so he went back to stacking the Duplo.

Jack noticed another child approaching but carried on stacking. The child watched him and then helped him stack by handing him a block. Jack took it and stacked it. He then tried to stack the Duplo upside down but found this didn't work, so he went back to stacking them the right way up.

The child helping Jack brought hand puppets but Jack wasn't interested in the puppets. Jack then sat the Duplo on the sill of the floor-to-ceiling window, stacked them, then left to play elsewhere.

Interpretation/Analysis

The amount of time Jack spent at this activity stood out for me, eight minutes in all. The fact that Jack did notice the other child, but did not really interact with her even when she brought the hand puppets over, showed that he was really involved in the task at hand.

What next?

Provide Jack with a variety of resources that can be stacked or used to build things (different sizes and shapes of blocks, large cardboard bricks).

19 March

While all the toddlers were asleep Jack explored the toddler area.

The large wooden tunnel took his fancy. He put his head inside it, laughing. He was laughing louder when he took it out again.

Jack played peek-a-boo with a staff member. On the completion of this game Jack went through the tunnel.



Teacher: Cilla

4 October

Jack loves balls. Today he found a ball outside, put it in a trolley and pushed it around the playground. He made a growling noise at his trolley if it did not go the way he wanted it to go. Jack spent 5 minutes taking the ball for a ride, then he picked up the ball, took it up the fort, and rolled it down the slide. I helped Jack come down the slide. He giggled, retrieved the ball, and repeated his slide game several times.

Interpretation/Analysis

Jack initiates his own games with items that interest him. He is playful with equipment and expresses his feelings verbally and through gestures.

15 October Jack tackles the steps

Today under the watchful eye of one of his larger mates, Jack tackled the wooden stairs. His socks were proving to be a little problem as he kept standing on them, so off they came. Claire stayed behind Jack as he made his way to the top of the steps, calling out “Jack, Jack” once he got to the top.



Teacher: Sandi 23 October

Today I was delighted to see Jack and Georgia initiating play with each other. Georgia first got Jack’s attention by squealing at him as he walked past. She then crawled to the end of the wooden box. Jack then came over and peeped right back. They took turns looking and laughing at each other. Jack then crawled through the box and Georgia followed. They did this several times, laughing and “talking” as they played.

Interpretation/Analysis	What next?
Jack and Georgia were able to play together. They took turns responding to each other’s ideas and were involved together for some time.	Keep noticing the friendships made in the nursery.

Teacher: Sandi 4 November

Jack has shown an interest in posting objects. Today he was putting shapes in and out of containers and then hiding them under the cushions. Jack showed delight when the objects/shapes were tipped out of the container. He smiled and repeated the task.



Interpretation/Analysis

Jack chooses play of interest to him. He plays around with equipment and gains much satisfaction from this type of exploratory play.

What next?

Increase the range of posting and heuristic play time and equipment to support Jack's interests.

5 December

As a toddler Jack's interest in stacking and manipulating objects continues. On many occasions Jack has been observed stacking a selection of cones one on top of another.

Teacher: Cilla

12 December

Jack loves hiding in boxes. Today he emptied out the sand toy-box to as far as his arms could reach, then climbed inside the box. He smiled at his teachers, then spent a few minutes searching through the toys, every now and then throwing something out until he found a sponge piece. He got out and returned this to the water play. Later on he was seen hiding in the toy oven and playing "peek-a-boo" with another child, using the playhouse window as a screen.

Short-term review

Jack enjoys discovering hiding holes. He will spend time each day in a private space – corner, box, tunnel, basket – by himself or with one other child.

What's happening here?

This is a series of stories about Jack exploring space.

What aspects of noticing, recognising, and responding to mathematics learning does this assessment exemplify?

A number of these assessment stories focus on Jack exploring space and his place in it. Another illustrates his interest in posting and stacking. These assessments provide Jack's teachers with ideas of "what next?" for Jack.

What does this assessment tell us about mathematics learning (using a *Te Whāriki* lens)?

Jack crawls, climbs, and stacks and posts objects. His explorations with these resources, along with his exploratory play with other children, are recorded in these assessments. They indicate the range of resources Jack has available to enable him to explore spatial relationships.

The Exploration/Mana Aotūroa strand of *Te Whāriki* includes learning outcomes that support: children's confidence in moving in space, their increasing control over their own bodies, and their manipulative skills, agility, co-ordination, and balance.

How does this assessment exemplify developing competence with mathematics?

Jack is exploring ways of using space, especially in relation to his own body. Through such exploration, he is developing his perception of depth and distance. He is also exploring the shapes and properties of materials and play equipment. *The New Zealand Curriculum* describes geometry as involving "recognising and using the properties and symmetries of shapes"²¹ and includes "Sort objects by their appearance" as a level 1 achievement objective. Within this strand of Geometry and Measurement, geometry also involves "describing position and movement".²²