
SECTION ONE

EXPLORING DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

CHAPTER 1 *Defining Developmentally Appropriate Practice*

Objectives

After studying this chapter, the student should be able to:

1. define developmentally appropriate practice, and identify the professional organization that published the first position statement.
2. describe the essential components of developmentally appropriate practice.
3. identify 12 developmental principles relevant to understanding developmentally appropriate practice.
4. discuss 10 positive interpretations of misunderstandings related to developmentally appropriate practice.
5. describe concerns regarding inappropriate educational experiences for young children.

Overview

In this chapter students are introduced to basic concepts stated in the position statements on developmentally appropriate practice. The main objections raised against developmentally appropriate practice are explored, so that students can be prepared to respond to these. The idea that the profession is still actively working on the implications of this philosophy is stressed. The revisions and modification of the 2009 publication are emphasized. The results for young children exposed to curricula that emphasize formal academics are discussed.

Class Suggestions

Ideas to help students grasp the basic concepts of developmentally appropriate practice include the following:

1. Have students read and then discuss in class, the complete NAEYC position statement (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009).
2. Invite a selection of child care professionals for a panel discussion in class, asking them to respond to questions such as: What are appropriate environments for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, primary aged? What are developmentally inappropriate practices? Why? What is the knowledge base that informs their practice? What are the conflicts and questions between those who work in different ways with young children? What are the community misconceptions about developmentally appropriate practice?
3. Ask students to lead discussions that briefly review the developmental knowledge and key principles that contribute to the theory base for developmentally appropriate practice.
4. Devise a number of situations in which parents or other community members might raise some of the objections in the section on misunderstandings, and have students role-play their responses to them.

5. Design case scenarios of typical classroom practices, asking students to apply their knowledge from the chapter in analyzing and discussing the appropriateness of the practices.
6. Assign students in pairs to visit various programs and classrooms in your community. Ask them to report back on specific observations, commenting on the appropriateness, or not, of the classroom practices. This should lead to discussion of many of the points in the chapter. Be sure to include infant-toddler and primary classrooms.
7. Assign short segments by any of the books by David Elkind listed in the references at chapter end. Ask students to comment on their experiences and observations that support or refute his point of view.
8. Have students watch videotapes of early childhood classrooms and discuss the practices they see.

NOTE; there is an excellent videotape available at www.naeyc.org to introduce principles of DAP. At the time of writing, the link is www.naeyc.org/dap/resources1.asp. If this changes, students can search for DAP video on the Website. NAEYC has also stated that they plan to have programs available soon on DAP and Intentional Teaching, and DAP and Play. These will no doubt be very useful resources, that could be used for individual assignments at any point in a course.

9. An extremely useful class resource for basic principles of DAP is *Tools for Teaching Developmentally Appropriate Practice: The Leading Edge in Early Childhood Education* (see below). This four-video set is divided into segments that last 5 to 12 minutes each, and explores the key concepts of good early childhood practice. They can be used for discussion starters, and illustrations of the important ideas.
10. The CD-Rom that accompanies the 3rd Edition of *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8* contains book excerpts, *Young Children* articles, and position statements as well as video vignettes to show developmentally appropriate practice in action. Instructors will find many ways to use these resources in classes. In addition, instructors can find segments of the CD-Rom available on links at www.naeyc.org

Answers to Questions to Assess Learning of Chapter Objectives

1. Developmentally appropriate practice refers to applying child development knowledge in making thoughtful and appropriate decisions about early childhood classroom practices. Thus research and formulated theory is used to create learning environments for young children that match their abilities and needs. NAEYC first published a position statement on developmentally appropriate practice in 1987.
2. There are three dimensions of developmental appropriateness: age appropriateness derived from general principles of child development; individual appropriateness, derived from learning the strengths, interests, and needs of each individual child; and cultural appropriateness, based on an understanding of the social and cultural contexts in which children live. Together these imply making decisions based on both universal, predictable sequences as well as unique patterns of development and experiences. Play is stated to be the primary vehicle by which young children learn. The third component, added in the

most recent revision, implies respectful inclusion of children's families in making decisions about what is individually appropriate.

3. Any of the 12 principles discussed on pages 11-15 in the text.
4. Any of the 10 misunderstandings discussed on pages 22-29 in the text.
5. Four possible results for young children exposed prematurely to formal academics are: damage to self-esteem; impairment of self-control; stress; and negative later academic patterns.

