SCRIPT-NC

Supporting Change and Reform in Preservice Teaching in North Carolina

Environments and Interactions that Foster Quality Inclusion

August 23, 2022
1:00 – 2:15 PM EST

UNC
FPG CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

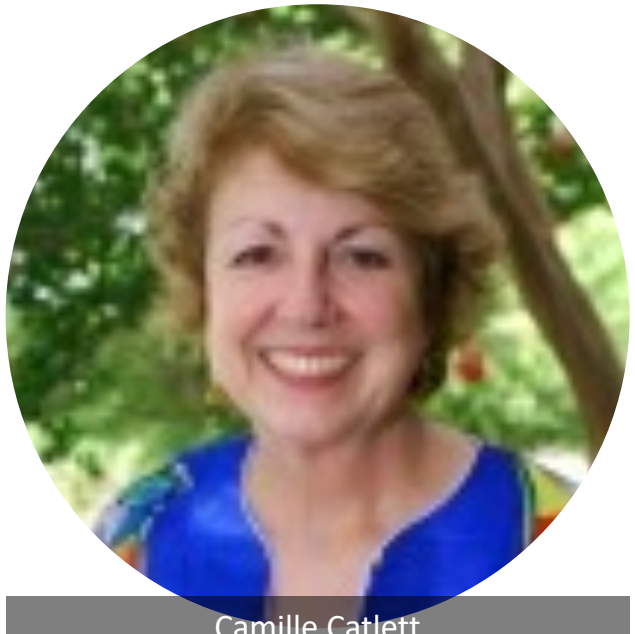
IDEAs that Work

Meet our guest presenter

Jennifer Jones

Instructor, Alamance Community College

Chih-Ing Lim



Camille Catlett

Tracey West

Meet the Team

SCRIPT-NC

Supporting Change and Reform in Preservice Teaching in North Carolina

ON

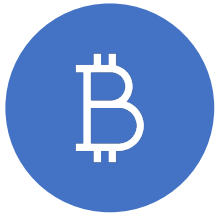
UNC FRANK PORTER GRAHAM CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

SCRIPT-NC Webinars emphasize…

embedding **inclusion, equity, and diversity** into coursework

opportunities to build both **knowledge acquisition and knowledge application**

content that reflects **evidence-based and recommended practices**



resources that are **readily available and free**

SCRIPT-NC

Supporting Change and Reform in Preservice Teaching in North Carolina

UNC FRANK PORTER GRAHAM CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Find all the materials from today's webinar here

https://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/script-nc-webinar-environments-and-interactions-foster-inclusion

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Webinar resources

Handout 1. Webinar handout

Environments and Interactions that Foster Quality Inclusion

The SCRIPT-NC Team

What is inclusion?

Early Childhood Inclusion: A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/ps_inclusion_dec_naeyc_ec.pdf

DEFINITION: *Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and supports.*

Morgan, C. W., & Cheatham, G. A. (2021, September). Rationale for change: Reconceptualizing inclusive early childhood education through practice. *Young Exceptional Children, 24*(3), 115-123.
"We recognize inclusive education as the process of (a) redistributing access to and participation in quality learning opportunities; (b) recognizing and valuing all child differences in learning activities, materials, and interactions; and (c) creating opportunities for non-dominant and under-represented groups to share their narratives and advance solutions for equity, with particular attention given to the interplay of multiple and intersecting social identities (e.g., ability, race, language) in learning contexts (e.g., home, school, and community settings)."

Alternative Learning Positions: Supporting Children's Appropriate Motor Development
Marianne Gibbs, April 05, 2022, Community Playthings
https://www.communityplaythings.com:443/resources/articles/2022/Alternative-Learning-Positions

What do we know about quality inclusion?

STEMIE Why Inclusion Video Series

- Part 1: Let's Change Attitudes and Beliefs https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9cw6pkQadiw (closed captioning available in English, Spanish, and Korean)
- Part 2: Key Characteristics of High Quality Inclusive Education https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b7DywG0BgMk (in English and Spanish)
- Part 3: Social Outcomes in Inclusion https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NlJNb9Gt2qM (in English and Spanish)
- Parts 1-3 (with closed captioning in Vietnamese and Vietnamese Sign Language) https://stemie.fpg.unc.edu/video-series-why-inclusion-vietnamese

Tools and frameworks that support quality inclusion

Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP)

- Developmentally Appropriate Practice: A Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Copyright © 2020 by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. All rights reserved. https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/dap-statement_0.pdf
  - For additional resources for faculty in implementing DAP: **SCRIPT-NC Webinar: Bringing a developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) lens to any course** : https://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/script-nc-webinar-bringing-developmentally-appropriate-practice-dap-lens-any-course
- **Early Care and Education Environment Indicators and Elements of High-Quality Inclusion,** Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center, & National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (2020). Indicators of High-Quality Inclusion. Retrieved from https://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/indicators.asp

Webinar resources

Handout 2. Resources for inclusive environments

	RESOURCES TO SUPPORT INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS [1]
EVIDENCE SOURCES	**ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Play Areas** https://www.access-board.gov/files/ada/guides/play-areas.pdf *These are the final accessibility guidelines to serve as the basis for standards to be adopted by the Department of Justice for new construction and alterations of play areas covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The guidelines include scoping and technical provisions for ground level and elevated play components, accessible routes, ramps and transfer systems, ground surfaces, and soft contained play structures. The guidelines will ensure that newly constructed and altered play areas meet the requirements of the ADA and are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.* **Dear Colleague Letter - Preschool Least Restrictive Environments (LRE)** https://sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/updated-dear-colleague-letter-on-preschool-least-restrictive-environments/ *The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) released this letter in January 2017 to provide updated guidance and clarification on: Key Statutory and Regulatory Requirements, Preschool Placement Options, Reporting Educational Environ-ments, Data for Preschool Children with Disabilities, and Use of IDEA Part B Funds for Preschool Children with Disabilities. It reaffirms OSEP's position that all young children with disabilities should have access to inclusive high-quality early childhood programs where they are provided with individualized and appropriate supports to enable them to meet high expectations.* **Early Childhood Inclusion: A Joint Position Statement of DEC and NAEYC** https://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/sites/npdci.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/EarlyChildhoodInclusion_0.pdf *The position statement contains a definition of early childhood inclusion and provides recommendations for families and professionals for improving early childhood services and policies with regards to inclusion. In English and Spanish.* **Making Sound LRE Decisions** https://ectacenter.org/topics/iep/iep-placement.asp *This document lists important actions in the IEP development process along with guiding principles and practices that should inform placement decisions for young children with disabilities.* **Preschool LRE Reference Points and Discussion Prompts** https://ectacenter.org/topics/iep/iep-reference.asp *This summary of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) provisions of the IDEA as applicable to preschool aged children with disabilities is intended to be used as both a quick reference guide and training tool.*
PRINT SOURCES	**Children's Right to Play and the Environment** http://ipaworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/IPA-Play-Environment-Discussion-Paper.pdf *This discussion paper highlights the critical role of play to children's well-being, development and survival and reflects upon the impact of environmental conditions on the realization of the right to play in children's everyday lives.* **Creating Inclusive Naturalized Outdoor Play Environments** https://naturalearning.org/creating-inclusive-naturalized-outdoor-play-environments/ *This article outlines the benefits of naturalized outdoor play environments for all children including children with disabilities and provides recommendations for how families, policymakers, and practitioners can ensure that children with and without disabilities can access these play environments.* **Creating Print Rich Learning Centers** http://www.smartbeginningsse.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/creating_print_rich_centers.pdf *Authors Juli Pool and Deb Carter highlight ways teachers can provide print-rich preschool environments to encourage children with a range of literacy skills.*

Webinar resources

Handout 3. Resources for inclusive interactions

	RESOURCES TO SUPPORT INCLUSIVE INTERACTIONS [1]
PRINT SOURCES	**A Guide to Asking Open-Ended Questions** https://stemie.fpg.unc.edu/sites/stemie.fpg.unc.edu/files/A%20Guide%20to%20asking%20Open-Ended%20Questions.pdf *Asking open-ended questions are a powerful way to foster interactions between adults and young children and to cultivate children's early science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) learning. This guide from the STEM Innovation for Inclusion in Early Education center shares tips and examples of open-ended questions adults could use in their daily interactions with young children with and without disabilities.* **Using Classroom Activities and Routines as Opportunities to Support Peer Interaction** https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/whatworks/WhatWorksBrief_5.pdf *Learn about the importance of supporting peer interactions in this brief. Find tips and strategies on how to incorporate these interactions in the classroom. Discover how this approach benefits children with and without disabilities.* **You're The Best Teacher! Responsive Interactions with Young Children** https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/youre-the-best-teacher.pdf *In this brief, learn how adults' responsive social interaction is key to children's early learning. Find the most up-to-date information to answer three prompts: "What does research say?"; "What does it look like?"; and "Try this!" Explore Connecting at Home, an accompanying resource that offers easy-to-try tips for families around building relationships with children and supporting their early learning.*
AUDIOVISUAL SOURCES	**Adult's Role in Supporting Peer Relationships** https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/adults-role-supporting-peer-relationships *In this webinar, presenters address four main questions around peer relationships: Why are friendships important? Why are friends hard to find? How can adults facilitate the development of friendships between young children? How can adults help children navigate their own search for friends?* **Can We Be Friends? Peer Interactions and Your Curriculum** https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/curriculum/ teacher-time-series/can-we-be-friends-peer-interactions-your-curriculum-0 *This archived webinar describes the benefits of making friends and building strong peer relationships between preschoolers. Listen as presenters explore research and strategies that support peer relationships in the early years.* **Connect Module 1 Videos on Peer Support** https://connectmodules.dec-sped.org/connect-modules/learners/module-1/step-3/a-definition/peer-supports/ *CONNECT Module 1 has four video examples of how adults can enlist peers in engaging in positive peer interactions. All four videos are available with English, Spanish, and Chinese Mandarin closed captioning.* **Friendship, Inclusion and Learning** https://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/video/resultsmatter/FriendshipInclusionAndLearning.mp4 *This story is about a beautiful friendship that blossomed between two young girls in a preschool classroom. The children's parents and teacher describe how the friendship helped both girls learn social and academic skills.* **The Importance of Early Interactions** https://modules.ilabs.uw.edu/module/importance-early-interactions/ *This 20-minute online module from the Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences (I-LABS) shares the importance of social interactions in a young child's life. Each module delivers content through narrated PowerPoint slides with embedded videos. A discussion guide and handout are also available for this module.* **Inclusion Basics: Membership** https://headstartinclusion.org/training-materials/ professional-development-packages/inclusion-basics-membership/ *This set of video, presentation, and print resources highlight effective approaches to supporting membership in an early childhood setting for children with and without disabilities.*

Handout 4. Sample course assignments

Assignment	Knowledge Acquisition (what do you want students to read, watch, etc.?)	Knowledge Application (what do you want students to demonstrate they can do?)
Building children's understanding of math ideas and skills	Frameworks and readings that are part of the course, e.g., math learning trajectories (Clements & Sarama). Preparing Young Children for School: Educator's Practice Guide	Imagine that it's a gorgeous fall day. Ask students to imagine that they have a class of diverse 2nd grade students, and you want to take them for some outdoor learning. **Assignment**: Identify five different activities in that outdoor environment that you could use to support children in exploring math ideas and skills that might be appropriate for 2nd graders. Include your source for the concepts, what you would expect children to do, and how you could differentiate the assignment to support children who learn faster/slower?

