Acknowledgement of Country
The Northern Territory Department of Education respectfully acknowledges the Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the land now known as the Northern Territory.
The Northern Territory (NT) Preschool Curriculum has drawn on key documents from the Northern Territory and other jurisdictions. These include:


- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, (2011), Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF), Victoria


- School Curriculum and Standards Authority (2014), Curriculum in Western Australia K-10/Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines, Western Australia.
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Resources and References
Introduction

The NT Preschool Curriculum (the curriculum) has been developed as a practical guide to assist you as a teacher or early childhood professional (assistant teacher or educator) to implement, with your colleagues, the outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)\(^1\) for children from three to five years of age. The curriculum is part of the Indigenous Education Strategy 2015-2020 and is a key commitment of the Northern Territory Government Early Years Strategic Plan ‘Great Start Great Future’.

It is based on the EYLF and its vision for children’s learning, characterised by:

**Belonging**  
recognising that knowing where and with whom you belong is integral to human existence, providing a basis for children’s interdependence and relationships with others

**Being**  
recognising and valuing the ‘here and now’ in children’s lives and viewing childhood as more than simply preparation for adulthood or the future

**Becoming**  
recognising the rapid and significant learning and development that occurs in the early years, and the capability and potential of children

It has been designed to strengthen and support you in teaching children in the preschool years, to enhance effective practice and professional knowledge, and to assist you to gain an understanding of children’s interests and the importance of family and community priorities and contexts. It is informed by a clear understanding of what children are capable of doing and how they develop effectively through play based learning and intentional/explicit teaching.

It aims to help you further understand and embed the EYLF in your work and in particular to help you to promote literacy and numeracy through play based intentional teaching. These foundational skills are essential for children to achieve success at school and in life.

Intentional teaching means systematically introducing content, across all learning outcomes, using developmentally based methods and respecting children’s modes of learning, acquired through knowing the experiences and learning styles of individual children.

The curriculum has been developed with the knowledge that early childhood programs can improve children’s learning and close the outcomes gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children. It recognises the importance for early childhood programs to be solidly grounded in culture, language and family relationships to recognise and help build children’s identity.

The curriculum was trialled in 37 preschools across the Northern Territory, from urban, remote and very remote locations. The learnings from the process have been incorporated into this document to make it a curriculum for all preschools, regardless of context. The resources and professional learning for teachers, and early childhood professionals to support the curriculum can be found by accessing this document on LearningLinks\(^2\).

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The EYLF is the nationally agreed framework – providing the principles, practices and learning outcomes within which to build early childhood programs and activities so that children:

- have a strong sense of identity
- are connected with and contribute to their world
- have a strong sense of wellbeing
- are confident and involved learners
- are effective communicators

These five learning outcomes accompanied by a number of principles are the core elements of the EYLF and the curriculum.

The curriculum also accords with Quality Area 1 of the National Quality Standard (NQS). It has a strong focus on enhancing children’s learning and development through the pedagogical practices of educators and the development of programs that promote children’s learning across the five EYLF learning outcomes. All preschools and other early childhood education and care services are assessed against the elements of the NQS.

The EYLF Educator’s Guide has been designed to support curriculum decision making to extend and enrich children’s learning and should be used in association with the curriculum and with the EYLF.

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3 Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (n.d.), National Quality Framework.
How to use the Preschool Curriculum

The Preschool Curriculum provides the next level of focus and detail, within the framework of the EYLF, to assist teachers and early childhood professionals to plan and program for children from 3-5 years of age. It also outlines the teaching practices and phases of learning, which can assist transition for children moving from child care settings to preschool and for Transition teachers to build continuity of learning for children when they move from preschool to the Transition class. It provides the links between the content of the curriculum and the Australian curriculum which is used by schools for students from Foundation to year 10.

A curriculum is ‘all interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children’s learning and development.’

The five EYLF outcomes are equally important because children need to develop their sense of identity and connection to their world and the relationships that are inherent to their sense of wellbeing. They build their dispositions for learning through interest, engagement, imagination, creativity, communication and thinking skills.

A large part of the curriculum is focused on aspects of communication. Many young Indigenous children living in remote communities are multi-literate, growing up in linguistically rich and complex environments where they are exposed to a number of languages and dialects. However the lack of competence in Standard Australian English and unfamiliarity with the school environment can mean these children fall behind their peers. This can apply to children from a range of cultural backgrounds. References and suggestions for teaching practices for children with English as a Second Language are included across the curriculum.
Each of the five broad Learning Outcome areas is categorised into elements, sub-elements and elaborations which include child focussed examples, plus a range of Learning Opportunities and Phases of Learning. These can assist teachers/educators to promote children’s early learning and development. These are not exhaustive or exclusive. The intention is that preschools, through their work with the curriculum, can contribute other relevant examples of practice.

### Learning Outcome

#### 2.1 Develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation

**Learning Opportunities:**
- **Learning Opportunity:** Educators interact with children and families to develop successful connections with others.

**Phases of Learning:**

**Connectedness**

- **Phases of Learning:** Connectedness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| 1     | Awareness of self and belonging to groups and communities.
| 2     | Awareness of others.
| 3     | Awareness of differences and similarities among people.
| 4     | Awareness of rights and responsibilities.

**Elaborations**

- "Identifies ways to take responsibility for the environment in their home, school, and community."
In the **Communication** outcome, for example, the focus is on the explicit teaching of strategies to support the teaching of literacy and numeracy.
Children do not learn or experience life and learning in a linear way – every child has a unique path\(^7\) to achieving the five outcomes – and the levels of support will vary dependent on their individual needs. However effective teachers know how children typically develop with regard to each learning outcome and use this knowledge to plan and program within their classroom.

The curriculum focuses on aspects of intentional teaching, that is, it assumes that teachers will act ‘with knowledge and purpose to ensure that young children acquire the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in school and life’\(^8\). Intentional teaching requires a range of integrated teaching and learning strategies to accommodate the different ways that individual children learn and the specific content they are learning. This is further addressed within the Principles later in the introduction.

The roles of the teacher and early childhood professional are crucial to supporting children’s learning, in partnership with the family and by additional support if needed, from specialist services or agencies.

Families play a vital role in their children’s learning. A child’s sense of belonging is enhanced through the relationships built between families and preschool teachers and early childhood professionals, and with other parents and children.

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The Planning Cycle and Principles for the Preschool Curriculum

The Early Years Planning Cycle

Educators use a variety of strategies to collect, document, organise, synthesise and interpret the information that they gather to assess children’s learning. They search for appropriate ways to collect rich and meaningful information that depicts children’s learning in context, describes their progress and identifies their strengths, skills and understandings.9

The planning cycle is used to ensure children’s learning needs are addressed in a systematic way. Teachers and early childhood professionals use the children's existing knowledge, skills and understandings and provide learning experiences linked to a child’s interests to extend their learning. Reflecting on the learning and teaching guides the next stages in the learning process. The planning cycle is used for individual children, small group and whole class learning needs.

The curriculum supports professional practice with a range of suggestions about the pedagogy to be used and information about phases of learning of child development across each outcome. It is important to note that aspects of children’s learning and development do not occur sequentially because each child is an individual and learning can occur at different rates and at different times/ages. A child’s learning and development forms the foundation for the next stage and learning needs to be scaffolded onto previous knowledge and experience.

Teachers and early childhood professionals need to plan with the end in mind. Based upon the individual child, where does this child need to be by the end of the year? What skills, knowledge and understandings do they require so they are capable and confident when they enter Transition? What additional support from families may assist this child’s learning progress? As a teacher, how do I ensure I have given the children the best possible start?

The curriculum is used to plan for a variety of experiences, across the year, which can broaden and extend children’s learning. Look for events and activities that may be happening in the school or local community that can link to children’s interests and learning within the curriculum, for example Term 1 is a good time to focus on Learning Outcome 1 as teachers and other early childhood professionals need to develop relationships with children and families as well as help them feel safe and secure. A whole school focus for Book Week in Term 3 may be an opportunity to engage with fun and engaging literacy activities.

**Unpacking the planning cycle**

- Observe and collect information about each child’s learning and participation in all aspects of the program. Strengths, skills and interests can be identified through using a range of methods to collect data and inviting contributions from families.
- Analyse the information that has been collected and question what each child knows, can do and understands, using the Learning Outcomes as points of reference.
- Plan long term goals for the group of children and plans for individual children (based on analysis). Choose strategies and experiences for inclusion in the program to achieve the goals and plans.
- Implement the planned experiences and be responsive to children’s emerging interests (child led learning) and use intentional teaching strategies to guide and support their learning.
- Reflect on each child’s participation and progress, individual and group interests, any challenges that occurred and what worked well. Identify your own learning to support further learning and improved outcomes for children.

The curriculum supports professional practice with a range of suggestions about the pedagogy to be used and information about the phases of learning, which occur as learning is scaffolded and as children acquire knowledge and skill. It also provides some examples of learning opportunities, which can be used to contribute towards the achievement of the outcomes.

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Practice Principles to support the Preschool Curriculum

The following eight practice principles\footnote{Drawn from the Department of Education and Training (2016 and 2011), Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLF), Victoria.} are drawn from research about the best ways to support children’s learning and development. They underpin the curriculum and inform pedagogy and practice.

Literacy and numeracy capabilities are important aspects of communication and are vital for successful learning across the curriculum.

The Practice Principles

- promote personal and collective knowledge of each child’s identity
- support teachers and early childhood professionals to act in the best interest of the child
- provide guidance to teachers and early childhood professionals as they respond positively and sensitively to each child

1. Partnerships with families

Working in partnership with families recognises their central role in children’s lives. Families have valuable information about their child’s strengths, abilities, interests and challenges. They are children’s first teachers.

Children’s everyday experiences within their family and community are influenced by the communities, culture and practices in which they are raised. It is crucial that teachers and early childhood professionals understand the context for each child and use that knowledge to build on children’s values and extend their knowledge and skills.

This approach builds continuity of learning and support so that children feel safe and confident as learners. It also allows families to actively engage in their children’s learning, to feel more positive about their competence and may enhance their support for their child’s learning as they progress through schooling.

Partnerships with families means:

- engaging with families through respectful relationships and responsive engagement
- sharing information openly with families using a range of communication methods
- actively seeking children’s and families’ views and taking them into account in practice
- taking initiative and fostering the involvement of families in their children’s learning
2. High expectations for every child

Teachers who expect children to learn will deliberately engage in instructional activities to enhance children’s knowledge and skills. Teachers’ high expectations are also transmitted to children and parents who then see themselves as active and capable participants in the learning process.\(^{12}\)

Every child has the ability to learn and develop. The curriculum is based on a belief that every child has the right to a preschool program that takes into account their individual learning path and the uniqueness of their experience. Evidence suggests that children who develop strong self-esteem and self-efficacy are motivated to succeed and are better placed to succeed at school.

In Indigenous communities,\(^{13}\) children are viewed as strong, independent people who have the right to make choices and freely explore their surroundings. Children construct their own understandings and co-construct understandings with both adults and other children.

Having high expectations for every child\(^ {14}\) means communicating this to every child, every day and enabling every child to experience success by using different approaches that take account of and build on a child’s strengths, interests and abilities, while also developing literacy, numeracy and science understandings. It also means communicating these expectations to families and to other teachers, assistant teachers, early childhood professionals and other health professionals.

The way children see themselves affects their learning. When they believe they are competent and can achieve results, they are more likely to persist with challenges, spend more time and energy on tasks and modify their approach to achieve better results.\(^ {15}\)

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3. Respectful relationships and responsive engagement

Secure attachments help children to feel safe and confident, develop self-regulation and to try new things. Safe and stimulating environments and positive engagement with children promotes a child’s emotional security.

*Relationships are deeply connected to thinking and learning. Children require support to learn about negotiation, collaboration, problem solving, conflict resolution and listening to each others’ perspectives.*

A respectful and responsive environment assists children to form friendships and to bond with others. The role of the teacher and early childhood professional is to initiate warm and respectful relationships with children, to honour the views and feelings of each child and to develop learning programs that are responsive to each child and build on their culture, strengths and knowledge to sustain and extend their learning. Respectful and responsive relationships with children and their families builds knowledge, trust and a shared view of learning.

Teachers and early childhood professionals create a balance between their interactions with children, the organisation of the learning environment and the program, and ongoing professional reflection.

