

Systems Thinking in Early Childhood: *Shifting Perspectives*

USING THE LADDER OF INFERENCE IN EVERYDAY SITUATIONS

Vignette #1

Mateo and Sonya own a family child care program. At 7:30 a.m., they see Ravi bring his daughter Anna into the room, fill in the sign-in sheet, quickly wave goodbye to Anna, and then leave.

Sonya: I'm sorry Ravi left so quickly; I wanted to ask him what Anna likes to eat at home. She doesn't seem to be eating much when she's here.

Mateo: Oh, he's always like that. He never talks to me.



Use the ladder of inference to reflect on this vignette:

What information or observable data did Mateo and Sonya see and hear?

Based on this information, what did Mateo and Sonya pay attention to?

What meaning did Mateo and Sonya add to this situation? What beliefs or assumptions do you think they have?

With two very different perspectives about Ravi's behavior, Mateo and Sonya might respond in different ways the next time they see him. How might Sonya respond to him? How might Mateo respond to Ravi?



ACT _____

BELIEVE _____

NOTICE _____

EXPERIENCE _____

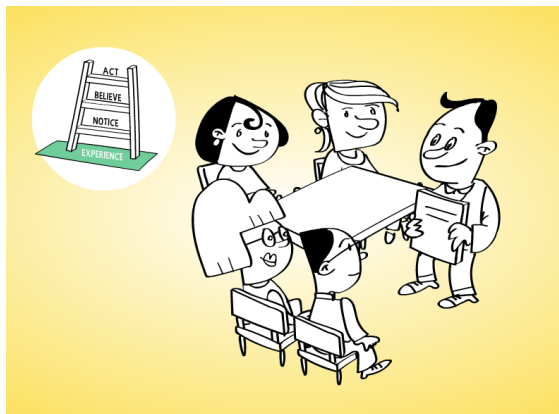
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HANDOUT

SYSTEMS THINKING

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Vignette #2

A consultant is working with your program to help you implement a math literacy curriculum. Today is his first day, and he is introduced at your staff meeting. He stands up, smiles at the group, and holds up the teacher's guide for the new curriculum.

Use the ladder of inference to reflect on this vignette:

As you pictured this scene in your mind, what information did you pay attention to? Write down your answers on the first rung of the ladder.

Now think about the mental models (thoughts, feelings, images) that came up for you. What were they? Write them down on the second rung of the ladder.

If you were in this situation, how would you respond? On the third rung of the ladder, write down your response.

Discuss your mental models with a partner, using one of these prompts:

- Tell me about your mental models about math.
- How would you feel about implementing a math curriculum for preschoolers?



ACT _____

BELIEVE _____

NOTICE _____

EXPERIENCE _____