Webinar resources

Handout 5: Course examples

Instructor: Jennifer Jones

Course: EDU 221 Children with Exceptionalities

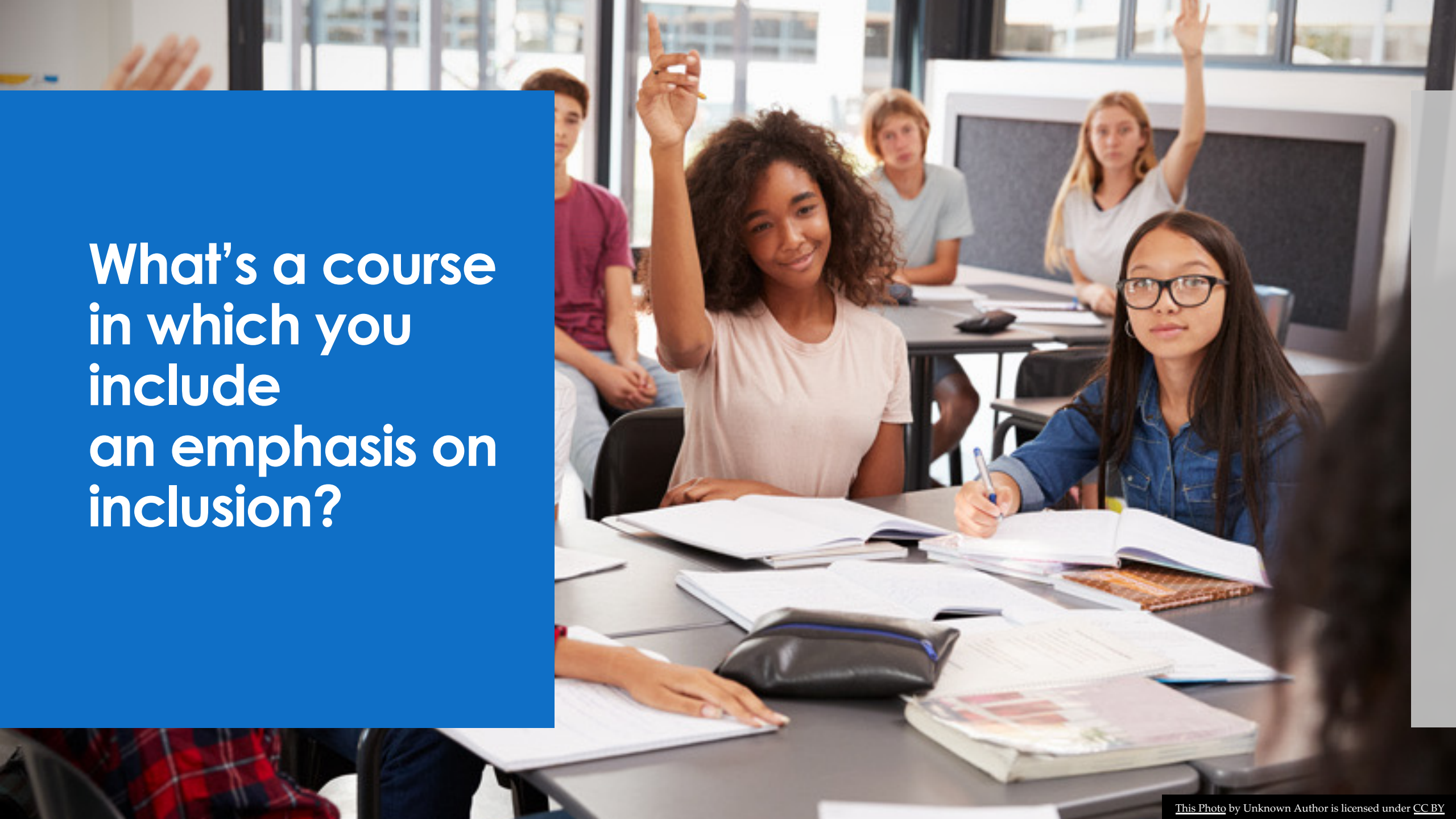
Text: *The Exceptional Child: Inclusion in Early Childhood Education*, 9th edition, (2022) Allen, K. E. and Cowdery, G. L. Cengage.

WEEK/ TOPIC	READINGS and INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES	ASSIGNMENTS
1 **Intro**	*Inclusion Works! Creating Child Care Programs That Promote Belonging for Children with Disabilities* https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/inclusionworks2ed.pdf	Icebreaker Discussion Forum **(DF)** Course Syllabus Scavenger Hunt Writing Assignment **(WA)** **Journal**: What do you think course is about? What would you like to learn? Proctortrack Onboarding
2 **Inclusion**	**Text**: Chapter 1: An Inclusive Approach to Early Education People First Language https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ddcl-yA88MU	**Journal**: How do you feel about working with children with different abilities? Do you have any experience in working with children or adults with exceptionalities? **DF**: After reviewing the video "People First Language", tell about a time that you heard someone use language such as "retarded". How did it make you feel? Did you say anything? Why or why not? In the past, have you ever used this term? Why did you use it? Now that you are taking a class on Children with Exceptionalities have your views on using the word "retarded" changed? **Persona**: Introduce "Stella".
3 **Inclusion** (continued)	Chapter 2: Federal Legislation: Early Intervention and prevention Foundations of Inclusion https://www.connectmodules.dec-sped.org/	**Journal**: Think about a time in your life when you didn't fit in. Describe the situation and the feelings you felt. **DF**: Think back to when you were in school — or talk to your parents, grandparents about how they remember children with disabilities being served in public schools. **WA**: Take the free course on the Foundations of Inclusion (1 hour to complete. Upon completion, you will receive a certificate of completion. Screenshot the completion certificate and upload to the course assignment link. **Persona**: Consider how the federal legislation relates to Stella
4 **Inclusion** (continued)	Chapter 3: Inclusive Programs for Young Children NAEYC/DEC Position Statement https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/ps_inclusion_dec_naeyc_ec.pdf	**Journal**: What type of early childhood program would you like to work in? What types of exceptionalities do you anticipate in this type of setting? **WA**: Questions from DEC Position statement **DF**: Using the list of criteria from the text, what elements do we need to make sure our program is appropriate for Stella? **Test #1** (Chapters 1-3) Taken through Proctortrack

More webinar resources

- Specific examples, e.g., Flo Thompson's examples of how to create your own personas
- PowerPoint slides
- Webinar recording

What's a course in which you include an emphasis on inclusion?



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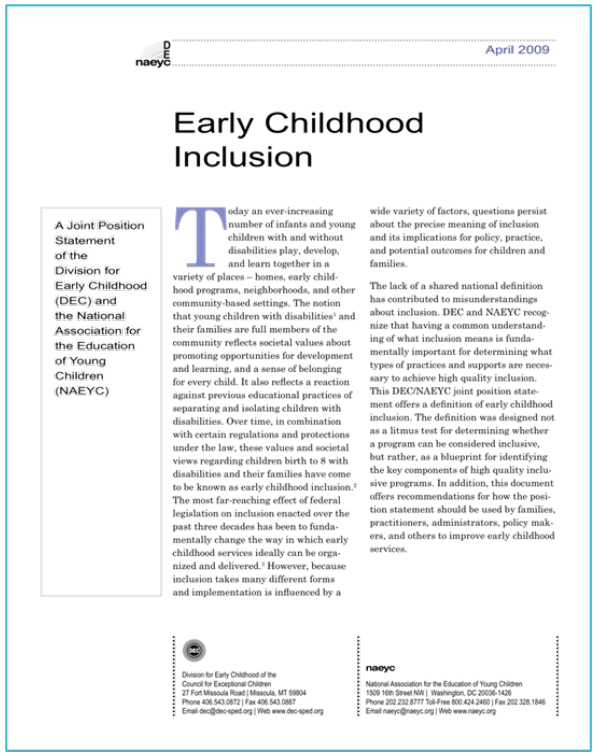
AGENDA

- Basics and definitions
- Tools & frameworks that support quality inclusion
- Inclusive environments and interactions in any course
- A splendid example of a course focused on inclusion

Definition of professional development

"Professional development is facilitated teaching and learning experiences that are transactional and designed to support the acquisition of professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions as well as the application of this knowledge in practice…..

Source: National Professional Development Center on Inclusion. (2008). What do we mean by professional development in the early childhood field? Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute, Author.
http://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/sites/npdci.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NPDCI_ProfessionalDevelopmentInEC_03-04-08_0.pdf



April 2009

Early Childhood Inclusion

A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Today an ever-increasing number of infants and young children with and without disabilities play, develop, and learn together in a variety of places – homes, early childhood programs, neighborhoods, and other community-based settings. The notion that young children with disabilities[1] and their families are full members of the community reflects societal values about promoting opportunities for development and learning, and a sense of belonging for every child. It also reflects a reaction against previous educational practices of separating and isolating children with disabilities. Over time, in combination with certain regulations and protections under the law, these values and societal views regarding children birth to 8 with disabilities and their families have come to be known as early childhood inclusion.[2] The most far-reaching effect of federal legislation on inclusion enacted over the past three decades has been to fundamentally change the way in which early childhood services ideally can be organized and delivered.[3] However, because inclusion takes many different forms and implementation is influenced by a wide variety of factors, questions persist about the precise meaning of inclusion and its implications for policy, practice, and potential outcomes for children and families.

The lack of a shared national definition has contributed to misunderstandings about inclusion. DEC and NAEYC recognize that having a common understanding of what inclusion means is fundamentally important for determining what types of practices and supports are necessary to achieve high quality inclusion. This DEC/NAEYC joint position statement offers a definition of early childhood inclusion. The definition was designed not as a litmus test for determining whether a program can be considered inclusive, but rather, as a blueprint for identifying the key components of high quality inclusive programs. In addition, this document offers recommendations for how the position statement should be used by families, practitioners, administrators, policy makers, and others to improve early childhood services.

Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children
27 Fort Missoula Road | Missoula, MT 59804
Phone 406.543.0872 | Fax 406.543.0887
Email dec@dec-sped.org | Web www.dec-sped.org

naeyc
National Association for the Education of Young Children
1509 16th Street NW | Washington, DC 20036-1426
Phone 202.232.8777 Toll-Free 800.424.2460 | Fax 202.328.1846
Email naeyc@naeyc.org | Web www.naeyc.org

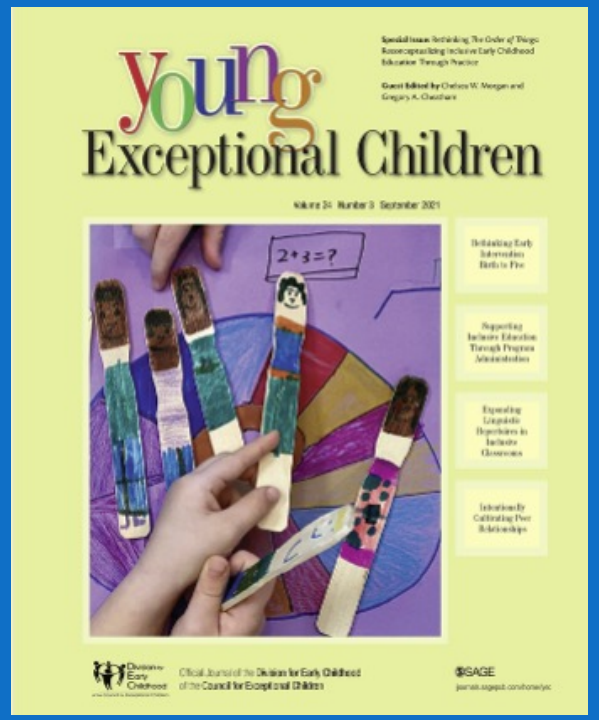
What is inclusion?

Early Childhood Inclusion: A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) http://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/resources/articles/Early_Childhood_Inclusion

From the DEC-NAEYC position statement

Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and supports.

Early Childhood Inclusion: A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) http://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/resources/articles/Early_Childhood_Inclusion



"We recognize *inclusive education* as the process of (a) redistributing access to and participation in quality learning opportunities; (b) recognizing and valuing all child differences in learning activities, materials, and interactions; and (c) creating opportunities for non-dominant and under-represented groups to share their narratives and advance solutions for equity, with particular attention given to the interplay of multiple and intersecting social identities (e.g., ability, race, language) in learning contexts (e.g., home, school, and community settings)"

Morgan, C. W., & Cheatham, G. A. (2021, September). Rationale for change: Reconceptualizing inclusive early childhood education through practice. *Young Exceptional Children, 24*(3), 115-123.

