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Children First: A Resource for Kindergarten

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Children First: A Resource for Kindergarten

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Introduction

This resource supports educators in providing a positive experience for kindergarten children. The resource is set up in such a way that allows educators to connect curriculum outcomes into meaningful associations. This resource offers a framework for planning based on principles of early learning.

The resource is organized into the following sections:

The kindergarten program's underpinnings are research-based **early childhood education** practices that reflect principles of early learning. These principles focus on children's competence, holistic learning, relationships, and learning environments.

The **distinguishing features of an early childhood education program** are the environment, conversations, and play. They represent best practice in early childhood education, guide educational decisions, and reflect the importance of relationships.

Planning an effective kindergarten program includes focusing on desired results (outcomes), assessment evidence, and a learning plan. This framework for planning focuses on what children need to know, understand, and be able to do, guides educators in knowing when children have achieved the outcomes, and assists the educator in planning and facilitating children's experiences.

The **outcomes and indicators** outline what children should know, understand, and be able to do by the end of kindergarten. The indicators provided describe the breadth and depth of each outcome.

Developmentally and culturally appropriate practice for young children is emphasized in this resource. Therefore, in addition to kindergarten educators, educators of Grades 1 to 3 may find this resource valuable because it includes approaches to learning that accommodate the diverse learning needs of young children up to eight years of age.

Early Childhood Education

Children from birth to eight years of age experience a unique and critical time in their development and learning. The learning that takes place in these early years establishes a foundation for the child's life. An understanding of how children learn as well as thoughtful planning that incorporates this understanding will invite children to:

- discover and value their inherent gifts
- gain confidence through a sense of belonging
- understand that they can make a valued contribution to their community

[Children] are self-motivated learners actively seeking to understand the complex world in which they live. Learning is therefore an ongoing, flexible, open-ended process wherein children construct their own understanding. Teaching is not telling; teaching is guiding discovery. (Staley as cited in Curtis & Carter, 2000, p. 29)

- be creative, competent communicators
- be curious lifelong learners.

Children possess extraordinary strengths and potential as well as an inexhaustible need for expression and realization. Children naturally and continuously explore, make discoveries, and transform themselves.

It is important that the kindergarten program:

- honours the potential of children by recognizing the uniqueness, wholeness, significance, and dignity of each child
- values early childhood as a foundational time of a child's development
- recognizes that children emanate from the contexts of family, culture, and society
- builds relationships with the child and his/her family based on respect, trust, and affirmation
- is based on knowledge of the development of children, aligned with current research, and is respectful of many ways of knowing
- responds to the linguistic and cultural diversity of children
- expects excellence.

This philosophy is supported by the following principles of learning.

Principles of Early Learning

The principles described below are generalizations that are adapted from research about how children learn. It is important that educators consider the following principles about children and their early learning experiences for the purpose of guiding the kindergarten program.

Children as Competent Learners

The beliefs we hold about children influence the way we interact with them. Children have different strengths, interests, and ways of learning. They come to school competent, inventive, and full of ideas that can be expressed in many ways. Effective educators:

- appreciate that children are active learners who draw on their experiences to construct their own understandings of the world
- accept that children are competent co-learners with educators and recognize that children learn best when they are valued, their physical needs are met, and they feel psychologically secure
- acknowledge that children demonstrate multiple ways of knowing, doing, and learning, including First Nations and Métis ways of knowing

-
- support children’s development by providing opportunities to demonstrate newly acquired skills in authentic and meaningful ways.

Development and Learning as Holistic

Holistic development and learning is based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to people, places, values, and beliefs. Effective educators:

- recognize that individual children develop at different rates and in different ways
- support children’s development by providing opportunities that advance children’s growth beyond their current level of knowledge, skills, interests, attitudes, and abilities
- provide integrated experiences that support children in achieving the outcomes of the seven Required Areas of Study
- provide opportunities for children to grow in each dimension (intellectual, socio-emotional, physical, and spiritual)
- base daily practice on current knowledge and research in early childhood education.

Relationships as Opportunities

Children develop many relationships with their families, with other people, and with the physical and spiritual worlds. Relationships exist not only between people and the environment but also among ideas, theories, and belief systems. Relationships are opportunities for young children to create a sense of self, identity, and belonging while learning about the world around them. Effective educators:

- respect the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of children in the context of family, culture, and community
- develop connections with people, the environment, ideas, and beliefs
- engage children, parents/guardians, families, and the community in program planning
- encourage children to confidently share ideas and insights.

All learning is based on relationships; that is, something has meaning when compared and contrasted with something else.

(Garner, 2007, p. 5)

The deepest language of all ... is the language of relationships. ... Learning is about making relationships, and this is the language that enables us to absorb information and process it at a deep level.

(Fraser, 2006, p. 270)

Environments as Stimulating and Dynamic

Stimulating and dynamic environments are carefully designed to be aesthetically pleasing and inspire children to wonder, ask questions, and be curious. Children are active learners and construct their own understanding of the world by reflecting on and responding to their environments. Effective educators:

- facilitate play, exploration, and discovery
- promote the holistic nature of children's learning in an environment that stimulates exploration, curiosity, and interactions with others
- create an inclusive environment that is safe, flexible, and has open-ended materials to stimulate the imagination
- encourage children's independence, responsibility, and participation in the learning environment, family, and community.

The principles of early learning are the foundation to planning an integrated experience and are realized through the distinguishing features of an effective kindergarten program.

Distinguishing Features of an Early Childhood Education Program

How kindergarten children learn best and how educators can honour children's potential are important questions for educators to ask. This resource invites and challenges educators to think about how they can build relationships with children and align teaching practice with the latest research in early childhood development while being aware of the diversity of all children. The distinguishing features of environment, conversations, and play can provide the foundation for children's learning. It is through these features that relationships among peers and with the educator can be established and strengthened.

When children feel secure in their relationships, they:

- feel valued
- are willing to engage in new learning experiences
- act responsibly
- care about others.

Many children will come to kindergarten with a strong sense of self and willing to learn. They will already be on their way to acting responsibly and caring about others. It is important that the educator continue to foster these traits through a well-planned environment and meaningful conversations.

Environment

The environment has a powerful influence on children’s development. As children interact with their environment, they come to understand the world in which they live and learn. A well-planned environment can enrich and expand children’s experiences, support their growth and development, and inspire curiosity. The environment can be the outdoors, the school, the community, the classroom, and, with technology, the world, universe, and beyond.

In an effective kindergarten classroom, children experience healthy, inclusive, and safe settings that enhance their learning and well-being. Children feel valued in flexible environments that stimulate inquiry. Children sense that they, their peers, and their families belong in the setting.

Children flourish in learning environments where educators respect their ideas, encourage their play investigations, and invite their participation in framing what happens, or could happen, in the setting. When children feel valued, safe, and comfortable in an environment, they engage more fully in activities and interactions. Considerations for supporting exploration of the environment are explained in the following sections.

