



**Developmentally  
Appropriate  
Practices**


**Creating  
Learning  
Environments**

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## Does your classroom reflect these practices?

**DIRECTIONS:** Place a checkmark in the box before each item observed in your classroom.

1. Provide classroom areas for:
  - Block building
  - Books
  - Dramatic play
  - Large motor activities
  - Manipulative activities
  - Art
  - Music
  - Science/math
  - Sand/water play
  - Woodworking
  - Cooking
  - Child's private area
2. Organize block-building area to contain:
  - Blocks in order on shelves
  - Enough blocks for several children to build large buildings
  - Room for children to build undisturbed
  - Large and small figures and trucks
3. Organize book area to contain:
  - Books appropriate for preschoolers
  - Multi-ethnic books
  - Books arranged at children's level
  - Books in good condition
  - Books arranged attractively
  - A comfortable place to enjoy books
  - A location away from noisy activities
4. Organize dramatic play area to contain:
  - Appropriate equipment, furniture, accessories
  - A full-length mirror
  - Men's and women's dress-up clothes
  - Clothes out where children can see them
  - Materials neatly arranged for easy selection and return
  - Dolls of different skin colors
  - Language props such as two telephones
5. Locate large motor activities and equipment:
  - To promote climbing, balancing, large movements
  - In an area where children can use them freely and safely
  - Away from quiet activities
6. Arrange manipulative materials:
  - Close to the area where they will be used
  - For easy selection and return by children
  - With enough materials for several children at once
  - With materials of varying levels of complexity
  - So that necessary parts and pieces are not missing
7. Have art materials for immediate use:
  - Located near labels or easels where they will be used
  - Usable with minimum adult direction
  - For easy selection and return by children
8. Arrange music equipment and activities to:
  - Include sound- and rhythm-producing materials
  - Include body movements
  - Include songs with children
  - Include record player and records
9. Include in science/math corner:
  - Children's displays or collections
  - Materials for sorting, counting
  - Changing materials or displays
  - Animal, fish, or insect pets
  - Plants
  - Appropriate books
  - A computer
10. Arrange sand and water activities:
  - With enough accessories for several to play with at once
  - To be used with minimum adult direction
  - Near source of water
  - For easy clean-up
11. Provide woodworking activities with:
  - Usable pounding, sawing equipment
  - Enough equipment for more than one child
  - Wood scraps, nails, etc.
  - Safety limits to protect children
  - Necessary adult supervision
  - Minimum adult direction
12. Include in cooking activities:
  - A variety of food preparation
  - Use of real facilities
  - Utensils such a knives, spoons, beaters
  - Necessary adult supervision
  - Minimum adult direction



Take a minute to think about these points and jot down your response.

### **Strategies for Selecting and Displaying Materials**

### **Why This Will Help**

Materials and equipment should be appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children in the room.

Materials should reflect the cultural richness of our society, the backgrounds and life experiences of the children and people with different abilities.

Materials and equipment should be in good repair with no sharp edges, peeling paint, or splinters.

Sufficient quantities of materials and multiple sets should be available when possible.

Materials in each interest area should reflect the curriculum and specific interests of the children (e.g., if the children have been visiting a construction site near the center, teachers might add hard hats and lunch pails to the house corner, wires, pipes, and construction vehicles to the block area; and books on buildings to the library corner).

Materials should vary in complexity (e.g., 5-piece puzzles as well as 10- and 12-piece puzzles, play dough alone and a box of utensils for children to use if they wish).

The location of all play materials should be labeled with a picture to show where each object or set of objects belongs when not in use.

Toys with small pieces can be stored in dishpans or containers that enable children to reach what they need.

Materials that are used together should be grouped together.

Soft materials should be included in the environment as well as hard ones (e.g., pillows, dough, fingerpaints, clay, sand, and water).

Kostelnik, M. J. (1995, September). Individually appropriate practice in a developmentally appropriate setting. Lecture presented at Dodge House Inn, Dodge City, KS.