4. Equity, diversity and cultural competence

A number of concepts underpin this principle. They include:

- **Equity**[^1] is about every child’s right to participate in all aspects of community life, including access to preschool and other early childhood programs.
- **Diversity**[^1] refers broadly to the variety of differences in people including their culture, language, background, gender, religion, abilities, socio economic status and lifestyle. It also encompasses cultural and linguistic diversity and mental, physical and emotional health.
- **Inclusion**[^1] is about acknowledging and catering for difference so that children can experience a strong sense of belonging and full and meaningful participation through equitable access to learning opportunities and resources.
- **Cultural competence**[^2] is the capacity to work effectively in cross-cultural settings and to build understanding and respect between children, families, staff and community. It requires teachers and early childhood professionals to understand their own culture, values and beliefs as well.

Inclusive practices in preschool benefits all children. Children’s identity and their family and culture shape their learning and development. The promotion of cultural awareness in preschool broadens children’s ways of ‘knowing and being’ and supports them to develop a sense of place, identity and connection with each other.

[^1]: VEYLDF 2016 p11.
All children have the capacity to succeed, regardless of diverse circumstances or abilities. A strong sense of identity emerges when children feel accepted and valued and their culture is acknowledged. They in turn look for and acknowledge the strengths in others.

For teachers cultural competence means gaining knowledge of different cultural practices and perspectives, respecting difference and developing cross-cultural communication skills. In community, assistant teachers and family liaison officers can provide invaluable knowledge and support the establishment of strong relationships between families and teachers.

Multilingualism is an asset and children feel confident as communicators and users of language when they are supported in their use of first language and cultural identities. Maintenance of first language strengthens children’s communication, thinking skills and meta cognition, providing a strong foundation for learning. Maintaining first language does not interfere with the learning of English and the maintenance of first or home language is particularly important for the child’s development of a positive self-concept and wellbeing.

Children learning English as a second language are a diverse group and some children will have had little or no exposure to English when starting preschool. Other children will have been exposed to English through older siblings, Families as First Teachers, playgroups or child care programs or will have been introduced to some English at home.

Children learning English as a Second Language need explicit modelling and language teaching, appropriate time to acquire the new language and quality exposure to English. Evidence shows that young children can learn more than one language with ease, as long as they are exposed to good language models and have plenty of exposure to both languages.

For children with additional needs it is important that their learning and development needs are identified early through screening and assessment processes and that the type and level of intervention can assist to improve each child’s learning and development. Further detail is available from the School Support Services policy and guidelines⁵⁹.

⁵⁹ Department of Education (n.d.), Early Childhood Intervention, Northern Territory.
5. Integrated Teaching and Learning Approaches

‘Learning is an active process that must involve children’s engagement. Play is essential for its ability to stimulate and integrate a wide range of children’s intellectual, physical, social and creative abilities.’

‘Teachers have a critical role in children’s play – making thoughtful, deliberate and purposeful decisions as they broaden and deepen children’s knowledge, skills and experience to take them beyond what they already know, can do and understand. Through guided play, intentional and explicit teaching they use specific strategies to build knowledge and understanding having the learning outcomes in mind.’

‘Integrated teaching and learning approaches combine guided play and learning, adult-led learning and child directed play and learning.’

Integrated teaching and learning combines a balance of child led, guided play and adult led learning. Learning occurs in many different contexts and environments. Through play and other opportunities children learn to make sense of their world, and teachers and early childhood professionals draw upon a range of strategies including sustained shared thinking, conversations, active engagement and intentional teaching to support an integrated teaching and learning approach which builds on children’s strengths and interests to make learning engaging and relevant. Teachers and early childhood professionals share strategies with families to support learning at home and make decisions about what concepts to introduce to children and when, building on children’s existing knowledge.
Adult-led learning\textsuperscript{20} occurs when adults introduce an experience or an idea, concept, topic for exploration and direct the learning by taking charge, giving instructions, setting rules, asking questions, and providing structure. An adult guided experience proceeds primarily along the lines of the teacher’s goals, but is also shaped by the children’s active engagement.

Teachers and early childhood professionals have the knowledge of what children need to know to progress in their world. They use the curriculum to guide the learning required by children at preschool by planning for individual children, small groups of children as well as the whole class needs. This is done on a weekly/fortnightly, term and year level.

Teachers have a critical role in children’s learning. They make deliberate and purposeful decisions which will expand children's knowledge and build upon children's skills. For example, the strategies about the explicit/intentional teaching of literacy are designed to expand children's vocabulary and language abilities, providing a strong foundation for later learning.

‘An effective Early Childhood program combines both child guided and adult guided educational experiences. These terms do not refer to extremes, rather adults play intentional roles in child-guided experience and children have significant, active roles in adult guided experience. Each takes advantage of planned or spontaneous, unexpected learning experiences.’\textsuperscript{21}

Child-directed play and learning\textsuperscript{20} occurs when children lead their own learning through exploring, experimenting and being creative in ways that they initiate and control. Children are active learners who make sense of their world and themselves when they have opportunities to investigate ideas through play and interactions with people. Learning occurs through their social and cultural interactions with teachers, parents, families and community members.

The adult’s role in child-directed play and learning may be to observe what the child knows and proceeds primarily along the lines of children's interests and actions, with strategic teacher support. The adult can use that information to identify children's strengths, abilities and interest and to plan for further learning.

Guided play and learning\textsuperscript{20} occurs when teachers and early childhood professionals are involved in children's play and learning, following children's interests and responding to spontaneous learning opportunities as they arise.

In guided play and learning teachers and early childhood professionals initiate the learning process, limit the learning goals, and are responsible for maintaining focus on these goals even as the child guides his or her own discovery. A teacher might initiate the play sequence while children direct their own learning within the play context. Thus, guided play is child-directed and can take a number of paths within a play setting. In guided play, the teacher or early childhood professional might extend children’s exploration and learning by commenting on their discoveries, co-playing along with the children, asking open-ended questions about what children are finding, or exploring the materials in ways that children might not have thought to do.

\textsuperscript{20} Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2011 and 2015), Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDV), Victoria.

\textsuperscript{21} Epstein, A. (2007), The Intentional Teacher, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Washington DC.
6. Assessment for learning

‘Educators use a variety of strategies to collect, document, organise, synthesise and interpret the information that they gather to assess children’s learning. They search for appropriate ways to collect rich and meaningful information that depicts children’s learning in context, describes their progress and identifies their strengths, skills and understandings.’

Assessment for learning is a continuous process of finding out what children know and understand in order to build on previous learning and plan for and advance the learning in response to individual children’s strengths, abilities, interests and needs. It recognises that children’s skills or capabilities are not necessarily age related, but reflect a child’s temperament, interests, dispositions and cultural and family background.

Assessment processes, which involve children thinking about their learning (meta-cognition), can empower them and the sharing of information with families engage them in the learning process.

Assessment processes, an essential part of the planning process, require collecting information through a range of mediums: observations, conversations and interviews with children, samples of children’s work, rating scales, video or audio recordings of children’s conversations or play, photographs, event and time sampling and conversations with families, colleagues and other professionals.

It is a planned process, which focuses on what children have learned and how they are progressing to achieving the learning outcomes or individual learning goals, which you have identified for each child.


7. Reflective Practice

Critical reflection on children’s learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, is regularly used to implement the program: Element 1.2.3 Quality Area 1, National Quality Standard.

It is an ongoing, dynamic process, which involves personal reflection, gathering information and working with colleagues to critically review all aspects of professional practice with children and families. It is an integral part of the planning cycle and a crucial part of quality improvement.

Reflective practice provides a deeper understanding of what learning is happening and why and is used to improve planning and pedagogy. It recognises good practices and identifies where change or improvement is needed allowing the monitoring of learning on an ongoing basis. It also assists in identifying what additional resources, knowledge or skills may be needed when working together as a team to improve professional practice. Reflective practice is a key component in the planning cycle.

Reflective practice can involve the following: a reflective journal, meetings, the use of a mentor or critical friend, discussions with children and families about the program, a reflective practice notice board, professional learning experiences (visiting other settings, communities of practice, research readings on effective practices, conferences, further study) or action research.

8. Partnerships with professionals

Supporting children’s learning and development often involves working with other professionals where a child may be in need of specialist support. It also means building continuity of practice or pedagogy as children move from one setting to another – from childcare settings or Families as First Teachers to preschool and from preschool into a Transition class.

It is important to communicate openly and constructively with allied health professionals and to share information and build a shared understanding of children’s needs. Planning and programming for a child can then be based on shared knowledge and perspectives, and agreed early intervention approaches.

It is important too that when children are transitioning from one setting to another that knowledge about the child is shared (with parental permission) and where children move on a daily basis between childcare and preschool that collaboration about the child’s program takes account of what is happening at each location to support and extend the child’s learning.

Resources and Links

The curriculum outlines learning that children require so they may access the Australian Curriculum: Foundation level when they reach Transition. To show the progression of learning, links to the General Capabilities, Cross-Curriculum Priorities and Learning Areas of the Australian Curriculum are identified in this document.

The NT LearningGames (Northern Territory Department of Education [DoE], 2013) and the Preschool Maths Games are an important resource particularly with children and families with different levels of Standard Australian English literacy and numeracy. The NT LearningGames are also useful for assisting families to learn about and use the language of learning and for developing and using literacy and numeracy vocabulary in real life contexts.

Further information to support the needs of young Indigenous Language Speaking and English as a Second Language children can be sourced from the NT English as a Second Language Policy and Guidelines, Clark (2009) and the Remote Indigenous Professional Learning Package for the EYLF.

Ways to use the Preschool Curriculum

Implementing the curriculum is really about making the EYLF more explicit and defined. (Alekarenge Preschool)

It is an additional resource that helps us to focus on specific literacy and numeracy skills. (Larapinta Preschool)

It provides the detailed language of learning — not only for the program, but for parents. (Leanyer Preschool)

It is useful for team collaborative days and for critical reflection and in using the outcomes to direct teaching and learning experiences. (Leanyer Preschool)

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26 Clarke, P. (2009), Supporting Children learning English as a Second Language in the Early Years (birth to six years), Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).
Identity

Early Years Learning Framework | Learning Outcome 1

CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY
Identity: **Learning Outcomes**

1.1 **Feel safe, secure, accepted and supported**  
a. build a sense of stability and trust  
b. build a sense of belonging

1.2 **Act with increasing autonomy, interdependence, resilience and sense of agency**  
a. show resilience  
b. make choices and decisions  
c. manage routines and organise self and belongings

1.3 **Develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities**  
a. show confidence in own learning and capabilities  
b. display a positive image

1.4 **Learn to interact with others with care, empathy and respect**  
a. participate positively as part of a group  
b. respond to others appropriately

Establishing a ‘field of positivity’ is a powerful strategy to help develop a sense of self-belief and belonging.

Larapinta Preschool
Children rely on secure, trusting and respectful relationships with the adults in their lives to feel valued and cared for as they grow and develop a sense of identity. Developing responsive, warm, trusting and respectful relationships with adults and other children promotes a sense of security, wellbeing and self-esteem. Having a strong sense of identity is about learning who you are, what matters to you and where you belong. Relationships are the foundations for a child’s strong sense of identity.

Having supportive relationships with teachers and early childhood professionals enables children to develop confidence in their ability to learn new things, express themselves, work through differences with others and take calculated risks. Children with a strong sense of identity look for and are open to new challenges. They ask questions and try new things. They know they can contribute to the world and make a difference. They also persist and enjoy their achievements.

Children often come to preschool with a developing sense of identity of who they are in their home setting, but are challenged by the notion of who they are and how they belong in the school setting. Children who come from culturally different backgrounds and who may not have English as a first language can find this situation particularly difficult. Indigenous children often have a very strong sense of who they are and how they belong in their family, community and to the land. This can be very different to the way they feel about their school identity. Indigenous culture recognises children as capable and competent. Children are allowed to take acceptable risks and are viewed as adept and entitled to explore and learn as proficient members of their communities.

To best support children to be confident and capable learners, early childhood professionals must acknowledge each child’s existing sense of identity and help them to build upon it. By demonstrating cultural competence and forming supportive relationships with children, their families and their community, teachers and early childhood professionals will develop trust and acceptance within the community. Establishing a mutual mentoring relationship with a local Indigenous person, such as the assistant teachers working at the school and working together will also improve enrolment and attendance for these children and families.

Children learn that their identity can be as an individual, as part of a family, as part of a class, a school and so on. In time, and with integrated teaching and learning, the child learns to adapt in response to each role while staying true to themselves. By teachers and early childhood professionals working together with children, their families, mentors and the community to develop a safe, secure and accepting environment at preschool, children will strengthen an increased sense of identity and confidence. They will act with increasing autonomy and resilience and will interact with others with care, empathy and respect.