Supporting Connections and Responsibility

Children have an intrinsic desire to have relationships with others, to belong, and to feel valued and loved. The environment can provide spaces for children to connect with others and be inviting for families and community members. Meaningful experiences within the environment can instill a responsibility in children to look after the environment, both inside and outside the classroom.

Engaging the Senses and Children’s Interests

Children require consistency and routines, but they also need spaces that are designed with flexible options. An effective environment changes regularly and is inviting to children. Special areas that include materials such as books, blocks, boxes, shadow table, dress-up clothes, and puppets can be developed to address children’s interests and invite inquiry. Exploring the outdoor environment can further broaden the interests of children and provide stimulation for children’s senses. As well, indoor environments should also include outdoor items.

Natural and open-ended materials can provide an abundance of opportunities that stimulate children’s senses. Herb gardens and a variety of healthy foods can stimulate the sense of smell and lead to further inquiry. Textures such as different cloth materials, corrugated cardboard, shaving cream, and sand or water tables provide a tactile environment while a tabletop water fountain, wind chimes, or musical instruments can create beautiful sounds within the classroom.

Effective kindergarten programs include caring educators who establish stimulating environments that support positive self-images in children.

Children are nomads of the imagination and great manipulators of space: they love to construct, move and invent situations.

(Vecchi as cited in Fraser, 2006, p.120)

When we are interested in what we are learning, no one has to force us to keep learning; we just do.

(Littky, 2004, p. 98)

Fostering Curiosity and Intellectual Engagement

Children are fascinated with the world around them and how it works. Light, colour, reflection, and motion are sources of wonder, exploration, and inquiry. The environment can provide opportunities for children to design, play, wonder, and explore the world around them. Modelling and demonstrations can also help children pursue their own ideas and explore the possibilities of various materials or tools to support their inquiry.

Supporting Representation and Reflection

Children require multiple opportunities and invitations to construct, express, and reflect on their thoughts, experiences, and feelings. Images, materials, and tools encourage children to explore symbolic representations, reflect on their learning, and express understanding through their play.

(For more information, refer to Curtis and Carter, 2003.)

Conversations

Children develop as confident learners when educators respect and acknowledge the experiences, skills, and interests children bring to their play and learning. Through meaningful conversations, respect and relationships are affirmed. As educators provide experiences that increase children's understandings through authentic questions about their play, offer ideas that extend their play, and encourage children to be self-directed learners, children learn to trust in their own ability to make decisions and to investigate new projects.

When educators show genuine interest in what children have to share, they are demonstrating respect for children's ideas and valuing the contributions to the conversation by the children. Listening carefully to children will guide educators when scaffolding the children's learning experiences. Children who are engaged in genuine conversations:

- initiate conversations
- talk freely, respectfully, and with enthusiasm and expression
- believe their thoughts and ideas have value
- expand their ideas through experiences or others' ideas
- apply new knowledge to other learning contexts
- reflect on their learning.

Educators validate children by actively listening and considering the ideas and theories that children are exploring. Questions during conversations can inform educators regarding the thinking behind the children's theories. This information can be used to scaffold children's learning and further opportunities for the children to test, refine, reject, or accept their theories.

Questions initiated by educators invite and encourage children to think deeply about ideas and experiences, and to develop potential solutions. Effective questioning by the educator encourages children to:

- support their own ideas
- give reasons for their answers
- spark meaningful connections
- consider alternatives and weigh evidence
- develop more questions
- accept and acknowledge differences
- think at higher levels (see Table 1 on page 23).

Questions that encourage higher level thinking, and draw upon prior knowledge and experiences, as well as interests, can provide a framework, purpose, and direction for the learning program and guide the educator in helping children connect what they are learning to their experiences and life beyond the classroom. Questions and conversations further the children's language development.

Educator Roles in Conversations and Language Development

Children often imitate what the adults in their lives do and say. Adults provide early literacy models daily by:

- "thinking out loud"
- writing
- reading
- telling stories, reciting poetry, and singing or chanting
- inviting children to join in chanting or reading a favourite story
- discussing what is happening in a picture book
- having a wide variety of resources available in the environment
- predicting what will happen next in a story or play
- modelling formal language, both written and spoken
- modelling correct written and spoken language.

Children develop language abilities in many ways. The environment that supports children's language learning encourages them to use various means to represent understanding. It is important to provide an environment that invites children to use language in many ways.

To encourage language development, educators can:

- designate an area for creating and displaying children's works of art and sculptures/constructions/models
- display pictures and posters of creations by a variety of artists

... for a question to be real, the student must really care about making an answer to it. However, it does not follow that the only real questions are ones that are first asked by students ... at issue here is the student's attitude to the question...

(Wells, 2001, p. 190)

... thinking of questions as 'seeds of thinking' rather than queries requiring answers is a major change in a teachers' teaching practice. If the question is a 'seed', it is asked for a different purpose than receiving a correct answer; it is asked to stimulate thinking and feeling.

(Berdoussis, Wong, & Wien, 2008, p. 43)

It is important for young children to see adults modeling the use of written symbols and words:

- "I will write that down before I forget."
- "Let's make a list of what we need for our project."
- "We need a sign here telling parents where to find us when we go outdoors."
- Writing notes to parents about a planned field trip.
- Labelling displays.

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- place books strategically around the classroom or near a related toy or project
 - offer appealing tools (e.g., new pens, sticky notes, clipboards) in various locations (e.g., in the dramatic play space or outdoors)
 - introduce the use of maps, globes, diagrams, and charts, whenever possible, to expand children’s experiences with different means of understanding and representing their world
 - validate the many ways cultures, including First Nations and Métis peoples, communicated with purpose and meaning (such as pictographs, birchbark scrolls, hide paintings, use of talking sticks, and oral traditions)
 - encourage children to communicate with their peers and parents/guardians by establishing a messaging system (such as letters, emails, blogs, and electronic bulletin boards) in the classroom
 - post picture and symbol notices to and from children at their height around the room (symbol of running shoes: “Today we are going on a field trip”).

Play

Play is a natural mode of learning and the foundation for the kindergarten program. Play is vitally important for the healthy development of young children (McCain, Mustard, & Shanker, 2007). Through play, children come to understand the world around them, express themselves, and practise new skills. Children engaged in play:

- use imagination
- make sense of their world
- develop social and cultural understandings
- express their thoughts and feelings
- use flexible and divergent thinking
- develop large and small motor skills
- solve real problems
- develop language, literacy skills, and concepts.

Children learn how to establish relationships with their peers through their play. Play and relationships occur naturally in socio-dramatic play episodes. Working together in their pretend play, children learn to use their language and social skills as they cooperate, negotiate, persist in tasks, and collaborate to sustain their play.

The function of play in development and learning has been considered from various theoretical perspectives over many years (Johnson, Christie, & Yawkey, 1999). Researchers have explored the relationship between play and the development of motor, cognition, language, social, and emotional domains. Johnson et al. suggest three ways play relates to development:

- play may reflect development (what the child can do)
- play may reinforce development (what the child practises and refines)
- play may result in development (what the child adds to growth).

