

Kindergarten Seminar Session Two

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Session Two Agenda

Review of the Day

Review of Session 1

Organizing Effective Centers and Materials

Exploring Materials

Lunch

Creating Kindergarten Learning Environments

Closing



Session One Review

- Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) is an approach to early childhood education that means teachers meet individual children where they are and help them reach challenging but achievable goals that will support their development and learning. (NAEYC)
- When teachers make decisions they keep in mind:
 - Age appropriateness
 - Individual Appropriateness
 - Social and Cultural Appropriateness



Assessment in Kindergarten

Performance Based Assessment

- Use multiple sources of evidence gathered over time
- Use in curriculum planning, professional development, and reporting to families
- **Teaching Strategies GOLD is a performance based assessment, not a curriculum**

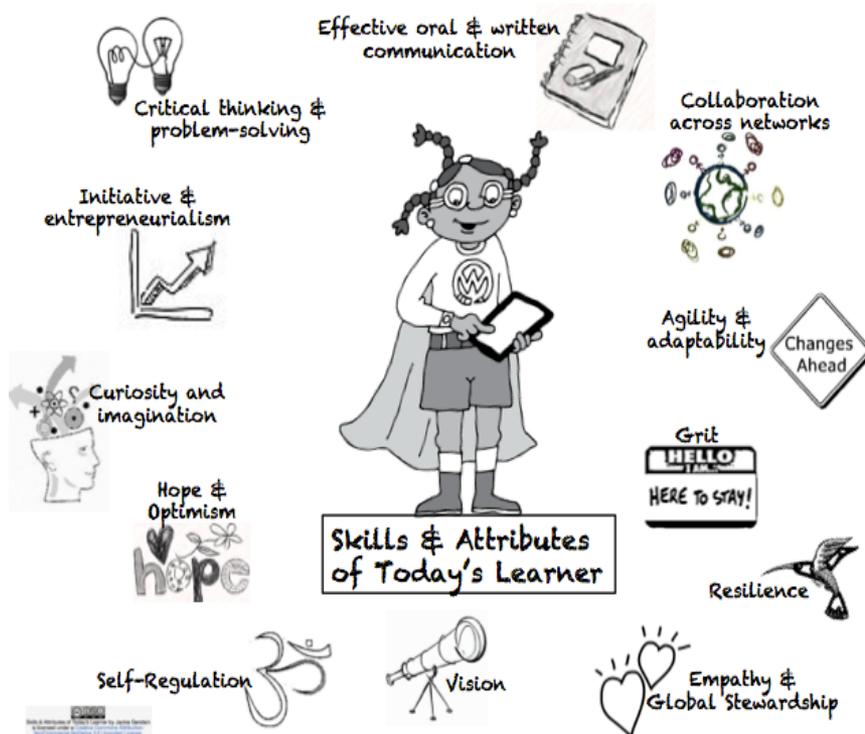
Evaluating Program Quality

- Classroom observation & rating instrument used for multiple purposes
- **Examples for Kindergarten include CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) or the APEEC (Assessment of Practices in Early Elementary Classrooms)**

Screening

- Identify children with special characteristics and determine if further assessment is needed
- Screening is always linked to appropriate follow-up
- Interventions should never result from a brief screening or one-time assessment
- **We recommend the ESI-K**

Engaging Today's Learner



The best way to prepare today's young learner for the 21st century is to provide them with rich opportunities to engage their minds, investigate, explore, problem-solve and have experiences with rich literature, block play, dramatic play, sand & water play, trips, cooking, science investigations, and cross curricular projects.

Strong social connections and relationships with caring adults and intentional teaching in the context of such activities is what supports children's academic growth.



Finding the Balance

THE KINDERGARTEN CONTINUUM



The primary "work" of kindergarten age children is to make sense of the world through play and active learning. This approach to learning will lay the foundation of understanding, motivation to learn, and self-efficacy that lead to later academic success. The trick is to find that "sweet spot" in the middle to guide focused learning through playful activities.

Beyond Worksheets & Workbooks



Worksheets and other paper and pencil activities should be supplemented or replaced with interesting, open-ended, three-dimensional, hands-on materials geared to different developmental levels and interests in a center-based classroom environment where children are learning primarily in small groups, spending most of the day engaged in hands-on activities connected to the standards and integrated across all content areas.



Finding the Time

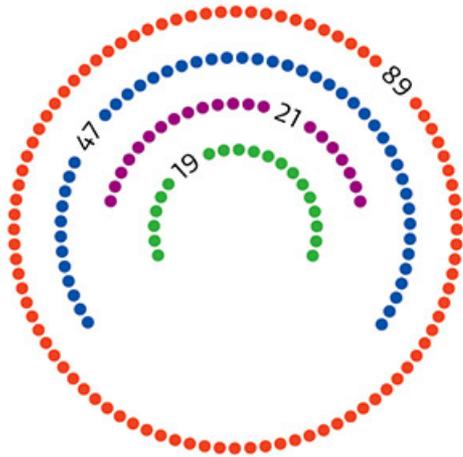
Full Day Kindergarten Schedule		
8:30-8:45	15 minutes	Arrival
8:45-9:00	15 minutes	Morning Meeting
9:00-9:20	20 minutes	Shared Reading
9:20-10:20	60 minutes	Choice Time with Ongoing Investigations/Project Work and Guided Reading
10:20-10:35	15 minutes	Cleanup and Sharing
10:35-10:50	15 minutes	Snack
10:50-11:20	30 minutes	Outdoor Recess
11:20-12:00	40 minutes	Math Explorations
12:00-12:30	30 minutes	Lunch
12:30-1:00	30 minutes	Rest and Independent Reading or Read-Aloud
1:00-1:40	40 minutes	Writing Workshop
1:40-2:20	40 minutes	Choice Time with Ongoing Investigations/Project Work (timed by actual length of overall school day)*
2:20-3:00	40 minutes	Specials
3:00-3:15	15 minutes	Sharing, Review, and Closing

Children should have at least 30 minutes of outdoor unstructured play time (or indoor if there is not a safe playground) and 60 minutes of choice during center time (not including teacher-directed centers) every day. TSG assessment is ongoing throughout the day. * World Languages, Science, Social Studies

Homework Is Not the Answer

TELLING TIME

Average number of minutes spent daily on **literacy**, **math**, **test prep** and **free play** in 112 Los Angeles kindergarten classes:



Source: "Crisis in the Kindergarten,"
Alliance for Childhood, March 2009

"Any assigned homework activities for kindergartners should be experiential rather than rote practice. Home activities including reading to a child, doing simple science experiments or hands-on mathematics activities, and drawing or writing in journals carry the message that learning is an important and engaging pursuit. It is not age appropriate for kindergartners to be subjected to negative consequences if home activities are not completed."

p. 11 *NJ Kindergarten Guidelines*

The National PTA and the National Education Association say children should get 10 minutes of homework a night per grade starting in first grade. Homework should not be the solution to squeezing more into an already packed day.

Organizing Effective Centers and Materials



NJ Kindergarten Guidelines: Appendix 3 (pp. 90-93) and “A Center-Based Classroom Environment that Supports Hands-On Activity in each of the Content Areas” (pp. 51-57).

Storing Materials



Are materials organized so children can obtain them on their own?

Accessible



Less Accessible



How does the setup on the left support self regulation?

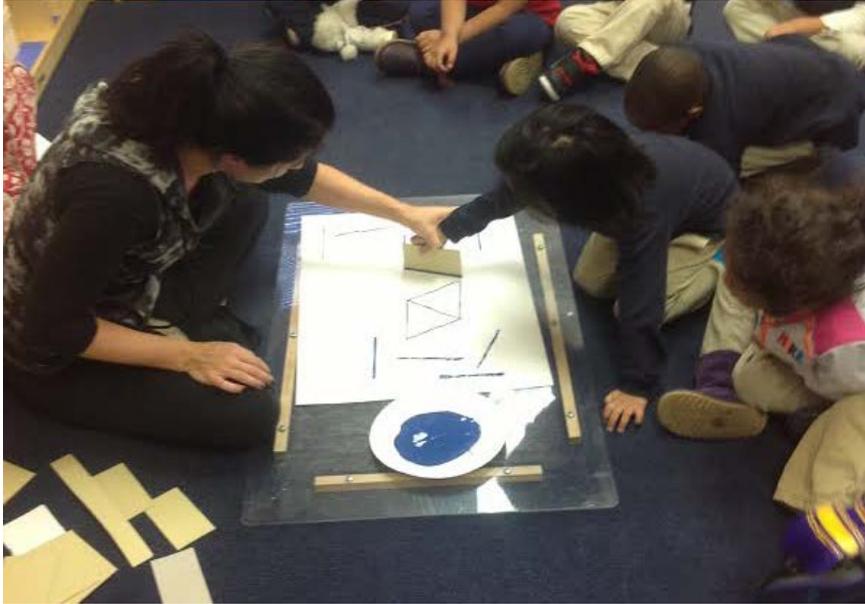
Storage

When classroom storage is limited, considered other storage areas in the school for shared materials. Rotate materials by topic or season.