Audiovisual Resources

NAEYC's Position on Developmentally Appropriate Practice: A Panel Discussion and Critique. Well known early childhood experts debate. 54 minutes. #887 NAEYC 1509 16th St. N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036-1426, 800-424-2460.

Looking at the Basics of Developmentally Appropriate Practice. DVD, 41 min. DVD that accompanies the 2009 position statement. NAEYC, see above.

Foundations for Excellence in Early Childhood Education. DVD, Videos designed to help early childhood educators connect theoretical concepts with real classroom situations. NAEYC, see above.

Education of the Young Child—Past, Present, and Future. David Elkind discussing how various images of children affect early childhood programs. 50 minutes, NAEYC, see above.

Tools for Teaching Developmentally Appropriate Practice: the Leading Edge in Early Childhood Education. Total viewing time of more than 3 hours. NAEYC, see above.

CHAPTER 2 *Understanding Play: Its Importance in Developmentally Appropriate Practice*

Objectives

After studying this chapter, the student will be able to:

1. define play and describe key elements of play.
2. describe categories and social stages of play.
3. describe major theories about how play affects development.
4. discuss conditions that support play.
5. discuss issues regarding play.

Overview

The central position of play in developmentally appropriate practice is emphasized in this chapter. The student is introduced to theoretical understandings of the definition of play. Categories of play are defined and described. Social stages of play are also defined and described. The theories of both Piaget and Vygotsky in relation to cognitive development are outlined and contrasted. Specific relationships are drawn between play and development of the various developmental domains. The specific circumstances and interventions that have been found to support development of play patterns and skills are discussed. Issues regarding play, including violent play, cultural influences on play, play for children with special needs, play and early learning standards, and helping families understand the importance of play, are discussed.

Class Suggestions

It is important that students develop a strong appreciation for the value of play. Various activities may help with this.

- (a) Using collections of videos made in a variety of classroom settings, to ask students to identify the domains of development being used and developed in segments of children's play. Similar learnings can be found when instructors devise written descriptions of children at play for student analysis and discussion.
- (b) Guided observations in early childhood settings, that ask students to focus on a particular play episode, identifying what the teachers involved have done to support the play.
- (c) View some of the recommended videos on play. Activities to support understanding of play are useful. There are any number of variations. For all of them, it is useful to have a large collection of "loose parts," or open-ended materials for creation.

You could: ask adult players to first select some materials and then play alone, with interaction, creating something on their own. Then they could find another player and play with them, combining their materials. Discussing the various experiences can help students identify some of the cognitive, emotional, and social components of play.

Or you could ask students to observe others at play, and describe the social aspects of communication and cooperation they observed, and then identify all the “curriculum” possibilities they observed in the play.

Still another variation is to assign specific materials and activities to one group, while another group can make their own choices. Comparing the two experiences helps students understand intrinsic motivation.

Answers to Questions to Assess Learning of Chapter Objectives

1. Play and the key elements involved in play are discussed in the text on page 33.
2. The categories of play include: functional or sensorimotor play; constructive play; dramatic play (sociodramatic when two or more children are involved); and games with rules. Social stages of play include: onlooker; solitary; parallel; associative; and cooperative.
3. The major theories about play are Piaget’s—discussed on pp. 37-38 in text, and Vygotsky’s, discussed on pages 39-40 in text. The contributions of play for each developmental domain are discussed on pages 40-42.
4. Conditions that support play include: conditions in the physical environment, such as space, time, and materials; and various teacher intervention strategies.
5. Some of the information discussed about the issue of violent play is found on pages 54-55; information about cultural influences on play is found on pages 55-57; information about play for children with special needs is found on pages 57-58; play and early learning standards is discussed on pages 59-61; and helping families understand the importance of play is on pages 61-62.

Audiovisual Resources

Play: A Vygotskian Approach. 25 minutes. Davidson Films, www.davidsonfilms.com.

Piaget’s Developmental Theory: An Overview. 30 minutes. Davidson Films, see above.

How Young Children Learn to Think: Piaget’s Theory. DVD, 19 min. Constance Kamil discusses Piaget’s theory of how young children gain knowledge. NAEYC, www.naeyc.org.

Play—The Seed of Learning. 30 minutes. NAEYC, see above.

Play Power: Strategies to Support Learning through Play. DVD, 43 min. Shows adults how to encourage and support children’s play for deeper learning. Available from www.Teachingstrategies.com.

Growing through Play. DVD, 30 min. Shows how children learn important cognitive and social skills through their play, from preliteracy skills to social interaction. Shows Parten’s stages of play. Available from Redleaf Press, www.redleafpress.org.