"Implementing inclusion involves a range of approaches – from embedded, routines-based teaching to more explicit interventions – to scaffold learning and participation for all children."

Early Childhood Inclusion, p. 2

Alternative Learning Positions:

Supporting Children's Appropriate Motor Development

Close your eyes and imagine for a moment a traditional classroom. Probably the educational model you conjured up included chairs and desks. Possibly even lined up in rows facing a chalkboard. Try a Google Image search and you're likely to get similar results.

While sitting in a chair supports effective performance of academic tasks such as handwriting, compositional writing, or math, many educators now question whether it really is the optimal position for learning. In regards to early childhood environments, sitting for long periods in a chair may not only be ineffective for learning, it is also not developmentally appropriate.

Gibbs, M. (2022). Alternative Learning Positions: Supporting Children's Appropriate Motor Development. Retrieved from: https://www.communityplaythings.com:443/resources/articles/2022/Alternative-Learning-Positions

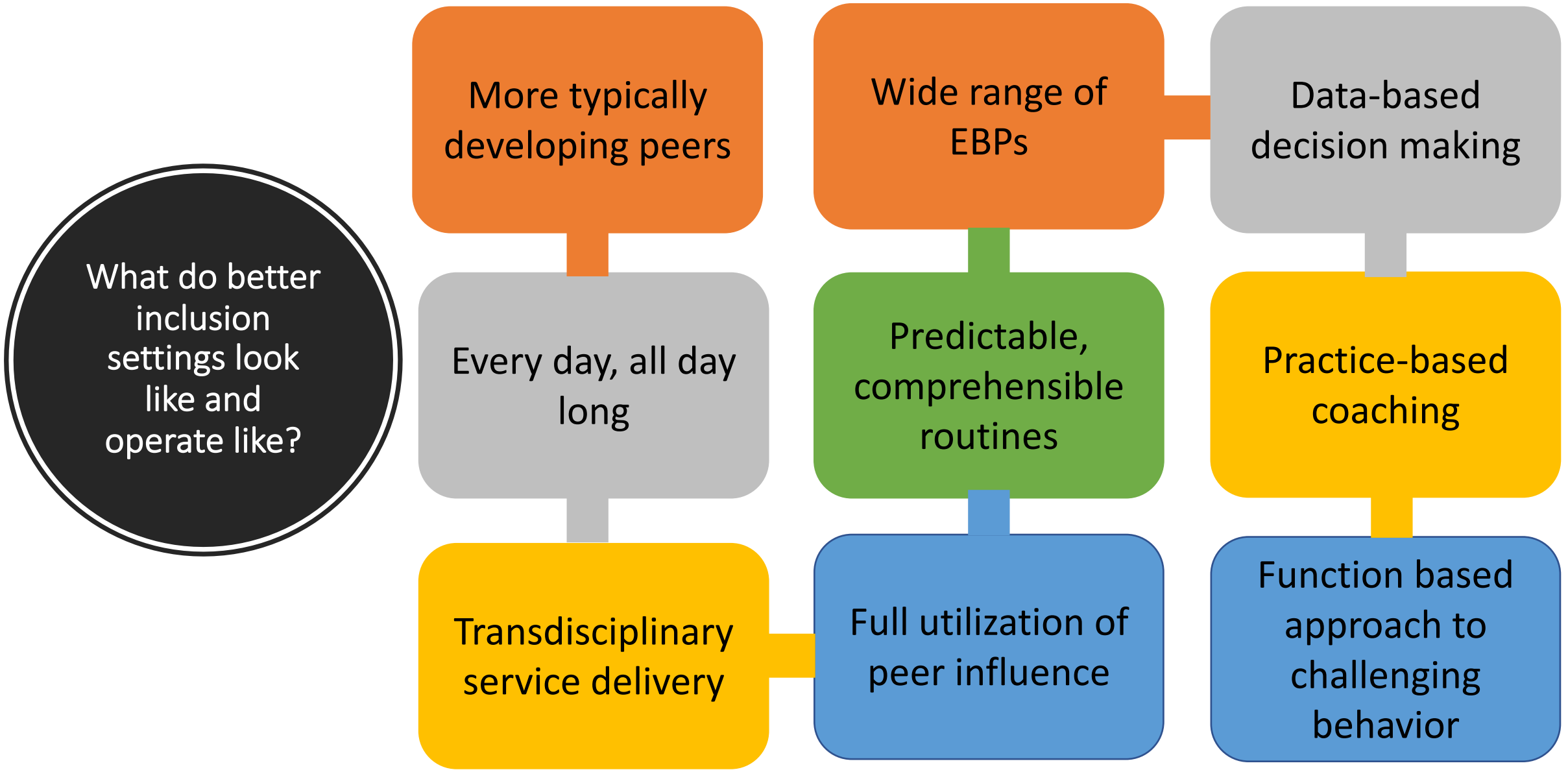
Support students to ask themselves:

Is the quality of participation good for the child with a disability?

Is the quality of participation good for each of the other children?

What do we know about quality inclusion?

Source: STEM Innovation for Inclusion in Early Education
https://stemie.fpg.unc.edu/video-series-why-inclusion



Adapted from Strain, 2019

Sample activity

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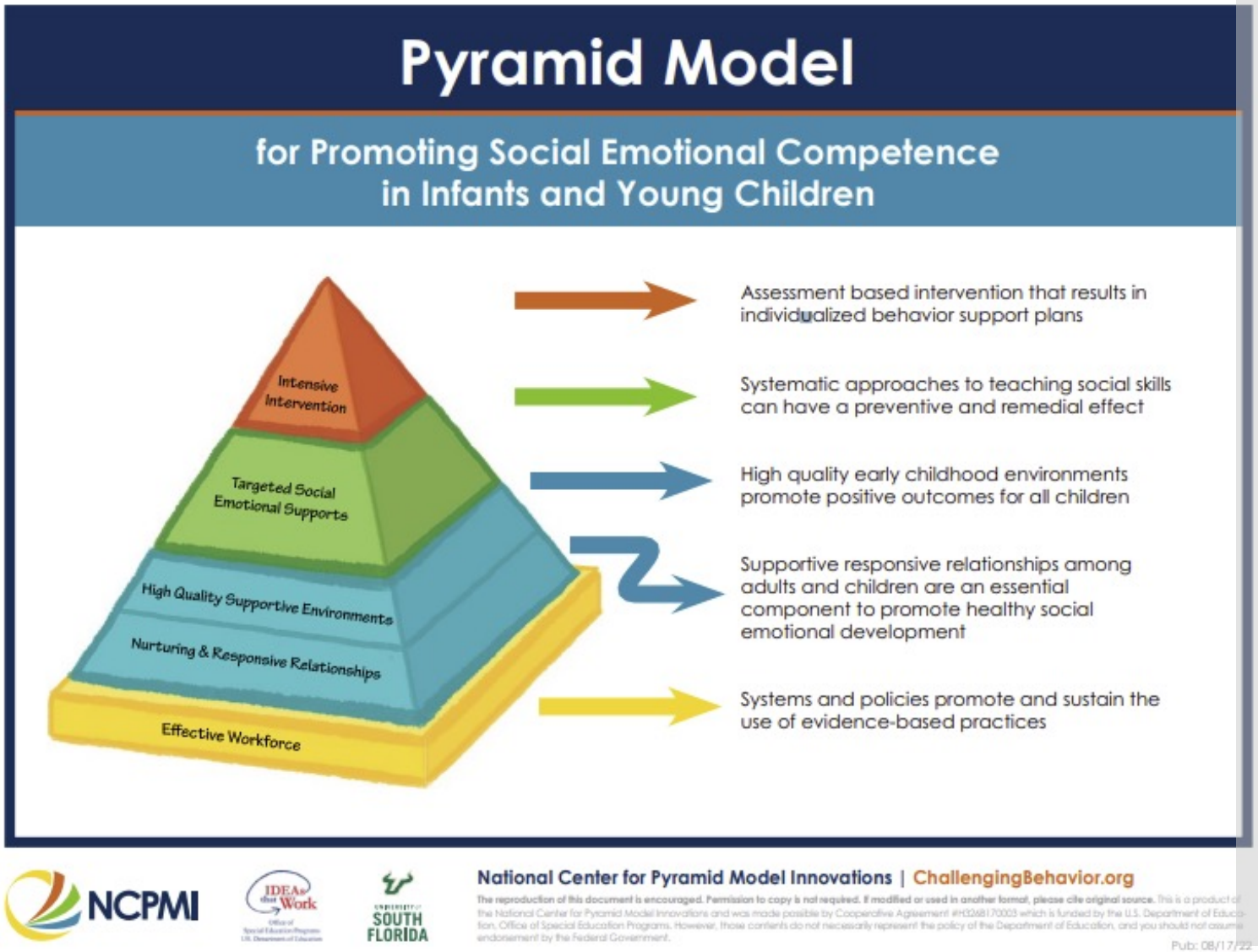
A friend of yours with a four-year-old child has come to you with a dilemma. She is going back to work and is looking for a high-quality program for her child. The program she likes the best is a program in which children of diverse abilities are included full-time in each classroom. Your friend has concerns and questions about placing her child in this program – will her child receive as much attention as the children with disabilities? Will her child pick up negative habits and behaviors from the children with disabilities?

What would you say to her? What resources would you draw on to support your response?

Why environments & interactions?



National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations https://challengingbehavior.org/

Tools & frameworks that support acquisition & application of quality inclusion practices

- Developmentally Appropriate Practice
- ECTA Indicators of Quality Inclusion
- DEC Recommended Practices
- Universal Design for Learning
- STEMIE Inclusion Resources
- Personas

Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Core Considerations

Developmentally appropriate practice requires early childhood educators to seek out and gain knowledge and understanding using three core considerations: **commonality** in children's development and learning, **individuality** reflecting each child's unique characteristics and experiences, and the **context** in which development and learning occur. These core considerations apply to all aspects of educators' decision-making in their work to foster each child's optimal development and learning.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice: A Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.
https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/dap-statement_0.pdf

Resources, assignments, and activities for implementing DAP

SCRIPT-NC Webinar: Bringing a developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) lens to any course

April 2022

The consistent emphasis on diversity, individuality, and context, attention to joyful, play-based learning and development, and connections to related frameworks (Professional Standards and Competencies for ECE, equity position statement) are a few of the qualities that make the fourth edition of Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) significant. This session will provide an overview of the useful features of the 4th edition as well as an introduction to a suite of companion materials designed specifically for higher education faculty and instructors. Sign up for an insider's guide to new options, resources, and opportunities for using a DAP lens to address diversity, equity, and inclusion. April 19, 1-2 pm EST

Presenters: Camille Catlett (SCRIPT-NC) & Flo Thompson (Wake Tech Community College)

Register NOW

SCRIPT-NC-DAP-Webinar-April2022.pdf

SCRIPT-NC DAP webinar handout.pdf

Flo Thompson personas.pdf

https://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/script-nc-webinar-bringing-developmentally-appropriate-practice-dap-lens-any-course

How Frameworks Fit Together

ECE Professional Standards & Competencies	1.Child Development and Learning in Context	2.Family-Teacher Partnerships and Community Connections	3.Child Observation, Documentation and Assessment	4.Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices	5.Knowledge, Application, and Integration of Academic Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum	6.Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator
DAP Guidelines	1.Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners	2.Engaging in Reciprocal Partnerships with Families and Fostering Community Connections	3.Observing, Documenting, and Assessing Children's Development and Learning	4.Teaching to Enhance Each Child's Development and Learning	5.Planning and Implementing an Engaging Curriculum to Achieve Meaningful Goals	6. Demonstrating Professionalism

Advancing Equitable Access to High Quality Learning and Care Environments

ECTA Indicators of Quality Inclusion

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center, & National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (2020). *Indicators of High-Quality Inclusion*. Retrieved from https://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/indicators.asp

Each indicator includes elements which are evidence-based examples of effective practices

Ask students to consider: Which other learners might this approach support?