Basement storage room converted to store shared materials, a place to plan collaboratively and work on documentation.

Introducing Materials



Is there a system in place to teach children how to use the materials?

Do children know how to interact with materials in meaningful ways?

Caring for Materials



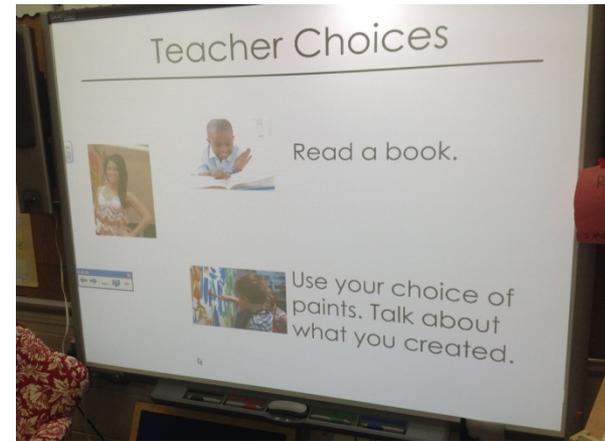
When the materials are offered in an attractive manner, the children will be more likely to take an interest in using them and returning them in good condition.

Do you support children in learning what is expected to maintain each area and support them in developing skills to accomplish the task?

Systems for Teacher and Child Choice



Integrating "Teacher Choice"



Daily Schedule

Child Initiated
Choice Time



Small Group Time



Meeting Area



Open the day with a brief welcome, share news from home, preview the day's plans, develop a sense of time with a brief calendar or weather activity, introduce a new topic or explore concepts of print in a morning message and close the day with a few minutes of sharing and reflection.

Math Learning Center



The math center should include shelving with a variety of math games, puzzles, props, tools and open-ended materials with a table nearby for a small group of children to engage in counting, sequencing, sorting, patterning and measuring.

Mathematical learning happens when children are offered a wide range of games and manipulatives such as blocks for counting, sequencing, sorting, patterning and measuring.



- Size
- Shape
- Weight
- Symmetry
- Spatial Understanding
- Part-whole relationships
- Horizontal-vertical reference systems
- Problem solving

<http://earlymath.erikson.edu/big-ideas/> (see Ideas Library)

Manipulatives: More than plastic counting bears



Measurement and Data
Classify objects and count the number of objects in each category.

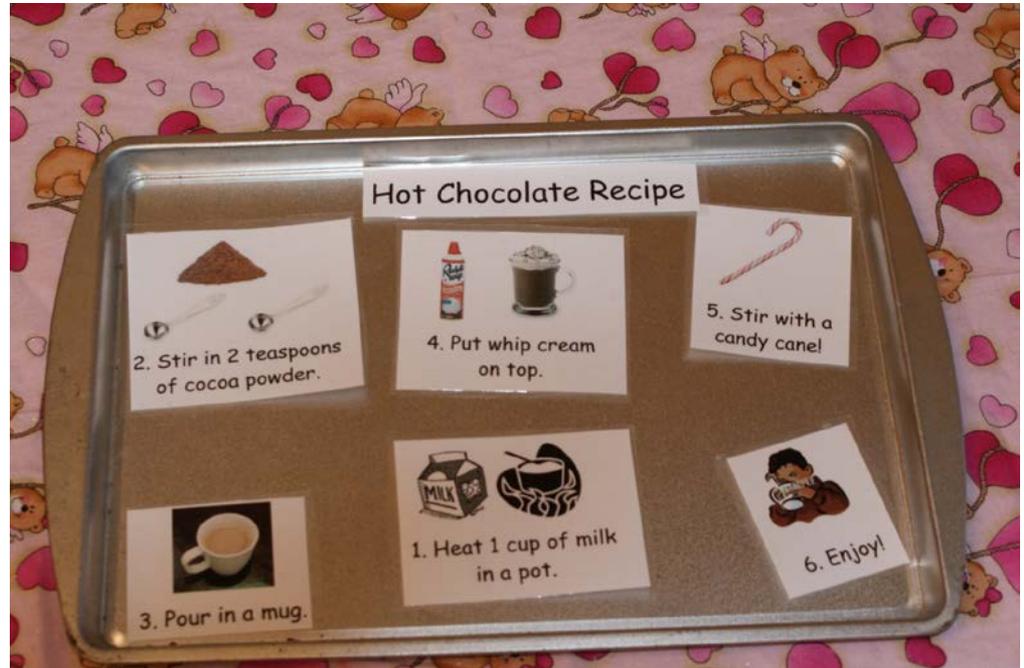


Operations and Algebraic Thinking

Understand addition as putting together and adding to, and understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from.



Measurement and Data



Describe and compare measurable attributes.

Describe and
compare
measurable
attributes.



Counting and Cardinality

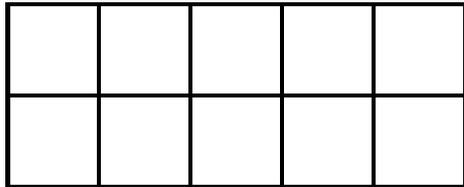
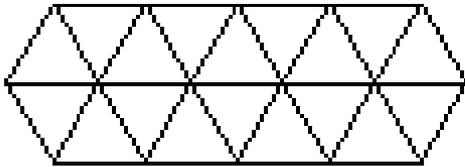
- Know number names and the count sequence.
- Count to tell the number of objects.
- Compare numbers.



Demonstrating understanding of one-to-one correspondence.

Geometry

- Identify and describe shapes.
- Analyze, compare, create, and compose shapes.



Tessellation

A tessellation is created when a shape is repeated over and over again covering an area without any spaces between the shapes.



Objective 21: Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes



“Children do not develop their ideas about shapes by simply looking at them. They need to manipulate, draw, compare, describe, sort, and represent the shapes in a variety of ways.”

(Charlesworth, 2005; Clements, 1999)



Read fiction and information books about numbers.

Standards Applied

- K.MD.A.1** Describe measurable attributes of objects, such as length or weight. Describe several measurable attributes of a single object.
- K.MD.A.2** Directly compare two objects with a measurable attribute in common to see which object has “more of”/“less of” the attribute, and describe the difference.
- K.G.A.1** Describe objects in the environment using names of shapes, and describe the relative positions of these objects using terms such as *above*, *below*, *beside*, *in front of*, *behind*, and *next to*.
- K.CC.B.4.A** When counting objects, say the number names in standard order, pairing each object with one and only one number name and each number name with one and only one object.

Technology Learning Center



Access to technology opens up many possibilities for early childhood learning. In addition to developing children's skills and abilities, well designed programs will engage children in thinking, creating, problem solving, questioning, critiquing, communicating and making connections.

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/psguide/TechnologyGuidance.pdf>



Geometry

- Identify and describe shapes.
- Analyze, compare, create, and compose shapes

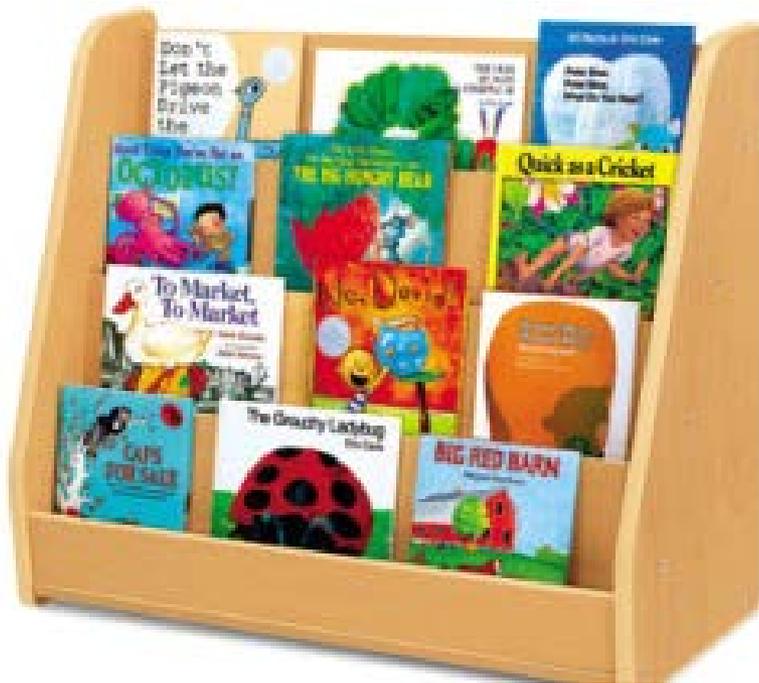
Library/Listening Center



Does the area include soft seating, pillows and a rug to provide a comfortable place for one or two children to read?