Observing How Play Indicates Development

An educator is watching children gather around the climbing apparatus in the playground and notices that some children are not participating. While some are laughing and swinging freely from bar to bar, there are others who stand and watch (reflects development: what the child can do).

It may be that some of the children watching have not yet developed the physical ability or the confidence to move hand over hand from bar to bar. As the educator continues to observe and learn about children and how they learn, one of the children attempts to swing cautiously from the bar with two hands. The educator supports the development through encouragement and offering the safety of a hand in supporting the child. The child manages to let go of the bar with one hand and successfully place it on the next bar without falling. The child, feeling more confident after a successful first attempt, continues to move from bar to bar with the educator's support. The educator encourages the child to try again. The child agrees but does not want the educator's help this time. The educator steps back to watch the child move slowly and hesitantly from bar to bar (reinforces development: what the child practises and refines).

At the end of the day, the educator observes the child running towards the climbing apparatus while calling out to the parent to "watch this". The child confidently swings from one bar to another across the length of the apparatus (results in development: what the child adds to growth).

Understanding the complexity of play and how it reflects, reinforces, and results in children's development assists the educator in planning for teaching and learning.

Research shows that children who engage in complex forms of socio-dramatic play have greater language skills than nonplayers, better social skills, more empathy, more imagination, and more of the subtle capacity to know what others mean. They are less aggressive and show more self-control and higher levels of thinking.

(Miller & Almon, 2009)

... to gain access to the experience of young children, it may be important to play with them, talk with them... follow them into their play spaces and into the things they can do while you remain attentively aware of the way it is for children.

(van Manen, 1990, p. 68)

Children are capable, competent, curious and creative. They are natural researchers as they question what they see, hypothesize solutions, predict outcomes, experiment, and reflect on their discoveries.

(Staley, as cited in Curtis & Carter, 2000, p. 29)

Supporting Play

When educators support children in their play, research tells us that children's play becomes more elaborate, richer, and more complex.

Effective educators gauge the situation carefully before deciding to take any action. Educators can take opportunities to become participants in the play by following the children's lead in the action.

The act of becoming play partners:

- demonstrates respect for the children's thoughts, language, and ideas
- strengthens the social and emotional connections between children and educators
- supports children's language and conceptual development provided the educators acknowledge and maintain the children's leadership in the play
- deepens the play with the addition of a new object or idea that encourages children to think about next steps in their play.

The educator's guidance is essential in encouraging children's learning through play, in maintaining an environment that invites a positive self-image in play, and in enhancing the opportunities to expand positive relationships among the players.

Embracing Inclusion and Diversity Through Play

Children and educators bring diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds as well as differing abilities to the learning environment, enriching the community. The kindergarten program must demonstrate an understanding and responsiveness to children's wide range of strengths, cultures, and linguistic capabilities. Play offers multiple opportunities for children to come together as learners, in a stimulating and inclusive setting.

In their play and interactions, children learn about and practise their roles and responsibilities as members of an early childhood learning community. Play in kindergarten provides an opportune time for educators to engage in conversations with children about differences, reinforcing respect and dispelling harmful stereotypes. As well, play provides a natural opportunity for children to engage in inquiry.

Stimulating Inquiry

Knowing that children, as active learners, solve real problems through their play, it is important that educators are aware of the process of inquiry learning and how it can be a natural and important part of play. Inquiries can take place in a variety of environments, including those in the school setting and within the community.

Inquiry learning provides children with opportunities to test theories and build knowledge, abilities, and inquiring habits of mind that lead to deeper understanding of their world and the human experience. Thoughtful questioning by the educator and a well-designed environment can lead children to further inquiry.

Inquiry learning builds on children's inherent sense of curiosity and wonder, drawing on their diverse backgrounds, interests, and experiences. The inquiry process provides opportunities for children to become active participants in a collaborative search for meaning and understanding. Children who are engaged in inquiry:

- construct knowledge and deep understanding rather than passively receive information
- are directly involved in the discovery of new knowledge
- encounter differing perspectives and ideas
- transfer new knowledge and skills to new circumstances
- take ownership and responsibility for their ongoing learning.

(Adapted from Kuhlthau & Todd, 2008, p. 1)

Planning an Effective Kindergarten Program

Planning in kindergarten begins with the end in mind. Educators should analyze the outcomes for each area of study (desired results) to determine the types of knowledge (i.e., factual, conceptual, procedural, metacognitive, or a combination) that the children are to know, understand, and be able to do. When familiar with the kindergarten outcomes for each area of study, the educator needs to reflect on what types of evidence would demonstrate that the children had achieved the outcomes (assessment evidence). Once the desired results and assessment evidence have been clearly established, the educator can plan for daily experiences (planning for learning).

Educators need to ensure that, over time, all outcomes are addressed and that all children are provided with ample opportunities to achieve particular outcomes. The educator selects resources and plans experiences to support children's achievement of the outcomes. It is the educator's responsibility to:

- design a flexible environment where exploration is possible, divergent thinking is encouraged, and children's interests are extended to achieve the kindergarten outcomes
- adjust the environment as children's interests expand and additional outcomes are targeted
- engage in genuine conversations to guide inquiry experiences that children initiate

Ways to promote inquiry-based learning in the classroom:

- Ask questions that invite constructivist input and validate prior knowledge
- Ask open-ended questions
- Encourage children to wait a few seconds before giving an answer to allow time for thinking
- Repeat or paraphrase what the children say without praising or criticizing.

(Ogu & Schmidt, 2009, p. 15)

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- be prepared to initiate and plan conversations and experiences that will lead to achievement of the outcomes
 - observe play to determine ranges of children’s development, and
 - support play that will meet individual needs, address interests, and achieve outcomes.

The following is based upon the backward by design method of planning (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) and describes desired results, assessment evidence, and planning for learning.

Desired Results

The kindergarten outcomes for each area of study identify what the children are to know, understand, and be able to do by the end of kindergarten. Analysis of the outcomes to determine the types of knowledge (i.e., factual, conceptual, procedural, metacognitive, or a combination) is essential to planning an effective kindergarten program. Outcomes are to be achieved through play and other planned experiences. Healthy relationships, quality conversations, and a well-planned environment will facilitate the children’s achievement of the outcomes.

By looking closely at each outcome, the educator will develop a clear understanding of what it is that the children are expected to know, understand, and be able to do by the end of kindergarten. When looking at outcomes across each area of study, educators will begin to make connections and see possibilities for integration. The outcomes and indicators for each area of study begin on page 12.

As each outcome is reviewed, educators begin to consider what elements in the environment would be needed, with whom relationships could be fostered, and how conversations can be used to gather information and scaffold children’s learning.

Educators who have a solid understanding of the outcomes will be able to provide children with opportunities to construct their own understandings, be curious wonderers, and to be actively engaged in their learning. Children explore the environment and authentic, compelling questions through play and other planned experiences. It is as a result of this exploration of big ideas that the outcomes will be achieved.