INDICATOR 5: Curriculum

1. Select themes that reflect children's interests, abilities, familial/cultural norms and developmental levels.
2. Make necessary adaptations to ensure that children with disabilities can access and participate in all curricular activities.
3. Modify materials to enable manipulation by children with a range of motor skills.
4. Use sign language, gestures and visual cues during activities when appropriate.
5. Use visual, verbal and gestural cues with materials to help children with disabilities participate more independently.
6. Reduce distraction by limiting materials in the environment when necessary.
7. Integrate individual children's adaptive, augmentative communication systems into all early care and education environment routines and ensure that pictures or alternative, augmentative communication (AAC) systems are readily available to individual children at all times.

Use the Indicators of Quality Inclusion as part of . . .

- Video observation
- Assignments
- Lesson planning
- Observation by cooperating teachers and instructors

Related resources to support the use of this framework

- Video/classroom observation tool
- Classroom planning format
- Free resources for each indicator
- Observation tool for faculty and cooperating teachers

Sample activity

As part of a course requirement, your students need to observe in an early childhood setting.

- Introduce students to the ECTA Indicators of Quality Inclusion.
- Ask students to observe in a setting serving young children and to identify which of the indicators they see being addressed/addressed significantly.
- Ask students to have a thoughtful conversation with the leaders of the site in which they are observing about other indicators of quality inclusion that they may not have observed.
- Ask students to identify possible enhancements they might use to make the environments and interactions more reflective or and responsive to the children and families.

F	FAMILY
A	ASSESSMENT
C	COLLABORATION
I	INSTRUCTION
L	LEADERSHIP
I	INTERACTION
T	TEAMING
A	AND
T	TRANSITION
E	ENVIRONMENT

DEC Division for Early Childhood

website: www.dec-sped.org
email: dec@dec-sped.org
address: 3415 S. Sepulveda Blvd. #1100
Los Angeles, CA 90034
telephone: 310-428-7209
fax: 855-678-1989

DEC Recommended Practices
in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education

The Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children

https://www.dec-sped.org/dec-recommended-practices

For each area of recommended practice there are . . .

AND an instructional module for faculty and professional development providers with a searchable resource library, activities, and assignments

In which course do you emphasize meaningful interactions with peers?

Child-Child Interaction Checklist

Please indicate which practice characteristics you were able to use as part of interactions with a child:	Seldom or never (0 - 25%)	Some of the time (25 - 50%)	As often as I can (50 - 75%)	Most of the time (75 - 100%)	Notes
1. Provide the child multiple opportunities to play and interact with other children	☐	☐	☐	☐	
2. Observe the child's attempts to interact with or gain the attention of his or her peers	☐	☐	☐	☐	
3. Identify the behavior the child uses to initiate interactions with peers by focusing on the children's shared interests	☐	☐	☐	☐	
4. Respond promptly and positively (contingently) to the child's attempts to engage in interactions with peers during everyday activities and routines	☐	☐	☐	☐	
5. Provide natural reinforcing consequences to the children's behavior and peer play to sustain child-child interactions	☐	☐	☐	☐	
6. Encourage child behavior elaborations during peer interactions through modeling, imitation, expansion, and other types of supports	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Each practice guide includes

- video
- examples
- vignette

Peer Social Interactions

Download this practice guide:

PDF (English) PDF (Spanish) Mobile PDF

Peer interactions are important for children's learning and development. Children learn new skills by observing and interacting with other children during everyday classroom activities and routines. By paying close attention and responding to what children are doing while playing and interacting with others, adults can support and enhance their social play and interactions.

https://ectacenter.org/decrp/type-pgpractitioner.asp

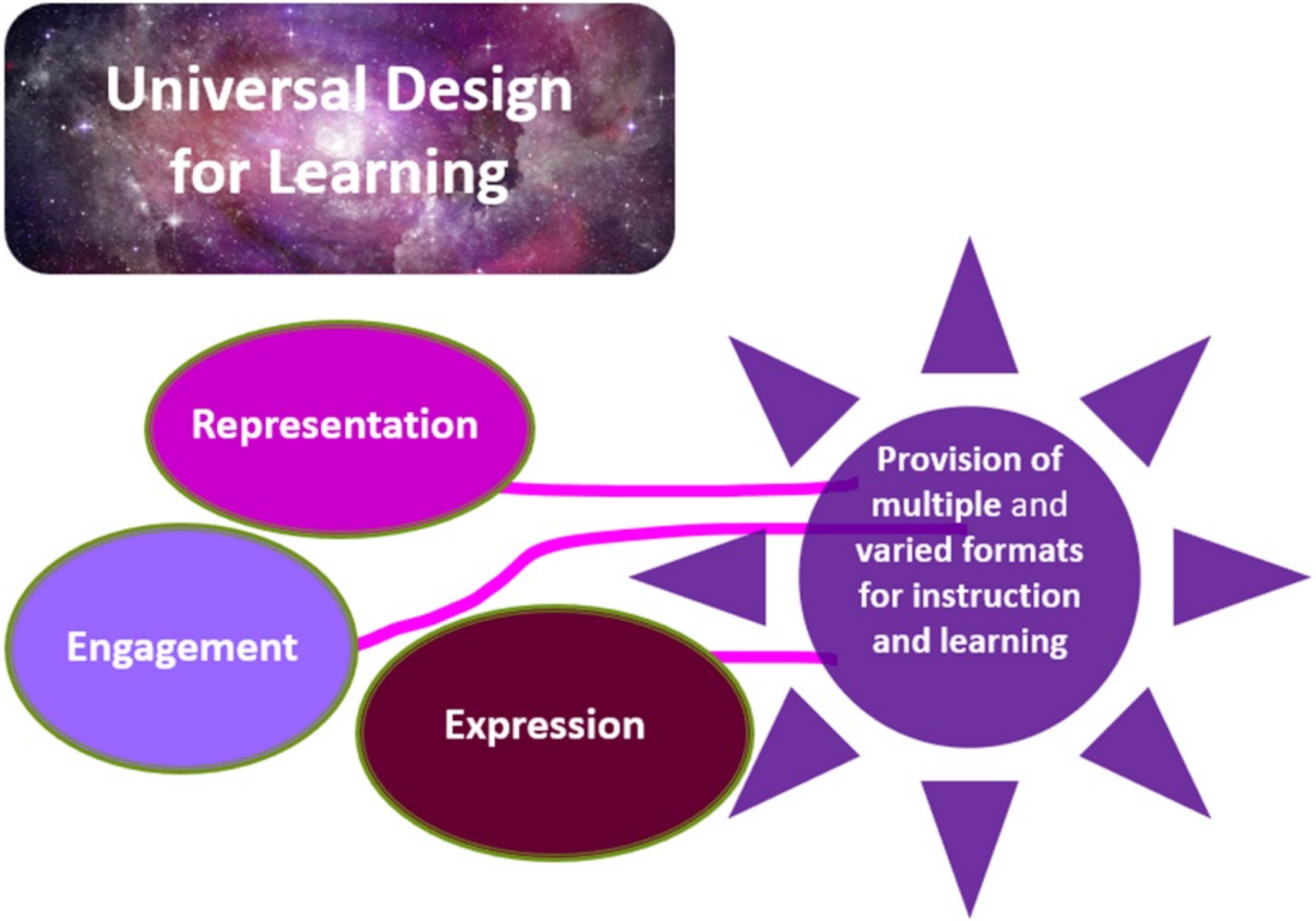
Maroke / Shutterstock.com

A Quick Peek

Knowing that the children in her classroom enjoy music, Marta invited her uncle, Rafael, to play his guitar for the group. She watched the children swaying, moving, and jumping as Rafael played. When she noticed Kylie approaching Jodi and touching her hand, Marta said, "Kylie, do you want to ask Jodi to dance with you?" Kylie said, "Dance, Jodi!" The two girls held hands and laughed as they wiggled to the music. Marta told the group, "Kylie and Jodi are dancing!" Marta clapped the beat to the music to encourage the two girls to continue "dancing." She moved her arms back and forth to show them how they could sway their arms together. As the girls continued to dance, other children soon began to take a partner to dance to Uncle Rafael's tunes.

Sample activity: If Kylie had not approached Jodi to dance with her, what else might Marta have done to support the peer interaction?

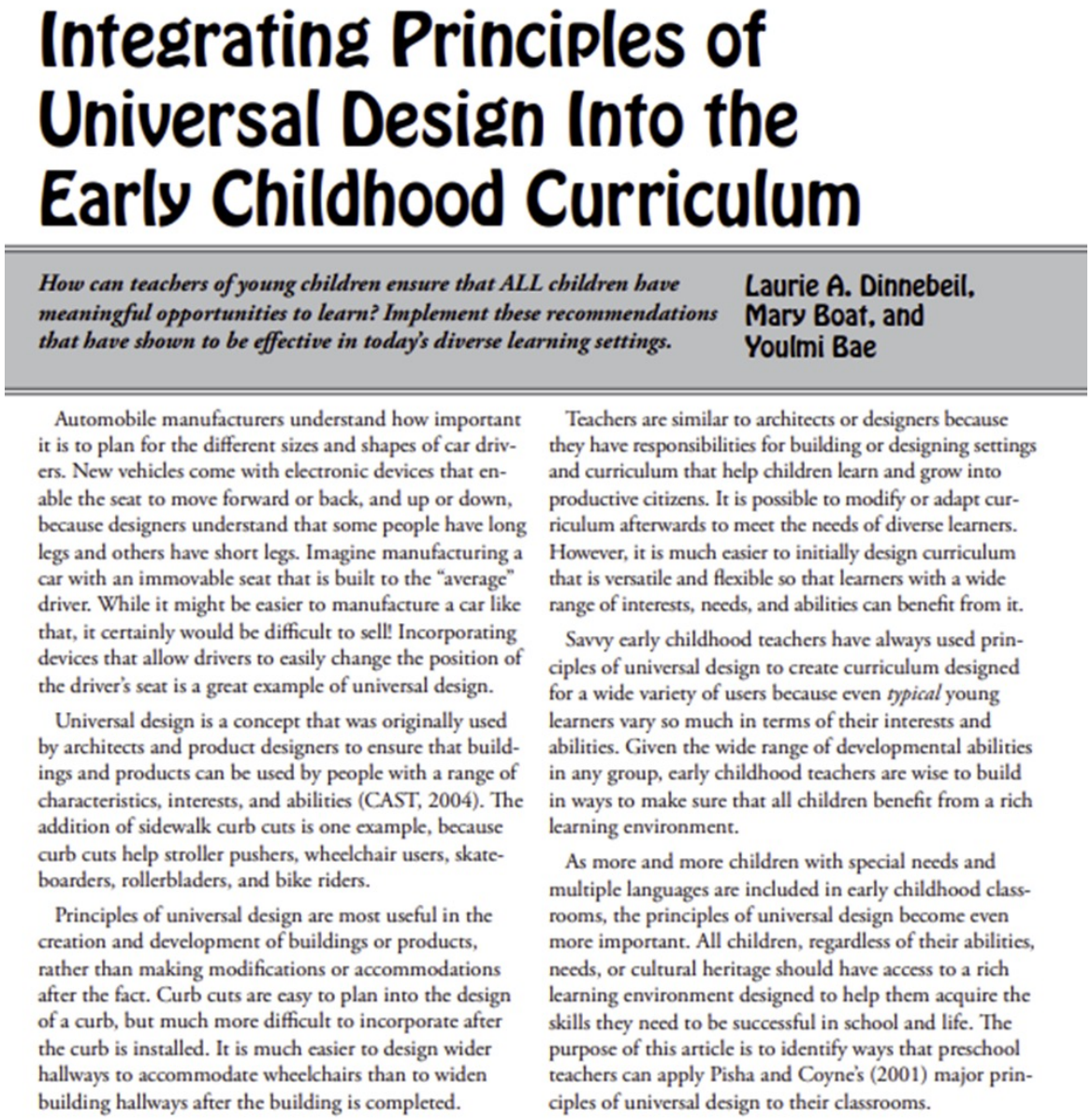
Use Universal Design for Learning practices



Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators	Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices Early childhood educators understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages and characteristics and on the settings in which teaching and learning occur. They (a) understand and demonstrate positive, caring, supportive relationships and interactions as the foundation for their work with young children. They (b) understand and use teaching skills that are responsive to the learning trajectories of young children and to the needs of each child. **Early childhood educators (c) use a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically relevant, anti-bias, and evidence-based teaching approaches that reflect the principles of universal design for learning**.
Developmentally Appropriate Practices	Educators effectively implement a comprehensive curriculum so that each child attains individualized goals across all domains (physical, social, emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and general learning competencies) and across all subject areas (language and literacy, including second language acquisition, mathematics, social studies, science, art, music, physical education, and health). **Educators follow Universal Design for Learning principles by proactively providing multiple means of engagement, multiple means of representation, and multiple means of action and expression.** Educators design experiences that celebrate the diversity in the experiences and social identities of each group of children and counter the biases in society. They build upon the children's combined funds of knowledge to foster each child's learning and understanding. Educators design activities that follow the predictable sequences in which children acquire specific concepts, skills, and abilities and by building on prior experiences and understandings.

