

# STUDYING CHILDREN'S CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND BEHAVIORS RELATED TO ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH, AND FOOD: METHODS FOR ETHNOECOLOGICAL RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN

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## BACKGROUND & RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- ❖ Research in ethnoecology utilizes standard methods that are mainly catered to study adult populations, and these methods do not transfer as well when conducting ethnoecological research with children.
- ❖ To successfully study children's cultural knowledge and behaviors related to the environment, health, and food, critical factors must be considered.



**OBJECTIVE:** To bring awareness to the research community of the various kinds of systematic research methods that can be employed to rigorously analyze the cultural knowledge and behavior children possess within an ethnoecological context

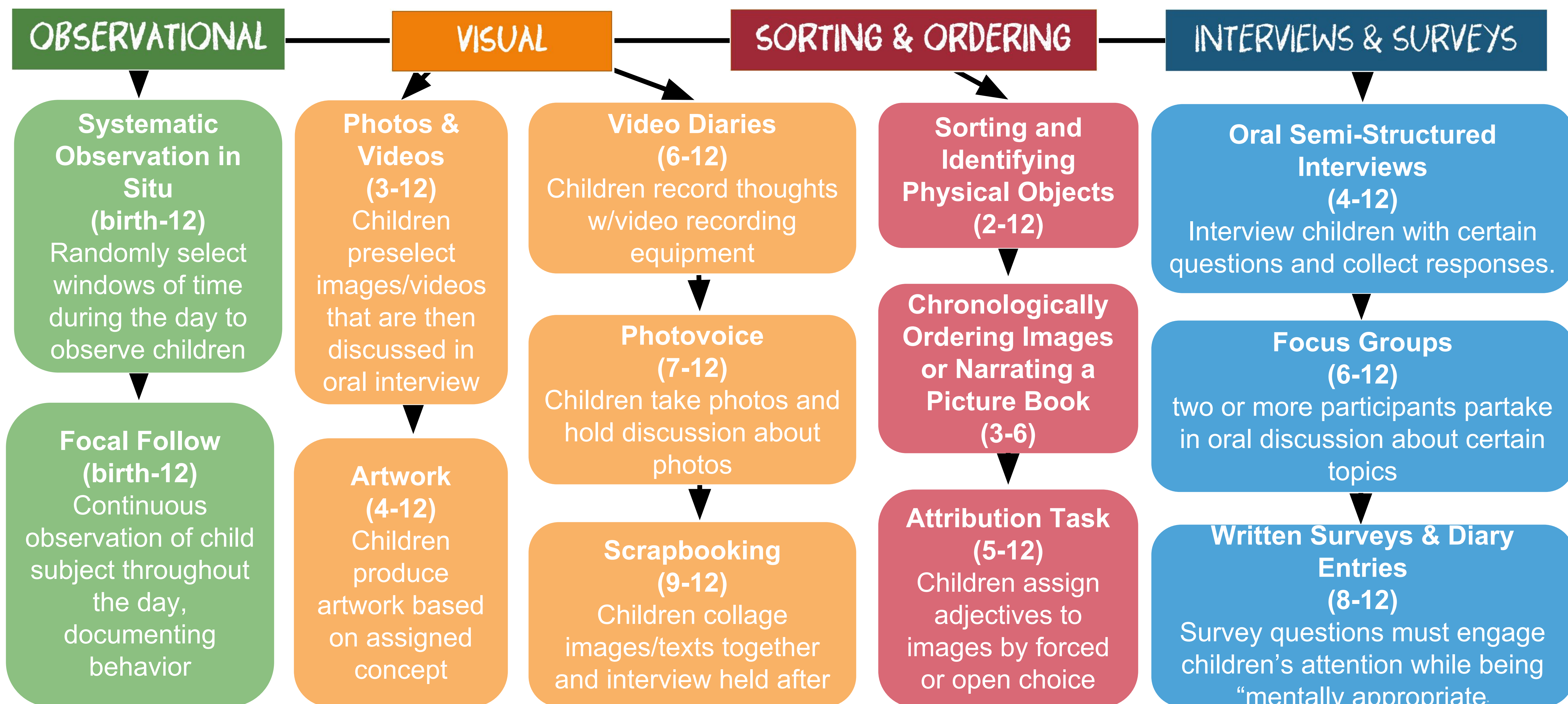
## METHODS

- ❖ A literature review was conducted to assign each researched method into one of four categories.
- ❖ Academic anthropologists were consulted and scholarly search engines were used to research and compile a list of methods into an annotated bibliography, which was peer-reviewed.
- ❖ The benefits and downfalls of each method were assessed by
  1. cultural appropriateness of method
  2. type of research question posed
  3. kind of data desired
  4. Ideal age range
- ❖ The research methods reviewed only apply to children twelve years and under.



## TYPES OF METHODS SUITABLE FOR ETHNOECOLOGICAL RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN

All of the methods diagrammed below fall under one of the four broad research method categories: observational, visual, interviews and surveys, and sorting and ordering. With each method presented, the ideal age group to implement the specified method with is also indicated.



## DISCUSSION & ANALYSIS OF METHODS

- ❖ For rigorous data analysis, utilize written surveys, oral interviews, attribution tasks, or photovoice
- ❖ To incorporate participatory aspect to study, use photovoice or scrapbooking and for limited budgets, use focus groups or artwork
- ❖ Use observational methods to study behavior and visual methods to study knowledge
- ❖ Before the age of three, observational techniques are most effective, but for ages four and up a combination of methods can be employed
- ❖ Mixed method approaches maximize effectiveness of study by pairing one method with another
- ❖ Reputability and replicability of studies involving children can be improved in the future by further detailing the consent and recruitment process within the methods section of paper

## CONCLUSION

- ❖ Various methods available to conduct research with children have been presented to emphasize the distinction in ethnoecological knowledge between children and adults.
- ❖ More so, carefully considering what type of methods to incorporate in a study involving children can produce an effectively designed study, where children have greater agency in the research process and the quality of the data collected is elevated.