## Suggestions for Materials and Supplies

### Audiovisual Equipment

Listening center with head phones  
Cassette recorder  
Record player  
Overhead projector  
Transparencies  
Filmstrip projector & filmstrips  
Screen  
Computer & software  
Camera & film

### Library Corner

Fiction & nonfiction books, including some with companion audiotapes  
Books made by children  
Chairs, rocking chair, rug  
Book racks, shelves  
Reading "boat" or bathtub  
Magazines  
Audio tapes & records

### Art Supplies &

#### Materials

Modeling clay, play dough, tools  
Easels  
Scissors  
Tempera paint & brushes  
Finger paint  
Paste & glue  
Crayons, water color markers  
Yarn  
Newsprint & manilla paper  
Colored construction paper  
Burlap & fabric scraps  
Collage materials  
Colored tissue & crepe paper  
Wallpaper scraps  
Cardboard & oaktag

#### Music

Rhythm & musical instruments  
Autoharp and/or piano  
Records and/or tapes  
Scarves & other dance props (see A.V. equipment)

### Cooking

Electric hotplate & toaster oven  
Electric frying pan  
Measuring cups & spoons  
Bowls, utensils, pots & pans  
Recipes

### Language Arts/Writing

#### Materials

A variety of crayons, pens, markers & pencils  
Different sizes & types of paper  
Manipulative letters of wood, crepe, foam & plastic  
Picture file & art reproductions  
Sentence strips  
Letter stamps  
Typewriter  
Alphabet cards  
Index cards for word banks  
Teacher-prepared blank books  
Games: matching alphabet, lotto, initial consonants  
Small chalkboards  
Chart stand with paper  
Flannel board with cutouts  
Puppets & puppet stage or frame

### Gross Motor Play

(Some of these may be used outdoors or in gym)  
Balance beam (low)  
Rocking boats  
Climbing structures  
Slide  
Stairs  
Floor mats  
Wheel toys, pedal toys, wagons, ride-on vehicles  
Scooter board  
Parachute  
Games: ring toss, bean bags  
A variety of balls  
Jump ropes  
Plastic paddles & large bats

### Math & Other

#### Manipulatives

Pattern blocks  
Unifix or multi-link cubes  
ESS wooden attribute blocks  
Geoboards and geobands  
Color cubes  
Beansticks and loose beans  
Base ten blocks  
Tangrams  
Primer (balance) scale  
Tools for measuring length, area, perimeter, volume, & time

#### Supplemental

#### Manipulatives

Set boards  
Lincoln Logs  
Other building materials  
Peg boards & pegs  
Real & play money  
Counters such as buttons, chips, checkers, etc.  
Games & puzzles for counting numeral recognition, etc.  
Numerals  
Objects for sorting, classifying & ordering  
Food and/or other items to develop fractions concepts  
Tabletop building toys:  
Legos, small block sets, building sets & accessories  
Puzzles  
Parquetry blocks  
Lacing boards

#### Construction

Wooden unit blocks  
Large wooden hollow blocks  
Large empty boxes  
Wheel toys for riding  
Steering wheel  
Block play props: vehicles, toy animals, people & furniture  
Signs  
Planks  
Rug

### Dramatic Play

Kitchen appliances: wooden stove, sink, refrigerator, cupboard  
Table & chairs  
Doll bed, blankets, pillow  
Dress-up clothes/uniforms  
Occupational props: fire hoses, doctor's kit, cash register, play money  
Multiethnic dolls/clothes  
Broom, dust pan  
Ironing board  
Telephone, pots & pans, clock, food containers, dishes, silverware  
Typewriter  
Doll house & accessories  
Full-length mirror  
Real props

### Woodworking

#### Workbench

Tools: hammer, saw, vice, clamp, hand drill, ruler, screwdrivers, pliers, etc.  
Styrofoam, logs  
Wood, nails, dowels

### Discovery Materials

Sand table & accessories: sifters, shovels, pails, rakes, molds, funnels, measuring cups  
Rice, beans & oatmeal to vary sand play  
Gardening tools/supplies  
Magnets  
Color paddles & prisms  
Electricity: batteries, wires, bells, flashlight bulbs  
Water tub & accessories: plastic tubing, small pitchers, handpumps, spray bottles, funnels, measuring cups, eye droppers  
Magnifying glasses  
Simple machines: pulleys, gears, inclined plane  
Collections: rocks, shells, nests, insects  
Animal environments & animals  
Thermometers  
Globe