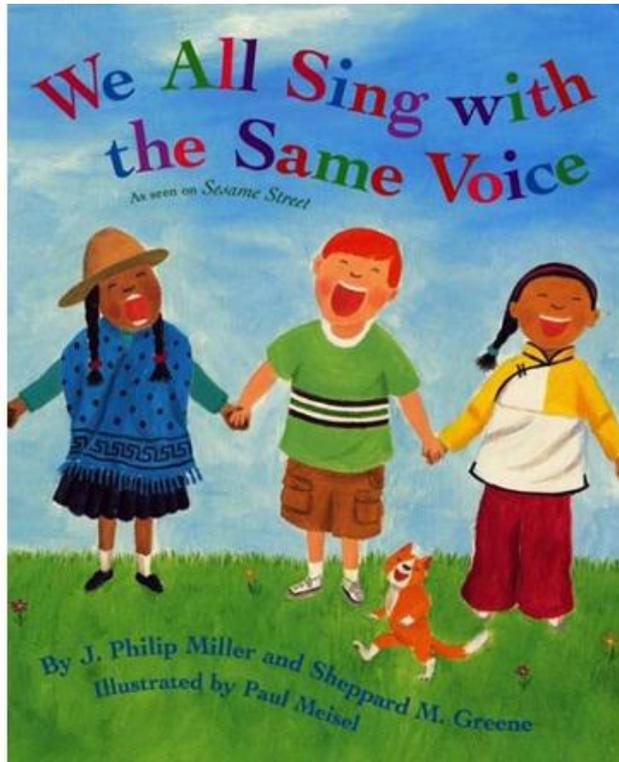
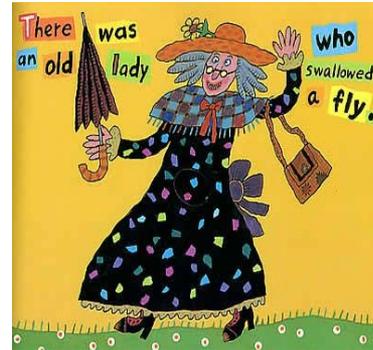
How is literature presented to children?

Accessible



Less Accessible





A wide variety of authentic literature - fiction, informational text, poetry and classroom books that reflects the children's interests and backgrounds - is available to children every day.





Are materials available to give children the opportunity to creatively reenact stories?

Consider adding flannel boards, puppets and props for storytelling to the library area or close by to provide kinesthetic and English language learners with opportunities to master oral language skills.



Can children choose a book to read by themselves
or to a partner?



Do you offer spaces to read outdoors?

Writing Center

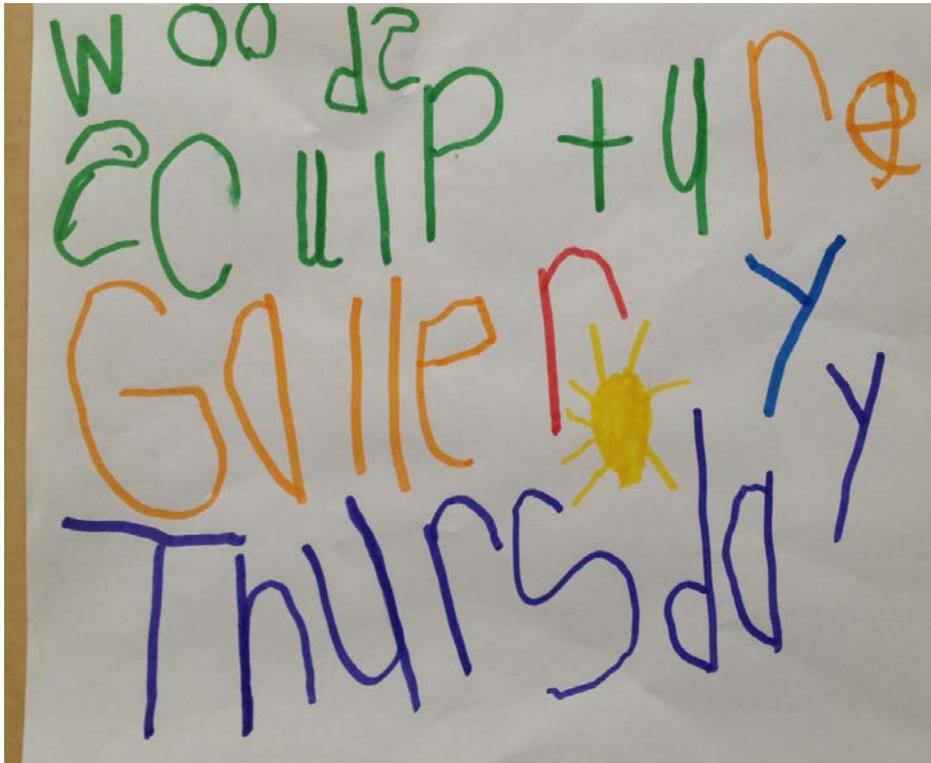


Designated writing areas are equipped with a variety of writing tools, paper and other materials, offering children the opportunity to write for various purposes, such as creating greeting cards, sending messages to family members, and writing stories.



Do children have authentic opportunities to use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose narrative, opinion and informational/explanatory texts?



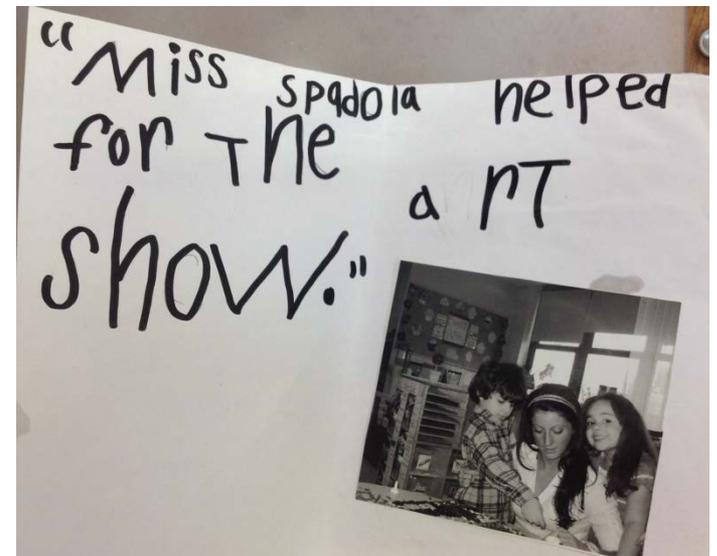
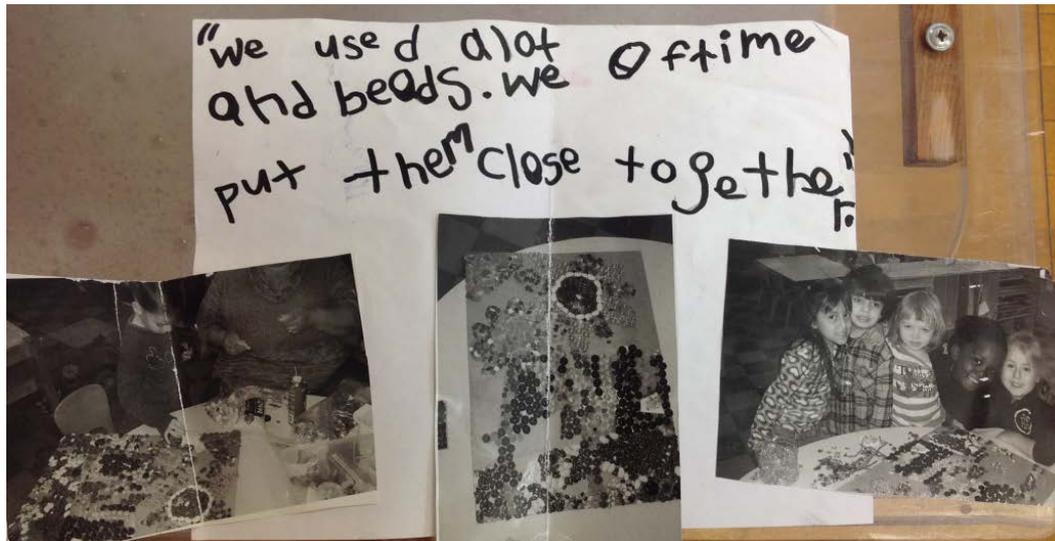
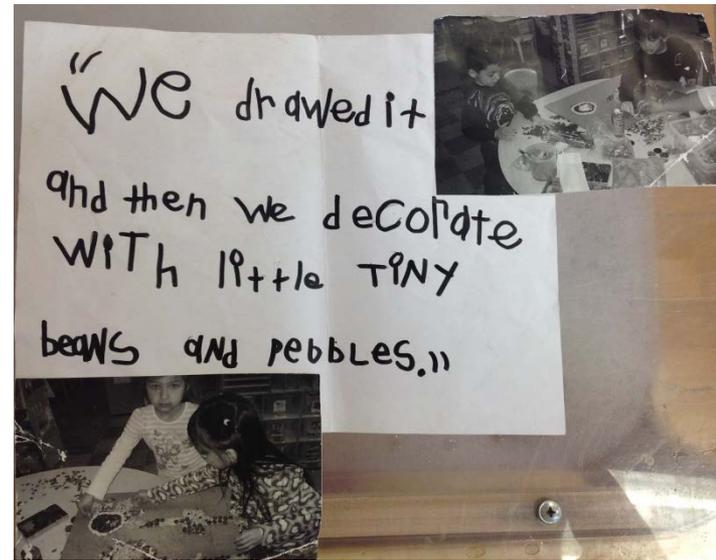
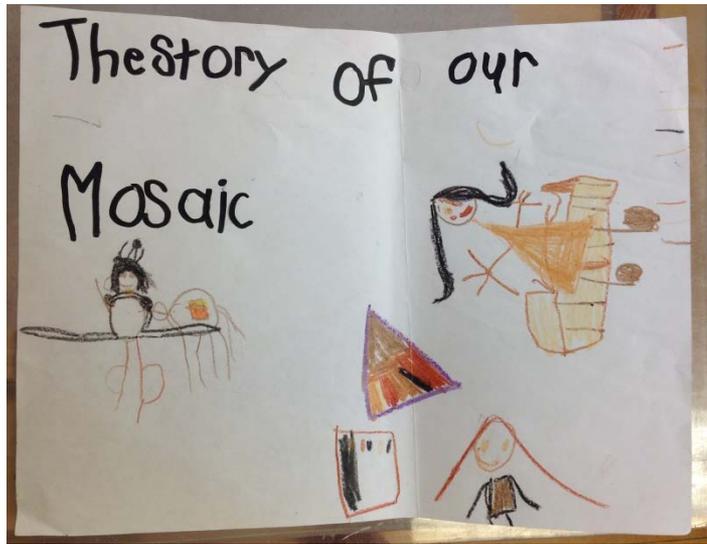