Sample activity



Integrating Principles of Universal Design Into the Early Childhood Curriculum

How can teachers of young children ensure that ALL children have meaningful opportunities to learn? Implement these recommendations that have shown to be effective in today's diverse learning settings.

Laurie A. Dinnebeil, Mary Boat, and Youlmi Bae

Automobile manufacturers understand how important it is to plan for the different sizes and shapes of car drivers. New vehicles come with electronic devices that enable the seat to move forward or back, and up or down, because designers understand that some people have long legs and others have short legs. Imagine manufacturing a car with an immovable seat that is built to the "average" driver. While it might be easier to manufacture a car like that, it certainly would be difficult to sell! Incorporating devices that allow drivers to easily change the position of the driver's seat is a great example of universal design.

Universal design is a concept that was originally used by architects and product designers to ensure that buildings and products can be used by people with a range of characteristics, interests, and abilities (CAST, 2004). The addition of sidewalk curb cuts is one example, because curb cuts help stroller pushers, wheelchair users, skateboarders, rollerbladers, and bike riders.

Principles of universal design are most useful in the creation and development of buildings or products, rather than making modifications or accommodations after the fact. Curb cuts are easy to plan into the design of a curb, but much more difficult to incorporate after the curb is installed. It is much easier to design wider hallways to accommodate wheelchairs than to widen building hallways after the building is completed.

Teachers are similar to architects or designers because they have responsibilities for building or designing settings and curriculum that help children learn and grow into productive citizens. It is possible to modify or adapt curriculum afterwards to meet the needs of diverse learners. However, it is much easier to initially design curriculum that is versatile and flexible so that learners with a wide range of interests, needs, and abilities can benefit from it.

Savvy early childhood teachers have always used principles of universal design to create curriculum designed for a wide variety of users because even *typical* young learners vary so much in terms of their interests and abilities. Given the wide range of developmental abilities in any group, early childhood teachers are wise to build in ways to make sure that all children benefit from a rich learning environment.

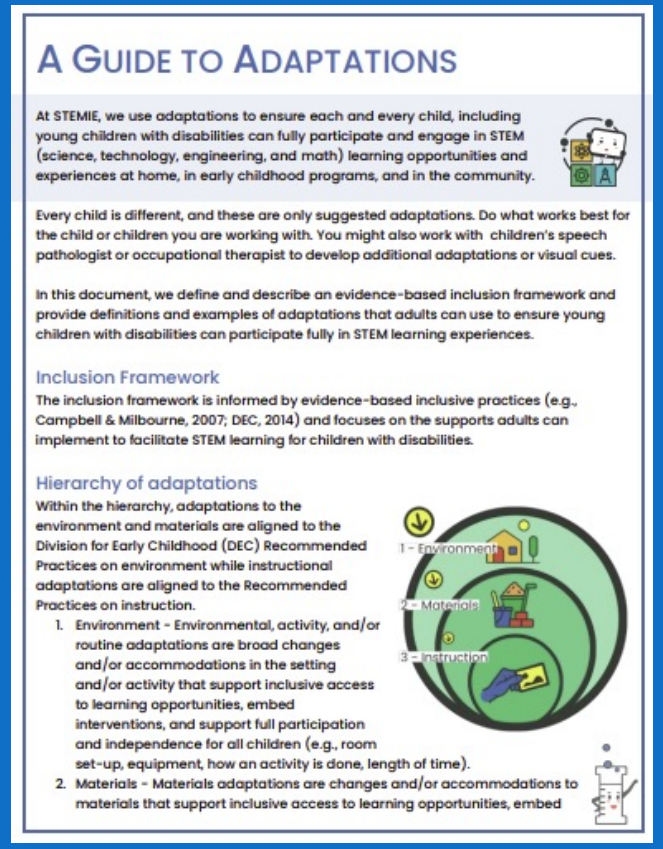
As more and more children with special needs and multiple languages are included in early childhood classrooms, the principles of universal design become even more important. All children, regardless of their abilities, needs, or cultural heritage should have access to a rich learning environment designed to help them acquire the skills they need to be successful in school and life. The purpose of this article is to identify ways that preschool teachers can apply Pisha and Coyne's (2001) major principles of universal design to their classrooms.

Laurie A. Dinnebeil, Mary Boat, Youl-mi Bae, Dimensions of Early Childhood Vol 41, No 1, 2013
https://fpg.unc.edu/sites/fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/presentations-and-webinars/Dimensions_Vol41_1_Dinnebeil-1_0.pdf

Ask students to watch Pyramid Practices at Circle Time and to identify examples of UDL they see in the video.

https://youtu.be/vZaNcfoCei8

Integrate STEMIE Tools



A Guide to Adaptations

At STEMIE, we use adaptations to ensure each and every child, including young children with disabilities can fully participate and engage in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) learning opportunities and experiences at home, in early childhood programs, and in the community.

Every child is different, and these are only suggested adaptations. Do what works best for the child or children you are working with. You might also work with children's speech pathologist or occupational therapist to develop additional adaptations or visual cues.

In this document, we define and describe an evidence-based inclusion framework and provide definitions and examples of adaptations that adults can use to ensure young children with disabilities can participate fully in STEM learning experiences.

Inclusion Framework

The inclusion framework is informed by evidence-based inclusive practices (e.g., Campbell & Milbourne, 2007; DEC, 2014) and focuses on the supports adults can implement to facilitate STEM learning for children with disabilities.

Hierarchy of adaptations

Within the hierarchy, adaptations to the environment and materials are aligned to the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices on environment while instructional adaptations are aligned to the Recommended Practices on instruction.

1. Environment - Environmental, activity, and/or routine adaptations are broad changes and/or accommodations in the setting and/or activity that support inclusive access to learning opportunities, embed interventions, and support full participation and independence for all children (e.g., room set-up, equipment, how an activity is done, length of time).
2. Materials - Materials adaptations are changes and/or accommodations to materials that support inclusive access to learning opportunities, embed

Materials

Variety of Materials

Provide a variety of materials of different sizes, shapes, colors, and/or textures to increase interest and accessibility

Create prop/story boxes (e.g., items/objects related to the books or theme) for books to increase engagement and understanding

Image Credit: Paths to Literacy, 2018

Use alternative materials to support grasping (e.g., soft, squeezable; see Grasping Supports for more examples)

Image credit: Creative Commons

Use high contrast materials (e.g., puzzles, shapes) for visual discrimination

Image credit: Creative Commons

https://stemie.fpg.unc.edu/sites/stemie.fpg.unc.edu/files/A%20Guide%20to%20Adaptations%20r-3-7-2022.pdf

Adaptations: Helping students learn to modify

magnets or Velcro wrist bands to pick up materials
Image Credit: BRIDGES Activities, 2021

cups with handles
Image Credit: Creative Commons

grip tape and/or tubes to thicken handles
Image Credit: Creative Commons

deep bowls/plates for easier scooping
Image Credit: Creative Commons

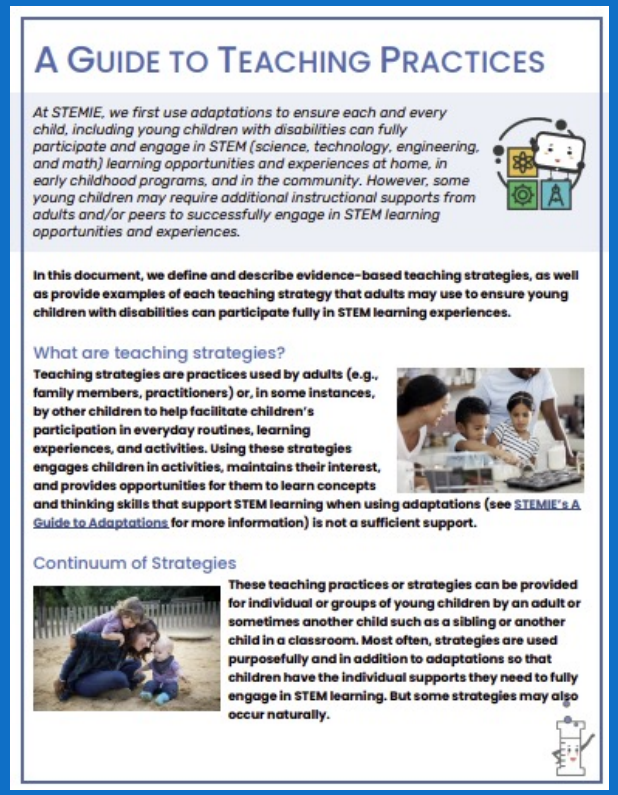
page fluffers to space apart pages of a book for easier turning
Image Credit: Paths to Literacy, 2018

stabilizers, like Velcro or rubber shelf liners, for activities, puzzles, and games
Image Credit: Creative Commons

alternative materials (e.g., soft, squeezable) to support grasping
Image Credit: Creative Commons

low-tech materials (e.g., Velcro on blocks, tabs, padded handles for toys, tools, and utensils)
Image Credit: Paths to Literacy, 2018

https://stemie.fpg.unc.edu/sites/stemie.fpg.unc.edu/files/A%20Guide%20to%20Adaptations%20r-3-7-2022.pdf



A Guide to Teaching Practices

At STEMIE, we first use adaptations to ensure each and every child, including young children with disabilities can fully participate and engage in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) learning opportunities and experiences at home, in early childhood programs, and in the community. However, some young children may require additional instructional supports from adults and/or peers to successfully engage in STEM learning opportunities and experiences.

In this document, we define and describe evidence-based teaching strategies, as well as provide examples of each teaching strategy that adults may use to ensure young children with disabilities can participate fully in STEM learning experiences.

What are teaching strategies?

Teaching strategies are practices used by adults (e.g., family members, practitioners) or, in some instances, by other children to help facilitate children's participation in everyday routines, learning experiences, and activities. Using these strategies engages children in activities, maintains their interest, and provides opportunities for them to learn concepts and thinking skills that support STEM learning when using adaptations (see STEMIE's A Guide to Adaptations for more information) is not a sufficient support.

Continuum of Strategies

These teaching practices or strategies can be provided for individual or groups of young children by an adult or sometimes another child such as a sibling or another child in a classroom. Most often, strategies are used purposefully and in addition to adaptations so that children have the individual supports they need to fully engage in STEM learning. But some strategies may also occur naturally.