It is important to note that each Indigenous community is very different from another because each community or place has its own specific laws and social rules, acceptable ways of behaving and being in that place and at that time.
1.1 Feel safe, secure, accepted and supported

connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Personal and Social capability

a. build a sense of stability and trust

Children in preschool have a strong sense of identity when they:

• form friendships within the preschool environment
• initiate and join in play with enjoyment and satisfaction
• ask for help and communicate needs
• initiate conversations with others in a range of contexts
• respond to ideas and suggestions from others

b. build a sense of belonging

Children in preschool have a strong sense of identity when they:

• join in group activities, for example, singing and dancing
• approach new activities with a positive attitude
• describe places where they feel they belong, for example family and preschool and begin to express why
1.2 Act with increasing autonomy, interdependence, resilience and sense of agency

connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Personal and Social competence

a. show resilience

Children in preschool have a strong sense of identity when they:

- persist with an activity when challenges occur
- show a belief that more effort or a different approach may pay off
- bounce back after difficulties
- maintain focus on an activity for example, not easily distracted

b. make choices and decisions

Children in preschool have a strong sense of identity when they:

- describe options then choose the most appropriate one
- make decisions about how to approach a task, solve a problem or reach a goal
- reflect how well an approach is going and change strategy if needed
- reflect on the learning process
1.2 Act with increasing autonomy, interdependence, resilience and sense of agency

connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Personal and Social competence

c. manage routines and organise self and belongings

*Children in preschool have a strong sense of identity when they:*

- take increasing responsibility for their own actions and learning
- organise and help look after their own and the group’s belongings
- respond to ideas and suggestions from others
1.3 Develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities

connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Personal and Social competence

a. show confidence in own learning and capabilities

Children in preschool have a strong sense of identity when they:
- take a risk, engage in new experiences
- show satisfaction in meeting their own goals
- are proud of how they accomplish tasks – not just the end result
- enjoy meeting challenges for their own satisfaction rather than for praise or rewards
- engage in open-ended activities
- find ways to solve problems, new ways to do things, think of ideas
- show curiosity about learning, objects, events and people
- celebrate achievements and share contributions

b. display a positive image

Children in preschool have a strong sense of identity when they:
- use first language at school to help understand concepts
- share aspects of themselves, family and culture
- represent their experiences in their play
- initiate activities and show a can do attitude
1.4 Learn to interact with others with care, empathy and respect
connects to the General capabilities – Personal and Social competence; Ethical understanding

a. participate positively as part of a group

*Children in preschool have a strong sense of identity when they:*

- show interest in other children and in being part of a group
- take turns in group situations
- engage positively with focused attention during group activities
- show empathy with and express concern for others
- co-operate and contribute to play and group situations
- know, respect and display agreed class behaviours
- respond appropriately to changes in routines, for example changes to timetables or relief educator
1.4 Learn to interact with others with care, empathy and respect
connects to the General capabilities – Personal and Social competence; Ethical understanding

b. respond to others appropriately

Children in preschool have a strong sense of identity when they:
- listen to others’ opinions and points of view
- show respect for others – their views and property
- understand that their own actions may affect others
- begin to negotiate and solve problems verbally
- understand when someone is hurt and comfort them
**Phases of Learning: Identity**

With prompting and cues, is beginning to express feelings and ideas to familiar people.

Beginning to approach familiar experiences and situations with support and encouragement.

Seeks to be near trusted adults (for example parents) as a ‘safe haven’.

Makes visual or physical contact with trusted adults for reassurance.

With prompts, cues and modelling will follow familiar routines and accepts redirection to follow them.

In groups, observes and listens to others discuss things they can do and like.

With explicit support, shares things of interest or personal experiences with familiar people.

Tolerates being physically near others.

Plays alongside another child using same or similar materials with adult assistance.

With support, expresses feelings and ideas and talks about things they like, can do and have achieved to familiar people.

Explores the learning environment and engages in familiar play experiences. With prompts, sets up an experience or play situation.

Shows confidence in parents’ and teachers’ abilities to keep them safe and healthy.

Explores the indoor and outdoor environments without being fearful.

With minimal support, manages and predicts daily routines and usually adapts to changes when explained and supported.

Has a sense of who they are and shows pride in being part of their family. Plays cooperatively with one other child with prompts, shares or takes turns with others.

Confidently expresses feelings and ideas and talks about things they like, can do and have achieved to familiar people.

Confidently explores the environment and engages in a variety of types of play. Negotiates use of space and materials and confidently engages in new ways to use resources.

Regards parents and teachers as resources and positive role models and imitates them during dramatic play.

Is comfortable with daily routines and can predict what may happen next.

Understands and adjusts to unexpected changes in daily routines.

Has a sense of who they are and shows pride in being part of their family, community, place and cultural group.

Successfully enters a group and plays cooperatively – maintains an ongoing friendship.

Shares toys or allows turns in response to another child’s request.

**Foundation**

Identifies a range of emotions and describes situations that may evoke these emotions.

Identifies situations where they feel safe or unsafe and approaches new situations with confidence.

Attempts tasks independently and identifies when and from whom help can be sought.

Follows class routines to assist learning.

Identifies their likes and dislikes, needs and wants and explores what influences these.

Reflects on their feelings as learners and how their efforts affect skills and achievements.

Understands their personal world, including personal histories and the places they and their families live in and belong to.

Explores relationships through play and group experiences.

Share experiences of cooperation in play and group activities.

(Adapted from: Continua of Learning and Development, Queensland Studies Authority 2010)

28 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Personal and Social Capability Learning continuum: Level 1b.
Learning Opportunities: for identity

Educators interact with families and children to develop relationships leading to a strong sense of identity.

They...

- Welcome family members to remain in class until they and their child feel safe and supported
- Use teaching strategies that reflect and respect the cultural mix of the group, for example, consider different tolerances for long silences, the value of relationships over outcomes and different tolerances for amounts of questioning
- Give children time and space to feel safe and confident
- Work alongside and together with children and their families
- Provide opportunities for children to explore and discuss their family, for example, share photo or objects from home
- Use photos of the children around the room, for example, in displays or to label lockers
- Accept the use of home language in class between families and children
- Learn and teach songs in children’s home languages
- Respectfully display children’s artworks and creations around the room
- Display photos and names of children in attendance at preschool (can be a click and reveal on the interactive whiteboard)
- Explore and explain feelings and emotions, for example, through role plays and situations that arise at preschool
- Sing songs and chants about feelings, for example, ‘If you’re happy and you know it clap your hands’
- Provide meaningful learning environments with opportunities to explore who they are and where they fit in their world, for example, dramatic play, home corner, or cubby house
- Celebrate contributions and achievements in culturally appropriate ways
- Use visual timetables displaying daily routines so that children know approximately what’s happening next

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
Connectedness

Early Years Learning Framework | Learning Outcome 2

CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD
Connectedness: Learning Outcomes

2.1 Develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
   a. develop skills for working with others
   b. develop inquiry and communication skills

2.2 Respond to diversity with respect
   a. explore diversity of culture, heritage, background and tradition
   b. respond respectfully to diversity

2.3 Become aware of fairness
   a. understand fairness

2.4 Become socially responsible and show respect for the environment
   a. explore natural and constructed environments
   b. investigate the interactions between the environment and its people
   c. respect, care for and sustain the environment

We offer parents chances to share their culture. This encourages students to learn about how different people live and promotes inclusivity among the students.

Nakara Preschool
Connectedness: Learning Outcome 2 Overview

As children develop their self awareness they broaden the variety and complexity of their experiences with others. They become active participants and contributors to their world through the different relationships and communities they belong to. Children show an increasing interest in how others regard them and create understandings about friendships and how their actions or responses affect how others feel. Through their sense of belonging to groups and communities, children will begin to understand the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active civic participation. They begin to develop an awareness and acceptance of diversity and learn to interact with others with an increasing capacity for respect and fairness.

Science strongly links to how children connect and relate to the world around them. Children become attuned to their environment and become aware of the systems and changes around them. They actively observe, analyse and wonder about how things occur and why. They begin to understand how their actions and participation contribute to their place in their world and their community.

Most Indigenous children are especially aware of their connection to the land and their people. Often there are cultural expectations that transform the way they interact with others and the environment. Indigenous culture has strong ties to the land. This determines particular laws, traditions, practices and protocols that are to be followed, for example, kinship protocols affect ways in which people connect with and interact with others. Indigenous family relationships are complex and varied. They include rules at family, clan or tribal levels. Traditions, protocols and rules are specific to each community and are dependent on the complex family structures and cultural rules associated with that place. What may be seen as appropriate in one setting can be seen as rude or offensive in another, for example, avoiding eye contact can be a sign of respect for some Indigenous people, but can be considered disrespectful in other situations.

It is important to be sensitive and take the time to develop relationships with people. The sharing of knowledge from other cultures is a privilege and without the trust and understanding that comes from a relationship, people may be hesitant or seem unwilling to share. The key to creating cultural competence is to be willing to step back and truly listen. A child’s parent, extended family member or an early childhood professional at the school could act as a cultural mentor.

For all children to effectively connect with the people and places around them, the teachers and early childhood professionals must create learning environments that allow children to experience mutually enjoyable, caring and respectful relationships with the individuals, societies and environments in which they live and learn.
2.1 Develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation

connected to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Personal and Social competence; Intercultural Understanding; Critical and creative thinking; Information and communication technology (ICT)

a. develop skills for working with others

**Children in preschool are connected and contribute to their world when they:**

- listen to others and share own ideas in Standard Australian English or first language (connects to the English Curriculum)
- share observations, in diverse ways, as they explore the immediate world using their five senses (connects to the Science Curriculum)
- participate with others to pose questions and solve problems (connects to the Mathematics and Science Curriculum)
- cooperate with others and negotiate roles and relationships in play and group experiences
- express their own opinion in matters that affect them
- contribute to fair decision making about matters that affect them
2.1 Develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation

connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Personal and Social competence; Intercultural Understanding; Critical and creative thinking; Information and communication technology (ICT)

b. develop inquiry and communication skills

*Children in preschool are connected with and contribute to their world when they:*

- plan and carry out a few simple sequenced steps when exploring and investigating *(connects to the Science and Technologies Curriculum)*
- use simple language of measurement, with support where needed, to describe, compare, order or sort the observations made when exploring *(connects to the Mathematics and Science Curriculum)*
- describe both verbally and non-verbally what they see, hear, touch, feel and taste *(connects to the English and Science Curriculum)*
- represent findings and communicate ideas in a variety of ways *(connects to the Arts, English, Mathematics and Science Curriculum)*
- use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) with assistance to collect information and communicate it simply *(connects to the English Curriculum)*, for example, take photos, use iPad apps and computer software
2.2 Respond to diversity with respect

connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Personal and Social competence;
Intercultural understanding
connects with Cross-Curriculum priorities – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures;
Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia

a. explore diversity of culture, heritage, background and tradition

*Children in preschool are connected with and contribute to their world when they:*

- build an understanding that people speak different languages and dialects such as Kriol and Aboriginal English *(connects to the English Curriculum)*
- describe their own family’s celebrations, rituals and traditions
- sequence familiar events *(connects to the Mathematics Curriculum)*
- talk about and name some of the people in their family and recognise that not all family structures are the same
- identify and compare connections, similarities and differences in their own and others’ histories and culture
- build an understanding that stories of the past can be communicated in different ways and by different people, for example photos, artefacts, perform at Dance and Drama and oral stories
- explore and begin to understand the cultures in their immediate world
2.2 **Respond to diversity with respect**

*connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Personal and Social competence; Intercultural understanding*  
*connects with Cross-Curriculum priorities – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures; Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia*

b. **respond respectfully to diversity**

*Children in preschool are connected with and contribute to their world when they:*

- begin to describe their own feelings if put in someone else’s place, for example, substitute a character in a book for themselves or role play
- listen to others’ ideas and respect different ways of being and doing
- begin including others in play
- explore Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ cultures that have a connection with places and people – past, present and future – artwork, artefacts and basic values
- investigate other cultures’ artwork, artefacts and basic values – past and present
2.3 Become aware of fairness

*connects to the General capabilities Ethical behaviour*

**a. understand fairness**

*Children in preschool are connected with and contribute to their world when they:*

- become aware of the ways in which peers are included, excluded or dominate play situations and how others may feel
- develop the ability to recognise unfairness and bias in story characters and play situations and the capacity to know how to act with compassion and kindness *(connects to the English Curriculum)*
- discuss fair/unfair and kind/unkind behaviours within the classroom and local environments
- explore the classroom rights and responsibilities of children
Learning Opportunities: for connecting with others

Educators interact with children and families to develop successful connections with others.

