

TABLE MATERIALS

Guiding Principle Cards

Visual and Performing Arts Guiding Principles

“Art can nurture the nurturer. Learning in the arts provides the opportunity for teachers, along with the children in the program, to take part in artistic growth. The arts- especially in the preschool environment- are experimental, and teachers can enjoy the freedom and flexibility to offer arts experiences around interests that add to the feeling of joy and excitement in learning for all participants. Since children have a propensity for imitation, more than anything else a teacher who is excited about the arts can potentially inspire children of any culture, language, or ability to become excited about art making” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 45).

“Children learn about human connection, beauty, and appreciation of the arts. The arts speak to human beings’ need to make connections between intellect and emotion and to find beauty in the ordinary. The arts are critical in any educational program, as they present situations to children, families, and teachers in which there is no approved standard or answer; people can discover their own sense of beauty and order. When a child is exposed to the arts—when he or she comes to love the art object or art making because of a deep, person knowledge of it—he child will appreciate and values the arts in a unique way” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 43).

Connections to Music

“Music is an outburst of the soul” Frederich Delius

“Music... will keep a fountain of joy alive in you.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Visual and Performing Arts Guiding Principle

“The arts reinforce the integrated nature of learning. The arts are a unique way of knowing, but they also support learning across the curriculum. Engagement in the arts can be an effective means through which important early childhood skills a dispositions are developed- such as empathy and cooperation, curiosity in and knowledge about linguistic and cultural differences, ease with differences among people, vocabulary, symbolic understanding, and math-related concepts such as number, size and **shape**. Because children learn holistically, the arts should be presented in a way that is integrated with other domains of learning. Artistic expression and products connect to other domains in the preschool curriculum, and these connections can be emphasized at strategic times during art activities” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 44).

Connections to Music

“When children develop musical skill and knowledge they are developing basic cognitive, social, and motor skills necessary for success throughout the educational process and in life itself” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 84).

“As preschool children not only listen to music, but also learn to make music by singing and playing instruments together (and responding to music in a variety of ways), they create important contexts for early learning of vital life skills such as cooperation, collaboration, and group effort” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 84).

“Various techniques reveal that both words and music tones cause similar activity in specific regions of the brain...One of the central predictors of early literacy, phonological awareness, is correlated with both music training and the development of a specific brain pathway” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 71)

“...[T]hrough singing and expressing music with different instruments, children may learn about mathematical concepts related to numbers and patterns. Repetition of phrases in music signals patterns in the music; children’s songs frequently involve counting” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 84).

Visual and Performing Arts Guiding Principle

“The child’s work is play. Children progress through various developmental stages and thrive in safe, playful environments. Well-designed arts curriculum accommodates children’s developmental needs and provides various types of social interaction and play-oriented approaches to learning” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 43).

Connection to Music

“...[A] major goal in the early childhood music curriculum is for children to enjoy and construct meaning about their musical experiences through various forms of play. *Provide opportunities for independent and group musical play*—at planned and unplanned music times. Further, as with other early childhood curricular areas, manipulative play is also essential in music. *Manipulatives help young children construct meaning*, whether the manipulatives are puzzle pieces, blocks, puppets, musical instruments, or objects shown on **shadow screens**[*]” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 83).

*A shadow screen is a white sheet held up against a source of light so that children can move objects and project their shadows on the side away from the light.

Visual and Performing Arts Guiding Principle

“Children are active learners who thrive when challenged appropriately. Developmentally appropriate activities and materials are crucial to the young child. Art making can be messy, but children of all abilities progress in the arts through experimental, hands-on activities. An effective curriculum is therefore a container large enough to hold a broad range of methods, experiences, and definitions of success for all children, teachers, and preschool settings” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 44).

Connections to Music

“Although early childhood music education is primarily about introducing the child to musical sounds and holistic experiences that are of the highest quality, enriched learning occurs when the child has an understanding of and ability to manipulate the music elements of rhythm, melody, form, loudness/softness, tempo, timbre, articulation, and style” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 63).

“‘Free’ exploration of the sounds of musical instruments is fun and developmentally appropriate but does not necessarily guarantee ‘music.’ Music by definition, is ‘organized sound’ and even a simple, steady rhythm (known in music as a ‘pulse’) performed on so-called ‘rhythm instruments’ provides authentic musical organization” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 75).

Visual and Performing Arts Guiding Principle

“The arts are inclusive of all children. The arts allow all children to participate in a meaningful and significant way and can help in developing a collaborative preschool environment. All individuals, including children with disabilities or other special needs, can find the arts satisfying and enjoyable. Accomplished artists with disabilities—Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Chuck Close (Wylie Coyote), Frida Kahlo, and Itzhak Perlman, among others—can serve as inspirations to all child artists, especially those with a shared experience of a disability” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 42).

Connection to Music

“Children who are deaf or hard of hearing often respond to the beat of the music as it vibrates through the floor or is loud enough to be felt” (PLF, Vol. 2, p. 23).