Creating signs and invitations for a purpose.

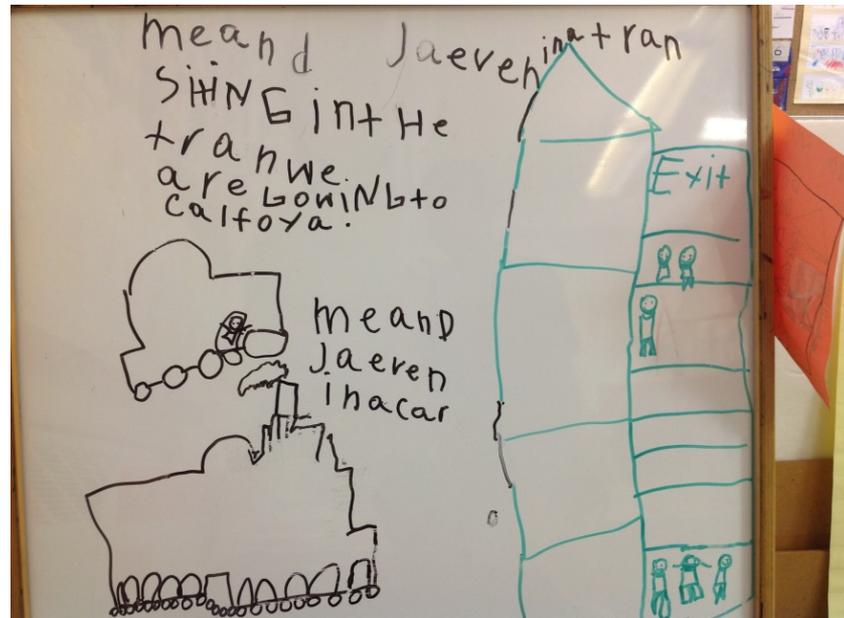


Are literacy experiences appropriate for all children's abilities?

Explanatory Text



Developmental Writing





Do children sign-in every day?

Science and Discovery Center

Coming in 2017: NGSS

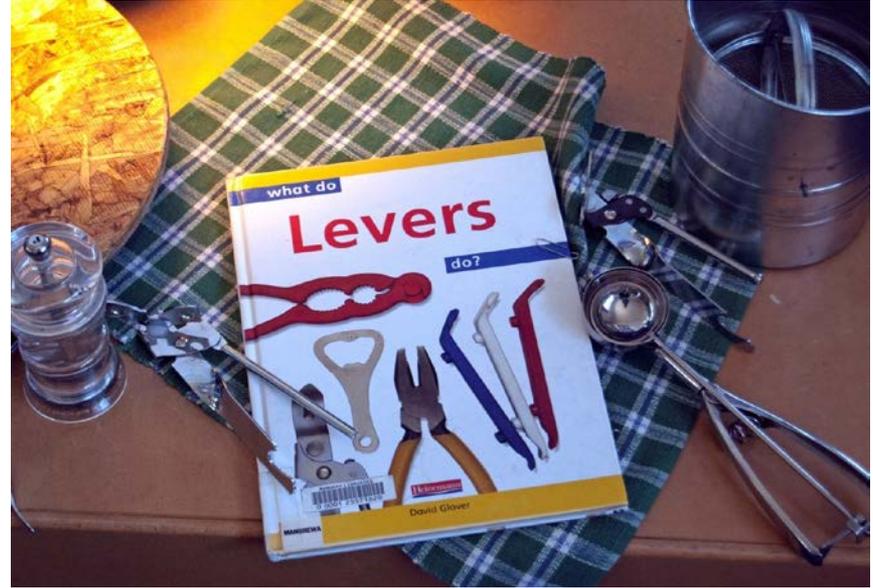


Forces and Interactions:
Pushes and Pulls

Interdependent
Relationships in
Ecosystems: Animals,
Plants and Their
Environment

Weather and Climate

Waves: Light and Sound

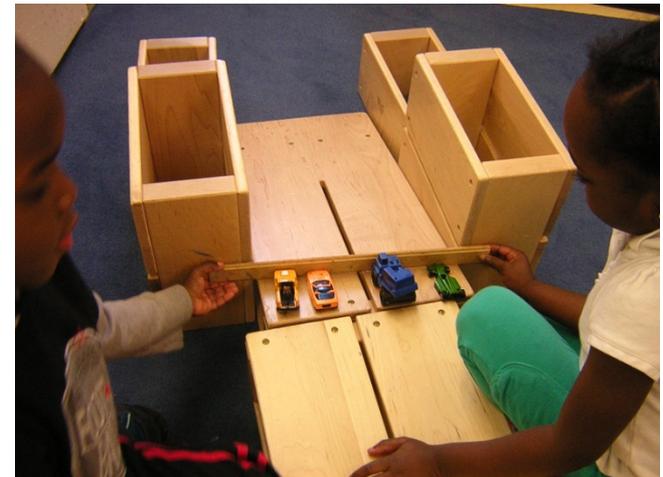


Forces and Interactions: Pushes and Pulls
Provide simple machines like gears, pulleys or wheels and common household objects with information books with accurate illustrations.

Block building offers one example of play's value for Science and STEM learning.



- Balance
- Gravity
- Stability
- Forces and Interactions
- Proportion
- Engineering Design





Interdependent Relationships in Ecosystems: Animals, Plants and Their Environment

Provide living and non-living things, collections of natural materials, and information books with illustrations on science topics.



Department of Education,
Office of Primary Education



Provide tools for observing, comparing, measuring, drawing and charting, such as magnifying glasses, binoculars, science journals or clipboards, and pencils or fine line markers.



Waves: Light and Sound



Children can begin to experiment with light, seeing that some materials allow light to pass through them, some materials allow only some light, other materials block all the light, and mirrors can reflect light.

Music and Movement





Department of Education,
Office of Primary Education

Dramatic Play Center



Provide props and furnishings to simulate a variety of familiar home and community environments.



This kindergarten teacher set up her dramatic play area as a shop where children could play roles such as customer and clerk. The children placed price tags on each of the items and the clerks ran the cash register, where the children practiced their counting skills with play money.

Materials and props in the dramatic play center should be changed throughout the year to incorporate current topics of study.



Little Egg Harbor parents create Farm Market for kindergartners



Submitted by
Kindergarten
Seminar
Participant
Elyse Daskalovitz



Multicultural Accessories

Props and materials should reflect the diversity of the children in the classroom and be inclusive of both genders.



Multipurpose Props

can be used to stand for many objects

Example: Cardboard Boxes

- It could be a computer in the office, a sink in the kitchen, or a baby crib in the nursery



- An Advantage of these nonspecific props is that children must use **more descriptive language** when **interacting** with their play partners.