They...

- model language to negotiate roles, express ideas and collaborate
- plan for group discussions and decision making about rules and expectations
- encourage participation and contributions to group play and projects such as turn-taking and sharing
- provide resources that broaden children’s perspectives and encourage appreciation of diversity, for example, puzzles, books, posters and toys
- expose children to different languages and dialects – encourage appreciation of linguistic diversity, for example, people, songs and apps
- sing songs, play games, recite chants from a range of cultural backgrounds
- explore culture, heritage and traditions of each child
- cook/experience foods from different cultures and invite families to demonstrate and participate (be aware of allergies)
- role play perspectives on inclusion/exclusion, fair/unfair and kind/unkind

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
2.4 Become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Creative and Critical thinking
connects with Cross-Curriculum priorities – Sustainability
connects to the Science Curriculum
Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia

a. explore natural and constructed environments

Children in preschool are connected and contribute to their world when they:

- identify some natural and made elements in their environment (connects to the Science Curriculum)
- use simple and safe tools to explore and investigate the environment (connects to the Technologies Curriculum)
- investigate the properties of different materials in the local environment, for example, colour, texture and flexibility
- observe and describe changes in the weather and the effect it has on what we do or wear, for example, sunlight, temperature, clouds and rain (connects to the Science Curriculum)
- use play to investigate, project and explore new ideas
2.4 Become socially responsible and show respect for the environment
connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Creative and Critical thinking
connects with Cross-Curriculum priorities – Sustainability
connects to the Science Curriculum
Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia

b. investigate the interactions between the environment and its people

*Children in preschool are connected with and contribute to their world when they:*

- investigate the basic needs of people, plants and animals in the local environment (connects to the Science Curriculum)
- investigate relationships between people, plants and animals in the local environment (connects to the Science Curriculum)
- explore how plants and animals provide food, clothing, tools and shelter (connects to the Science Curriculum)
- identify and describe the features of living and non-living things (connects to the Science Curriculum)
2.4 Become socially responsible and show respect for the environment
connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Creative and Critical thinking
connects with Cross-Curriculum priorities – Sustainability
connects to the Science Curriculum
Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia

c. respect, care for and sustain the environment

Children in preschool are connected with and contribute to their world when they:

• observe, reflect and ask questions about their environment, for example, positive and negative interactions (connects to the Science Curriculum)
• between humans and the environment (connects to the Science Curriculum)
• suggest ways to care for and sustain local environments, for example, turn water taps off, reuse containers and compost vegetable scraps (connects to the Science Curriculum)
• take responsibility for the care of a living thing, for example, classroom pet or garden (connects to the Science Curriculum)
• participate with others to solve questions; contribute to group outcomes (connects to the Science Curriculum)
Further information

**Being socially responsible and respecting the environment**
Fostering young children’s sense of curiosity can promote a lifelong interest in their natural world. The foundations of scientific learnings rest in the dispositions of inquiry and exploration. The skills and processes required for inquiry and exploration are fundamental for children to explore, investigate and take responsibility for the environment. They occur naturally for children during play and educators should look for opportunities to develop children’s understanding of scientific concepts in relation to sustainability and the environment. Children need to observe things first-hand, to experience hands-on concrete activities and to ‘learn by doing’.

**Further cultural considerations**
Expectations regarding children’s rights and responsibilities may be informed by and vary between cultures. For some cultures, young children are given a lot of guidance and expected to develop autonomy as they grow older whereas in other cultures (for example, Indigenous) young children are given autonomy but are expected to conform more as they grow older. Being aware of these cultural perspectives creates a better understanding of children’s sense of being.
Phases of Learning: **Connectedness**

**With support and modelling, the child manages classroom responsibilities.**
Requires modelling and scaffolding to attempt to resolve conflicts.

**With guidance, plays and works alongside others in familiar experiences and situations.***
Requires modelling and scaffolding to join in play with others, particularly small group play.

**With support, recognises differences between familiar people, for example, physical appearance, foods eaten, language.**

**Listens and watches as others share examples of cultural practices, for example, dances, stories.**

**With guidance, notices things of interest within the environment, for example, insects in the garden, weather change. With support, is beginning to observe plants and animals in the environment.**

**With occasional prompts, participates in packing up, keeping the environment clean and tidy and caring for materials and spaces.**

**With support, uses a small range of modelled strategies to resolve conflict.**

**Plays and collaborates with others during familiar experiences for sustained periods of time.**

**Usually shares play resources and takes turns.**

**Responds positively and respectfully to differences and similarities among people.**

**Shows interest in their own culture and heritage, for example, talking about stories, important people, food from own culture.**

**Is interested in observing short-term changes in their environment, for example, watches ice melt, seeds grow.**

**Shares interest in animals and plants with others and if asked, can discuss ways to care for them.**

**Offers to help with familiar classroom responsibilities and often carries them out independently.**

**Attempts to resolve conflict by suggesting modelled strategies.**

**Actively participates in a few familiar and new group learning experiences.**

**Applies awareness of their own and others, rights in familiar situations, for example, turn taking.**

**With prompts, talks positively about differences and shows interest in the many ways people may be different.**

**Shares some aspects of their own culture, for example, a song or story.**

**Willingly shares observations of natural changes in their environment, for example, tides changing when fishing, rivers flowing when it rains.**

**Shares their knowledge of plants and animals with others.**

(Adapted from: Continua of learning and development, Queensland Studies Authority 2010)

* It is not necessary for children to constantly interact with other children or adults. Playing alone provides children with time to think, explore and create.

29 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Personal and Social Capability Learning continuum: Level 1b.

**Foundation**

**Identifies ways to take responsibility for familiar tasks at home and school. Shares experiences of cooperation in play and group activities. Explores relationships through play and group experiences.**

**Shows awareness for the feelings, needs and interests of others. Identifies similarities and differences between themselves and their peers.**

**Shares ideas about self and belonging with peers. Identifies and describes memorable intercultural experiences. Shows awareness that the biosphere is a dynamic system that provides conditions that sustain life on Earth.**

**Shows awareness that all life forms, including human life, are connected through ecosystems on which they depend for their wellbeing and survival. (Cross-Curriculum priorities/ Sustainability/Key Ideas)**

Connectedness EYLF Outcome 2 | Northern Territory Preschool Curriculum
Learning Opportunities: for connecting with the environment

Educators interact with children and families to develop successful connections to the environment.

They...

- provide access to a range of natural materials throughout learning experiences, for example, pebbles/gum nuts for counters, leaves for printing/collage, natural sponges for cleaning and straw/clay for building
- consider children's connectedness to the land, seek to learn more and demonstrate respect for community protocols
- embed sustainability into daily routines, programming and practices, for example, keeping food scraps for chickens or a worm farm, planting an edible garden, encourage bringing foods without wrappers
- keep a class pet and/or grow plants, for example, edible plants, herbs or bush tucker that can be used in cooking (turmeric, ginger, lavender, coriander, basil)
- use recycled materials in experiences, for example, egg cartons for paint or seed pots; plastic bottles filled with sand/pebbles/seeds/nuts for musical shakers

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
Wellbeing

Early Years Learning Framework | Learning Outcome 3

CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING
Wellbeing: Outcomes

3.1 Become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing
   a. interact positively to form relationships and friendships
   b. recognise simple emotions and build self-regulation

3.2 Take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing
   a. build knowledge, skills and positive attitudes to physical movement
   b. explore ways to promote their own and others’ health and safety

At preschool we aim to help children develop firm foundations, and to achieve this we focus on our Principles and Practices and it is imperative that we create a strong sense of belonging and encourage positive relationships.

English as a Second Language Action Research Group
NT Preschool Curriculum Trial Phase 2
Wellbeing: Learning Outcome 3 Overview

A strong sense of wellbeing is fundamental to children's sense of being, belonging and becoming. Wellbeing encompasses children's spiritual, social, emotional and physical wellbeing as well as health. It provides children with confidence, independence and optimism which maximises their learning potential. It increases their ability to be responsible for their health, hygiene, personal care and safety.

Developing children's physical wellbeing ensures the integration of the sensory motor and cognitive systems. When children receive information from multiple senses, the brain processes the information to produce a more coherent picture which children require to interact in their environment. Practising basic gross and fine motor skills in preschool lays the foundation for complex motor skill development.

Children's wellbeing is strongly linked with resilience - the capacity to cope with day to day stresses and challenges both within and outside the preschool. Many children in the Northern Territory grow up in environments that are very different to those of children in the rest of Australia. This means that some children will need different types of support to grow and learn. Some children may need more support than others to reach their full potential; this might include providing a meal or snack for energy, daily nose blowing to improve hearing and hygiene routines for general wellbeing. Consider this a rewarding opportunity to engage the wider community through parent workshops to support wellbeing too.

As with all developmental achievements, each child will develop their skills according to their unique experiences, personality and abilities. Teachers and early childhood professionals, along with the child’s family, play an integral role in supporting and encouraging each child's confidence and ability to manage self-help tasks.
3.1 Become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing
connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Personal and Social competence

a. interact positively to form relationships and friendships

Children in preschool have a strong sense of wellbeing when they:
- negotiate friendships and build and maintain respectful and trusting relationships with other children and early childhood professionals
- demonstrate increasing awareness of the needs, rights and responsibilities of others
- describe their contributions to shared projects and experiences
- acknowledge and accept affirmations
- verbally ask an adult and peers for help

Further information

Positive relationships and friendships
When children experience secure supportive relationships they feel respected and valued. When children feel well, happy, secure and socially successful they are able to fully participate in, and learn from, the daily routines, play, interactions and experiences at preschool.

Children’s wellbeing includes good mental and physical health, feelings of connection with others, enthusiasm and satisfaction for daily activities. A sense of satisfaction and acceptance of self is essential for children to get along with others and deal with their feelings in constructive ways.
3.1 Become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing
connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Personal and Social competence

b. recognise simple emotions and build self-regulation

Children in preschool have a strong sense of wellbeing when they:

- demonstrate moments of solitude and reflection
- make choices
- accept challenges
- recognise basic emotions
- share humour (verbally and non-verbally), happiness and satisfaction
- take considered risks
- demonstrate an increasing capacity to self-regulate their feelings, emotions and behavior appropriate to the situation
- with support, show an increasing capacity to act and speak appropriately when resolving conflict
- respond appropriately to changes in routines and the environment

Further Information

Emotions and self-regulation
Secure, strong and respectful relationships with familiar adults are fundamental to children’s learning and development and assist them to feel confident to try new things or take considered risks. Self-regulation is the capacity to not over-react or under-react.

Developing self-regulation is crucial to the way that a child learns to cope with the world, and has a lasting impact on their mental health and wellbeing. Through modelling, role-play, puppetry, conversations and explicit teaching, children can develop the capacity to adjust or regulate their behaviour or emotional reactions to particular events.
Phases of Learning: *social and emotional wellbeing*

Identifies and labels own feelings, for example, I feel happy.

Physically or verbally asserts needs and desires, for example, continues to play with a toy when another child wants a turn; lets teacher know if another child refuses to share toys.

Is able to describe feelings and their causes in Standard Australian English or can do when questioned in first language, for example, I’m excited because Dad is coming home.

Asserts own needs and desires verbally without aggression, for example, when the timer goes off, says it’s my turn now.

Is increasingly able to manage own feelings, for example, calms down when angry and uses words to explain why s/he chooses to go to spend time alone.

Takes action to avoid possible disputes, for example, displays a sign to say: Work in progress – don’t pack up the block building; signals to/asks someone to watch over their work while they go to the bathroom.

(Adapted from: Continua of learning and development, Queensland Studies Authority 2010)

30 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Personal and Social Capability Learning continuum: Level 1b.
Learning Opportunities: for social and emotional wellbeing

**Educators interact with children to develop social and emotional language and understandings.**

They...