Assessment Evidence

Before specific learning experiences are planned, educators need to determine how they will know if the children are progressing towards the achievement of the outcomes, or if they have already achieved them. In kindergarten, this evidence allows educators to assess what the children know, understand, and are able to do. From the evidence,

educators can see or infer what the children are learning. This evidence will facilitate assessment and planning. Educators assess children for interrelated purposes:

- to collect evidence to guide daily planning (assessment for learning)
- to assist children in becoming aware of their thinking (metacognition) and to make it visible by documenting the learning process (assessment as learning)
- to record evidence of children’s learning to inform educators and report to parents/guardians (assessment of learning).

The assessment evidence can consist of observation checklists, anecdotal notes, performance tasks, rubrics, self-assessment tools for the children, or other forms of evidence as determined by the educator. The criteria for all types of assessment are based upon the outcomes in each area of study.

Observation

Observation of children is one of the most important components of planning, guiding, and assessing. It is critical to “watch” children to determine their intellectual, socio-emotional, physical, and spiritual knowledge and behaviours. Through play, children show what they know, understand, and are able to do.

The information gained from these observations indicates development and scaffolding opportunities for educators. Observation makes educators more aware of children’s thinking and informs educators how to support, scaffold, and extend the learning that is taking place. Observation provides a foundation for understanding what children are learning and what might be added to the environment to support further investigations. When educators observe children through play, they often note the child’s interactions with others, the use of language, and the children’s knowledge and understandings. Observations inform educators as to what materials should be included in the environment to facilitate inquiry, play, and learning. Observation can inform educators about children’s:

- interests
- insights
- developmental levels
- construction of knowledge
- learning needs.

Educators will need to keep records of their observations. Records of observations can be kept in a variety of ways such as anecdotal notes, audio recordings, checklists, photographs, and video recordings.

These observations will support the educator with planning as well as guiding future learning activities.

The observation guides on pages 24-27 provide questions to guide holistic observations of young children across four dimensions (i.e., intellectual, socio-emotional, physical, and spiritual). When using these observation guides, the distinguishing features of environment, conversations, and play must be considered. It is important to remember that play can reflect, reinforce, or result in the child's development across the four dimensions. As these dimensions cross all areas of study, such observations contribute to educators' knowledge and understanding of the whole child.

Documentation

Documentation is the process of displaying evidence of the children's learning. It involves organizing and displaying the information collected during observations, enabling the educator to explain the children's words, creations, constructions, and ways of sharing ideas throughout the year. Documentation evokes questions about the thinking behind the children's learning experiences and "invites inquiry about the children's thinking and invites predictions about effective teaching" (Forman & Fyfe, 1998, p. 245).

Documentation can be used to place children's learning in context, to reveal children's competence, and to guide future planning. When displayed, it also communicates children's experiences to members of the school community. Documentation supports meaningful and collaborative discussion among children, educators, administrators, parents/guardians, and others, as appropriate.

Documentation requires that educators:

- observe children closely and for a specific purpose to record their actions, conversations, and learning processes
- capture children's metacognitive thoughts, memories, and imaginings through their investigations and projects
- decide how to organize the data gathered
- examine drawings and/or photos of children's work (progressing over several stages), with accompanying written comments by children, educators, parents/guardians, and caregivers
- interpret and pose questions about children's actions, language, and choices based on early childhood principles and theory
- plan the next experience or 'invitation to explore' related to the children's questions.

... once the habits of documentation are in place – observing children closely, taking photographs, studying the work that children generate, preparing these materials to share with children and others – then teachers in schools can take their documentation further into attempting to make children's thinking, their theories about the world, visible to others.

(Wien, 2008, p. 10)

Documentation of children’s learning is organized and gathered to give evidence of learning over time. To make children’s learning visible, the following items could be included with each documentation:

- a title stating the context of documentation
- an overall theoretical or philosophical statement
- an indication of the purpose or rationale of the activity or topic being documented
- an illustration of the experiences, such as in photographs or written commentaries
- a description of the process of development or learning that has been observed and recorded
- a record of the experiences and voices of the children
- a display of the children’s work
- an analysis of the experience in light of theory and philosophy
- a statement of implications for future work
- a concluding statement.

(Fraser, 2006, p. 132)

Additional information on documentation in early childhood education can be found in Curtis and Carter (2000), Fraser (2006), and Edwards, Gandini, and Forman (1998).

Table 6 and Table 7 on pages 28 and 29 provide examples of documentation forms that may be used for gathering information about the teaching and learning process. They may be adapted to suit the experiences that are being documented.

Interpretation

Interpretation involves pondering and drawing conclusions based on recorded evidence of children’s learning in the context of early childhood education theory. These ponderings and conclusions, when based upon the principles of early learning, observations, and documentation, can greatly inform the educator.

The more data collected during a documentation cycle, the more valid the interpretation of the evidence. Collaboration with a colleague(s), administrator(s), and consultant(s) provides multiple perspectives that can deepen the understanding of the child’s developmental level in relation to the achievement of the outcomes for each area of study. Educators reflect on the learning as it unfolds, and interpret the information collected through observation and documentation.

The belief that development and learning are holistic means that the whole child is attended to intellectually, physically, socio-emotionally, and spiritually. As the educator reviews the evidence, interpretations

Thus pedagogical documentation is both a methodology of teacher research to make children’s thinking and learning visible and interpretable to others, and a method for planning emergent curriculum.

(Wien, 2008, p. 10)

can be made regarding how children form connections to people, ideas, places, values, and beliefs. Interpretations with respect to children's understandings, abilities, relationships, and self-concept can be made regarding each of the four dimensions.

The belief that children are capable and competent learners recognizes that children have a variety of strengths, interests, and ways of knowing. As educators analyze the evidence, they will develop theories about the children, teaching, and learning. A picture, showing how the children construct their knowledge, will likely begin to emerge.

The environment is designed to allow and encourage children to wonder, ask questions, and be curious. As observations and the documentation is reviewed, educators can consider future needs, possibilities, and changes. Since the environment is much more than just the classroom, this means the school, outdoors, and community should be visible in the observations and documentation.

It is from these interpretations that the educator will create opportunities for children to develop, explore, test their theories, and effectively communicate to other children, parents, and the community.

Planning for Learning

Educators' beliefs and views about children, their pedagogical approach to learning, and the nature of relationships in the learning environment will influence educators' planning and the kind of program offered to the children. Planning takes into account the developmental level of the children in order to support their achievement of the outcomes from the seven Required Areas of Study.

Planning involves:

- addressing outcomes from all areas of study throughout the year
- analyzing the outcomes to determine the types of knowledge required (i.e., factual, conceptual, procedural, metacognitive, or a combination)
- listening carefully and respectfully to children's ideas and interests
- determining what evidence would demonstrate the children's achievement of the outcomes
- determining what forms of assessment will be used
- considering possible directions for learning according to the outcomes for each area of study and children's interests and needs
- creating the classroom environment to provide invitations for learning.