- Prompting
- Scaffolding
- Modeling
- Descriptive Talking/Verbal Guidance
- Wait Time
- Reinforcement

https://stemie.fpg.unc.edu/sites/stemie.fpg.unc.edu/files/A%20Guide%20to%20Teaching%20Practices%203-14-2022.pdf

Modeling

Modeling

Visually demonstrate and/or perform the target activity/behavior/skill to encourage participation

- Demonstrate activity when introducing and implementing (e.g., illustrate or model the use of number and comparison words [e.g., more, less, fewer, same] when introducing and implementing an activity [e.g., "I see you and Emma have the same number of counters, you both have three – Let's count them..."])
- Model expectations (e.g., show your hand slowly touching each counter, saying aloud 'One, two, three' to model using 1-1 correspondence)
- Model exploration and play
- Pair child with a peer who can model and reinforce key aspects of the activity
- Role-playing (e.g., saying 'Let's pretend we're playing with the counters. I'll count first, then you show me what to do!')

https://stemie.fpg.unc.edu/sites/stemie.fpg.unc.edu/files/A%20Guide%20to%20Teaching%20Practices%203-14-2022.pdf

Sample activity

Modeling ideal behaviors in curriculum plans can help young students develop executive function

Published July 27, 2022

By Lauren Barack
Contributor, K-12

https://www.k12dive.com/news/modeling-ideal-behaviors-in-curriculum-plans-can-help-young-students-develo/628271/

- Knowledge Acquisition Resources: Guide to Teaching Practices/Modeling, Modeling Ideal Behaviors article
- Ask students to initially discuss how they would lay out the steps to model a desired behavior (e.g., sharing a food item with a friend)
- Ask students to extend the discussion to include what modeling might include, for example, for children who are dual language learners or children who have very poor memory

Personas

Stella

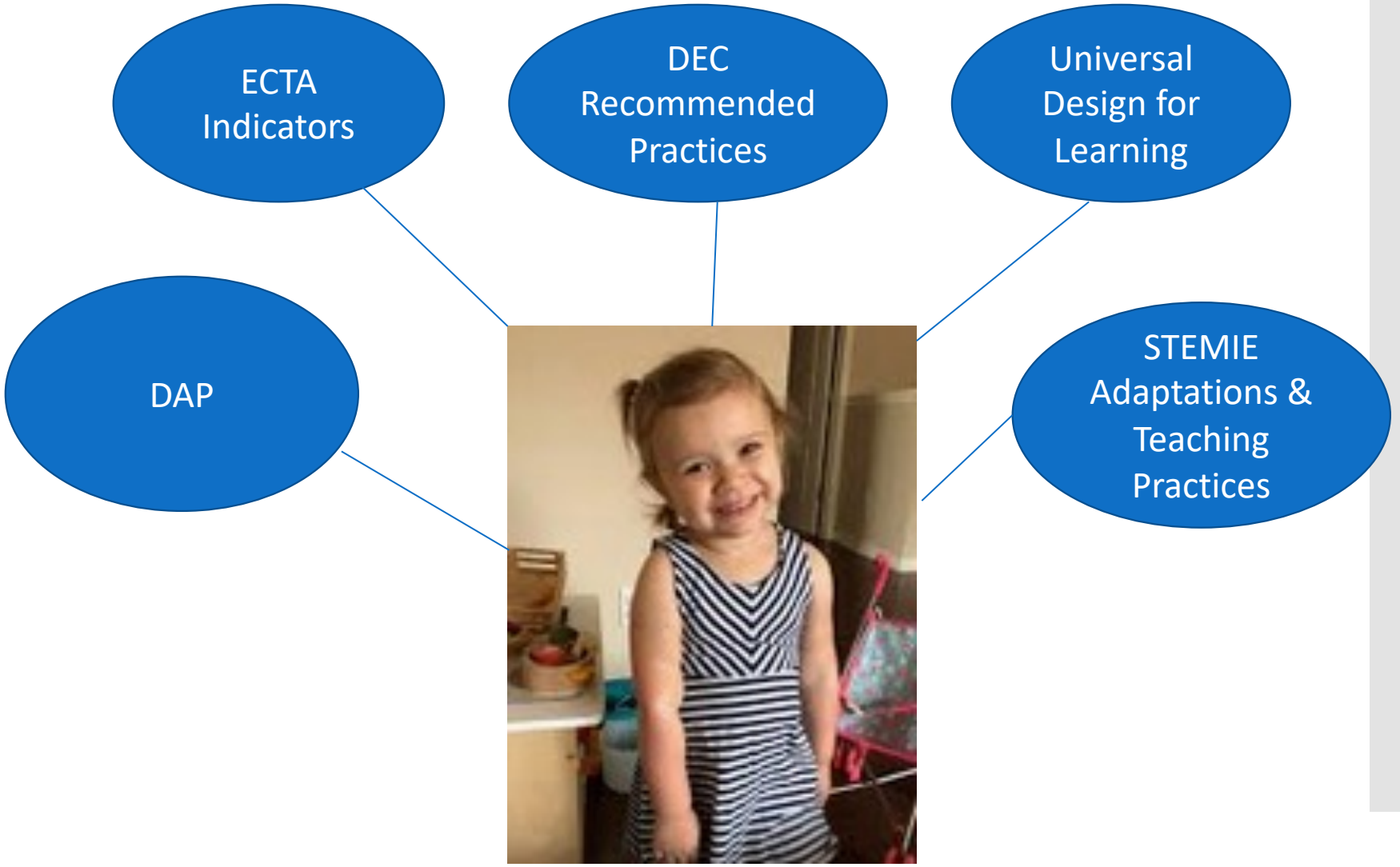
Stella was born with a cleft lip and palate which were successfully repaired through a series of operations. She also has had consistent and significant middle ear infections which have also contributed to her speech and language delays. Stella and parents were enrolled in their state's Early Intervention program from the time she was born. She has received early childhood special education services in an inclusive classroom with her toddler peers. Her inclusion is supported through services she and her teacher receive from a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP).

At 30 months, Stella is delighted with all things pink and the sparklier the better. She loves to play with dolls, stuffed animals, and other children. Stella is also very excited that she will soon be getting a baby sister.

Stella's parents are thrilled with the progress she has made and have benefitted greatly from the strong collaboration between her teachers and her SLP. Together they provide frequent progress reports and offer ideas for how Stella's speech and language can be supported through everyday routines and activities at home. As conversations about Stella's transition to a public PreK program have gotten underway, her parents are very concerned about how to make sure her progress continues.

https://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/sites/scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/Preschool%20Personas.pdf

Integrating the frameworks to support a child and family – what's the assignment?

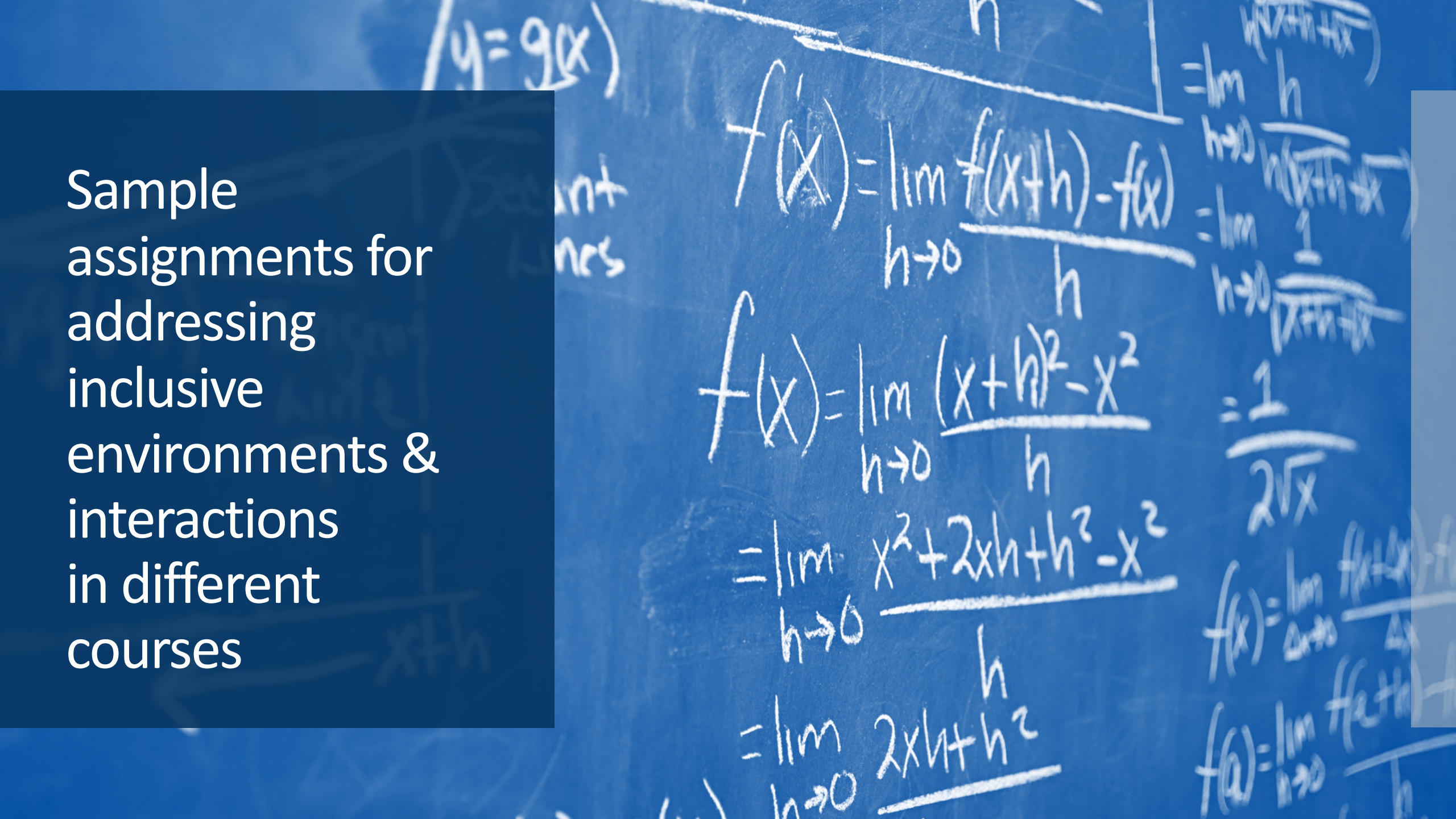


Sample activity

With the knowledge that Stella's mother will soon be having a baby, the children in her classroom are now very interested in babies. They're especially interested in how you can rock a baby to sleep with a lullaby. If you were Stella's teacher, how would you build on this interest?

- Share examples of ways in which you might use the environment to support learning and development across domains.
- Share examples of large and small group activities that would promote language, STEM, social emotional, and motor development based on this interest.
- As part of your each example, provide the reference to a framework or frameworks that support the use of that approach. For example, on example might be to contact families to learn about the songs/lullabies they sing to or play for babies. This practice would be supported by DAP Guidelines 2F, 4B/5D; ECTA Indicator E2; DEC Recommended Family Practices; UDL multiple means of engagement/representation; and STEMIE Guide to Adaptations, Variety of Materials.
- Consider how your examples might specifically support Stella's IFSP goals of receptive and expressive vocabulary development.

Sample assignments for addressing inclusive environments & interactions in different courses



What resources or frameworks for inclusion do you use in your coursework?

Type in the chatbox.

Handout 4. Sample course assignments

Assignment	Knowledge Acquisition (what do you want students to read, watch, etc.?)	Knowledge Application (what do you want students to demonstrate they can do?)
Building children's understanding of math ideas and skills	Frameworks and readings that are part of the course, e.g., math learning trajectories (Clements & Sarama). Preparing Young Children for School: Educator's Practice Guide	Imagine that it's a gorgeous fall day. Ask students to imagine that they have a class of diverse 2nd grade students, and you want to take them for some outdoor learning. **Assignment**: Identify five different activities in that outdoor environment that you could use to support children in exploring math ideas and skills that might be appropriate for 2nd graders. Include your source for the concepts, what you would expect children to do, and how you could differentiate the assignment to support children who learn faster/slower?