- initiate trusting and reciprocal relationships with children by listening and responding to children’s conversations; giving genuine feedback, encouragement, understanding and respect

- respect and support families’ choices and decision making such as observance of family celebrations and rituals, for example, birthdays, sorry business or fasting, dietary restrictions during Ramadan

- talk with parents and other educators about supporting children to understand their feelings and strategies to assist them to begin to self regulate strong emotions, for example, talk about the events that trigger anger, the body signs for it, and discuss ways that work for the child to diffuse it

- provide environments for solitude and reflection, for example, intimate spaces or using comfortable furniture

- provide environments/materials for releasing/containing excess energy, for example, mini-trampolines, weighted cushions, stress balls

- model and role play how to ask an adult or peer for help – acknowledge attempts or successes

- program small group activities and support individual children to participate

- provide opportunities for safe risk taking, for example, walking across high balance beam; climbing on rocks; playing with mud and sticks

- provide opportunities for children to choose activities, for example, eating times; resting or looking at a book

- encourage children to use first language when sharing experiences and personal successes

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net

* in first language where needed
3.2 Take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Personal and Social competence

a. build knowledge, skills and positive attitudes to physical movement

Children in preschool have a strong sense of wellbeing when they:

- demonstrate increasing control and coordination in gross motor skills, for example, running, hopping, crawling, sitting, jumping, catching, kicking, balancing, striking and galloping
- work towards gaining control and coordination with fine motor skills, for example functional stable pencil grip, cutting (curved and straight lines) and finger isolation
- increasingly develop hand/eye and hand/foot coordination and ball skills
- visually track moving objects with the eyes (not moving head)
- cross the midline during a range of activities, for example, cross-clapping games or dances or touching opposite elbows or crossing ankles
- develop perceptual motor skills, for example, completing 7 piece interlocking puzzle, follow three verbal instructions or copy a block construction
- develop sensory awareness, for example, using different senses to receive and differentiate stimuli
- move around the environment safely displaying spatial awareness
- develop strength, balance, stamina, flexibility and muscle tone
- demonstrate a positive attitude and willingness to participate in or pursue physical interests or challenges, for example, dance, drama, physical movement or ride a bike
- demonstrate the ability to calm the body and mind when needed
**Further information**

**Motor skills**

Motor skills are defined as gross motor and fine motor. Both are required to perform most basic actions so they tend to develop at similar rates.

Gross motor skills are the larger movements of arms, legs, feet, or the entire body such as crawling, running and jumping. Fine motor skills can be defined as small muscle movements that occur in the fingers and in coordination with the eyes.

Children first start with whole arm movements at birth and as they develop they refine the movements to the smaller muscles. With time and practice, children are able to refine and strengthen movements in their fingers to be able to manipulate small objects and hold a pencil correctly. Fine motor skills are smaller actions such as grasping an object between the thumb and a finger. Before children use their fingers to manipulate writing implements and paper they may need many opportunities to practise larger whole body movements, for example, dancing, digging in the sandpit, playing games or exploring the playground environment.

Ensure opportunities in the day are created for children to practise key motor skills to increase:

- brain development – crossing midlines and pathways between hemispheres
- co-ordination and control through body awareness
- large muscle tone and strength
- balance, stamina and laterality
- spatial sense and visual motor planning (perception).

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31 Department of Education (2014), Assessment of Student Competencies Teacher Handbook, Northern Territory.
Phases of Learning: **Motor Skills**

Moves with direction and beginning coordination, for example, runs avoiding obstacles, jumps forward, hops once or twice on the spot.

Attempts to walk along a line, occasionally stepping off.

Throws, catches and kicks objects with awkward movements, for example, throws a ball with two hands, catches a large ball against the body, kicks a ball from standing position.

Manipulates objects with hands, for example, manages large buttons on own clothes, makes snips with scissors.

Moves with direction and increasing coordination, for example, runs moving arms and legs, does a running jump with both feet, attempts to skip – often reverting to a gallop.

Walks along a wide balance beam.

Throws, catches and kicks with increasing control, for example, throws ball at a close target, catches a bounced ball, moves towards the ball to kick it.

Manipulates smaller objects with increasing control, for example, squeezes clothes pegs to hang paintings, cuts along a straight or curved line.

Moves with direction and refined coordination, for example, runs quickly changing directions starting and stopping, jumps forward from a standing position.

Walks forward easily and backwards with effort, along a balance beam (beams are becoming increasingly narrower).

Throws and kicks at target and catches with increasing accuracy, for example, throws object with smooth overhand motion, catches object with elbows bent and kicks ball with fluid motion.

Manipulates a variety of objects requiring increased coordination, for example, cuts with scissors along lines and creates recognisable shapes in play dough.

(Adapted from: Continua of learning and development, Queensland Studies Authority 2010)

32 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Health and Physical Education/Foundation Year/Movement and Physical Activity.
Learning Opportunities: for physical wellbeing

*Educators interact with children while they play to develop physical wellbeing, language and understanding.*

They...

- encourage children to practise tracking objects with their eyes by rolling objects such as a ball around a circle of children, roll marbles across the desk or painting tray or roll cars around a track
- encourage visual perception activities
- finding and sorting objects which are the same or different
- finding the difference between similar pictures
- finding an object in a busy picture
- completing mazes of increasing difficulty
- playing with interlocking jigsaws in a frame and without a frame, increase number of pieces
- encourage children to cross the midline by playing mirror games (copying a partner’s actions), ‘Simon says’, musical games and contemporary and traditional dances
- develop fine motor skills with activities such as cutting with scissors, tearing, twisting and scrunching, manipulating play dough/clay, threading, sorting, playing with small objects, drawing on chalkboards/whiteboards or finger plays
- demonstrate balance by walking across low balance beams, along a line, standing on one leg or using rocker boards
- develop foot/hand-eye coordination, by hitting/catching a moving ball or kicking a ball
- develop body awareness by jumping/hopping on a trampoline or manipulating through an obstacle course
- build muscle strength by riding a bike up an incline, carrying heavy objects, pushing and pulling objects and trampoline activities

*These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net

* in first language where needed
3.2 Take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

*connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Personal and Social competence*

b. explore ways to promote their own and others’ health and safety

*Children in preschool have a strong sense of wellbeing when they:*

- suggest ways to keep themselves, others and their surroundings safe
- recognise they need help when they feel uncomfortable or unsafe
- engage in experiences, conversations and routines that promote healthy lifestyles, good nutrition, safety and personal hygiene practices
- demonstrate self-care skills and participate in health routines
Further information

**Promote their own and others health and safety**

Developing the ability to self-manage aspects of a child’s own care, including health and hygiene tasks, is an important aspect of their journey towards independence. Children need time to learn tasks such as toileting and washing their hands, blowing their nose, choosing healthier food options, unwrapping and opening packaging and tidying up at food times. Therefore, planning time in the daily routine to intentionally teach these self-care tasks is required. Different cultures have different self-care behaviours and the behaviours expected in school may need to be sensitively and explicitly taught.

Personal safety skills are important as they can provide the basis for helping all students to be safe at school, at home or when away from home. It also helps teach everyone to stay safe from the many risks (such as violence and child abuse) faced on a daily basis.

These safety skills can be known as protective behaviours and often need to be explicitly taught so children can:

- assert their right to feel safe
- listen to what their body tells them
- follow up by taking action to solve problems on their own or seek assistance from other people.

33 (Kids Matter, 2008).
Phases of Learning: **health and safety wellbeing**

- **Follows rules to keep themselves and others safe.**
- **Identifies familiar routines and rules to keep themselves and others safe, for example, knows not to share food as some children may have allergies, remembers to walk inside the classroom, remembers not to talk to strangers.**
- **Remembers and follows rules and routines to keep themselves and others safe and healthy, for example, explains safety rules to others, identifies people they can ask for help.**

(Adapted from: Continua of learning and development, Queensland Studies Authority 2010)

34 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Health and Physical Education/Foundation Year/Personal, Social and Community Health.
Learning Opportunities: *for own and others health and safety*

*Educators interact with children to develop the language and understandings to promote children’s own and others’ health and safety.*

They...

- talk about preschool safety rules and why they are important, for example, walking inside, holding the scissors safely, pushing chairs in, and keeping hands their hands to themselves
- encourage children to notify an adult about unsafe situations, for example, snake in the playground, broken glass or water on the floor
- scaffold children to use protective behaviour strategies and related language, for example, encourage children to assert their right to feel safe using statements like, *Stop, I don’t like it when you* and listen to what their bodies tell them, scaffold children to solve problems on their own or know who to go to for assistance
- use everyday experiences such as meal times, hygiene procedures, play and toileting routines to highlight ways for children to develop self-care skills
- use self-care and health activities as a means of deepening the learning experience, for example, discuss healthy food options at meal times or discuss why we blow our nose, wash hands or clean our teeth

*These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net*
Learning and Thinking

Early Years Learning Framework | Learning Outcome 4

CHILDREN ARE CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNERS
Learning and Thinking: Outcomes

4.1 Develop dispositions for learning
   a. develop curiosity, enthusiasm, resourcefulness and reflexivity
   b. build confidence, cooperation, commitment and persistence
   c. develop creativity and imagination

4.2 Develop a range of skills and processes for learning and thinking
   a. develop problem solving, investigation and inquiry strategies

4.3 Transfer and adapt what is learnt from one context to another
   a. to make choices and organise self for learning
   b. reflect on thinking and learning and transfer and adapt what they have learnt
   c. resource own learning

4.4 Engage in creative and inventive ways of thinking and doing
   a. use imagination and innovation
   b. represent ideas, feelings and experiences in creative ways

Children are provided with a diverse range of activities as well as spontaneous and intentional teaching moments to enhance their learning experience.

LITERACY AND NUMERACY ACTION RESEARCH GROUP
NT PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM TRIAL PHASE 2
Learning and Thinking: Learning Outcome 4 Overview

In the early years, children use their imagination and curiosity to generate new ideas, solve problems and apply that knowledge to new situations. Developing dispositions such as curiosity, persistence and creativity through an active involvement in learning builds children's understanding of the concepts, creative thinking and inquiry processes that underpin learning. They also build the foundational skills of inquiry, reflective thinking and develop a sense of agency. Dispositions for learning are the foundations for learning in areas such as Science, Technologies, Engineering, Mathematics and the Arts.

Engagement is central to learning. When children are engaged, they show concentration, persistence and eagerness in their inquiry. They are more likely to be confident and involved learners when they increasingly take responsibility for their own learning. Confident learners ask questions and are open to different perspectives; try new ideas and resources; commit to a goal and learn to persist when problems arise. They begin to learn to listen to alternative points of view, to collaborate and become more aware of the rights and needs of others. In the early years, confident learners begin to reflect on their own learning. 35

Learning is exploratory, fun and rewarding and children develop understandings about themselves and the world around them.

Learners challenge and extend their own thinking and that of others through interactions and collaboration. Learning with other children allows them to share thoughts, ideas and feelings. With support, they begin to understand that listening to the responses of others can assist them to understand and make meaning of experiences. Children’s active involvement and long periods of uninterrupted play helps them explore ideas using imagination and creativity, and to investigate, assemble, invent and create. This thinking can be promoted by creating a stimulating and engaging learning environment rich with natural and manufactured materials and tools.

Teachers and early childhood professionals can build on children’s engagement in order to focus, challenge, lead and extend their learning – through sustained shared thinking, demonstrating, scaffolding new skills, explicitly teaching the language of this learning, and creating new ways of thinking to optimise learning. Children need many opportunities to generate and discuss ideas, brainstorm and solve problems and investigate how things work. Increasingly they use information Communication Technology (ICT) to assist their thinking and represent what they know and understand.

35 (Arthur, 2010).
4.1 Develop dispositions for learning

connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Critical and creative thinking

a. develop curiosity, enthusiasm, resourcefulness and reflexivity

Children in preschool are confident and involved learners when they:

• express curiosity and wonder about events, experiences and interest in their environments (connects to the Science Curriculum)
• ask questions (in first language as needed) about people, events, objects and the environment
• follow and extend their own interests with enthusiasm and energy
• explore the properties of familiar objects (connects to the Science Curriculum)

b. build confidence, cooperation, commitment and persistence

Children in preschool are confident and involved learners when they:

• persist even when the task is difficult and then experience the satisfaction of achievement
• build their concentration and ability to focus on key aspects of learning experiences
• actively engage in learning experiences, conversations and play experiences
4.1 Develop dispositions for learning
countries to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities - Critical and creative thinking

Children in preschool are confident and involved learners when they:

- dance or move to music using their own voice, scarves, musical instruments or large pieces of material
- express themselves and their ideas using crayons, paints, play dough or clay, construction materials, computer software or photography
- tell their own stories using picture books/photos, constructions they create, for example, tell a story using adjuncts during and after building a block construction or train track

Further information

Dispositions
Dispositions are ‘relatively enduring habits of mind and action’\(^{36}\) that encourage learners to respond to experiences in particular ways. Dispositions are linked to our attitudes and feelings about ourselves. Effective learners draw on a repertoire of dispositions in their interactions with their world\(^{37}\).