Planning refers to both long range plans and daily decisions with respect to selecting materials, creating invitations for learning, and building contexts for learning experiences. When planning, educators need to ensure a culturally responsive approach that reflects the experiences of all children. Involving other people (such as parents/guardians, First Nations and Métis knowledge keepers, community members, and relatives) in the planning will help to ensure cultures are respected and that First Nations and Métis content, perspectives, and ways of knowing are included. It is important to assess resources to ensure that they are culturally appropriate and reflect both contemporary and historical information.

As part of the planning process, educators are encouraged to reflect upon their own responses to children's different ideas, understandings, and questions. This may cause the educator to return to the planning framework (see page 21) to revise what was originally planned. Table 8 and Table 9 on pages 30 and 31 provide examples of planning forms.

Planning an inquiry in kindergarten is deliberate and intentional on the part of the educator. It begins with educators realizing the children's interests relate to questions they are asking. Educators can think of possible inquiries, and connect these ideas to the children's interests, prior knowledge, and experiences while addressing the outcomes in each area of study.

Educators must consider which environment is best for a particular topic of study and what needs to be added to that environment to create meaningful and relevant experiences for the children. In addition to considering the environmental needs of the planned inquiry, educators need to consider how the children will share what they have learned. Opportunities for reflection by both the educator and the children must be made during, and following, the inquiry.

Conversation is an important feature of early childhood education, particularly when educators are facilitating learning through play in their kindergarten program. The educator can strategically ask questions to scaffold, guide the learning experiences of the children, and connect experiences to support children's achievement of the subject area outcomes. The learning plan also identifies specific learning opportunities designed to enhance the children's abilities to know, understand, and achieve the desired results. As well, resources used throughout the topic of study will be listed and identified on the learning plan. These resources may consist of experiences in the community; oral, print, visual and digital texts; as well as people and artifacts.

The following sections describe aspects of planning a kindergarten program that include long range planning, daily planning, scheduling, a reflective lens, and a planning framework.

Teachers plan in response to the group's interests and concerns, and curriculum expands into genuine inquiry, as children and teachers together become participatory co-learners who attempt to understand some aspect of real life.

(Wien, 2008, p. 1)

Long Range Plans

Educators consider children's interests and ideas as they plan for an integrated experience. They use children's interests and ideas as a vehicle to support children's knowing, understanding, and being able to do what is expected at the end of kindergarten. While educators need to plan, they must remain flexible as they engage with children to accommodate their needs, interests, and abilities.

The following questions may assist educators with long range planning:

- What are the outcomes for each area of study?
- What questions are children asking?
- What do I know about each child and what more can I learn?
- What have I learned about each child with respect to the four dimensions that will also inform my planning (see Questions to Guide Observations on pages 24-27)?
- What are the needs of each child that might require further supports or adaptations?
- What materials/resources are already available for the children related to their interests and the outcomes for each area of study?
- What can I add to the environment to support children's investigations through play and further develop their thinking and understanding?
- How might children represent their investigations and understandings related to the environment?
- How can the community be involved in supporting children's learning?

Daily Plans

Daily plans are designed around observing, documenting, and interpreting the actions of children and their achievement of the outcomes for each area of study. Each day needs to be well-planned and yet flexible enough to allow opportunities for children to explore their interests and work towards achieving the outcomes for each area of study. Plans are adjusted in the light of observations and negotiations with children. The following questions may assist in daily planning:

- What ideas or interests have the children been exploring in their play?
- What are the outcomes for each area of study that align with the children's current interests?
- What do the children ask/tell each other in small group discussions and play?

-
- How can the children’s interests and investigations be supported and scaffolded to support new learning in order to achieve the outcomes for each area of study?
 - What is happening in the children’s lives and/or the community that will provide a context for supporting children’s achievement of the outcomes for each area of study?
 - What is happening in regional, national, or global communities that is affecting the children?

Schedules

Sufficient time for children to carry out their explorations is characterized by large blocks of time. While young children have difficulty attending to adult talk for long periods of time, children are capable of extended periods of engagement in activities matched to their interest and ability level. It is also important to remember that too much structure will hamper, rather than help, children’s learning.

The educator plans for an appropriate balance of active and quiet times, individual and group work, routine and free-choice activities, self-initiated and educator-directed activities, and the engagement of families and communities. The balance will shift according to the interests of children involved, the length of the school day (e.g., half day or full day kindergarten), and the time of year.

Kindergarten educators make the best use of time by:

- protecting instructional time and avoiding unnecessary interruptions
- focusing the teaching and learning process towards children’s interests and the achievement of the outcomes for each area of study
- using a reflective lens that supports the development of a holistic kindergarten experience.

Reflective Lens

The reflective lens is intended to assist educators in observing, assessing, and planning for learning opportunities and daily experiences that build a sense of belonging and contributing, exploring and creating, and understanding and sharing. When educators view the children’s experiences through each reflective lens, they ensure opportunities are provided for children to have a holistic experience.

Belonging and contributing is an important part of developing children’s relationships. Belonging is feeling important, accepted, and valued as unique individuals with potential and personal gifts, interests, or talents. Children need to connect in meaningful ways to the people who are important to them and who make them

feel supported and respected. A sense of belonging to a family, a classroom, a school, and a community is an important part of developing the whole child.

Young children can make positive contributions to their family, classroom, school, or community. As children develop a sense of who they are, understand their place in the wider world of relationships, and see how these relationships contribute to the community, they develop a sense of responsibility as well as a respect for the needs and well-being of the group.

Providing daily occasions for **exploring and creating** will allow children to use their imaginations. Children naturally explore, are curious about the world around them, and have questions and theories about how things work. Inquiring through play is how children explore the world around them and satisfy their natural curiosity. Based on previous and new experiences, personal investigations, and analysis, children form generalizations about their world and develop working theories for making sense of both the natural and constructed worlds.

Children create by expressing themselves, experimenting, constructing their understanding, structuring their thoughts, and further developing their worldview. A worldview is developed through wondering, reasoning, and exploring ideas, materials, designs, and structures. Activities that draw on all of the senses free the child to try out experiences, feelings, and ideas to develop new thoughts and perceptions.