TSG SEL Objectives Applied

Objective 2: Establishes and sustains positive relationships

c. Interacts with peers

**Initiates, joins in,
and sustains positive
interactions with a
small group of two to
three children**

**Enters easily into
ongoing group play and
plays cooperatively**



SEL Objective 2: Establishes and sustains positive relationships

d. Makes friends

Maintains friendships for several months or more; forms friendships around similar play interests

- Works through a conflict and remains friends after a disagreement



Objective 3: Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations

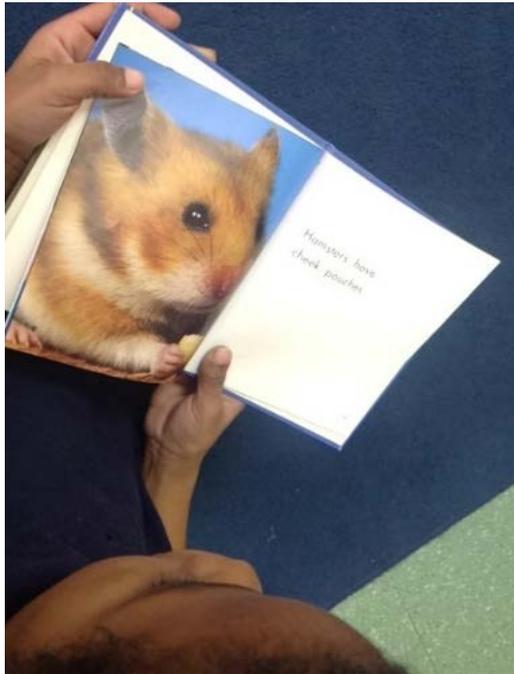
a. Balances needs and rights of self and others

Cooperates and shares ideas and materials in socially acceptable ways

- Pays attention to group discussions, values the ideas of others, and contributes own ideas in a respectful manner.



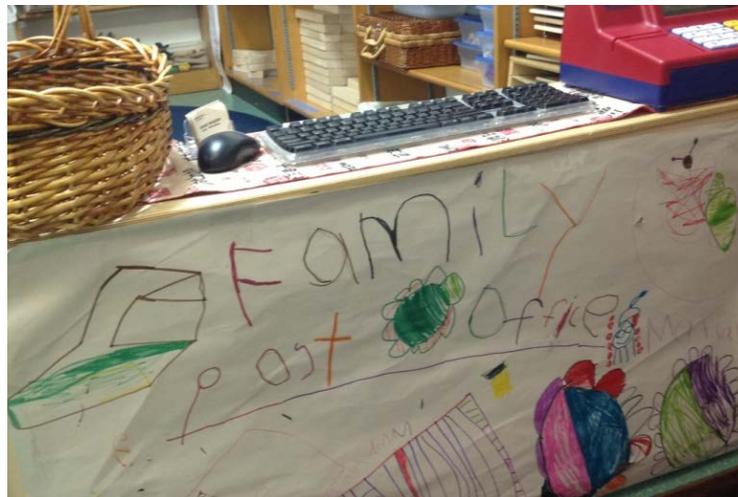
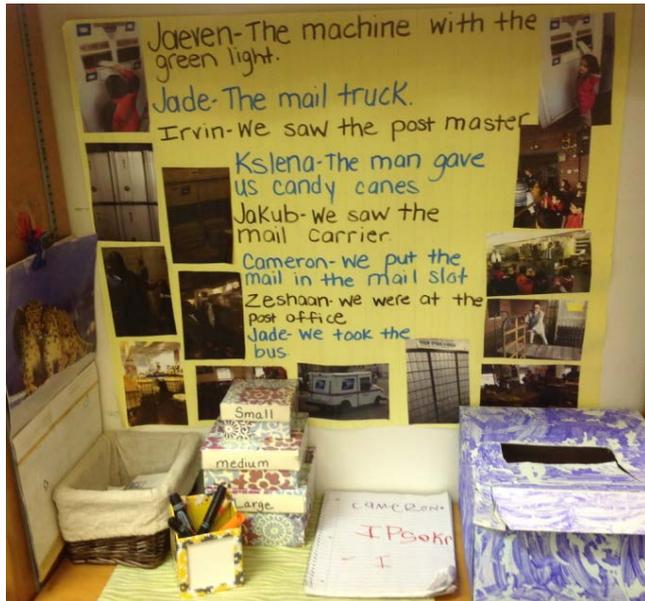
Literacy in Play



Silly Dogs Pet Shop

“When children are pushed into reading and writing instruction without being offered a context for its meaning, they typically respond in one of the following ways: lack on interest, memorization with no understanding, stress or rebellion.” (Elkind 1987)

Connecting Experiences to Play: Post Office



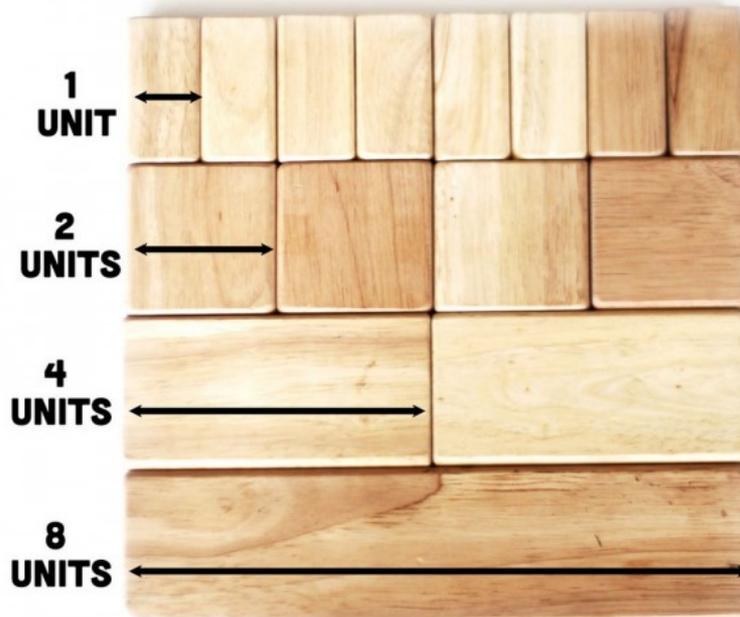
Block Center



Blocks allow children to develop and practice many different skills simultaneously. When children plan, construct, create, and represent their experiences with blocks, they progress in each area of development and learning: social-emotionally, physically, and cognitively.

(Miller 2004)

Unit blocks are rectangular blocks measuring about 5 x 1 x 2 ½ inches. They come in sets with half, double, and quadruple units. Blocks also come in a wide variety of shapes.



Beech Unit Blocks		G93402	G93404	G93110	G93406	G93390
Shape	Description					
	1/2 UNIT	10	14	18	28	64
	UNIT	4	24	20	30	70
	DOUBLE UNIT	2	8	4	12	20
	QUADRUPLE UNIT		4	2	8	12
	1/2 PILLAR	6		6	6	18
	PILLAR	4	8	6	18	30
	DOUBLE PILLAR			2		4
	1/2 COLUMN			2		4
	COLUMN	2	4	4	10	18
	DOUBLE COLUMN	1		2	2	6
	ROMAN ARCH	2	2	2	2	6
	SMALL 1/2 CIRCLE	2	2	2	2	6
	SMALL TRIANGLE	4	8	6	8	20
	LARGE TRIANGLE	2	4	6	10	22
	RAMP	2	2	4	6	14
	1/2 GOTHIC ARCH	2	2	2	2	6
	SMALL BUTTRESS	2	2	2	2	6
	1/2 CIRCLE CURVE			2		4
	CIRCLE CURVE			1		2
	LARGE 1/2 CIRCLE			1		2
	CROSS ROAD			1		2
	GOTHIC ARCH DOOR			1	2	4
	SIDE ROAD			1		2
	1/4 CIRCLE			4		8
	ROOF BOARD			4	6	14
	FLOOR BOARD			2	4	8
	RIGHT ANGLE			2		4
	GOTHIC ARCH			1	2	4
	DOUBLE TRIANGLE		2		4	4
	SMALL CUBE				6	6
	Total # of Pieces	45	86	110	170	390
	Total # of Shapes	14	14	28	21	30
	Total Weight	14	43	49	86	184

Accessible



Less Accessible



Do you provide space to build large, complex structures?

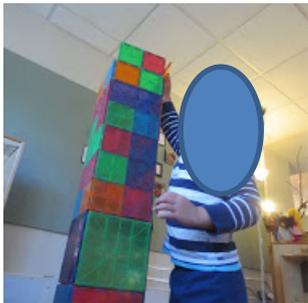


Building Accessories



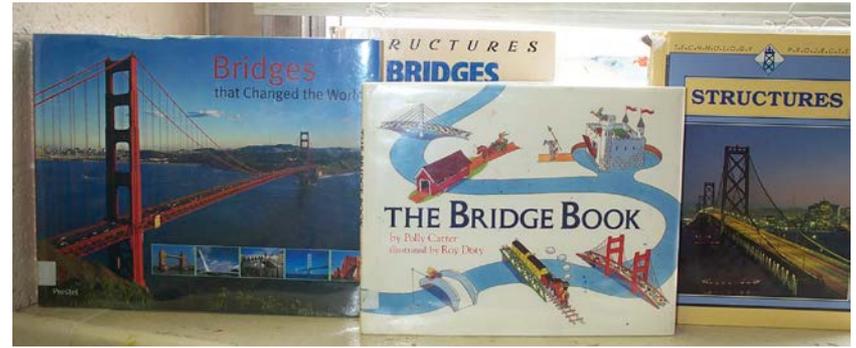
Other Building Materials

Colored wooden or foam blocks, straws and connectors, cardboard blocks, hollow blocks, hollow blocks, designer blocks and cardboard boxes.





