

Curriculum Unit Overview

Curriculum Area: Approaches to Learning

Grade Level: Pre-K

Unit Summary: Throughout the year, children will gain a positive disposition toward learning and an openness to new challenges.

Learning Targets

Curriculum aligned with Standards: New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards 2014

21st Century Skills: Critical Thinking & Problem Solving X, Creativity and Innovation X, Collaboration, Teamwork and Leadership X, Cross-Cultural Understanding and Interpersonal Communications X, Communication and Media Fluency X, Accountability, Productivity and Ethics X

Interdisciplinary Connection: Math=MA, English=ELA, Science=SCI, Social Studies=SS, Physical Education=PE, Art=ART, Music=MU, Technology=TECH, World Language=WL

Standards:

Standard 9.1 Children demonstrate initiative, engagement, and persistence.

9.1.1: Make plans and decisions to actively engage in learning (e.g., two children greet each other as they arrive to school and decide that they will finish counting all the bottle caps they collected during choice time.)

9.1.2: Show curiosity and initiative by choosing to explore a variety of activities and experiences with a willingness to try new challenges (e.g., choosing harder and harder puzzles).

9.1.3: Focus attention on tasks and experiences, despite interruptions or distractions (e.g., working hard on a drawing even when children nearby are playing a game).

9.1.4: Show persistence when faced with challenging tasks and uncertainty, seeking and accepting help when appropriate (e.g., saying to a friend, "This is hard. Can you help me figure it out?").

9.1.5: Bring a teacher-directed or self-initiated task, activity or project to completion (e.g., showing the teacher, "Look- I finished it all by myself!").

Standard 9.2 Children show creativity and imagination.

9.2.1: Show flexibility in approaching tasks by being open to new ideas (i.e., doesn't cling to one approach to a task, but is willing to experiment and to risk trying out a new idea or approach).

9.2.2: Use the imagination to solve problems, use materials, role play, write stories, move the body, or create works of art (e.g., create pretend spinach out of torn green construction paper to serve for dinner).

9.2.3: Use multiple means of communication to creatively express thoughts, ideas, and feeling (e.g., sing a song and act out the story of the life cycle of a butterfly).

Standard 9.3 Children identify and solve problems.

9.3.1: Recognize a problem and describe or demonstrate ways to solve it alone or with others (e.g., "I know! Jamar and I can work together to clean off the table so that we can have a place to eat lunch.")

9.3.2: Use varied strategies to seek or recall information and to find answers (e.g., questioning, trial and error, testing, building on ideas, finding resources, drawing, or thinking aloud).

9.3.3: Predict what will happen next based on prior experience and knowledge and text the prediction for accuracy (e.g., raising the height of the ramp to see if the ball will roll farther than when the ramp was lower).

9.3.4: Reflect on, evaluate, and communicate what was learned (e.g., children in the class demonstrating and explaining their project to children in a younger group).

Standard 9.4 Children apply what they have learned to new situations.

9.4.1: Use prior knowledge to understand new experiences or a problem in a new context (e.g., after learning about snakes, children make comparisons when finding a worm on the playground).

9.4.2: Make connections between ideas, concepts, and subjects (e.g., children take pictures from a field trip or nature walk, and use them to write and illustrate classroom books).

9.4.3: Demonstrate understanding of what others think and feel through words or actions (e.g., children act out a story that the teacher has told them, mirroring the characters' emotions).

Unit Essential Questions

Children will wonder...

- How do I find out about things?
- What do I learn when I am playing?
- What information do I need to learn new things?

Unit Enduring Understandings

Students will understand....

- Actively construct knowledge through routines, play, practice and language.
- Observe others and their environment, use their senses to manipulate objects, and materials.
- Develop their own individualized approach to learning.

Unit Learning Targets

Students will know:

- Initiative: Children demonstrate initiative as they explore their world.
- Planning: Children make plans and follow through on their intentions
- Engagement: Children focus on activities that interest them.
- Problem solving: Children solve problems encountered in play.
- Use of resources: Children gather information and formulate ideas about their world.
- Reflection: Children reflect on their experiences.

Students will be able to:

- Be eager to learn. They exhibit curiosity, independence, and self-direction as they learn about relationships, materials, actions, and ideas. They take reasonable risks as they investigate the environment.
- Make plans and decisions, and express choices and intentions based on their interests. Their plans increase in detail and complexity. Children follow through on their plans.
- Sustain involvement and concentration in their play. They are persistent, motivated, and able to stay engaged.
- Be inventive and flexible in solving a variety of problems. They progress from using trial and error to more systematic attempts at problem solving.
- Use all their senses and a variety of tools to explore and gather information about the world around them. They ask questions and try to explain their ideas about the things they encounter.
- Use their experiences to draw conclusions about people, materials, events, and ideas. They make connections between what they already know and what they are doing and learning.