Child's Play. DVD, 23, min. Describes how play promotes development in children —cognitive, social, emotional, and physical-- from infancy on. Redleaf Press, see above.

CHAPTER 3 *Planning Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum*

Objectives

After studying this chapter, the student will be able to:

1. describe indicators of developmentally appropriate curricula, as defined by position statement.
2. discuss the cycle of planning, describing each of the components.
3. identify advantages and disadvantages of theme planning.
4. define “emergent curriculum” and discuss sources of emergent curriculum.
5. discuss strategies for planning emergent curriculum.
6. describe needs for flexible planning forms.
7. identify ideas for changing to more appropriate curriculum planning.

Overview

It is important for students to understand the characteristics of developmentally appropriate curriculum. Thus, the standards stated by various professional groups are identified. Teachers planning developmentally appropriate curricula are involved in an ongoing cycle of planning. These separate components are identified and described, along with examples to illustrate each part. The components include: systematic observation and note-taking; assessment in relation to pre-determined goals and objectives; identifying children’s interests, experiences, and questions; selecting appropriate materials and experiences for teaching and learning strategies; and observation to evaluate success of plans and set new directions. Thus it is hoped that this chapter will introduce students to ideas of planning in ways that allow teachers to respond to individual and cultural needs, rather than merely direct all learning towards their own, or institutional goals. It is also intended that students will come to understand various ways of planning to meet state early learning standards.

Class Suggestions

1. Ask students to examine a number of planning forms from a variety of classrooms. Help them analyze the kinds of curriculum planning approaches they find.
2. There are a number of useful scenarios in *Reflecting Children’s Lives* by Carter and Curtis (1996). You and the students may enjoy discussing these approaches to curriculum, comparing what the experiences are like for the children, and the teachers’ goals.
3. Activities can be designed to help students develop competencies related to the cycle of planning.
 - a. Students can practice recording objective data, beginning in pairs using photographs, then moving to observing slides and then short video segments. As the class works together to list the objective detail, and discusses interpretations, students learn more about observation.
 - b. Use segments of video to record observation, and then assess levels of development, using a tool such as the Creative Curriculum Preschool

Development Continuum or other such assessment tool being used in your community. This allows students to see the connection between planning with specific goals and objectives in mind, for individualization. If they are also having practicum or work experiences, they can work to observe a child over a period of time, and then plan curriculum for the group with the child's identified goals in mind.

- c. Ask students to record several observations and conversations with a particular child. They can then work in small groups to brainstorm possible plans for the classroom that could extend the particular child's experiences and questions.
4. Involve the students in experiences related to planning and your state early learning standards. First have them plan intentional activities that are developmentally appropriate for a particular age-level, and that also could move children towards attainment of particular knowledge or skill as described for several of your state standards. Then involve them in the process of back-tracking. One way to do this in class would be to have them view a video of children involved in active play or working on a project, and then work in small groups to identify the early learning standards that could be met in this way.
5. Involve the students, working in pairs, on a number of exercises involving webbing. Help them identify differences between concept webs and material and activity webs.
6. In recent years in my classes, we have had a number of interesting visits from those involved in evaluating lesson plans, notably directors and licensing consultants. These have been useful visits to have, after students are enough involved in planning emergent curriculum to want some questions answered about the acceptance of these alternative approaches.
7. We have also enjoyed activities where students devise lesson planning forms that allow for the flexibility of teacher responses to children's ideas and interest.

Answers to Questions to Assess Learning of Chapter Objectives

1. Criteria for curriculum from professional organizations are found on pages 68-70.
2. The cycle of planning includes: observation to learn individual and group levels of ability; assessment related to stated goals and objectives of class/program; interaction to learn children's interests, experiences, and questions; selection of appropriate materials and learning experiences designed to move children towards the goals; and continued observation to assess effectiveness of plans and formulate new plans. These components are discussed in detail on pages 73-79.
3. Emergent curriculum is discussed on pp. 82-85. It includes ideas of being socially relevant and personally meaningful to children. It is curriculum that is not simply derived from children's interests, but is negotiated with other factors. Emergent curriculum is largely based on teacher observations and understandings of children's lives. Sources of emergent curriculum include: children's play; adult interests; things, events, and people in the environment; developmental tasks; family and cultural input; serendipity; and curriculum resource materials.
4. Strategies for planning emergent curriculum are discussed on pages 85-90. These include close observation and recording of children's play and conversations; a webbing process to brainstorm possible starting points, materials, and potential learnings; a provisioning of

the environment, and the repetition of the observation cycle to sustain and deepen the learning process.