Non-interlocking sets of small blocks (like Kapla blocks or Keva planks) and interlocking blocks, offer children opportunities to explore a variety of math and science concepts on a table top surface when children are developmentally ready and when floor space is limited.



Do you include class books, photos, reference books and reference materials in the block center?

Introducing and Supporting Block Play

What are children's prior experiences with blocks?

Do children know how to physically navigate and interact in the block area?

Do you sustain attention to children's building by asking questions such as:

- ✓ What part of the building are you adding to here?
- ✓ What would be interesting to add?
- ✓ I wonder what would happen if...?





Blocks offer children a vehicle to use descriptive language.

- What do you notice as children are building?
- What do you notice about children's language during the building process?
- What stories do children tell while they are playing with blocks?
- What themes emerge from children's play with blocks, and how might you build on them?



Block building offers many rich opportunities for both boys and girls to develop social and emotional competencies through dramatic play.



SEL Objective 3

**Participates
cooperatively and
constructively in group
situations**

b. Solves social problems

When problems arise,
what strategies do
children use to solve
these problems, and how
do you support this
problem solving?



Re-inspire children's building by taking the blocks outdoors. Children observed the shadows of their 3-D constructions.



Sensory Tables

(Sand and Water Centers)



Children learn best through the senses: seeing, touching, smelling, hearing, and tasting.



Plastic bins: An affordable alternative to sand and water tables.



Children can compare and contrast the characteristics of different materials such as sand, water, soil, snow and investigate the concept of flow by pouring and sifting.



The sensory qualities of water and sand are calming to young children. They offer children a non-stressful environment for using language.





Accessories

Provide materials for pouring, scooping and measuring different sized objects, and plastic tubes, funnels, turkey basters, sponges, spray bottles and pumps for water play. Offer objects to expand on a story or topic of study.





Light Table

Sort and classify appealing objects in a variety of ways on a light table makes the task much more interesting.



Art Center



Provide a table with access to materials for drawing, painting, collage (natural and recycled materials), sculpting and construction.



Materials should be organized on open shelving for easy access.





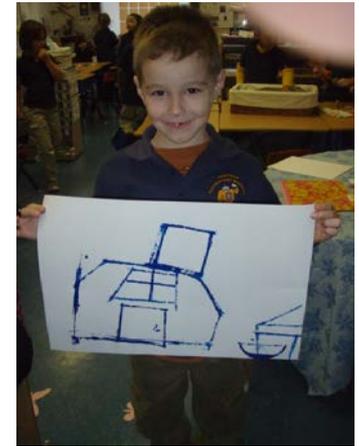
Every art center should have a two or three sided easel stocked with:

- a limited palette of fresh paint
- 18" x 24" easel paper
- brushes of varying sizes
- smocks to protect clothing

Nearby:

- child-height sink for clean-up
- place to store wet paintings

Art materials can provide sensory and fine motor experiences that children need, but art also provides endless ways for children to non-verbally translate experience, imagination and feelings into two- or three-dimensional work.





Three dimensional experiences with play dough and clay strengthens children's manual dexterity, but also supports visual-spatial thinking.

Coloring vs. Drawing

“Most colouring-in books are a bit like junk food—harmless in moderation but definitely not recommended for a regular diet. Why? Because they don’t assist children in ‘learning to see’ or draw. They may keep hands busy but they rarely provide food for the imagination.” ~ Ursula Kolbe



Children are capable of doing observational drawings. In this example, “coloring in” is not a mindless activity to keep hands busy.



Children should have many opportunities for two dimensional drawing and painting to help them become more careful observers. Children learn to look closely at the object under observation, noticing new details they might not have seen before.



Drawing helps children translate 3-D construction to 2-D paper, and vice versa, which architects and builders often do when they create and refer to blueprints.

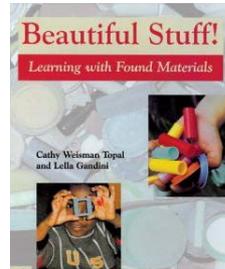


Offering visual references and information books on topics you are studying supports drawing and writing skills.



It is not uncommon for children's drawings to communicate what they know before they have the ability to verbalize it. This makes drawing an especially useful tool for children with language delays and those who are English language learners.

Beautiful Stuff: Loose Parts



British architect Simon Nicholson coined the term “loose parts” to describe open-ended materials that can be used and manipulated in many ways.





Ephemeral art is art that is temporary or short-lived, giving children the pleasure of working with materials over and over again.



Yarn, fabric samples, lace, buttons, and other shiny and sparkly materials engages children for hours as they explore textures, shapes, colors and sizes while investigating design. This background for the design is mat board covered with velvet, so materials “stick” to the fabric.

Activity #1

Solo Exploration: There should be no more than five (5) persons at a table. One person from your table should select a box or bag for your table. Each person at your table will choose one of five containers from the box or bag.

Explore Materials: Place your objects on the construction paper and spend the next few minutes exploring and creating with the objects in SILENCE. Get comfortable (move to the floor if you like), relax and enjoy the experience. Remember that there are no goals, no evaluation, no judgment, no testing.

Draw: While you are working with the materials, I will pass out drawing paper and markers or pencils. Take a few minutes to draw your creation or one detail of your creation.

Reflection on the Experience

Walk-About: When finished, we will walk around the room to look at the creations.

Whole Group Sharing:

- What was the experience like for you?
- What did you do?
- What ideas, feelings, or questions arose as you played?
- What memories, if any, did you recall?

Activity #2

Collaborative Exploration: Using all the materials at your table, build a common structure with others. You can talk!

Notice: What happens during this kind of play is similar to what happens when children play together. Pay attention to your conversations and any standards or TSG objectives you might be addressing in your play.

Small Group Sharing: How did this play differ from solo play? What have you learned from this experience? What are the implications of using this experience with children?

Walk-About: Walk around the room to look at the creations.

Clean-up: After you have admired all the creations, please return your materials to the original bag or container and place it back into the box or bin. Return the box or bin to where you found it.

Whole Group Sharing

- How might this experience influence play in your classroom?
- What is the teacher's role in facilitating rich play experiences for children?
- How might these materials be used to meet the standards in your curriculum and TS GOLD objectives?

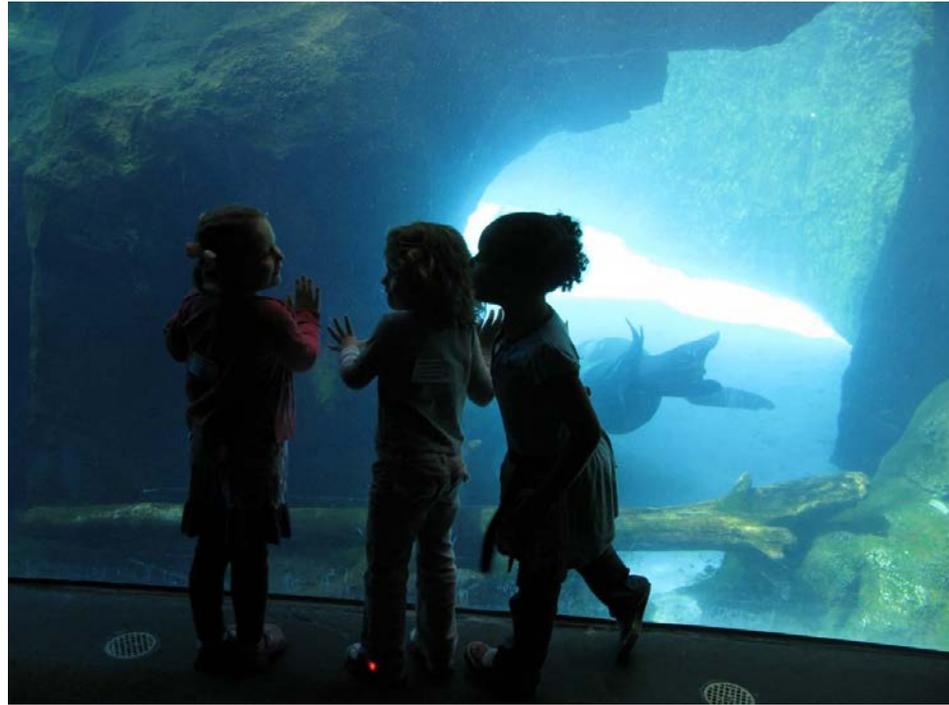


The Value of Loose Parts

- Promotes active learning
- Deepens critical thinking
- Promotes divergent and creative thinking
- Develops the “whole child:” physical, social emotional, cognitive
- Includes children of all ages, abilities, skill levels, and genders -- because there’s no right or wrong way to work with the materials, all children can achieve competence, build on existing strengths, and feel successful and independent
- Are sustainable and economically feasible
- Supports the curriculum: math, science, dramatic and symbolic play, language and literacy, art, sensory exploration, music and movement.