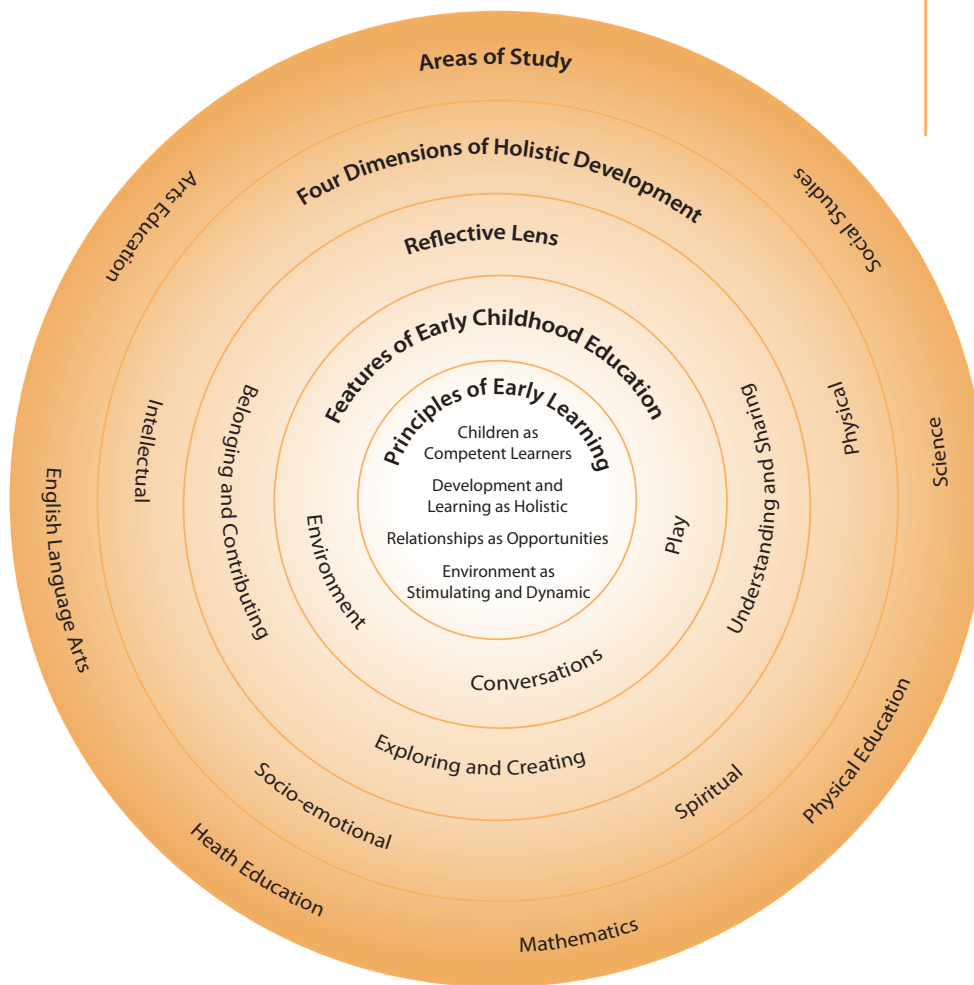
When planning for children's learning, the educator must reflect and ask if opportunities have been provided for **understanding and sharing**. This will assist the educator in ensuring that children have opportunities to develop and share their understandings. Children construct their own understandings of themselves, others, and the world around them. They draw on their potential using factual, conceptual, procedural, attitudinal, and metacognitive knowledge to make sense of what is being learned and to reflect on how they are learning.

Children come to express these understandings through language and by recognizing the many ways people share ideas. Children learn to express their needs, wants, ideas, information, and feelings in a variety of ways. Children can represent their understandings through developing dance phrases, sound pieces, dramatic play, or 3-D models to make sense of and express ideas.

Planning Framework

The reflective lens is a key part of the planning framework. At the centre of the framework are the principles of early learning which provide a foundation for decisions about developmentally and culturally appropriate practice. These principles are enacted through the distinguishing features of early childhood education. The reflective lens is a reminder for educators to consider providing children with opportunities to develop holistically through belonging and contributing, exploring and creating, as well as understanding and sharing.

Figure 1. Planning Framework



Surrounding the reflective lens are the four dimensions of holistic development and the Required Areas of Study which provide the outcomes that children should know, understand, and be able to do by the end of the kindergarten year.

The planning framework is a visual summary that is intended to guide educators in decision making and planning.

When caring educators create stimulating kindergarten learning environments, they:

- invite children to engage in learning and strengthen children's foundation for lifelong learning
- draw on constructivist principles and inquiry methods
- support children in connecting concepts and relationships across areas of study
- integrate authentic problems and issues of personal and social significance.

These educators also help children acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to become lifelong learners, to develop a strong sense of self and community, and to become engaged citizens, and to achieve the outcomes they need to know, understand, and be able to do by the end of the kindergarten year.

Table 1. Higher Level Thinking

Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002)	What it is ...	What children do ...
Remember	Retrieving relevant knowledge from long-term memory	Collect Find Identify Recognize Recall
Understand	Determining the meaning of messages, including oral, written, and graphic forms of communication	Describe Explain Discuss Give examples Predict Interpret Exemplify Classify Summarize Infer Compare Explain
Apply	Carrying out or using a procedure in a given situation	Construct Model Categorize Demonstrate Manipulate Execute Implement
Analyze	Breaking down material into component parts to understand the structure, seeing similarities and differences	Examine Compare/Contrast Determine Distinguish Differentiate Organize Attribute
Evaluate	Making judgements based on criteria and standards	Decide Choose Verify Check Critique
Create	Putting elements together to form a novel, coherent whole or make an original product	Invent Develop Design Compose Synthesize Generate Plan Produce

Table 2. Questions to Guide Observations of the Intellectual Dimension

Intellectual Dimension	Some Questions to Guide Observation
Is the child reflective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the child show reflection during play, upon completion of an activity, and on thinking? • Does the child “think out loud” or use self-talk when thinking about something? • What metacognitive comments does the child make? • To what extent does the child recall what the child has learned and found interesting?
Does the child comprehend and use knowledge of numbers and everyday words in a meaningful way?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the child have an adequate vocabulary to communicate what is needed? • Does the child understand what numbers mean and the interrelationship between numbers? • Does the child understand what others are communicating? • Can the child summarize experiences using words and/or numbers?
Does the child apply information to a new situation or use knowledge of a general concept to solve a problem?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the child’s approach to problem solving? • Can the child differentiate between reality and fantasy? • Can the child construct models, objects, or drawings to solve problems? • Can the child execute a simple plan?
Does the child analyze materials, ideas, or situations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the child categorizes materials and play objects, do the categories change along the way or remain stable? • Does the child draw connections or see relationships within and/or between ideas, objects, and part-to-whole relationships? • Can the child distinguish the salient properties of materials, objects, and events? • Can the child make comparisons among objects, people, or events? Between family members and friends? Between animate and inanimate objects?
Does the child judge, evaluate, and decide the value of applying particular criteria?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What criterion does the child choose as the basis for grouping objects (e.g., interest, function, theme, colour)? • Can the child decide what materials to use for different purposes? • Is the child able to verify that some containers are larger than others? • Can the child critique own creations and representations?
Does the child come up with something new or organize something in a new way?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the child imagine and discuss a situation or event from the perspective of another person or living thing? • Does the child adapt materials for props in dramatic play and see alternate uses for objects? • Does the child add details and change or remove elements to improve the overall quality of an individual or group creation? • To what extent does the child invent and how does the child explain the purpose of the invention?