When children are enthusiastic they initiate and engage in investigations, interactions and play. When children are curious they explore, ask questions and solve problems – often with great persistence. When they are confident they ask questions, are open to different perspectives and try new ideas and resources\(^{38}\).

Further cultural considerations
Some cultural world views value relationships and harmony over outcomes and productivity. Therefore expectations such as committing to a goal may be difficult for some children. Helping children understand different ways of being will help address any cultural mismatch.

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4.2 Develop a range of skills and processes for learning and thinking
connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Critical and creative thinking

a. develop problem solving, investigation and inquiry strategies

Children in preschool are confident and involved learners when they:

- manipulate objects and experiment with cause and effect, trial and error and motion (connects to the Science Curriculum)
- ask questions, develop and test own theories
- inquire, investigate, attempt to solve problems (connects to the Science Curriculum)
- adapt successful strategies and skills to new situations
- create own improvisations in play (connects to the Arts Curriculum)
- create and use simple representation to organise, record and communicate mathematical and scientific ideas and concepts (connects to the Mathematics and Science Curriculum)
- are explicitly taught the language of that learning

Further Information

Skills and processes
Learning processes such as inquiry, problem solving and hypothesising are essential for effective learning as well as the ability to ‘think deeply and logically, and obtain and evaluate evidence’. Successful learners are also ‘creative, innovative and resourceful, and are able to solve problems in ways that draw upon a range of learning areas’.

39 (MCEETYA, 2008).
4.3 Transfer and adapt what is learnt from one context to another
connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Critical and creative thinking

a. to make choices and organise self for learning

Children in preschool are confident and involved learners when they:
• make simple plans and carry them out to complete a task
• organise self and source simple resources to carry out a task or participate in an activity
4.3 Transfer and adapt what is learnt from one context to another

connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Critical and creative thinking

b. reflect on thinking and learning and transfer and adapt what they have learnt

Children in preschool are confident and involved learners when they:

- articulate their thinking process and reflect on their learning (in first language as needed), for example, how they could improve or alter things next time or how they might do things differently
- use skills of prediction, hypothesising, testing, experimenting and evaluating in play and construction experiences (connects to the Science Curriculum)
- respond to ideas and suggestions from others
- use reflective thinking to consider why things happen and what can be learnt from these experiences
- understand and apply a range of thinking strategies to engage with situations
- solve problems and adapt these strategies to new situations
- transfer knowledge from one setting to another
4.3 Transfer and adapt what is learnt from one context to another

connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Critical and creative thinking

c. resource own learning

*Children in preschool are confident and involved learners when they:*

- communicate with others (in first language as needed) to extend their own learning, for example, members in the community, peers, parents, elders and educators
- explore the local environment to enhance their own learning, for example, visit parks, clinics or park rangers
- visit community stores (*connects to the Science Curriculum*)
- construct and pull apart materials, machines or construction toys to learn how things connect (*connects to the Technologies Curriculum*)
- use their five senses to explore the properties of natural and processed materials (*connects to the Science Curriculum*)
- use tools, cameras, iPads, internet or computer software to explore, investigate and solve problems
4.4 Engage in creative and inventive ways of thinking and doing
connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Critical and creative thinking
connects to The Arts Curriculum

a. use imagination and innovation

Children in preschool are confident and involved learners when they:

- explore and experiment with two dimensional and three dimensional objects, shape, colour, line, texture, contrast and patterns in art and craft, for example, painting, printing, constructing or sculpting (connects to the Mathematics and Arts Curriculum)
- use objects, sounds, movement and language to symbolise ideas, for example, a banana represents a phone, their voice is used to create sounds or fabric represents water (connects to the Arts Curriculum)
- use imagination and experiment with ideas, materials, processes and a range of media (connects to the Arts Curriculum)
- use music, sound, movement and language to explore changing rhythms, speed, direction and movement of different body parts (connects to the Arts Curriculum)
- use symbolic play, dramatic play, music and movement to experiment with voice, language, gestures, costumes and props (connects to the Arts Curriculum)
- use the senses to explore objects and materials, indoor and outdoor
4.4 Engage in creative and inventive ways of thinking and doing
connects to the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Critical and creative thinking
connects to The Arts Curriculum

b. represent ideas, feelings and experiences in creative ways

Children in preschool are confident and involved learners when they:

- engage in music-making and create simple compositions (connects to the Arts Curriculum)
- use singing, dancing and drama in play (connects to the Arts Curriculum)
- respond, express and communicate ideas and feelings in a variety of ways to a range of stimuli, for example, music and artworks (connects to the English and Arts Curriculum)
- engage in dramatic, fantasy and role play (connects to the Arts Curriculum)
- use simple tools and materials to investigate, take apart, assemble, invent, construct, change and represent ideas, for example a tinker table (connects to the Technologies and Science Curriculum)
- retell or create simple stories and act them out using voice, movement and space (connects to the Arts Curriculum)
Phases of Learning: Learning and Thinking

Notices detail and attributes of objects, for example, pointing at or expressing that the dragonfly has patterns on its wings.

Finds multiple uses for classroom objects.

Sees simple tasks to completion, for example, completes a five piece puzzle.

Notices and comments on the effect of actions, for example shaking a jar of water makes bubbles appear.

Draws on everyday experiences and applies knowledge to similar situations, for example, washes hands after playing in the sand.

Notices or asks questions about similarities and differences (in first language as needed), for example, notices that two children are the same height.

Experiments with materials in new ways, perseveres when it didn’t work the first time, for example, fills objects with water to make them sink.

Perseveres with a task even when encountering difficulties, for example, tries another way of connecting boxes when glue didn’t work.

Investigates and explores what if... possibilities, for example, what happens when I add more red colour to the yellow paint?

Applies new information or vocabulary to an activity or interaction, for example, jumps like a kangaroo after reading a book on kangaroos.

Observes details and seeks relevant information, for example, notices gears on a bike are similar to those in the clock that was pulled apart.

Finds alternate solutions to problems, for example, uses scissors to cut play dough when all the plastic knives are in use.

Completes a project over time, regularly returning to it, for example, takes three days to build a Lego structure.

Explains plans for testing the cause and effect, tries different ideas, for example, puts rice in different types of containers to notice different sounds.

Applies learning to different contexts, for example, adds more water to mud pies to make them runny after making cakes in cooking.

(Adapted from: Continua of learning and development, Queensland Studies Authority 2010)

40 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) (n.d.), Critical and Creative Thinking Learning Continuum, Personal and Social Capability Continuum.
Learning Opportunities: for developing learning and thinking

Early childhood professionals interact with children to evoke enthusiasm, confidence, cooperation, commitment, persistence, curiosity, resourcefulness and reflexivity.

They...

- create learning environments that invite experiences, interactions, risk taking, discovery, connections to nature, conversations, play and collaboration through open ended complex materials that can be used in many ways, for example, Which objects float? How can I make them sink?

- provoke exploration, discovery and inquiry by providing new and intriguing materials, for example, kinetic sand, magnetic marbles, digital microscopes, scarves/ribbons and musical instruments

- program to ensure appropriate levels of challenge including experiences, learning centres and projects that overtime, facilitate in-depth investigations and collaborative learning, for example exploring how a post office works, investigating the properties of glue, pulling machines apart or exploring sounds to create music

- use materials that encourage problem solving and persistence and allow children choice to follow and extend their own interests, for example, What happens to the car when the height of the ramp is adjusted? How do I create new colours to paint with? What are the most effective ways for joining different materials? For example, glue, sticky tape or staples

- have a flexible timetable with extended periods of time to engage in deep learning with rich and meaningful inquiry based experiences

- provide sufficient space for children to explore and have access to both active and quiet spaces

- listen carefully to children's ideas and discuss how these ideas might be developed

- provide opportunities for children to revisit ideas, extend their thinking and to persist even when they find a task difficult

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net

* in first language where needed
Communication

Early Years Learning Framework | Learning Outcome 5

CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS
Communication: Outcomes

5.1 Interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
   a. develop oral language and active listening
   b. develop phonological awareness
   c. begin to extend literacy vocabulary
   d. begin to extend numeracy vocabulary
   e. begin to use and extend language in a range of contexts

5.2 Engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from them
   a. begin to comprehend and make meaning from texts
   b. begin to develop reading and writing

5.3 Express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
   a. investigate, view and create in a range of media

5.4 Begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
   a. begin to understand symbols and patterns
   b. develop number and algebra concepts
   c. develop measurement and geometry concepts
   d. begin to understand statistics and probability
   e. develop concepts of print
   f. begin to understand sequencing

5.5 Explore tools, resources and information communication technologies to represent ideas and thinking
   a. use tools, resources and technologies in play, thinking and learning
   b. use Information Communication Technologies (ICT)
Communication is one of the major developmental skills a child will learn. It is essential for interacting in their world and to have their needs met. Communication includes gaining the skills to understand and to express thoughts, feelings, and information. Literacy and numeracy are important aspects of communication and are vital for successful learning across the curriculum.

**Literacy** is the capacity, confidence and disposition to use language in all forms such as listening, speaking, viewing, reading, writing, music, movement, dance, visual arts and storytelling. Early literacy is the most important skill a child can have to experience reading success in primary school. Understanding and using oral language including a strong vocabulary is the first step in mastering reading and writing.

Children in preschool, whose first language/dialect is not Standard Australian English, need a strong base in their first language to both maintain or extend and achieve in Standard Australian English at school. The maintenance of the first or home language is particularly important for the child’s development of a positive self-concept and well being. These children need explicit teaching as well as interaction in their play and everyday experiences, to expand their vocabulary and language abilities. Given a culturally inclusive and supportive classroom environment, appropriate learning experiences and teaching strategies and the high expectations of their teachers and early childhood professionals, these children can achieve success in the English speaking classroom.

**Numeracy** is the capacity, confidence and disposition to use mathematics in daily life. It is about numbers, putting things in order, comparing quantities, discovering patterns and navigating space. By explicitly teaching the language of mathematics, and asking the right questions in the right way and at the right time, children can be stimulated in their investigations to identify objects, make comparisons, make predictions, test ideas, and share discoveries, while exploring their interests. Children can also explore sizes, shapes, patterns, and quantities in the process. In this way, children can learn concepts from different disciplines in different contexts, all in ways that are naturally engaging to them.
5.1 Interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes

connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy

**a. develop oral language and active listening***

*Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:*

- say most speech sounds correctly (age-appropriate articulation when speaking first language or Standard Australian English)
- use various types of sentences and sentence structures to comment, ask a question, give directions or explain – using correct grammar (in first language as needed)
- clearly communicate ideas, needs and feelings
- maintain a two-way conversation – ask and answer simple questions, recall personal experiences and greet people
- maintain a topic of conversation
- initiate conversations, share ideas, feelings and experiences
- modulate voice to match the situation, for example, use a quieter voice indoors
- listen and respond to others, texts, questions and basic instructions
- extend auditory memory to be able to remember three unrelated directions and repeat a series of three to four words
- predict the meaning of some words
- use non-verbal expressions, facial expressions, gestures and eye contact (where appropriate) to convey meaning

* Communication can be in first language, signed or Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC) and Standard Australian English (SAE) where appropriate

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**Further information**

*Many preschool children in the Northern Territory have conductive hearing loss which can affect learning. The Breathe, Blow Cough (BBC) program, when followed properly, has been proven to have a significant effect on children’s hearing and learning.*
Further information

Oral language

Oral language provides the foundation for learning to read, and is related to overall reading achievement throughout primary and secondary schooling\(^2\). From the moment of birth, a child is immersed in an environment that will have an immense impact on his or her long-term facility with oral and written language. Children who are surrounded by, and included in, rich and increasingly complex conversations, whether in Standard Australian English or first language, have an overwhelming advantage in vocabulary development, in understanding the structures of language and in tuning into the sounds of language in general, including the English language. Oral language is important for both reading and writing. To understand language at the printed level oral language competency is a necessity. Children need strong vocabularies to understand the broad range of words in texts; they require strong grammatical skills to understand the complex sentences present in many texts; and they require the ability to reason and infer so that the necessary links between information in texts can be made.\(^3\)

A child’s ability to talk about what they are doing as they play directly links to their ability to read. When children learn to ask for help or to join in play or have a turn with a toy, talk about how they feel, give opinions and reasons for them, talk about the actions they perform and describe experiences they enrich their vocabulary so they learn words they will need to socialise, read and write. Building a supportive and trusting relationship with children is imperative for them to feel comfortable to talk about their experiences and what they are doing, and accept feedback that progresses their oral language development.