Loose Parts - Lisa Daly and Miriam Beloglovsky, Redleaf Press, 2015

Creating Kindergarten Learning Environments



“The environment should act as an aquarium which reflects the ideas, ethics, attitudes and culture of the people who live in it.” Loris Malaguzzi

Aesthetic Considerations



Are crowding, noise and clutter a problem in your classroom?

How does your physical space encourage socialization/movement?
Quiet/focused attention?

Design Elements to Consider
Sound
Light
Color
Smell
Nature



Wall Displays



What's on your walls?
What messages do they convey?
Who is the display for?



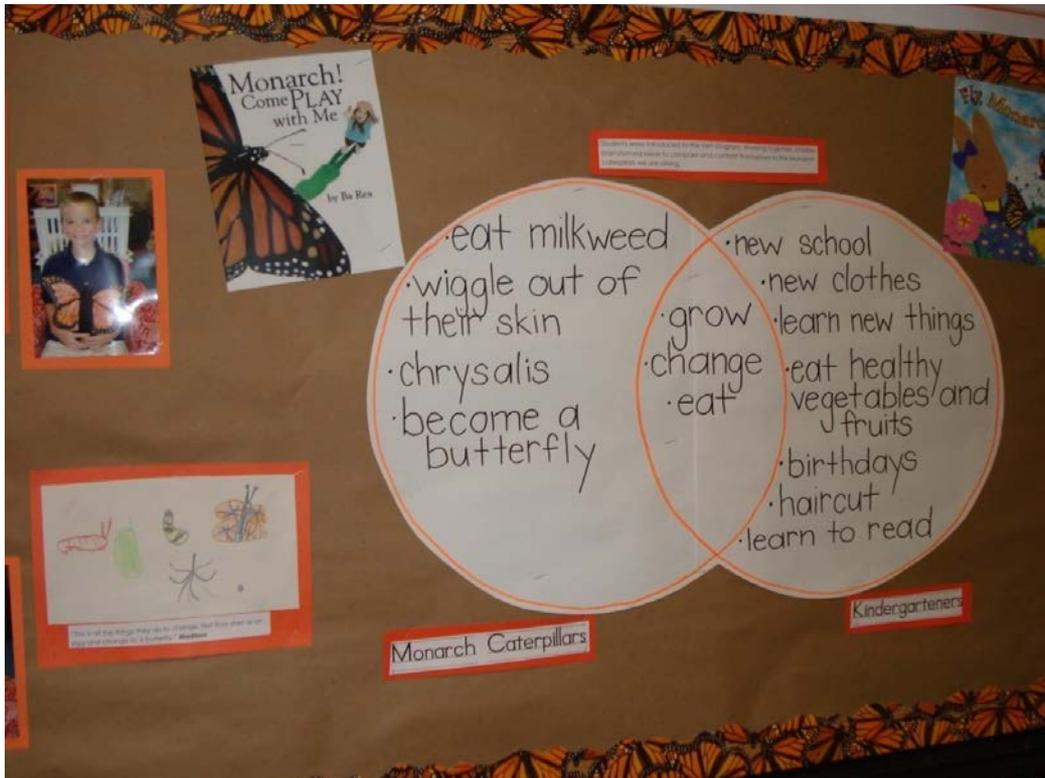
Do your classroom walls have photos of children engaged in learning, along with their work, giving the message that you value the process of learning as well as the product?



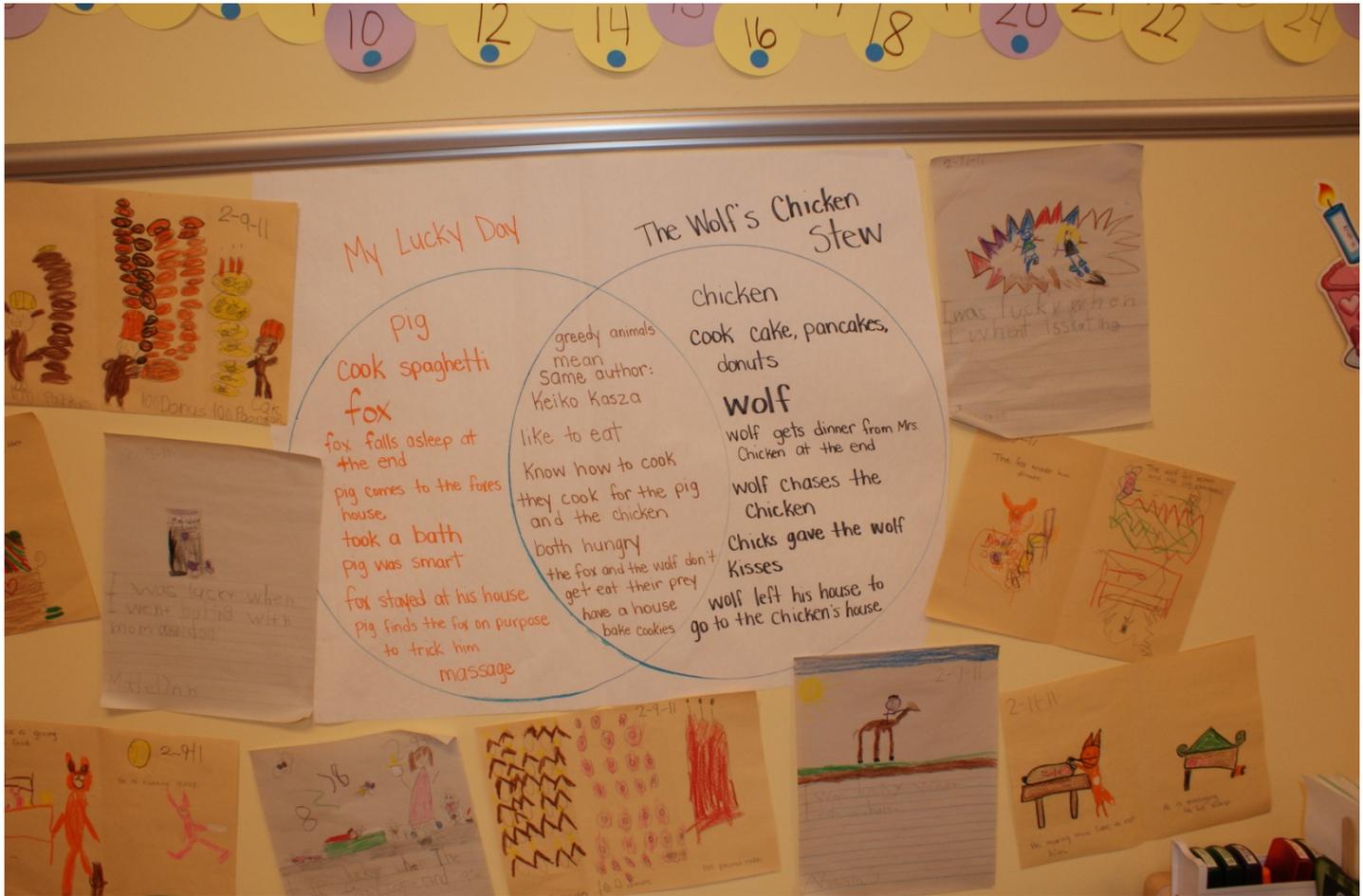
Are most displays at children's eye level so that they can revisit, reflect on and appreciate their work and the work of others?



Do you include teacher-created graphics on topics of study supporting children's understanding of concepts?



Do displays change frequently to connect with current topics of study that communicate the rich learning happening in the classroom?