Table 3. Questions to Guide Observations of the Socio-emotional Dimension

Socio-emotional Dimension	Some Questions to Guide Observation
Does the child have a positive sense of self?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the child describe self? • To what extent does the child trust own decision-making abilities? • To what extent does the child express pride in accomplishments? • To what extent does the child use positive self-talk?
Does the child have an understanding of self-care?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the child seek balance among intellectual, socio-emotional, physical, and spiritual needs? • To what extent is the child aware of own feelings? • To what extent is the child able to use language to describe personal feelings? • What coping strategies does the child use when upset, afraid, or nervous?
Does the child have interpersonal skills?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the child ask for and provide help? • To what extent does the child use appropriate non-verbal forms of communication? • How well does the child take the time to listen to others? • To what extent does the child use cooperative skills when interacting with others?
Does the child value, respect, and care for others?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the child help or assist others? • To what extent is the child willing to accept ideas and assistance from others? • To what extent does the child use respectful, caring language when in discussion with others? • How does the child give credit to others (e.g., I or we)?
How does the child resolve conflicts with others?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent can the child make wishes, desires, irritations, annoyances, or ideas understood? • To what extent can the child understand another child's wishes and desires? • To what extent can the child negotiate a solution to a problem? • To what extent is the child able to handle disappointment?
How does the child contribute to a democratic environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is the child able to share equipment and materials? • To what extent is the child able to wait a turn? • To what extent does the child abide by the rules in a game situation? • To what extent does the child accept other people's suggestions?

Table 4. Questions to Guide Observations of the Physical Dimension

Physical Dimension	Some Questions to Guide Observation
Is the child physically stable, coordinated, and capable of smooth movement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the child developed fine motor skills such as holding a crayon or a pair of scissors? • To what extent is the child able to partake in uninhibited body movements? • Can the child move the body in various ways while standing still? • Does the child walk, run, jump, and climb smoothly with ease?
Is the child spatially aware?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the child capable of maintaining control while moving within a designated space? • Does the child often bump into others or objects even when specifically told to avoid contact? • Does the child know what it means to move the body within and through space? • To what extent does the child have an understanding of the concepts of location, direction, pathways, and levels?
How does the child physically exert self?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the child willingly participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity without tiring easily? • Does the child incorporate physical movement into a variety of play activities, both indoors and outdoors? • What types of activities does the child engage in during recess? • In what types of outdoor play is the child interested?
Does the child understand how the body can be used as an instrument of movement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the child understand that physical responses to exercise are good and healthy? • How does the child respond to movements that challenge flexibility, endurance, and strength of the muscles? • To what extent is the child able to create body shapes described by the educator? • To what extent does the child understand that the body can be used to express ideas or feelings?
Does the child explore and practise rhythmical movement to different auditory sounds?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the child feel comfortable in taking part in rhythmical movements to different auditory sounds? • To what extent does the child move rhythmically and expressively to music, adjusting the speed of movement in time to the rhythm of the music and the intensity of the sound? • How does the child move own body in time to a beat while keeping feet in one spot and remaining balanced? • Does the child create unique movement responses and repeat movement sequences to a variety of auditory sounds?
Does the child take a personal interest in being physically active?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the child initiate exploration of movement? • What kind of language (positive, enthusiastic) does the child use when discussing physical activity? • To what extent does the child invite others to participate in physical activity? • To what extent does the child discuss physical activity at times other than recess or during physical education and arts education classes?

Table 5. Questions to Guide Observations of the Spiritual Dimension

Spiritual Dimension	Some Questions to Guide Observation
Is the child aware of an inner self?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the child aware that inner thoughts and feelings are parts of oneself that cannot be seen? • Is the child aware of an “inner self” as a part of the self that is important but not visible to others? • To what extent does the child draw upon her/his inner strength? • To what extent is the child intrinsically motivated?
Is the child aware of how cultural beliefs and traditions address various aspects of the spiritual dimension of life?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways does the child share own cultural traditions with others? • What interests does the child have in other cultures? • Is the child aware that individuals and families may have different spiritual or religious beliefs and practices? • Does the child demonstrate respect for differing spiritual or religious beliefs and practices?
Does the child explore questions of personal meaning and purpose?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the child wonder about larger ideas which are of particular interest? • Is the child interested in exploring larger ideas which are of particular interest? • Is the child interested in discussing larger ideas which are of particular interest? • Does the child ask insightful questions?
Does the child have a sense of connection to the world?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the child have a sense of awe and wonder related to beauty and nature? • To what extent has the child developed the ability to appreciate others? • To what extent is the child willing to participate in activities designed to increase the child’s sense of connection to others and nature? • To what extent is the child able to be calm, still, and quiet in order to become aware of his/her connections?
Does the child have an appreciation for personal gifts and her/his role in contributing to a better world?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the child express gratitude for intangible and non-material aspects of life? • To what extent does the child participate in new experiences designed to expand her/his interests and appreciation for all that life has to offer? • What capacity does the child have for kindness, care, and compassion (e.g., tipi pole teachings)? • How does the child show an understanding of her/his own potential contributions?
Does the child demonstrate care for others and the surrounding environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the child contribute to the establishment of the classroom as a caring, inclusive, and democratic community? • To what extent is the child aware that people all over the world have the same basic needs? • To what extent is the child aware that her/his behaviour affects other living and non-living things? • To what extent does the child demonstrate respect for the natural environment?

Table 6. Sample Documentation Form

Documentation of the Learning Experience	
Child's name: Date: Observer:	
<p>Observation</p> <p>This is what I see or hear related to ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intellectual dimension: • socio-emotional dimension: • physical dimension: • spiritual dimension: 	<p>Interpretation</p> <p>This tells me ...</p>
<p>Outcomes for areas of study</p> <p>What the child knows, understands, and is able to do ...</p>	<p>Questions</p> <p>I still wonder about ...</p>

Table 7. Sample Documentation Form

Documentation of the Learning Experience	
Child's name: Date: Observer:	
Evidence of Learning	
Observations related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intellectual dimension: • socio-emotional: • physical: • spiritual: 	
Interpretation:	<<Photo>>
What the child knows, understands, and is able to do (outcomes for areas of study):	What's next?