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\(^2\) (Snow et al., 1995; Wise et al., 2007).
\(^3\) (Konza 2011).
Learning Opportunities: for oral language

Educators interact with children to extend their oral language.

They...

- scaffold and promote oral language through spontaneous opportunities, daily routines, group times, intentional activities, and individual book sharing times
- use children's interests, explorations in art, sensory motor activities, nature, dramatic play and puzzles to extend children's vocabulary and language
- purposefully model, make explicit and add specific educational content to daily routines, for example, develop positional words on the way to the bathroom – My teddy is on the shelf. Can you put your teddy on the shelf and then go to the bathroom?
- talk about ‘talking’ so children begin to notice differences and understand there are different dialects as well as languages (first step in code-switching)
- use children's interest in puppets and drama to role-play and model non-verbal cues and greetings such as feelings, good morning, good bye
- model, discuss and read with big books, share stories individually or in small groups - talking and extending oral language
- talk with every child everyday, scaffolding and extending their vocabulary
- ask different levels of questions (such as using concrete thinking, classifying/describing, predicting/generalising), for example, What is this? Can you tell me...? How are these different? What do you think might happen? Do you have any ideas on how to...? Why do you think...?
- jointly sing songs, rhymes and chants for enjoyment

When working with EALD students, communication using visual cues is key (whether in first language or in SAE). By respecting and nurturing a child’s first language alongside SAE, we will ensure their sense of belonging, as well as their love and capacity to learn. Through this holistic approach, with families and teachers working in partnership, SAE and first language will grow together.

EAL/D Action Research Group
NT Preschool Curriculum Trial Phase 2

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net

The children's level of Standard Australian English (SAE) acquisition will determine the extent to which this interaction occurs in first language and/or SAE. It is important that the Assistant Teachers model and extend children’s first language when and where appropriate and that the teacher models and encourages usage/development of SAE.
Phases of Learning: Active Listening

Associates words with actions, for example, says ‘throw’ when sees ball thrown or throws when hears the word.

Follows oral instructions when combined with gestures, for example, ‘sit down’ accompanied by a gesture.

Follows one-step instructions, for example, ‘Please pick up the block.’

Follows two-step instructions, for example, ‘Sit on the mat and read a book.’

Follows instructions with more than two steps, for example, ‘Put the pencils away, wipe the table and then sit on the mat, please.’

Follows three unrelated instructions, * for example, ‘Pick up the block, put the pencils away and close the door.’

Further information

Active listening
Oral comprehension precedes reading comprehension and can be developed from the earliest years. Some students can hear, but are not active listeners. Active listening requires selective and sustained attention, working memory, cognitive processing and information storage and recall mechanisms. Teachers and early childhood professionals can help students develop these skills by teaching non-verbal cues and giving them tasks such as listening for specific or key information, listening to answer specific questions and listening to follow instructions (treasure hunts) Barrier games require active listening, are very popular with children and can be adapted in many different ways.44

Further cultural considerations
Sometimes hearing loss is not an issue. Many Indigenous children are not used to listening to ‘one controlling adult’, nor to following their instructions on the spot. When hearing is fine, it can be more about ‘Is this worth listening to?’ as they can be used to tuning in and out of multiple conversations. Having a visual/aural cue (for example, hand in the air/bell) that says ‘this is important’ is recommended.

Western culture includes, more or less, ‘obligation to answer’ questions, whereas in Indigenous cultures, people have the right to decide whether they want to answer or not. Children who choose not to answer can be thought of as uncooperative or anti-social if the teacher views this through their own cultural lens.

44 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), English/Foundation Year/Literacy/Interacting with others.

* Students need to be able to remember sets of instructions to effectively work in a classroom environment and develop memory strategies to assist with their learning. Some students need to be explicitly taught listening strategies and questioning techniques.

45 (Konza 2011)
Learning Opportunities: for active listening

_Educators interact with children to promote active listening._

They...

- individually engage children in conversations and share books and activities to promote listening
- play barrier games/board games
- use a visual diary/word/symbol cards to talk about the daily routine each morning and throughout the day, for example, What will we do now we’ve finished morning tea?
- engage children in memory card games, start with a small amount of cards and increase as skill improves
- play games that focus on listening to instructions, for example, Simon Says or Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes
- use charts to explain active listening, for example, eyes looking, ears open, lips closed and brain engaged
- participate in games requiring listening and gross body actions, for example, Twister or Do what I say, not what I do and Guess who?
- ask the child to follow one, two and then, eventually, three step oral instructions
- use simple concise sentences at an accessible pace and provide visuals as well as auditory cues where possible/practical
- model giving instructions and asking questions with other adults

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
5.1 Interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes

connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy

b. develop phonological awareness

*Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:*

- develop increasingly acute auditory discrimination skills such as identifying environmental sounds through to identifying subtle differences between sounds in words (hat/mat)
- begin to notice and understand that there are different sounds and words in languages and dialects
- engage in sound and word games to promote enjoyment of language
- begin to hear, produce and play with rhythm, rhyme and alliteration in words
- begin to hear, produce and play with syllables in words, such as clap syllables
- begin to hear and identify beginning (onset) and ending (rime) sounds in simple words
- begin to realise spoken and written language is made up of small sound units (phonemes)
- begin to understand sounds are connected to letters in the alphabet (phonics)
Phases of Learning: Phonological Awareness

Identifies sounds in the environment – hears increasingly subtle difference, for example, notices the difference between bird calls and sirens, gradually hears the difference between a cockatoo and kookaburra, joins in nursery rhymes and songs.

Plays with words, sounds, rhythm and rhymes, for example, repeats songs, moves to the rhythm of words and chants, says rhymes like ‘I’ve got a tangle in my bangle’.

Copies the rhythm of words; recognises and invents rhymes and repetitive phrases, notices words that begin the same way, for example, says, ‘My name begins the same as dog and dot.’ Claps in time to the rhythm of words.

Hears and repeats syllables in words, plays with sounds to create new words, for example, claps hands 3 times when saying ‘ban-na-na’, says hen, fen, len.

Further information

Phonological awareness

Phonological awareness is hearing and understanding the different sounds of spoken language. It includes the different ways oral language can be broken into individual parts, for example, separate sounds and syllables. The teaching of phonological skills to young English as a Second Language children is an important aspect of learning Standard Australian English. These children need to learn to consciously attend to and learn to pronounce a new set of speech sounds some of which are not found in their home language. In preschool, this includes skills such as playing with rhymes, noticing how words begin with the same sounds or clapping out individual words or syllables of a song, rhyme or chant. Playing with speech paves the ways to phonemic awareness – the ability to hear, identify and manipulate the individual sounds in spoken words.

Graphophonics, formally commencing in Transition, is connecting a printed symbol to a sound, unlike phonological awareness, which is an aural process of attending to and hearing the sounds of a language. Through music time, stories and having fun with nonsense words in relevant situations, children begin to show they are hearing different sounds. For English as a Second Language (ESL) children this often takes a lot of time and repetition to learn.

Further cultural considerations

Some Indigenous languages do not have rhyming words in their language. For these children and for children who speak Standard Australian English with difficulties, it is more beneficial to focus on syllables than rhyming.
Learning Opportunities: *for phonological awareness*

*Educators interact with children to develop the language and key concepts of phonological awareness.*

**They...**

- play games, identify and model listening to and talk about environmental sounds
- help children record their own sounds and then identify them
- sing action songs/rhymes and encourage children to feel the rhythm and hear rhyme, for example, B-I-N-G-O, Old Mac Donald and This Old Man
- clap musical patterns or use musical instruments to tap the rhythm in songs
- act out/play games around nursery rhymes, for example, Hickory Dickory Dock or We’re going on a Bear Hunt
- clap patterns and have children imitate the pattern
- play word games, for example, match pictures that rhyme and fill in the missing rhyming words in rhymes and songs
- play words games such as Which word doesn’t rhyme?
- physically collect rhyming words, for example, pin, tin, bin
- have fun with tongue twisters (e.g. alliteration)
- purposefully add specific educational content to everyday routines, for example, greet children with a word that rhymes with their name – Amanda panda
- play games like ‘Sounding Fish’ – where illustrated laminated cards target problematic sounds like ‘b’ and ‘p’ (bin/pin) or ‘t’, ‘d’ and ‘th’ (thin, din, tin), (e.g. phonemes, rhyme)
- use chanting for increased awareness/ability to use the sounds, grammatical and stress patterns of Standard Australian English

*These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net*
5.1 Interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes

connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy

c. begin to extend literacy vocabulary

Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:
understand and develop literacy vocabulary for everyday experiences, personal interest and topics explored in the classroom such as:

social interactions
hello, good-bye, please, sorry, thank you, can I...

reading
front, back, beginning, middle, end, title, pictures, author, illustrator, imagination, problem

feelings
happy, scared, mad, worried, surprised, sad

body parts
head, body, eyes, ears, nose, arms, legs

family
mum, dad, brother, sister, aunty, uncle, grandmother, grandfather

hygiene
wash, wipe, dry, brush, blow, breathe, soap, teeth, toothpaste, tissue, sleep, eat

count
then, next, after, where, when, what, why, how, first, went, saw

texture
hard, soft, rough, smooth, bumpy, squishy

sensory
smell, taste, feel, look, sound

colour
red, blue, yellow, green, orange, purple, brown, black, white, pink, purple

action
jump, walk, skip, talk, yell, wipe, stir, spread
5.1 Interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy

d. begin to extend numeracy vocabulary

Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:
understand and develop numeracy vocabulary for everyday experiences, personal interest and topics explored in the classroom such as:

- **time**
  before, after, first, last, morning tea, lunch, home-time, bedtime, wet season, dry season, summer, autumn, winter, spring, day, night, fast, slow, long, short, next, before, after, and then

- **shape**
  round, straight, flat, pointy, fit, doesn't fit, match, square, circle, triangle, rectangle, oval, corners, shape,

- **curved length**
  long, short, tall, thin, thick

- **size (including comparative language er, est)**
  big, bigger, biggest, small, long, short, thick, thin

- **position**
  on, off, on top, under, in/inside, out/outside, behind, over, behind, between, middle, opposite, in front, above, below, beside, next to, here, there, left, right

- **direction**
  up, down, forward, backwards, around, across

- **distance**
  near, far, distance, close to, further away

- **volume/capacity**
  small, large, pack, fill, holds more, holds less, full/empty, nearly full/empty, half full/empty

- **transformational**
  turn, flip, slide, edge, gaps, no gaps, shape, object, over, around

- **number**
  add, subtract, take away, share, money, coins, notes, dollars, cents, change, cost

- **ordinal**
  first, second, third, last, finish, start

- **mass/density**
  heavy, light

- **chance**
  could happen, will happen, won't happen, might happen
Further information

Vocabulary
Vocabulary is a key component of reading for meaning. If children know the meaning of a word, they are far more likely to be able to read it and make sense of it within a sentence. If the reader is not familiar with the meaning of those words, the sentence will be largely incomprehensible, even if some decoding attempt can be made. This will be the case for every sentence the child tries to read – word knowledge and comprehension of what the word means contributes in a major way to reading comprehension.

Many children extend their vocabulary indirectly, by repeated exposure to words in meaningful contexts such as conversations, listening to stories, through the media, active learning experiences and reading.

Many children in the Northern Territory begin school with small vocabularies and they are often not skilled in learning new words. Children from limited literate backgrounds will hear a more restricted range of words,⁴⁷ have less access to the vocabulary of books and will consequently be more likely to have difficulty acquiring the skills of reading and less opportunity to use their own reading skills to develop their vocabulary further.

Explicit instruction of vocabulary has been found to increase the vocabulary development of all children. It requires carefully choosing the vocabulary children require, developing strategies to gain a deep understanding, regular use and an increasing ‘word consciousness’ in all children.⁴⁸

Consider the benefits of sharing this information with parents, whether in conversation, presentations or workshops.

Further cultural considerations
In traditional Indigenous cultures, the notion of time is not chronological but related to events, people and places. It is the same with distances through references to landmarks and the environment (seasons). This subject-specific language must be planned for, modelled and taught in context.

⁴⁷ (Biemiller 2005).
⁴⁸ (Konza 2011).
**Phases of Learning: Vocabulary**

**2 - 3 year olds**
Vocabulary of approximately 150-300 words:
- approximately 2/3 of what child says should be intelligible
- can name a number of objects common to his/her surroundings
- combines words into a short sentence-largely noun-verb combinations (mean) length of sentences is given as 1.2 words.

**3 - 4 years**
Vocabulary grows to about 900–1000 words and includes:
- correct use of pronouns (I, you, me)
- plurals and past tense
- at least three prepositions: (in, on, under)
- uses three word sentences
- identifies main parts of the body.

