Sample Assignments to Support Learning About and Creating Inclusive Environments and Interactions

Assignment	Knowledge Acquisition (what do you want students to read, watch, draw upon, etc.?)	Knowledge Application (what do you want students to demonstrate they can do?)
What does it take?	Frameworks and readings that are part of the course **Presentation from Juliana Urtubey, 2021 National Teacher of the Year** (23:52 minutes) **Inclusion Institute keynote address** by Jackie Joseph, speaking from her perspectives as an educator, an administrator, and a family member (57:42 minutes)	• Ask students to listen to one presentation, the other, or both. • As they listen, ask them to write down themes and messages related to family and community, inclusion, appreciating and understanding individual learners, culturally responsive practices, and individualizing to support each child and family. • Ask students to document how each presentation aligns with or reinforces messages in specific frameworks (e.g., NAEYC DAP Core Considerations, DEC Recommended Practices) that are being emphasized in your course. • Ask students to write down messages that they find particularly compelling for them as a future early childhood educator. • Ask students to reflect on how the messages from either/both presentations will inform their future work to include each and every child and family.
Environment is more than a physical place	Frameworks and readings that are part of the course, e.g., **DAP Guideline 1: Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners** (page 15)	• Ask students to read/watch relevant materials (e.g., evidence-based frameworks like DAP, UDL, etc.), DAP Guideline 1, course materials, etc.) • Ask students do identify specific practices and strategies they would use to promote a caring, equitable community of learners. It may be helpful to identify specific components of this assignment (e.g., physical environment, emotional environment, cognitive environment, positive and caring interactions and relationships). These components might also be used to delineate the components of the rubric for grading this assignment.
Break it down: Finger plays	Frameworks and readings that are part of the course, e.g., DAP Guideline 4F, Inclusion Indicator E6.6, **STEMIE Guide to Adaptations**	• Identify common fingerplays and ask students to break down the components of each (see below). A next step might be considering how to teach each child to participate in each finger play. This could work well as a team activity, whether virtually or face-to-face.

Let's play . . .	What skills does a child need to play?	At what age might a child be expected to have those skills?	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			

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Break it down: Routines & expectations	Frameworks and readings that are part of the course, e.g., RP E1 and E3, **STEMIE Guide to Teaching Practices** **Teaching Children to Clean Up**	• Remind students about the importance of teaching routines to support all children in knowing what is expected. This practice avoids making assumptions about cultural differences and conveys consistent expectations that support all children. • Share Andrea Racek's example, Teaching Children to Clean Up • Identify other routines or expectations that occur in an early childhood setting (e.g., sharing, taking turns, lining up to go outside). • **Assignment:** Ask students to delineate the specific steps for helping each and every child to learn and participate successfully in a routine. Include consideration of cultural differences (e.g., is this a familiar concept? New concept? Is it something that also happens at home? Similarly? Differently?), language and vocabulary differences ("red up" vs. "clean up"), and ability differences. Specify how the environment and interactions will factor into the process.
Supporting emergent curriculum	Frameworks and readings that are part of the course, e.g., Universal Design for Learning principles, DAP Guideline 5, Inclusion Indicator E5)	• Set the stage for the assignment: Recently, the children in your kindergarten classroom have become extremely interested in tattoos. (NOTE: Select an interest that works for your course, including age group, etc.) • **Assignment**: Detail how you would build on the interests of the children to support 1) vocabulary and language, 2) mathematical ideas, skills, and language, and 3) social-emotional development. Specify how you would use the class environment and interactions to explore this content within regularly occurring routines. In addition, provide one example of an original way in which you would use the environment and interactions to support development (e.g., use the project approach to create a tattoo parlor). Require students to document how their ideas reflect the frameworks and other instructional resources used in the course.
Inclusive indoor and outdoor play	Frameworks and readings that are part of the course, e.g., personas, **DAP Guidelines, DEC Recommended Practices: Environment (Adapting Children's Learning Opportunities, Opening Doors to Learning**	**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? Ask students to document the evidence sources they drew upon (i.e., citations and locations within the course text and readings, frameworks, etc.)

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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. • Here's the 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?
Planning storybook conversations for each and every child and family	Frameworks and readings that are part of the course STEM Video Demonstrations: **Storybook Preparation (Rosie's Walk)** **Storybook Conversation (Rosie's Walk)** STEM Storybook Reading for Infants, Toddlers, and Young Children **https://rise.articulate.com/share/RNoLFRn02L0ftxfyW-5ooljAYqdhP3cY#/** **Using children's books to support identity, equity, and inclusion (Additional Resources and Ideas)** **https://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/script-nc-2021-webinar-using-childrens-books-support-identity-equity-and-inclusion**	• Prepare students for this assignment by asking them to read any relevant materials that are part of the course and watching/discussing the STEMIE videos (Storybook Preparation and Storybook Conversation) related to *Rosie's Walk*. Ask students to discuss how each video sets the stage for each child to fully participate. Ask that they also consider how the approach of introducing core vocabulary for a new story might support young children with different languages, experiences, and abilities. • Introduce students to the **STEMIE storybook collection**. Focus on the resources that are available for each story. For example, for *Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons* the resources include links to the book in different formats, STEM ideas in the book, a bookmark with prompts, adaptations for access, environment, materials, etc., and activities to build on the STEM ideas in the book. • **Assignment**: Ask students to identify a storybook that is related to the content of the course (e.g., a book suitable for toddlers in an infant/toddler course), **has not** been featured on the STEMIE website, and is selected using the *Children's Book Selection Checklist.* Ask students to create a set of resources for the book they chose, including a bookmark. Ask that the completed assignment also provide ideas for how families might use the completed set of materials. It would be great to create a repository for the completed examples so all students could have access to all the materials for use in their future work with children and families.