Table 8. Sample Planning Form (with descriptors)

Planning Form for Kindergarten		
Topic:	Big Idea/Question: <i>The concept or question that is the focus of the planning.</i>	
<p>Desired Results</p> <p>(Outcomes from areas of study: Arts Education, English Language Arts, Health Education, Mathematics, Physical Education, Science, Social Studies)</p> <p><i>The outcomes for the areas of study, relevant to the topic being studied, will be listed here. In each outcome, circling the verbs will identify skills and strategies. This is what the children need to be able to do. Underlining the nouns establishes what the children need to know and understand.</i></p>	<p>Assessment Evidence</p> <p>(Performance tasks, rubrics, self-assessment, and other evidence)</p> <p><i>Educators create authentic tasks, rubrics, self-assessments, and other evidence that will allow children to demonstrate what they know, understand, and are able to do. Observation and documentation play a key role when assessing the evidence in kindergarten. Teaching and learning is more effective and authentic when the desired results and the assessment evidence are determined prior to designing the learning experiences so educators know exactly what to focus on and how to assess it.</i></p>	
Learning Plan		
<p>Environment: Ideas and Needs</p> <p><i>Educators consider what the children need in the environment that will allow them to achieve the outcomes through play and related inquiry. Consideration should also be given to the school and community environment.</i></p> <p><i>Possible resources to help the children achieve the outcomes will include people; experiences in the community; oral, print, digital, and visual texts; as well as artifacts.</i></p>	<p>Conversations: Questions to Scaffold and Guide Learning</p> <p><i>Questions or talking points to be discussed with the children are designed to extend the children’s understandings, and assist them in making connections between prior learning and new experiences.</i></p>	<p>Play: Inquiry Focus</p> <p><i>Children are invited to share their interests and questions as they collaborate with the educator to develop topics of study. Children will be expected to share what they know, understand and are able to do.</i></p> <p><i>Educators will note children’s interests during play and collaborate with them to decide upon an inquiry that connects to the outcomes in the areas of study.</i></p>
<p>Reflective Lens</p> <p><i>Educators’ use of the reflective lens ensures that the children are provided with daily opportunities to develop holistically.</i></p>		

Table 9. Sample Planning Template

Planning Template for Kindergarten		
Topic:	Big Idea/Question:	
Desired Results (Outcomes from areas of study: Arts Education, English Language Arts, Health Education, Mathematics, Physical Education, Science, Social Studies)	Assessment Evidence (Performance tasks, rubrics, self-assessment, and other evidence)	
Learning Plan		
Environment: Ideas and Needs	Conversations: Questions to Scaffold and Guide Learning	Play: Inquiry Focus
Reflective Lens <input type="checkbox"/> belonging and contributing <input type="checkbox"/> exploring and creating <input type="checkbox"/> understanding and sharing		

Glossary

Community is a group of people with at least one thing in common – location, shared interest, values, experiences, or traditions.

Control (level of skill performance) is when the child's body appears to respond somewhat accurately to the child's intentions but the movement requires obvious concentration. A movement that is repeated becomes increasingly uniform and efficient.

Convention is an accepted practice or agreed-upon rule in spoken, written, or representational language.

Cueing systems are sets of cues or clues built into the structure or patterns of language and communication texts.

General space is all of the space within a room or boundaries that the body can travel through, moving away from the original starting space.

Graphophonic cues and conventions refers to the sounds of speech (phonology) and how these sounds are organized in patterns, pronounced, and graphically represented (spelled).

Indicators are representative of what children need to know and be able to do in order to achieve an outcome. Indicators represent the breadth and the depth of the outcome. The list provided in each curriculum is not an exhaustive list. Educators may develop additional and/or alternative indicators but those educator-developed indicators must be reflective of and consistent with the breadth and depth that is defined by the given indicators.

Inquiry involves children in some type of exploration, investigation, or experimentation regarding a specific topic, problem, or issue for play, learning, and action. Inquiry is a way of opening up spaces for children's interests and involving them in as many different aspects of a topic, problem, or issue as children can find.

Listening is attending to, and getting meaning from, what is heard using cognitive processing including associating ideas, organizing, imagining, and appreciating what is heard; it is a receptive form of oral language.

Locomotor skills are skills that see the body moving through space. They include such skills as walking, running, leaping, and sliding.

Manipulative skills are skills that allow the body to interact with objects by sending (e.g., throwing, striking), receiving (e.g., catching, collecting), deflecting, and accompanying (e.g., stick handling).

Metacognition is the ability to think about and reflect on one's own thinking and learning processes.

Movement activity is the all-inclusive descriptor that includes any form of physical movement including leisure activities such as sand/water play, energy expending activities such as running, and skillful movements such as throwing, aiming, and kicking, used in cooperative and competitive games and sports.

Non-locomotor skills are skills that see the body moving while remaining in one location (personal space). They include such skills as jumping and landing on one spot, balancing, twisting, and bending.

Open-ended materials stimulate the imagination with the potential for multiple uses. These flexible materials (e.g., clay, wire, wood) can be used to solve problems, create, manipulate, examine, and explore.

Other cues and conventions associated with effective communication include printing, font choices, graphics, illustrations, layout, and additional enhancements such as colour, sound, and movement (e.g., the child imitates the sound a car makes by saying vroom, vroom).

Outcome is a statement of what children are expected to know, understand, and be able to do by the end of a particular grade.

Performance cues provide information about specific components of a skill that help the performer move skillfully by transferring the cognitive understanding of the movement to the motor performance, thus increasing the potential for skillful movement.

Phonemic awareness is to consciously attend to the sounds in the language.

Pragmatic cues and conventions refer to the style of language that is used in a given context and take into consideration the communication purpose, situation, and audience. The pragmatic cueing system is often considered to be the social aspect of language (e.g., the child uses the more formal term of blanket instead of “blanky”).

Reading is an interactive-constructive process in which readers comprehend, interpret, and respond to print text using the cues and conventions of that text.

Register (language) is a socially defined variety of language such as conversational, informal, formal, frozen, or slang.

Representing is conveying information or expressing oneself using verbal or written means as well as non-verbal visual means such as drawings, models, dramatizations, or physical performance.

Semantic, lexical, and morphological cues and conventions refer to the meaning and structure of words (e.g., the child recognizes that a wheeled vehicle can be called a car, truck, van, etc.).

Speaking is the act of communicating through oral language. It is the act of transmitting and exchanging information, ideas, and experiences using oral language in formal and informal situations. Speech is an expressive form of oral language.

Strategy is a systematic plan for solving a problem or completing a task.

Syntactical cues and conventions refer to the structure (word order) and parts of sentences, and the rules (e.g., subject-verb agreement) that govern the sentences (e.g., the child recognizes that it more appropriate to speak in complete sentences and to ask questions using a sentence).

Text is any form of communication, whether oral, written, visual, or multimedia (including digital media), that constitutes a coherent, identifiable unit or artefact (e.g., poem, posters, conversation model) with a definable communicative function. It refers to printed communications in their varied forms; oral communicating, including conversations, and dramatizations; and visual communications such as illustrations, video, and computer displays.

Textual cues and conventions refer to the type or kind of text and the features that are associated with its organization (e.g., the child recognizes that stories beginning with “once upon a time” are fictional stories).

Viewing is attending to and getting meaning from visual representations including pictures, signs, videos, charts, drawings, diagrams, sculptures, mime, tableaux, drama/dance, and other performances.

Writing is a recursive process of recording language graphically by hand or other means to explore, share, and communicate ideas, information, and experiences.

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Kindergarten Resource

1. Please indicate your role in the learning community:

- parent teacher resource teacher
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What was your purpose for looking at or using this resource?

2. a) Please indicate which format(s) of the resource you accessed:

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4. Please respond to each of the following statements by circling the applicable number.

The resource content is:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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5. Explain which aspects you found to be:

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