

# Lesson Planning for a Mixed-Age Group



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PLANNING EXPERIENCES FOR DIFFERENT DEVELOPMENTAL LEVELS



# What Will You Learn?

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- What does “developmental level” mean?
- Why is it important to keep developmental levels in mind when planning experiences?
- How can you adapt experiences for children at different developmental levels?
- What are the 10 key developmental areas?
- What safety concerns must you consider?
- Why is it important to engage with children during experiences?



What is  
meant  
when  
we say...



Developmental Level?



# Developmental level is...

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Where a child is on a developmental progression of skills  
in a particular area

- Sometimes referred to as “developmental milestones” or “developmental stage”
- Is most often VERY different for different children and different developmental areas

Knowing each child's developmental level is important.



# Formal & Informal Child Assessment

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## **Informal Assessment:**

Observation

Anecdotal Notes & Reflections

Photos/Videos

## **Formal Assessment (examples):**

Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ)

Teaching Strategies GOLD®

DRDP







What are the 10 key developmental areas?

# 10 Key Developmental Areas

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 = Language Development

 = Literacy Knowledge

 = Math Knowledge

 = Science Knowledge

 = Logic & Reasoning

 = Social Studies Knowledge

 = Social & Emotional Development

 = Music & Creative Arts

 = Physical Development & Health

 = Approaches to Learning



How many developmental areas do you think you address every day?



# One Experience ... Many Developmental Areas + Different Developmental Levels

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Materials:

- **Assorted boxes**
- **Assorted types of tape**, crayons/markers, **tissue paper**, scissors, etc.
- Children use dramatic play to not only show what they know but also to build skills in many other areas. During this guided play experience, the children can pretend to pack and ship surprises to family or friends. This is also an excellent way for them to build fine motor control and practice problem-solving skills (e.g., does it fit?). Because different developmental levels will approach this experience differently, we are providing options.
- Toddlers/Twos/Threes: This age group will just enjoy putting things in boxes and taking them out. As they play, be sure to describe the objects they choose as well as their actions. This would be an excellent time to reinforce the opposites in and out as well. These children will also problem-solve as they decide what “fits” and what does not.
- Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children can choose items to pack and then tape up the boxes in preparation for “shipping” them. As they do so, your most advanced group can even write their addresses on the boxes or can dictate them for you to write. Be sure to talk about letter names and beginning sounds during this time. You can also talk about numerals as they appear in addresses. You can also talk about the 3-dimensional shapes of the boxes as well. Once packed, the children can even pretend to deliver their packages. Then, they can unpack them & repack them again and again.

# The “Packing & Shipping” activity addresses...

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**Language Development** – Listening, speaking, building vocabulary, non-verbal communication

**Literacy Knowledge** – Letter knowledge, beginning writing (as they address boxes)

**Social/Emotional Development** – Engaging with adults and other children, sharing materials, making choices (e.g., preferences)

**Approaches to Learning** – Trying new things, persistence

**Math Knowledge** – Exposure to 3-dimensional shapes, number recognition (addresses)

**Logic & Reasoning** – Problem-solving, using common objects for new purposes

**Science Knowledge** – Using senses, making/testing predictions, size exploration

**Physical Development & Health** – Fine motor skills, safety (addresses)







# Is fingerpaint really just art?

Which developmental areas do you think are addressed when children fingerpaint?

# 10 Key Developmental Areas

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# Lesson planning for mixed- age groups





# Things to Consider

- Each child's developmental level
- Adaptations needed (e.g., special needs, ELL/DLL)
- Materials required
- Space (indoor/outdoor, table/floor)
- Teacher-directed or child-led?
- Developmental areas/skills addressed





# Lesson Planning – Things that Grow



# Example: Florist Fun

Developmental Ages: Toddler through School-age

Developmental Areas:          

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## What skills may be required? (developmental levels)

### Materials Needed:

- Plastic vases/flower pots
- Silk/plastic flower stems (wrap sharp ends with tape)
- Toy cash register with play paper money
- Notebooks/notepads
- Empty shelves/table

- Putting flower stems in plastic vases/pots (fine motor)
- Patience, persistence
- Problem-solving, creative thinking
- Engaging in dramatic play (with/without others)
- Sharing materials
- Language (engaging with you & other children, asking for assistance)
- Beginning writing (more advanced)
- Counting skills (more advanced)
- Background knowledge of common jobs in the community



Where?  
How?  
When?

Important  
questions to  
answer when  
planning the  
experience



# Florist Fun

## Where? How? When?

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### Where?

Indoors or  
outside (table  
required)

### How?

- Set out the materials. Children can choose to use the materials in any way they would like. Some may choose to be florists while others may not. Now is the perfect time to reinforce many skills in a meaningful way (e.g., colors, counting, etc.).
- Toddlers/Twos (+ others with limited fine motor control): For these children, choose plastic vases or pots that have large openings. Also, use plenty of description language to talk about the flower and other materials the children choose to use as they play (build vocabulary).

### When?

Morning free  
choice play

- Threes/Fours/Advanced Preschoolers/School-Age: These children may, or may not, engage in dramatic play while using the materials. More advanced children (and school-age) can practice writing as they take orders for floral arrangements. They can also utilize counting skills as they “charge” for their arrangements and collect play money for them. IF you have ELL/DLL children, be sure to use both the children home language and English when describing the children’s actions and the materials they choose to utilize.

What developmental areas does this experience address?



## Developmental Areas Addressed during Florist Fun:

**Language Development:** Both receptive & expressive

**Science Knowledge:** Sensory, making/testing ideas (e.g., how many flowers fit), natural world (what is a flower?)

**Math Knowledge:** Comparing/contrasting, counting

**Social/Emotional:** Engaging with others, sharing materials, self-regulation

**Creative Arts:** Dramatic play

**Physical Development & Health:** Fine motor skills, eye-hand coordination

**Logic & Reasoning:** Problem-solving (how many flower will fit?)

**Literacy Knowledge:** Beginning writing

**Social Studies Knowledge:** Jobs in the community



# Use a lesson planning form



Experience Title	Materials Needed + Location	Experience Steps	Developmental Areas	Adaptations <i>(Diff. devel. levels)</i>



# Let's Practice

Experience Title

Materials Needed

Experience Steps

Developmental Areas Addressed

Adaptations Needed?



# Let's Practice One More Time

Experience Title

Materials Needed

Experience Steps

Developmental Areas Addressed

Adaptations Needed?





# And One More...

Experience Title

Materials Needed

Experience Steps

Developmental Areas Addressed

Adaptations Needed?

# Questions?

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Thanks for  
joining us!

The Gee Whiz  
curriculum includes  
experiences  
designed for mixed-  
age groups. Please  
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