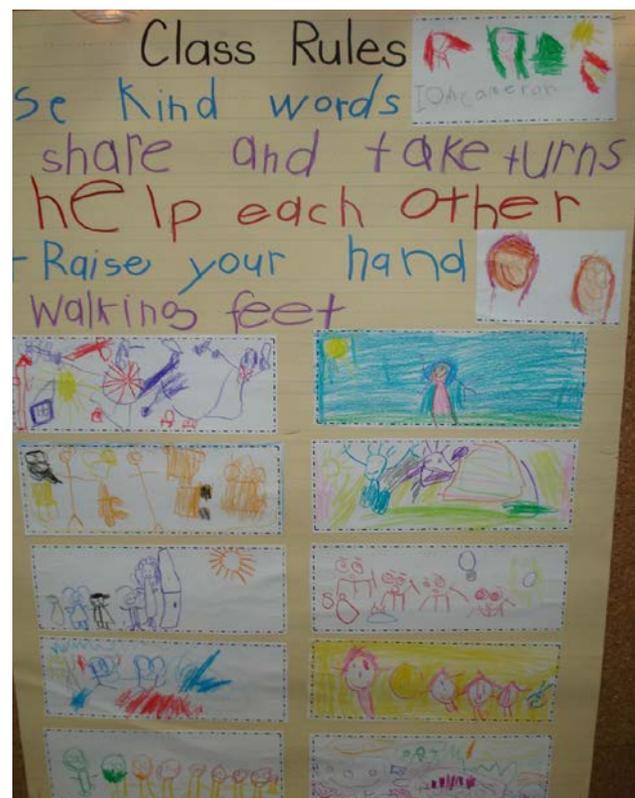
Department of Education,
Office of Primary Education



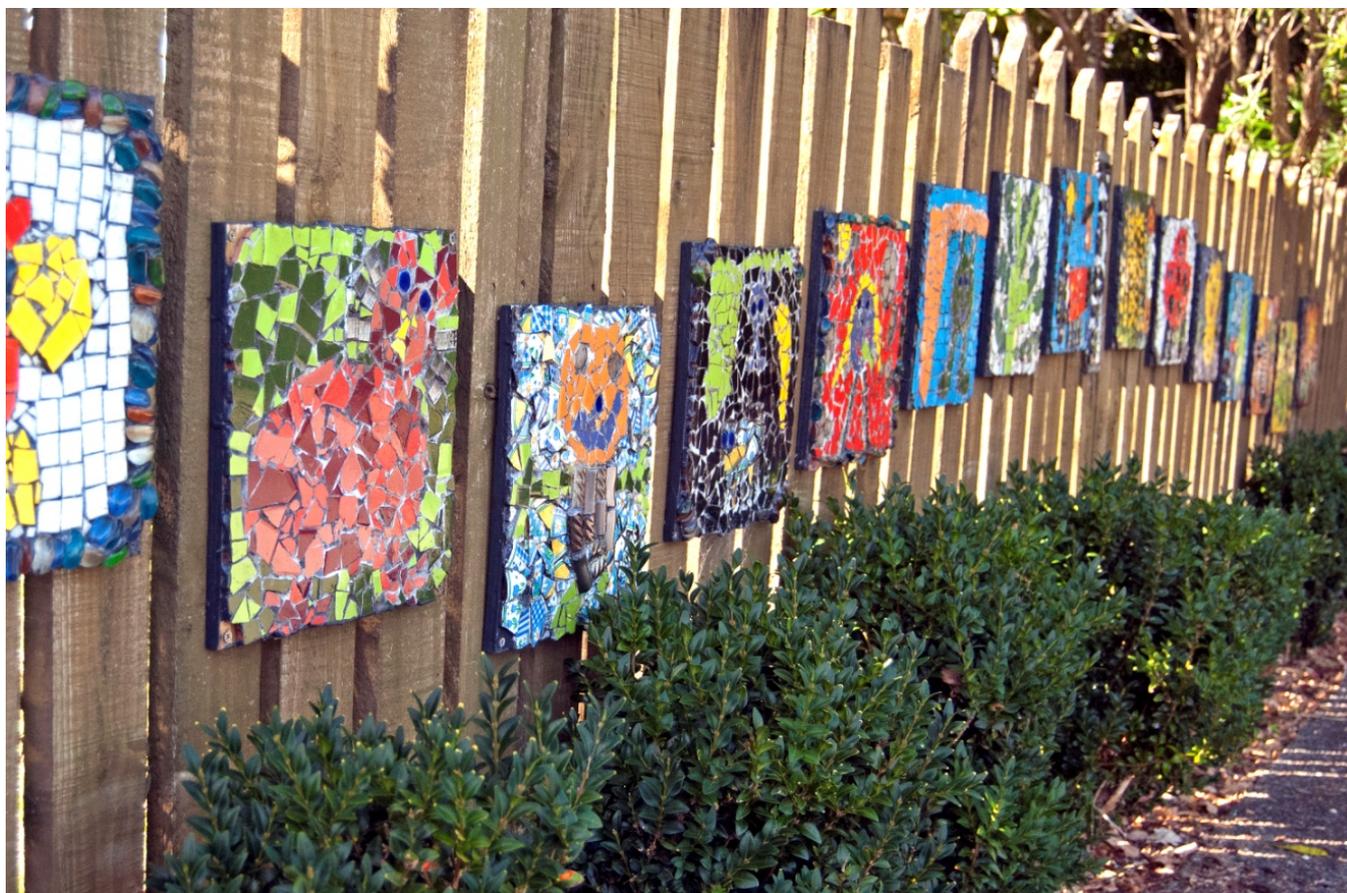
Do displays include children's original work, where no two works are alike, honoring children's words, creative ideas and efforts?



Do wall displays include photographs of children and their families, showing an appreciation of their interests and lives with loved ones outside of school?

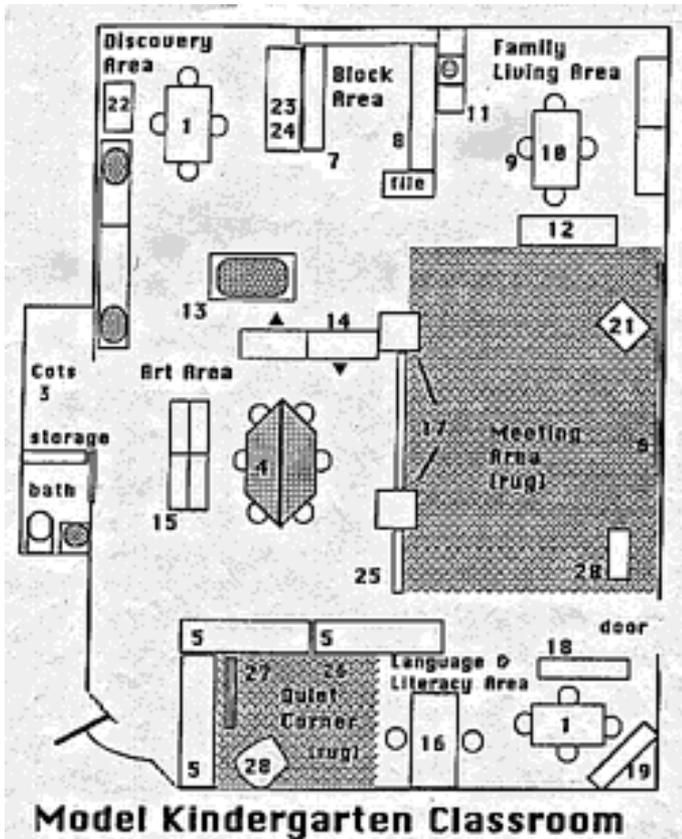


Do children have opportunities to select items to be displayed? Are some displays and signs child-made, helping children understand the purpose of writing?



Are some children's works on permanent display, creating a lasting legacy of learning and a message that children have an important presence at the school?

Incorporating Centers in a Floor Plan



- Floor space for whole group meeting
- Tables placed in interest areas
- Storage for child-accessible materials
- Small group interest areas (2-6 children), balance of noisy/quiet
- Placement of furniture to allow flow
- Sinks for easy clean up and handwashing
- Attached bathroom for ease of supervision
- Storage for coats, book bags etc.
- Soft furnishings, relaxation area



How is this classroom similar to your classroom?
How is it different?

Activity #3

1. At each table, participants will share photos of their classroom environments and floor plans/sketches. Each person will have 2 minutes to share uninterrupted.

2. When everyone has shared their photos, use these questions to discuss your classroom layout, displays and design elements.

- Are the tables placed within the interest areas?
- Is there a defined space for each interest area?
- Are interest areas intentionally placed? (Quiet areas away from noisy areas?)
- Are materials stored and accessible in each interest area?
- Is there a place to store coats and book bags?
- Are messy interest areas located near a sink?
- Are wall displays aesthetically pleasing and not over-stimulating?
- Is the room clean, organized, inviting and home-like?
- What pleasing design elements (color, light, sound and smell) does your classroom feature?
- What natural materials (loose parts, plants, animals etc.) are featured?
- If the room is crowded, what furnishings or materials could be removed?
- What ideas or materials would you like to introduce in your classroom?

Remember...

*Children are miracles...
We must make it our job to create,
with reverence and gratitude,
a space that is worthy of a miracle.*

~ Anita Rui Olds

Assignment for Session Three

- Bring BEFORE and AFTER photo of one change you made to your classroom environment. Choose from: wall display, art area, block area, meeting area, sand-water table, science area, math area, dramatic play area, writing area, shelves or storage area, (not library).
- How did children respond to the change?
- Meet with your PLC using a protocol to discuss topics and/or goals you are addressing in your classroom or district.

Reflection and Review

- In your journal, reflect on the day. Jot down one change you would like to make in your classroom environment.
- Complete your evaluation for Session Two.
- Address questions you may have on the Kindergarten Seminar to:

Rosanne.Hansel@doe.state.nj.us

Address questions you may have on literacy to:

Crystal.siniari@doe.state.nj.us

Address questions you may have on TS GOLD to:

Kathleen.Spadola@doe.state.nj.us