

WHAT IS THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM?

CREATIVE CURRICULUM:

The Creative Curriculum balances both teacher-directed and child-initiated learning, with an emphasis on responding to children's learning styles and building on their strengths and interests. This curriculum applies the latest theory and research on best practices in teaching and learning and the content standards developed by states and professional organizations. While keeping the original environmentally based approach it clearly defines the teacher's vital role in connecting content, teaching, and learning for preschool children. It features goals and objectives linked directly to our valid and reliable assessment instrument.

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool translates new research and theory from the field of early childhood education into a practical, easy-to-understand approach to working with children and their families. It is a comprehensive curriculum with a clear organizational structure and a focus on interest areas.

Theory and Research

Child development theory and scientific research are the foundation of The Creative Curriculum for Preschool. They inform decision making, influence our view of children, and are the basis for all the recommendations we've included.

Abraham Maslow--Basic needs and learning Erik Erikson--The emotions and learning

Jean Piaget--Logical thinking and reasoning Lev Vygotsky--Social interaction and learning

Howard Gardner--Multiple intelligences Sara Smilansky--Play and learning

Research on learning and resiliency Research on learning and the brain

Not only is every aspect of The Creative Curriculum based on sound developmental theory and evidence-based research, but numerous research studies have been conducted to validate its effectiveness.

How Children Develop and Learn

Knowing how children develop and learn is the basis for planning a program, selecting materials, and guiding children's learning. By knowing, we mean appreciating general patterns of growth in all children as well as the differences you will certainly encounter among individual children.

The Creative Curriculum enhances social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. Goals and objectives for each of these developmental areas are organized into The Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum for Ages 3-5.

Because children do not master a skill all at once, each objective has three steps that illustrate the typical sequence of development. A special category called forerunners helps you look at emerging

behaviors for each objective and enables you to assess all children's learning and development, including those with disabilities or developmental delays.

You'll find that The Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum for Ages 3-5 is an effective way to focus your observations of children and document their progress in relation to the goals and objectives. This tool has been proven valid and reliable in a wide range of research studies.

The Learning Environment

The learning environment is the structure of the classroom that sets the context for teaching and learning. The Creative Curriculum shows you how to:

set up the physical environment and maintain interest areas

establish a classroom structure that includes the daily routine and schedule, choice times, and small- and large-group times

create a classroom community that promotes positive relationships and

where children make friends, and learn social problem-solving skills

Interest Areas

The physical space of The Creative Curriculum classroom is organized into 10 indoor interest areas:

- Blocks
- Dramatic Play
- Toys and Games
- Art
- Library
- Discovery
- Sand and Water
- Music and Movement
- Cooking
- Technology

The 10 indoor interest areas plus the outdoor space offer multiple opportunities for children to explore, discover, and learn.

Interest areas provide a setting for children to learn academic content and apply skills.

What Children Learn

Based on scientific research and state and professional standards, The Creative Curriculum identifies the knowledge, skills, and concepts important for preschool children to acquire in each content area: literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology.

We describe the key components of these content areas:

Literacy: vocabulary and language, phonological awareness, letters, words, print, comprehension, books and other texts, and sources of enjoyment

Mathematics: numbers; patterns and relationships; geometry and spatial awareness; measurement; and data collection, organization, and representation

Science: physical science, life science, and earth and the environment

Social Studies: spaces and geography, people and how they live, people and the environment, and people and the past

The Arts: dance, music, drama, and the visual arts

Technology: awareness of technology, basic operations and concepts, technological tools, and people and technology

Most importantly, we explain how to teach these subject areas in ways that respect how preschool children develop and learn.

The Teacher's Role

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool describes the teacher's role as an ongoing cycle of observing children, guiding their learning, and assessing their progress. We show you how to motivate children, build on their prior knowledge and strengths, and support their learning in an intentional way by using a variety of strategies to increase their knowledge, skills, and understandings.

You'll find out how to use assessment information to guide children's learning throughout the day: during large- and small-group times, routine times, long-term studies, and in interest areas.

The Family's Role

Home and school are a young child's two most important worlds. Children must bridge these two worlds every day. If home and school are connected in positive and respectful ways, children feel secure. However, children suffer when the two worlds are at odds because of apathy, lack of understanding, or an inability to work together. Teachers can build a true partnership when they truly value the family's role in a child's education and recognize how much they can accomplish by working with families.

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool provides you with guidance on getting to know families, welcoming and communicating with them regularly, collaborating for children's learning, and responding to challenging situations.