



## What's New in the TPOT™ Research Edition

In the new edition of the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT™), the developers have made several important changes based on recent research findings. Detailed information about the changes can be found in Chapter 7 of the TPOT™ manual. Here is a quick summary of what's new:

- Each Key Practice indicator is now scored Yes or No instead of organized under 1, 3, and 5 anchors.
- There are still 14 Key Practice items, but the *Collaborative Teaming* item is now scored based on observation instead of interview.
- The updated version no longer has the 7 Environmental items; 4 of the 7 items were modified and are now either Red Flags ( $n = 3$ ) or an indicator under the Teaching Behavior Expectations item ( $n = 1$ ). The remaining 3 items were not included in the new edition.
- *Using Effective Strategies to Respond to Challenging Behavior* is a subscale rather than an item in the new edition. This change was made so each occurrence of challenging behavior can be examined and teachers' use of three essential response strategies can be recorded.
- There were also minor changes in wording to some of the indicators and slight changes in the number of indicators and red flags.
- Additional guidance was provided in the manual so every indicator now has scoring guidance.

The attached chart (from pages 84 and 85 in the TPOT™ Manual) breaks down the comparison between the pilot version and research version in detail.

## Guidelines for Transitioning to the Research Version

The research version is the most updated version of the tool. Revisions to the research version were made based on research conducted by the developers and input from pilot version users. If you use the pilot version, you should begin using the research version immediately unless you're in the process of conducting pre-post comparisons with the TPOT and collected data at time 1 using the pilot version. In this case, use the pilot version for time 2 but transition to the research version after time 2. New users should only use the research version.

**Table 7.1.** Comparison of pilot version and research edition of Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool

	Pilot version	Research edition
<b>Environmental items (n)</b>	7	0
Learning centers have clear physical boundaries.	Environmental item 1	Red flag 27
The classroom is arranged such that all children in the classroom can move easily around the room.	Environmental item 2	Not included
The classroom is arranged such that there are no large, wide-open spaces where children could run.	Environmental item 3	Red flag 28
There is an adequate number and variety of centers of interest to children and to support the number of children (at least four centers; one center for every four children).	Environmental item 4	Not included
Materials in all centers are adequate to support the number of children allowed to play.	Environmental item 5	Not included
Materials/centers are prepared before children arrive at the center or activity. Classroom rules or program-wide expectations are posted, illustrated with a picture or photo of each rule or expectation, limited in number (3–5), and stated positively.	Environmental item 6 Environmental item 7	Red flag 19 Teaching Behavior Expectations Indicator 1
	Number of indicators	How indicators scored
<b>Key practice items (n = 14)</b>	Number of indicators	How indicators scored
Schedules, routines, and activities	9	Observation
Transitions between activities	8	Observation
Supportive conversations	10	Observation
Promoting children's engagement	9	Observation
Providing directions	6	Observation
Collaborative teaming	5	Primarily interview
Teaching behavior expectations	7	Observation
Teaching social skills and emotional competencies	8	Observation
Teaching children to express emotions	8	Observation and interview
Teaching problem solving	10	Observation and interview
Teaching friendship skills	9	Observation and interview
Interventions for children with persistent challenging behavior	4	Primarily interview
Connecting with families	8	Primarily interview
Supporting family use of the Pyramid Model practices	7	Primarily interview
	Pilot version	Research edition
<b>Red flag</b>	(n = 16)	(n = 17)
The majority of the day is spent in teacher-directed activities.	✓	✓
Transitions are more often chaotic than not.	✓	✓
Teacher talk to children is primarily giving directions, telling children what to do, reprimanding children.	✓	✓
During group activities, many children are not engaged.	✓	✓
Teachers are not prepared for activities before the children arrive at the activity.	✓	✓
Children are reprimanded for engaging in disruptive problem behavior (use of "no," "stop," "don't").	✓	✓
Children are threatened with an impending negative consequence that will occur if disruptive problem behavior persists.	✓	✓
Teacher reprimands children for expressing their emotions.	✓	✓
Emotions are never discussed in the classroom.	✓	✓
Teacher rarely encourages interactions between children during play or activities.	✓	✓
Teacher gives directions to all children in the same way without giving additional help to children who need more support.	✓	✓
Teacher tells children mostly what not to do rather than what to do.	✓	✓
Teacher reports asking for the removal of children with persistent challenging behavior from the classroom or program.	✓	✓
Teacher makes comments about families that are focused on the challenges presented by families and their lack of interest in being involved.	✓	✓
Teacher only communicates with families when children have challenging behavior. <sup>a</sup>	✓	✓
Teacher complains about other team members and notes difficulty in their relationships. <sup>a</sup>	✓	✓
Learning centers do not have clear boundaries. <sup>b</sup>	✓	
There are large, wide-open spaces in the classroom where children can run. <sup>b</sup>	✓	
Teacher restrains a child engaging in challenging behavior or secludes the child in an area separate from the classroom where the child cannot see the activities of the classroom.	✓	

Strategies used to respond to challenging behavior	(n = 10)	(n = 6)
Teacher implements developmentally appropriate generic strategies (e.g., redirection, planned ignoring) in response to challenging behavior. <sup>c</sup>	✓	✓
Teacher responds to children by stating the expected behavior in positive terms (i.e., what to do) or providing instruction related to an acceptable alternative behavior. <sup>c</sup>		✓
Teacher provides positive attention or positive descriptive feedback to the child when the child begins to behave appropriately. <sup>c</sup>	✓	✓
When challenging behavior occurred, the child was reminded of posted behavior expectations or rules. <sup>d</sup>	✓	✓
Teacher responded to challenging behavior by stating a natural or logical consequence and following through with stated actions. <sup>d</sup>	✓	✓
Teacher provided support to children who were angry or upset by assisting them with problem solving related to the challenging behavior. <sup>d</sup>	✓	✓
Teacher directs children toward a desired alternative behavior.	✓	
Teacher ignores behaviors when appropriate (e.g., behaviors that are not harmful to child or others).	✓	
Teacher responds to problem behavior by using it as a chance to teach an acceptable alternative.	✓	
Teacher uses logical and natural consequences to redirect children to use appropriate behavior.	✓	
Teacher frequently comments on children's appropriate behavior.	✓	

<sup>a</sup>Item was rewritten and included as a key practice indicator in the research edition of the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT™).

<sup>b</sup>Item was included on the pilot version of the TPOT as an environmental item and was modified for the research edition to reflect red flag.

<sup>c</sup>Essential strategy for responding to challenging behavior.

<sup>d</sup>Additional strategy that might be used to respond to challenging behavior.