## Sample Schedule: Preprimary (A)

Time	Activity/Description	Type	Purpose
8:30	Arrival - Greeting, and personal sharing with the teacher as children enter the room	Individual	To affirm individual
8:40	Free choice - Center Activities	Free choice *May include small group activities and/or individualized instruction.	Provide opportunities for individual children to explore concepts in depth and develop skills in an integrated manner.
9:40	Clean-up/Bathroom	Transition activity	Prepare for snack time
9:50	Snack	Whole group	Communal conversation
10:05	Story, music, poetry	Whole group	Literacy development, aesthetic development, memory and attention
10:20	Outdoor or gym	Free choice	Large motor development, play skills
10:50	Review of the day	Whole group	Personal sharing, recall of the day, closure
11:00	Depart		

Adapted from Kostelnik, M.J., Soderman, A.K., & Phipps Whiren, A., 1993. *Developmentally Appropriate Programs in Early Childhood Education*. (pp. 283-286). New York: MacMillan.

## Sample Schedule: Preprimary (B)

Time	Activity/Description	Type	Purpose
8:30	Arrival - Greeting, and personal sharing with the teacher as children enter the room	Individual	To affirm individual
8:40	Planning for the day	Small groups	Small groups meet to discuss what they want to accomplish in the day, and make appropriate plans.
8:55	Free choice - Center activities *Includes snack as a learning center activity. Children are free to eat snack at any time.	Free choice	Provide opportunities for individual children to explore concepts in depth and develop skills in an integrated manner.
9:55	Clean-up	Transition activity	Prepare for next activity
10:05	Story, music, dance, poetry	Whole group	Literacy development, aesthetic development, memory and attention
10:20	Outdoor or gym	Free choice	Large motor development, play skills
10:50 11:00	Review of the day Depart	Whole group	Personal sharing, recall of the day, closure

## Sample Schedule: Kindergarten

Time	Activity/Description	Type	Purpose
8:00	Free choice - Center activities	Free choice	Provide opportunities for individual children to explore concepts in depth and develop skills in an integrated manner.
9:20	Clean-up, snack	Transition - Whole group	
9:35	Story, music, dance, poetry	Whole group	Literacy development, aesthetic development, memory and attention
10:00	Outdoor or gym	Free choice	Large motor development, play skills
10:30	Review of the day, announcements, prepare to leave	Whole group	Personal sharing, recall of the day, closure
11:00	Depart		

Adapted from Kostelnik, M.J., Soderman, A.K., & Phipps Whiren, A., 1993. *Developmentally Appropriate Programs in Early Childhood Education*. (pp. 283-286). New York: MacMillan.

## Sample Schedule: Kindergarten (Full Day)

Time	Activity/Description	Type	Purpose
8:00	Free choice of manipulative. Lunch count, and attendance count, and attendance.	Free choice	Allow for easy transition into the classroom from home.
8:20	Opening, goal planning for the day	Whole group	To promote a feeling of community among the students and the teacher
8:35	Free choice - Center activities	Free choice	Provide opportunities for individual children to explore concepts in depth and develop skills in an integrated manner.
11:05	Story, music, dance, poetry	Whole group	Literacy development, aesthetic development, memory and attention
11:30	Lunch - Recess	Whole group	Family style - Communal conversation
12:30	Films, stories, restful activities	*Small group	Rest time
1:00	Materials-based math experiences	Small group	Mathematics
1:25	Gym	Whole group	Large motor skills
1:55	Review of the day, sharing	Whole group	
2:10	Recess	Whole group	Large motor skills
2:30	Dismiss		

Adapted from Kostelnik, M.J., Soderman, A.K., & Phipps Whiren, A., 1993. *Developmentally Appropriate Programs in Early Childhood Education*. (pp. 283-286). New York: MacMillan.