5. Planning forms are described on pages 90-91.
6. Ideas for changing the planning process to more developmentally appropriate methods are discussed on pages 91-93. Ideas include: listening to children's conversations; selecting themes from the children's lives; keeping the timeframe of the theme open-ended; paying attention to the developmental tasks children are working on, and finding ways to support that exploration.

Audiovisual Resources

Appropriate Curriculum for Young Children: The Role of the Teacher. DVD, 28 min. Shows adults' important roles in helping children learn through play and child-initiated activity. Available from NAEYC, www.naeyc.org.

Rearview Mirror: Reflections on a Preschool Car Project. DVD, 39 min. The project approach in action. Available from NAEYC, www.naeyc.org.

Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices. Series from the University of Cincinnati on mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies shows how children develop concepts and skills and how teachers can use this knowledge to guide planning. Each DVD is 75 min. Available from NAEYC, www.naeyc.org.

Side by Side: Mentoring Teachers for Reflective Practice. DVD, 26 min. Become a better observer and curriculum developer by drawing on children's interests and ideas. Available from Redleaf Press, www.redleafpress.org.

Thinking Big: Extending Emergent Curriculum Projects. DVD, 22 min. Available from Redleaf Press, www.redleafpress.org.

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool in Action. DVD, 120 min, divided into 9 sections that describe intentional teaching, integrating learning through studies, planning for mathematics and literacy, etc. While it is produced by the Creative Curriculum, the concepts and illustrations show excellent practice for all classrooms. Available from Teaching Strategies, www.teachingstrategies.com.

CHAPTER 4 *A Consideration of Various Curriculum Models*

Objectives

After studying this chapter, the student should be able to:

1. describe several different curricula approaches and philosophies common in early childhood education.
2. discuss how each curriculum model follows principles of DAP.

Overview

This chapter includes overviews of the following curriculum approaches: Montessori, Bank Street, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf, High/Scope, and the Creative Curriculum. For each of the approaches, a brief history and overview of the philosophy is presented, then information about classroom environments, teacher roles, and special features of each approach. There is a brief summary for each of how the curriculum fits into principles of DAP.

Class Suggestions

It would be useful for students to view actual classrooms and/or videos, and to interview teachers from each approach, depending on the amount of time that can be devoted to this chapter during the course.

The questions in “Think About It” may help guide discussion.

Answers to Questions to Assess Learning of Chapter Objectives

1. See appropriate sections in chapter
2. See appropriate sections in chapter

Audiovisual Resources

Montessori

Maria Montessori: Her Life and Legacy. DVD, 35 min., Davidson, www.davidsonfilmsstore.com.

Nurturing the Love of Learning: Montessori for the Early Childhood Years. 12 min., available from www.edvid.com Information also available from Montessori Foundation Publications Center, www.montessori-foundations-books.org.

Also available from them:

Montessori Math Curriculum Demonstrations. 30 min.

Montessori Language Curriculum Demonstrations. 30 min.

Bank Street

No video known, but students could watch *Empowering New Teachers: Bank Street College of Education* at <http://www.edutopia.org/bank-street-video>.

Waldorf

The Waldorf Experience, DVD. Available from www.moonstarfilms.com.

Reggio Emilia

To Make a Portrait of a Lion. Shows the interaction of children and adults as they explore a component of their community and express their learning's through a variety of media and methods.

The Amusement Park for Birds. 90 minutes. Performaneutics Press, 19 The Hollow, Amherst, MA 01002 (413) 256-8846.

100 Languages of Children. 30 minutes. Filmed at the exhibit The Hundred Languages of Children. M.S. Lyon, 101 Lombard St., 608W, San Francisco, CA 94111.

High/Scope

Plan, Do, Review in the High/Scope Demonstration Preschool. Set of 3 videos, 63 min., Available from High/Scope, www.highscope.org

High/Scope Preschool Key Experiences: Classification, Seriation, and Numbers. 60 min., High/Scope, see above.

High/Scope Preschool Key Experiences: Creative Representation. 40 min., High/Scope, see above.

High/Scope Preschool Key Experiences: Language and Literacy. 60 min., High/Scope, see above.

The High/Scope Curriculum: The Daily Routine. 17 min., High/Scope, see above.

The Creative Curriculum ®

The Creative Curriculum ® Video. 37 min., available from Teaching Strategies, www.teachingstrategies.com

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool in Action. DVD, 120 minutes, available from Teaching Strategies.com