What does it take?

Two compelling presentations: National Teacher of the Year, Inclusion Institute keynote

- Connections to evidence-based practices & frameworks
- Future directions
- Reflections on family engagement
- Themes
- Reflections on individualizing

Environment is more than a place

1. Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners

Because early childhood education settings are often among children's first communities outside the home, the character of these communities is very influential in children's development. **Through their interactions**, children learn how to treat others and how they can expect to be treated. In developmentally appropriate practice, educators create and foster a community of learners. The role of the community is to provide a **physical, emotional, and cognitive environment conducive to development and learning for each child.** The foundation for the community is **consistent, positive, caring relationships between educators and other adults and children, among children, among educators and colleagues, and between educators and families.** Each member of the learning community is valued for what they bring to the community; **all members are supported to consider and contribute to one another's well-being and learning.**

Using one or more evidence-based framework, identify specific steps you would take to create a caring, equitable community of 2nd grade learners

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-NC

Break it down: Finger plays

Let's play . . .	What skills does a child need to play?	At what age might a child be expected to have those skills? (cite source)	Additional considerations • Culture • Language/vocabulary • Ability • Family/context
Peek-a-boo			
Itsy Bitsy Spider			
Hide and Go Seek			
Wheels on the Bus			
Rock-Paper-Scissors			

Break it down: Routines & expectations

"If a child doesn't know how to read, *we teach*."

"If a child doesn't know how to swim, *we teach*."

"If a child doesn't know how to multiply, *we teach*."

"If a child doesn't know how to drive, *we teach*."

"If a child doesn't know how to behave, *we…*

….teach? *…punish?"*

Tom Herner (NASDE President) Counterpoint 1998, p. 2

Lesson plan for clean up time from Andrea Racek

Objective: To teach children how to clean up

OF NOTE: *In my classroom I did not insist that students clean up an area before moving on. I believed that a half-built tower left in the block area would inspire students entering to add on and serve as a jumping off point to a new building. This was especially true for students on the autism spectrum who had a hard time creating from scratch. This meant when it was time to clean up, all areas had something to clean up and we all had ownership over the whole classroom. I did not believe that if a student built it or played with it they had to clean it up. Everyone cleaned everything until together our room was clean.*

Long term plan:

- Introduce one or two areas each day during clean up.
- Take the time to teach each area in an organized way. (This could take weeks)
- Allow time in the schedule for this to be a lesson.
- Make sure the areas have clearly labeled shelves and baskets with both written words and visual pictures

https://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/sites/scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/Lesson%20Plan%20for%20Clean%20UP%20Time.pdf

Supporting emergent curriculum - preparing educators who can pivot

Inclusive indoor and outdoor play

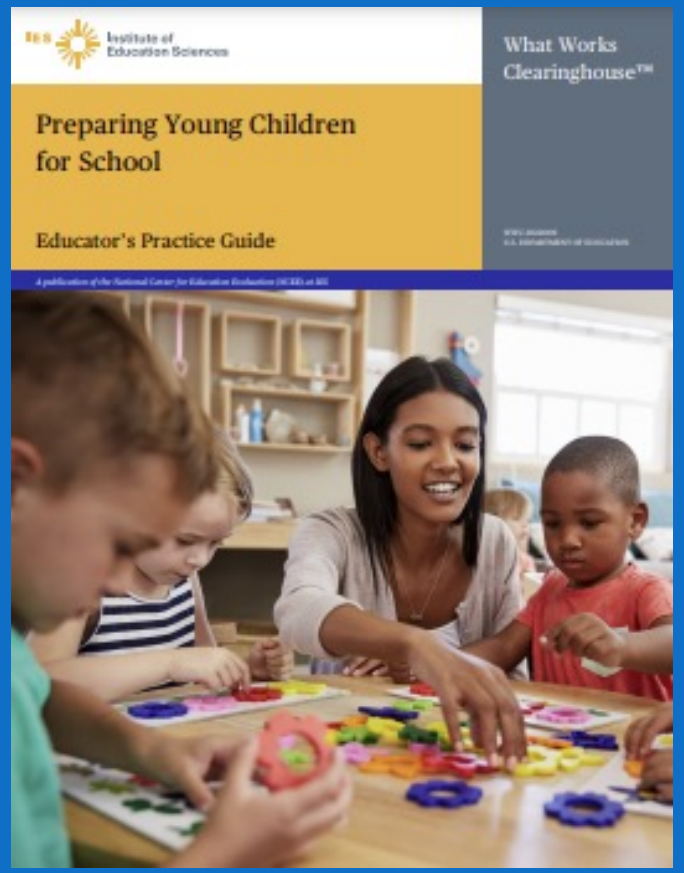
- Ask students to review:
  - DAP Guideline 4D and DEC Recommended Practices for Environments
  - ECTA Practice Guides *Adapting Children's Learning Opportunities* and *Opening Doors to Learning*
- Introduce Emerson:

Emerson is three years old. She loves the Disney princesses, the color pink, and enjoys playing with baby dolls. She **has a vocabulary of about 20 words or signs. Emerson is friendly and outgoing. She participates in morning meeting by clapping her hands to songs and imitating fingerplays.** Emerson also has Down syndrome which was diagnosed at birth… **While Emerson enjoys playing with the other children, she has difficulty following 1-step directions and has limited pre-academic skills (i.e., color naming, counting to 5, naming shapes). She has difficulty understanding how to ask a friend to play and doesn't really understand the concept of sharing toys**

Emerson persona available here:
https://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/sites/scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/Preschool%20Personas.pdf

Application

- **Part 1: Indoor Activity:**
  - Drawing on the resources reviewed, what are two centers you would target for skill-building for Emerson? Describe how you would set up the centers and the practices you would use to facilitate her engagement with peers and her communication and language skills.
- **Part 2: Outdoor Activity**
  - Outside time and the playground provide many opportunities for supporting learning, what are two activities you could use during outside time that would promote Emerson's social and communication skills and engage her peers?



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Burchinal, M., Krowka, S., Newman-Gonchar, R., Jayanthi, M., Gersten, R., Wavell, S., Lyskawa, J., Haymond, K., Bierman, K., Gonzalez, J. E., McClelland, M. M., Nelson, K., Pentimonti, J., Purpura, D. J., Sachs, J., Sarama, J., Schlesinger-Devlin, E., Washington, J., & Rosen, E. (2022). Preparing Young Children for School (WWC 2022009). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/PracticeGuide/TO4_PRACTICE_GUIDE_Preparing-for-School_07222022_v6.pdf

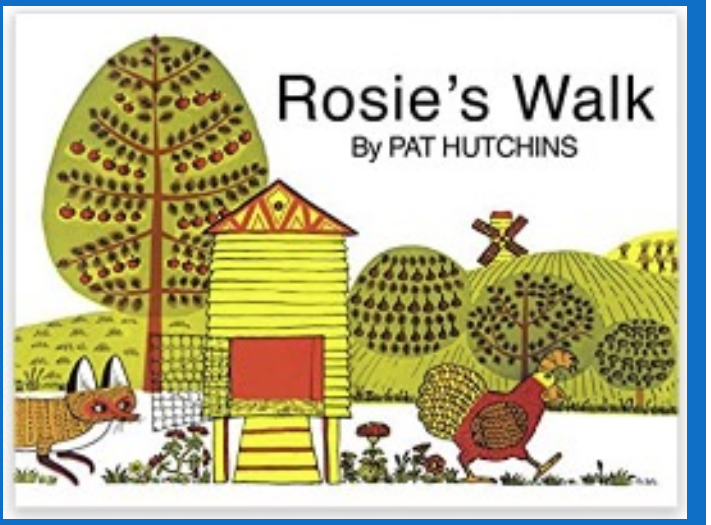
Math
example

Planning storybook conversations example

If the children do not initially demonstrate the word accurately, guide them toward the meaning of the word.[141] For example, if the child curls up inside the egg, showing the opposite of *emerging* from the egg, say, "The baby dragon was IN the egg. Can you show me how the dragon came OUT of the egg?" Immediately and specifically point out what children did or said correctly. For example, when the child shows *emerging* from the egg, say, "The dragon emerged! Great job showing how the dragon emerged from, or came out of, the egg!"

Figure 5.1. A child acting out a word

Source: Burchinal, M., Krowka, S., Newman-Gonchar, R., Jayanthi, M., Gersten, R., Wavell, S., Lyskawa, J., Haymond, K., Bierman, K., Gonzalez, J. E., McClelland, M. M., Nelson, K., Pentimonti, J., Purpura, D. J., Sachs, J., Sarama, J., Schlesinger-Devlin, E., Washington, J., & Rosen, E. (2022). Preparing Young Children for School (WWC 2022009). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/PracticeGuide/TO4_PRACTICE_GUIDE_Preparing-for-School_07222022_v6.pdf



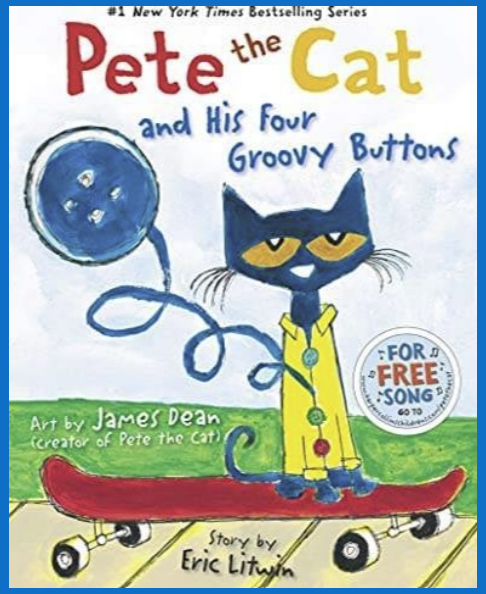
STEM Video Demonstration: Storybook Preparation (Rosie's Walk)

- Introduce vocabulary and concepts to children, letting them to use all senses
- Introduce the story characters, reminding children what they already know and teaching new concepts
- Use UDL approaches and interactions to encourage children to explore the environment and materials

STEM Video Demonstration: Storybook Conversation (Rosie's Walk)

- Use pauses and prompts to help children form connections between the story, real life, and what they already know.
- Encourage children to touch and explore the physical items that will represent the characters and concepts
- Speak slowly and allow children time to respond. Encourage questions.
- Provide gentle prompts that honor what each child has contributed AND build new knowledge.

