Definitions of Learning Environment Characteristics

**EXTERNAL**

**TACTILE**

Pertaining to the sense of touch

**Pressure** — the amount of force being placed on the skin by people or objects
- light - pressure just barely skims the skin's surface, may result in displacement of body hair, but no visible displacement of skin
- deep - touch results in displacement of skin

**Duration** — the rate of motion, action, activity, or performance
- brief/staccato - movement is fast (typically lasting less than 1 second) and is repeated several times — may appear jerky in movement
- lingering/slow - movement is rhythmic and will occur over a period of time longer than 1 second

**Temperature** — determination of temperature is largely dependent upon the materials being utilized (For example, 82-84 degrees is an average or warm temperature for an indoor swimming pool, while 82-84 degrees for a beverage would be considered hot.)
- cold/neutral/hot

**Texture** — the composition or structure of a substance
- soft - not hard or firm, offering little resistance to touch, not harsh
- rough - having a bumpy, irregular surface, coarse, not polished
- smooth/slick - fine texture or consistency, free from irregularities, roughness, or projections — glossy, slippery, polished
- hard - resistant to pressure, firm, rigid, fixed

**VISUAL**

Pertaining to the sense of sight

**Brightness** — intensity of light reflected from a surface
- shiny - high reflective ability
- dull - low reflective ability

**Secondary Light (proximity and intensity)**
- direct - secondary light source is within a two foot radius of student
- indirect - there is a secondary light source, but it is greater than two feet from the student
- high/medium/low

**Color** (intensity and actual color) — property of object or light that is visibly distinguished as possessing the quality of redness, greenness, etc.
- light/neutral/dark
- red/green/blue/yellow/purple/orange

**Contrast** — differences in light intensity from two or more areas
- high/low
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUDITORY</th>
<th>The reception of sound waves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pitch</td>
<td>frequency of the signal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• high tone (i.e., soprano)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• low tone (i.e., baritone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensity</td>
<td>loudness or magnitude of the sound</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• loud - high volume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• soft - low volume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timbre</td>
<td>quality characteristic of sound, attribute of sensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• sharp - intense and harsh tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• muted - muffled or softened tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo</td>
<td>a characteristic, rhythm or speed of a sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• fast - rhythm is rapid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• slow - rhythm is low speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• continuous - a sound with no breaks or interruptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• intermittent - a periodically interrupted sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>the origination of a sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• voice - a sound produced by the vocal cords of an actual person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• mechanical - a sound produced by a radio, computer, toy, or other device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• other - other possible items (musical instruments)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMELL</td>
<td>To notice the odor of something by the sense organs in the nose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• foul - putrid, repulsive, nauseous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• fruity - cherry, berry, grape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• floral - rose, lilac, honeysuckle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• burnt - smoke, tar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• resinous - pine, camphor, spruce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• spicy - clove, cinnamon, pepper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TASTE</td>
<td>To distinguish the flavor of something by taking it into the mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• salty - tasting like salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• spicy - having a hot taste - pepper, relish, nutmeg</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• sour - taste characteristic of that produced by acid, tart, tangy foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• sweet - having a sugary taste</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| MOTOR | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOVEMENT</th>
<th>A change in position or motion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tempo</td>
<td>rate or pace of an activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• slow - rate is lacking, below or behind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• fast - rate is occurring rapidly with great speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• intermittent - sporadic, not continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• continuous/rhythmic - movement characterized by a regularly recurring element, without interruption</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Direction - in what direction the movement is occurring
- up-and-down - including jumping, being bounced slowly or rapidly, or a vertical movement on a waterbed
- side-to-side - includes rocking (if sideways such as holding an infant), walking or running sideways, rolling if the circle is not complete, and sideways motion on a waterbed
- back-and-forth - includes front to back rocking such as in a rocking chair, or while seated or standing
- circular - includes movements which complete a circle such as rolling, spinning with or without an object (chair, merry-go-round)

Body Component - that part of the body that is moving or being moved
- full body - include the total body from head to toe and including extremities
- trunk - area of the body from hips to neck
- head - area of the body from the neck up
- upper limb(s) - arms (from shoulder to fingertips)
- lower limb(s) - legs

Tone - the coloring of the skin and the appearance of muscle strength
- high/normal/low

ORIENTATION The physical relationship of the student's body to his/her environment

Position - the way in which the student is placed
- sitting - the student's body is bent at the waist at an angle of at least 45-degrees from a horizontal surface
- standing - the student is in an upright position that is at least at a 75-degree angle with a horizontal surface and a portion of his/her weight is borne on legs and feet (ankle joints). (If student is placed in a prone stander, he/she is coded as standing when the prone stander is elevated to at least a 75 degree angle, and it appears that more of the student's weight is being supported by his/her legs than by the torso).
- prone - the student is on his/her stomach with the torso making contact with a horizontal surface
- supine - the student is on his/her back with the torso making contact with a horizontal surface or his/her body can be bent at the waist at less than a 45-degree angle from a horizontal surface
- sidelying - the student is on his/her side. (The back can be making contact with a horizontal surface, but the pelvis is rotated with the side of the hip resting on the horizontal surface).

Tilt - the angle of the body or a part of the body
- upright - the student is at a 90-degree angle to a horizontal surface
- backward - the student's shoulder blades are at an angle greater than 90-degrees and less than 175-degrees
- forward - the student's shoulder blades are at an angle greater than 1 degree and less than 90-degrees

Equipment
- Wheelchair
- Prone stander
- Bean bag
- Kneeler
- Tumbleform
- Other person (i.e. being held)
- Corner chair
- Other

LEARNING ATMOSPHERE

Physical

Temperature
- cold - the temperature is below 68 degrees
- neutral - the temperature is 68-79 degrees
- hot - the temperature is above 80 degrees

Lighting
- bright - bright sunlight is evident, or intense direct illumination is present
- neutral - normal overhead lighting is evident
- dim - no overhead lighting or primary source of light

Aroma - refer to the above definitions in the External section under the Smell category
- foul
- burnt
- spicy
- resinous
- floral
- fruity

Noise
- high - background ambient noise is above 80dB; includes loud talking, crying or yelling, machine noise, or loud music
- medium - typical noise level in a classroom; background noise is between 30-80 dB; voices are at normal speaking level, or soft music is present
- low - no one is talking and there is no noticeable background noise

Setting Change*
- primary - the place where the student spends the majority of his/her time during a typical educational day
- secondary - any indoor space other than the student's classroom area (e.g., hallway, other classrooms, cafeteria) within the same building in which the primary space is located
- community - any indoor space that is not part of the student's primary school building, residence, or training facility; includes a bus or car, restaurants, malls, or recreational facilities
- outside - any area outside of a building

*If a setting change occurs within any of these areas, indicate approximately how far the distance is.
across room 5 feet 10 feet

Social

People in the environment - record the number of individuals in the student's environment
- peers with disabilities
- nonhandicapped peers
- staff

Direct Interactions - record any interactions that occur directly with the student being coded, and who those individuals are
- peers with disabilities
- nonhandicapped peers
- staff

Activity level - record the pace at which activities surrounding the student are occurring
- fast
- neutral
- slow