“Music does not have to be difficult to be good. Some of the most moving and profound music is very simple. For example the drone (a continuous low note) found in much traditional music is merely one note held for the entire song. Nearly everyone can play this. Despite its simplicity, it is essential to the musical effect” (“Adapting Musical Activities for Persons with Disabilities,” Assistive Technology Partners: University of Colorado—Anschutz Medical Campus, <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschooll/programs/atp/Documents/AdaptingMusicalActivitiesforPersonswithDisabilities.pdf>).

“The original design (or traditional use) of instruments is not sacred. Altering or simplifying instruments by taking off some of the strings (with guitars, adding extensions to piano keys (i.e. Popsicle sticks), or making drum sticks fatter and easier to grip (with pipe insulation) can be very helpful” (“Adapting Musical Activities for Persons with Disabilities,” Assistive Technology Partners: University of Colorado—Anschutz Medical Campus, <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschooll/programs/atp/Documents/AdaptingMusicalActivitiesforPersonswithDisabilities.pdf>).

Visual and Performing Arts Guiding Principles

“The arts are motivating and engaging for learners. Unique to the arts, for many children, is the feeling of success during the process of creation, which often results in the pursuit of art experiences. Success in the arts is not typically measured by a tangible product or a preconceived outcome, but through the experience and process. Early successes lead to future success and can create feelings of competency and confidence for children. The arts are a means to explore, take risks, communicate, and define personal perspectives and preferences regardless of culture, developmental status, or ability” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 44).

“The arts promote dispositions for learning. Most young children enter preschool with a love of drawing, pretending, listening to music, humming and singings, and moving. They have a natural curiosity about the arts and a desire to be involved with and play through the arts. Daily time devoted to learning in the arts, the learning environment, adult-child interactions, as well as the curriculum design, supports and develops children’s dispositions for lifelong engagement in arts-related activities” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 43).

Connections to Music

“Musical babble begins at about six months of age. From the onset of language, toddlers are spontaneous singers” (PLF, Vol. 2, p. 23).

“Experimenting with instruments captivates preschool children’s imagination, and they enjoy their own ability to control sound...With encouragement, they may express their musical ideas in their own notation, using invented pictures or symbols” (PLF, Vol. 2, p. 24).

Visual and Performing Arts Guiding Principle

“The arts are a language that is common to all. Arts education is an opportunity to improve communication and embrace understanding between children of different linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, and between children with different abilities. Children will flourish from using the arts as a means of self expression. Additionally, arts education may serve as a scaffold to help children build verbal language skills. A prop and shared experience can create a point of shared meaning among children and in teacher-child interactions” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 42).

Connections to Music

“Teachers welcome children’s cultures to preschool programs when they encourage children and families to share songs, dances, poems, music, visual art, or art-related objects and practices from home” (PLF, Vol. 2, p. 2).

“Programs serving diverse children can create positive learning opportunities culturally relevant curricula, and a sense of community by including visual and performing arts that represent the children’s home cultures [i.e., music, drama, visual art, and dance]” (PLF, Vol. 2, p. 2).

“Singing songs reinforces learning new vocabulary, sequencing of events, contextual word meaning, pronunciation, and fluency” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 72).

“Continued use and development of the child’s home language will benefit the child as he or she acquires English” (*Preschool English Learners: Principles and Practices to Promote Language, Literacy, and Learning—A Resource Guide (Second Edition)* [CDE], p. 43).

Visual and Performing Arts Guiding Principle

“Cultural competence is approached through art. The arts are a part of all cultural traditions. The arts can help children reflect on their own cultures and origins as well as those of others. Some strategies included as part of this framework will aid preschool teachers in reflecting on the cultures and interests of the children’s families and teachers. Through the arts, families and community members learn about and understand what goes on in preschools for their children and may devise at-home activities that embrace multiple cultures, abilities, and ways of learning. When children see and experience the artistic efforts and creations of families from diverse cultural backgrounds, it promotes positive connections between home and school. All children are empowered by sharing each other’s family art traditions” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 44).

Connections to Music

“As young children grow and develop, music continues as a basic medium not only of communication, but also of cultural expression and self-expression” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 84).

“Preschoolers increasingly display the capacity and motivation to attend to excerpts of recorded music and classical music videos. Children especially enjoy listening to songs and music from their home culture and language” (PLF, Vol. 2, p. 24).

Visual and Performing Arts Guiding Principle

“The arts provide a unique means for families to interact. Parents and families, because of special bonds and trust, are in a position to encourage, enrich, and support their children’s artistic opportunities, development, and education. They can contribute to the child’s learning in the arts in many ways. This framework presents ideas for family activities in the arts in each strand. In addition, families are a rich resource for the preschool program. They have songs, stories, fables, and many other talents to share. When children in the same early childhood setting come from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, the gains from family involvement can be even more pronounced” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 45).

Connections to Music

“Often, families may be unaware of the important role they play in their children’s music education. From the child’s birth, families are usually the best providers of music and musical engagement in the home. The family setting is where generations of songs are passed along and preserved” (PCF, Vol. 2, p. 85).