STEMIE storybook example



Bookmark with Prompts

Ages 4-8	Math
Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons By Eric Litwin	
C	Complete a sentence **"My buttons, my buttons, my four groovy _____." (buttons)**
R	Recall **"How many buttons did Pete start with?"**
O	Open-ended questions **"What should Pete do about losing his buttons?"**
W	WH questions **"What shape are the buttons?" (circle)**
D	Distancing questions **"How would you know you had a button missing on your shirt?"**
STEM Words & Ideas to Explore	
• Number Operations (Subtraction) • Counting • Shapes	
STEMIE stemie.fpg.unc.edu	

Adaptations

- For access and the environment
- For the materials
- For guiding and teaching
- For specific needs

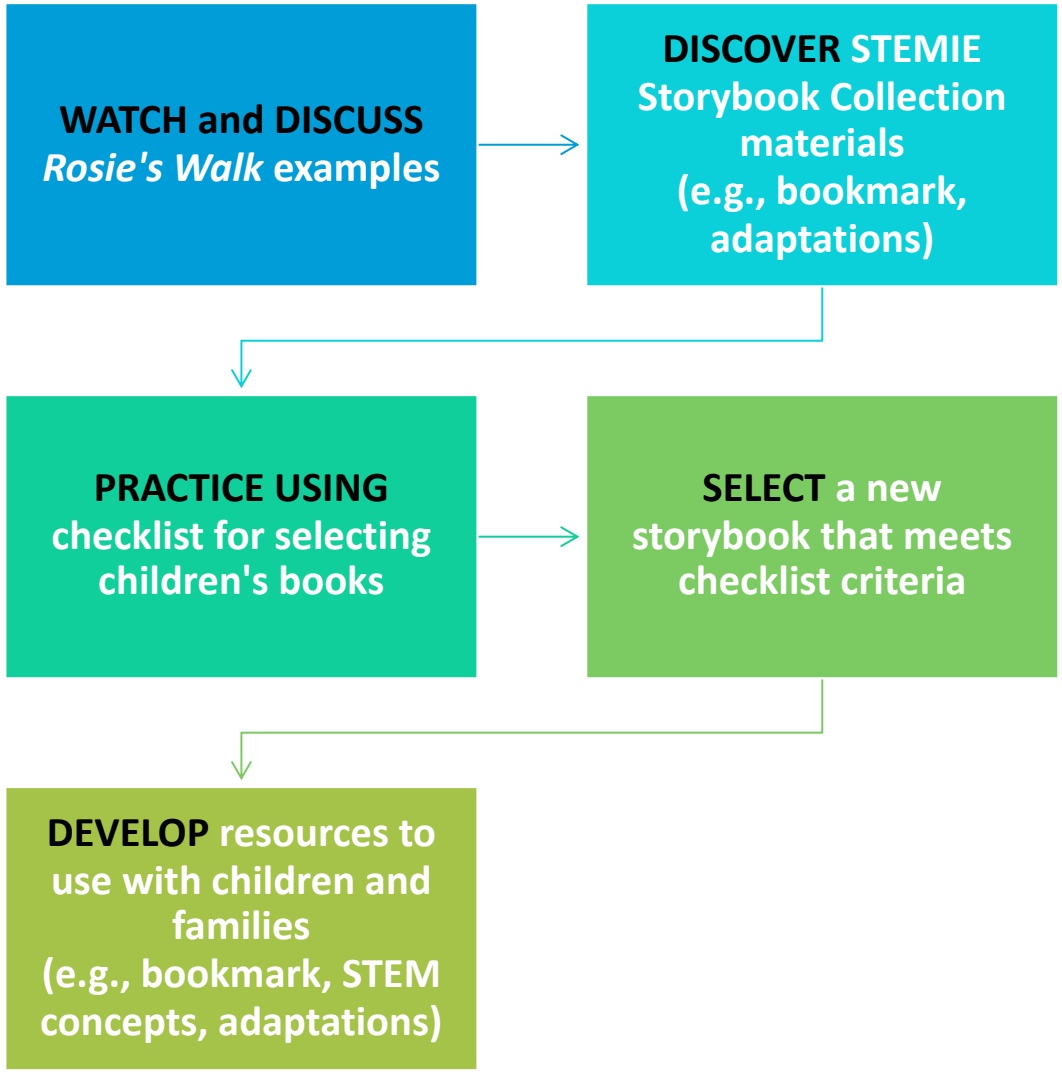
https://rise.articulate.com/share/RNoLFRn02L0ftxfyW-5ooljAYqdhP3cY#/lessons/vBd2WgzH5EUj3fP0kvI0fwAlK9tqH_zp

Considerations in Selecting Books for Young Children that Build Equity and Inclusion

https://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/script-nc-2021-webinar-using-childrens-books-support-identity-equity-and-inclusion

Considerations for Characters	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1. ***Look at the characters who are diverse.*** Are they treated like strong, active, and capable individuals? Are they able to make a contribution? Are they portrayed and treated as if they are lacking? Are diverse characters placed on a pedestal? Does their inclusion reflect tokenism?				
2. ***Watch how the characters treat each other.*** Do characters model views or actions that you would like children to emulate?				
3. ***Consider how families are portrayed.*** Are families of diverse cultures, compositions, and configurations portrayed authentically and respectfully? How are siblings depicted? Are siblings shown as being allies?				
4. ***Consider the insights children will gain from the book***. Are there one or more characters with whom a young reader who is diverse can readily identify in positive and constructive ways? Do the words and images provide mirrors (i.e., an accurate reflection that values diverse children, their families, and their communities? Do the words and images provide windows and/or sliding doors (i.e., opportunities to learn about or partake in someone else's experience)?				
5. ***Consider the potential impact of the book.*** Will it help to expand a child's world view? Will it build knowledge of other cultures and lifeways? Will it provide accurate insights that build opportunities for inclusion?				
Considerations for the Story, Theme & Setting	Yes	No	N/A	Comments

Possible assignment



Edu 221 Children with Exceptionalities

Alamance Community College

Jennifer Jones

Edu 221 Children with Exceptionalities

Traditional Course

- Focuses on vocabulary words, learning about individual disabilities and taking quizzes on text content.
- Chapters read in order from the textbook, starting with public policy, specific disabilities
- Major assignment is creating a presentation about a specific disability

Revised Course

- Focuses on family involvement, identifying children's strengths and areas for growth, and creating adaptations for children in the classroom.
- Chapters read out of order so that family involvement could be a focus early in the semester.
- Students able to apply information to actual children (personas)
- Major assignment is creating a persona of a child with a disability and describing how they would work with that child and family, change the environment, and create adaptations within the classroom.

Change #1 Family Involvement and using Stella Persona

- A focus of the course
- Moved to earlier in the semester
- Students use the persona of “Stella” to imagine how they would include Stella’s family in their work with Stella

Reflections

- **I found using a persona very helpful in understanding how to create appropriate environments for children with exceptionalities**. Working with Stella's parents helped understand fully what we had to do for Stella's education needs, as well as her personally to understand her personality. I will love to continue to work with "Stella" and my "own child persona".

  --Jozelyn

- I feel like being able to use Stella's persona as an example throughout these last few weeks has made it a lot easier to understand the material. We are not teachers ourselves, so we don't have any experience working with actual children, so **being able to use Stella as an example and putting a name to the person really helped make it feel more real**. The same goes for using Stella's family as an example. There are many real-life children who are like Stella and her family so **it's awesome that we've been able to use these examples in order to help us out in real life situations in the future**!

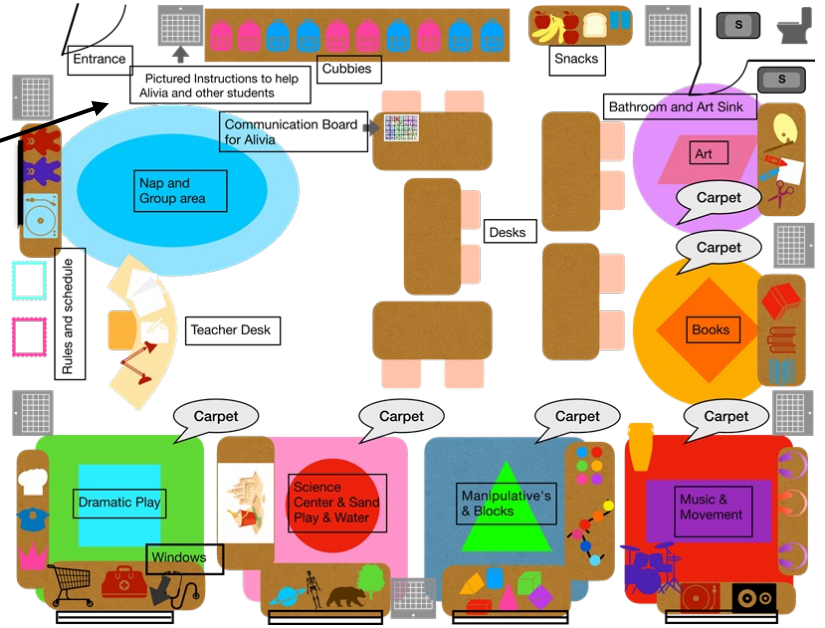
  --Delaney

Change #2: Create a persona

- Allows students to envision how they could make adaptations for specific children in their classroom by creating a persona child
- The students describe the persona child's strengths, area for growth, disability and family structure.
- A persona is created and shared with the class.

Change #3 Application

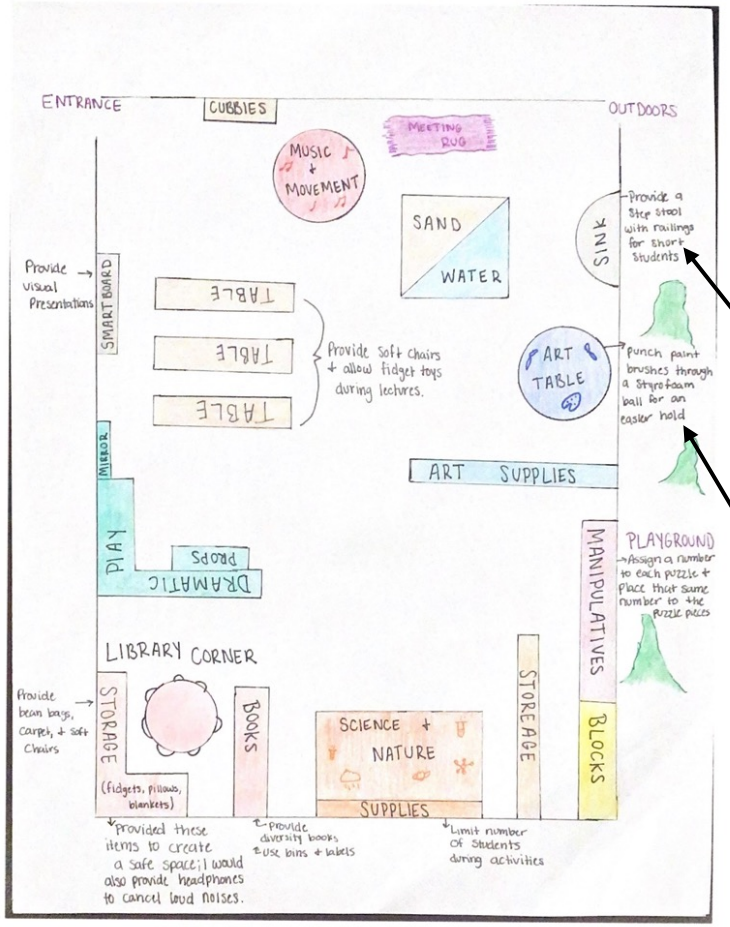
Communication Board for Alivia



As we studied various topics the students had the opportunity to apply the information to their work with their persona child

For instance,

- Students made adaptations to classroom environments for their persona child
- Students created task analysis activities



Provide a step stool with railings

Push a paint brush through a Styrofoam ball for easier hold for Hudson

Reflections

I think that creating this persona child was definitely beneficial in a lot of ways. It was helpful to create a child using some of the attributes that I've experienced with other children, alongside of attributes that I have not experienced. It was a way of learning new ways to accommodate children with exceptionalities. **It also helped me expand and experiment with my knowledge on different situations that a child with an exceptionality may face, and what I may face in a classroom setting**.

Challenges with creating my persona child that I encountered would be the fact that **I had to keep reminding myself that THIS is my persona child, this is his personality, these are his exceptionalities**, and I had to stick with this personality and fictional character that I have created. I had trouble with sticking to the script sometimes and would try to add onto my persona child things that did not correlate with him. I would also forget small details about my persona child and would have to reflect back on him from previous assignments. --Chasta

By developing my persona, **I'm better equipped** to provide children with disabilities a safe learning environment. This assignment helped me understand the essentials for the classroom when children with disabilities are involved. Challenges I encountered while creating my persona included finding the necessary resources for my specific child. I wanted to make sure I was providing my persona with everything they would need, but sometimes I had a **hard time figuring out what those resources might be**. --Sabina

What is one thing you will do as a result of what you heard or saw in this webinar?

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https://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu

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Date/Time	Topic
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