Evidence of Learning

Suggested Assessments

Students learning is documented through anecdotal records and the Children's Observation Record (COR)

Developmental Range:

The children will approach each activity at different developmental levels:

Earlier:

Student requires adult supervision throughout the activity. Student needs to be redirected back to activity several times. For small group activities, student explores materials. For large group activities, student observes others or participates with adult assistance. Student uses little or no language and requires prompts to follow directions.

Middle:

Student requires some adult supervision and can do an activity independently for brief periods. Student needs some verbal prompts to be redirected back to the activity. For small group activities, student uses materials in a purposeful way, copies actions of other students, or starts using materials purposely with verbal suggestion from adult. For large group activities, student participates with some verbal prompt from adult or copies actions of other students. Student uses some language to describe, request, suggest, and comment during activities.

Later:

Student can independently participate in activities after the adult introduces them. Student needs to be redirected a few times or does not need redirection. For small group activities, student uses materials in purposeful and complex ways. Student is able to assist peers with their materials. For large group activities, student participates independently and offers suggestions during the activity. Student uses sentences to describe what they are doing, ask questions, and participate in conversations.

Suggested Assessment Evidence

Approaches to Learning is addressed throughout the day in the High Scope Curriculum. These 5 principles form the framework of the High/Scope Approach:

- Active Learning
- Daily Routine
- Learning Environment
- Adult-Child Interactions
- Assessment

Active learning students have direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, events, and ideas based on children's interests and choices.

Daily Routine:

- Plan-Do-Review lets children decide their activities, explore and then reflect on their experience
- Enables children to anticipate what will happen next
- Gives children control in their decisions, how to spend their time
- Small-Group allows for more focused discussion
- Large-Group builds a sense of community and offers time for music, movement, stories, etc.

Learning Environment:

- Provides opportunities for children to make choices
- Play space is created with defined areas; building, role play, reading, writing, sorting
- Storage of materials are at child's level, with picture labeled shelves to allow for children to easily return items

Adult-Child Interaction:

- Adults provide positive interactions with children
- Adults provide guidance for children, rather than give directives
- Adults establish authentic relationships with the children, showing genuine interest in their learning experiences
- Adults assist in helping children be successful in conflict resolutions

Assessment:

- Teachers document their observations of children
- Teachers communicate and share their observations
- Teachers work together to plan activities
- Teachers evaluate the learning environment and how materials are used to create an appropriate layout

Learning Activities:

- Planning/Recall Activities
- Work Time

- Teacher created materials
- Games
- Large Group Time
- Small group time
- Planning/ recall time
- Transition activities
- Snack time /Meal time conversations
- Children's literature involving: community, community roles, families, people and diversity, feelings and emotions

Modifications and/or Accommodations:

- **Special Education:** Utilize a multi-sensory (VAKT) approach during instruction, provide alternate presentations of skills by varying the method (repetition, simple explanations, additional examples, modeling, etc.), modify test content and/or format, allow students to retake test for additional credit, provide additional times and preferential seating as needed, review, restate and repeat directions, provide study guides, and/or break assignments into segments of shorter tasks.
- **English Language Learners:** Extend time requirements, preferred seating, positive reinforcement, check often for understanding/review, oral/visual directions/prompts when necessary, supplemental materials including use of online bilingual dictionary, and modified assessment and/or rubric.
- **Students at Risk of School Failure:** Deliver instruction utilizing varied learning styles including audio, visual, and tactile/kinesthetic, provide individual instruction as needed, modify assessments and/or rubrics, repeat instructions as needed.
- **Gifted Students:** Create an enhanced set of introductory activities, integrate active teaching/learning opportunities, incorporate authentic components, propose interest-based extension activities, and connect student to related talent development opportunities.

Teacher Resources:

- Educating Young Children (High/Scope Press)
- Essentials of Active Learning in Preschool (High/Scope Press)
- Small-Group Times to Scaffold Early Learning (High/Scope Press)
- 50 Large-Group Activities for Active Learners (High/Scope Press)
- Lesson Plans for the First 30 Days (High/Scope Press)
- www.highscope.org