**4-5 year olds**
Vocabulary generally consists of about 1500–1600 words and includes:
- familiar animals
- at least four prepositions or understanding their meaning
- naming common objects
- knowing some colours
- demonstrating understanding over/under
- understanding concepts such as longer, larger.

**English as a Second Language (ESL)**
Children in preschool, whose first language is not English, need a strong base in their first language to achieve in Standard Australian English at school. Include speakers of children’s home languages in preschool activities where possible, assistant teachers and families are a valuable resource. If vocabulary and concepts are understood in their first language, children are more likely to transfer understandings to English and therefore, become readers and writers in English.

These children need explicit teaching, modelling and scaffolding as well as interaction in their play and everyday experiences, to expand their vocabulary and language abilities. Most importantly, explicitly teach children how to notice and begin to understand the differences between the various languages and dialects they know.
Learning Opportunities: for vocabulary

Educators interact with and engage children in conversations to extend vocabulary.

They...

- provide a print rich environment
- explicitly teach new words related to learning, children’s interests and class topics
- build and extend vocabulary instruction into everyday routines, for example, On the way outside, let’s jump like a kangaroo. Say what you are doing
- share books with children, engaging them in conversations about the story, about reading behaviours and different concepts
- engage children in conversations about what they are doing, the environment around them and people in their world - extending their vocabulary
- encourage children to talk about what they are learning, what they plan to do, how they are going to do an activity, their day and what they are eating/doing
- encourage children to retell shared experiences
- model and role play using home language and Standard Australian English for children in appropriate contexts
- invite a variety of speakers into the classroom, for richness of content (vocabulary) and to reinforce the value of diversity (language, dialect, culture and style)
- explicitly teach the differences between various languages and dialects they know (will require assistant teachers and/or parent support)

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
5.1 Interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes

connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy

e. begin to use and extend language in a range of contexts

*Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:*

- verbalise ideas and simple concepts and ask questions to clarify concepts in Standard Australian English or first language
- retell simple stories and experiences
- engage in discussions, for example, class discussions on topic of the day, narratives and informational texts
- use imagination to recreate roles and experiences
- explore language patterns in narratives and mirror in own or class produced stories
- communicate ideas and tell stories through drawings, copied symbols, some letters or scribed sentences
Developmental Stages: **Using Language**

### 2 - 3 year olds
- begin to take turns when speaking with others
- may have short conversations with others
- talk about things that have happened in the day – may need prompting
- talk about people and objects not present, for example, Grandma at home.
- Begin to play with Language, for example, rhymes, songs.

### 3 - 4 year olds
- sentences are becoming longer – combining four or more words.
- language is used in role play
- begin to negotiate with other children about what may happen, for example, who will go first?
- talk can be about things that have happened away from home, for example, talk about preschool, friends, outings and interesting experiences.

### 4-5 year olds
- storytelling may have too much or not enough information, order of events may be muddled
- beginning to understand and use different perspectives in story telling
- still require practice at taking turns in conversations.

Further cultural considerations

*English as a Second Language children will need intentional language teaching and time to meet these milestones in Standard Australian English (SAE).*

*English as a Second Language children may require more practice to sequence events in a linear order as they may come from cultural backgrounds where narratives are constructed in different ways from the linear construction of Western, Standard Australian English texts.*
Learning Opportunities: to use language

Educators model and scaffold children’s use of language by:

They...

- encourage formal and informal oral sharing time, for example, talking about what they are learning and doing
- support children to share events – explaining who, what, when, where, why, how
- encourage children to retell a story or event – pictures can be used as prompts
- ask different levels of questions to develop deeper thinking, for example, What is this? Can you tell me? What do you think might happen? Do you have any ideas on how to? Why do you think?
- play oral language activities and games, for example, I spy, feely bag, make up stories based on 2 – 3 pictures
- use spontaneous opportunities, daily routines, group times, activities and individual book sharing times to scaffold and promote the use of language
- purposefully add specific educational content to everyday routines, for example, develop positional words on the way to the bathroom – Educator: Tell me where teddy is hiding? Child: Teddy is under the chair
- encourage shared reading using big books and sharing stories individually or in small groups - using and extending language

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
5.2 Engage with a range of texts to gain meaning from them

connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy and Numeracy

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**a. begin to comprehend and make meaning from texts**

*Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:*

- identify key ideas presented in simple texts
- retell a story in a logical sequence, for example, through block play, dramatic play scenarios, role play, paintings and orally
- predict what happens next in simple texts and why it might happen
- interpret illustrations and what may happen before or after
- start moving from literal interpretation of texts to inferential
- participates with a range of texts for enjoyment
- identify the purpose of different texts, for example, environmental print, narratives, informational texts and spoken texts
- explore language used in fiction and non-fiction texts
- recognise literacy conventions such as settings and characters in narratives
- join in chorus from narratives, rhymes, songs and chants
- recognise and engage with oral, written and multimedia texts

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*The new Preschool Curriculum can enhance learning outcome 5.2 for those children who are wanting to 'write' and have an interest in literacy. We found that the Curriculum gave a useful guide to the developmental stages of writing and to track the child's progress.*

Jenny Earls and Karen Kerr
Ida Standley Preschool
Developmental Stages: Comprehension

- Repeats words and actions demonstrated in books, for example, roars like a lion.
- Relates story to self and shares information, for example, after hearing a story about the beach says, ‘I went to the beach.’
- Imitates the act of reading through play, for example, holds a book and pretends to read to baby doll.
- Compares and predicts events in a story, acts out main events of a familiar story, for example, compares own feelings about baby brother to those of a character, re-enacts The Three Bears.
- Retells a story including many details and draws connections between story events, for example, the wolf blew the house down because it wasn’t strong, retells The Very Hungry Caterpillar using prompts.

Further information

Comprehension

Comprehension is the reason for learning to read; to understand things, and how they work and make meaning of texts. It is the process of deriving meaning from action, speech, images and text by connecting the learning to what the child already knows. Children need to understand the vocabulary used, predict what will happen next in the story or event, make connections to their life and retell the actions or events of a story to demonstrate their comprehension.

Vocabulary knowledge and comprehension are crucial in developing the ability to read meaningfully and to learn through reading. Research shows there is a strong correlation between the two; that is, vocabulary is both an outcome of comprehension and a precursor to it.51

50 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), English/Foundation Year/Literacy/Interpreting, analysing, evaluating.

51 (PETAA 2012).
Learning Opportunities: to develop comprehension

Educators engage children in conversations to develop comprehension.

They...

- read regularly to children and talk about what is read. Educators ask different levels of questions to develop children's thinking, for example, what is happening? Why did? What do you think will happen next? What do you think about?
- build the field of knowledge around the text by having shared experiences, cooking and making things
- read stories with emotion, sound effects, different voices and volume and tone to help communicate meaning
- connect ideas, language and knowledge presented in a text to experiences children have had in their lives
- encourage children to join in repetitive phrases in books, for example, "and don’t forget the bacon" or "My cat likes to hide in boxes"
- read a variety of different types of books, for example, factual, fiction, poetry, look at illustrations, talk about the texts to develop understanding
- use interactive whiteboards, stories, videos and illustrations to talk about their meaning and make connections with other stories or experiences
- encourage responses through art, drawing, play dough, puppets, role play and dramatic play
- read/tell (or have others read/tell) a variety of spoken (or written) narratives from diverse cultures. With children, co-construct oral and pictorial retellings to capture what was learned. (The focus might be on ‘why’ and ‘who’ and ‘where’ (purposeful relationships) or ‘what’ and ‘when’ (logical sequencing)

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
5.2 Engage with a range of texts to gain meaning from them
connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy and Numeracy

b. begin to develop reading and writing

*Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:*
- use images, marks and approximations of letters and words to convey meaning
- show an awareness that spoken words can be written and that print holds a stable meaning
- participate in fine motor activities that lead to the development of a functional and stable pencil grip, for example, cutting, playdough and finger rhymes
- copy symbols, produce some recognisable letter shapes or write most of the letters in their own name
- demonstrate reading/viewing like behaviour in books and online, for example, turn pages, identify front/back, read left to right and top to bottom
- enjoy and value reading
- demonstrate sequencing of events (at least three step sequence)
- explore ways print is used, for example, road signs, menus,
- show an interest in drawing, early writing and dictating ideas
Phases of Learning: Reading

- Looks at books and pictures with an adult or another child.
- Chooses and looks at books independently.
- Completes phrases in familiar stories.
- Listens to stories being read, for example, asks an adult to read a favourite story, repeats phrases when favourite stories are read aloud.
- Participates in story time interactively, for example, answers questions before, during and after read-aloud sessions; relates story to self; acts out a familiar story using props.
- Chooses to read by self, seeks information in books, sees self as a reader, for example, gives reasons for liking a book, uses books to identify an insect found in the garden.

(Adapted from: The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Trister Dodge, Colker, Heroman 2002)

52 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), English/Foundation Year/Literacy/Interpreting, analysing, evaluating.

Further information

Reading and writing
Most learning at school depends on knowing how to read. Reading is inter-dependent on language skills, particularly vocabulary. Therefore understanding and using oral language (listening and speaking) is the first step in mastering printed language (reading and writing). Language is the means by which children convey their needs, describe events, interact with others and express their thoughts and feelings. For success in reading and writing, it is important that children have strong oral language in Standard Australian English or first language before attempting formal reading and writing sessions.

The development of oral language is the focus in preschool, however, reading and writing skills also emerge as this happens. Understanding and creating opportunities to develop reading and writing skills along with oral language can be done in play situations and further enhanced by interacting with the children. Writing and reading while playing allows the child to understand that print carries a message and is used in various ways in their world, for example, doctor and patient in the play clinic, shopkeeper and customer or making a stop sign for cars in block play, are ways to authentically introduce writing and reading in play situations.
Learning Opportunities: begin to develop reading and writing

Educators interact with children to develop reading and writing language and understandings.

They...

- Create an environment to promote reading and writing, for example, a comfortable reading area that contains a variety of book types and electronic stories, a writing area that contains a variety of writing implements such as textas, pens, little writing books, envelopes and tablet devices
- use pictographs in the classroom for visual cues, for example, class timetable and question children about what is happening next
- make signs together for displaying children’s work. Read these with the children regularly
- talk about the letters in children’s names - first letters and the sounds associated with them and other letters in names, similarities and differences between names. Children learn a lot about sounds in words and letters through learning to read theirs and other children’s names
- ensure that children participate in whole class and small group shared reading activities and visit school and community libraries
- make story maps and symbols as a prompt for retelling
- provide opportunities for children to take home library books and class generated texts to share with family members
- take photos of the children doing activities or on excursions to use as a basis for discussing and recounting illustrations
- seek children’s help to make signs and labels for classroom displays
- provide templates for tracing
- provide pre-reading and writing apps on tablet devices
- use blocks, magnetic tiles, threading, puzzles and other manipulatives
- provide small handmade books for children to draw and write in to create their own books
- provide clipboards and paper for children to draw and ‘write’ on in different areas of the environment
- write words for children if they request them
- take notes for learning stories during the session so that children can see writing with a purpose
- provide laminated animal names for children to sort toy animals

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
Developmental Stages: Writing

Drawing

The child:
- uses drawings as a means of communicating
- believes drawings and writing communicate a message
- reads drawings as if there was writing on them.

Scribbling

The child may try to imitate writing.
- scribbles are intended to be writing
- scribbling may resemble writing
- usually holds and uses pencil with a mature grip (see pg. 106).

Letter-like formations

- the shapes in writing resemble actual letters
- shapes are not actually letters
- looks like poorly formed letters but are unique creations.

Random letters or letter strings

The child:
- uses letter sequences perhaps from his/her name
- may write the same letters in many ways
- may write a long string of letters in random order.

Create short texts to explore, record and report ideas and events using familiar words and beginning writing knowledge. (ACELY1651)

I wll b hope wen skul
I lk 4 pl4 sh mi frndz.

Foundation

Create short texts to explore, record and report ideas and events using familiar words and beginning writing knowledge. (ACELY1651)
The child may:
- begin to use left to right progression however letter reversals are still common
- create own spelling when conventional spelling is not known
- one letter may represent an entire syllable
- may not use proper spacing
- write words with beginning and ending sounds
- begin to spell some high frequency words correctly
- may insert vowels into words but not necessarily the correct ones
- as writing matures, more words are spelt correctly
- as writing matures, invent or omit one or two letters.

(ACRA (n.d.), English/Foundation Year/Literacy/Creating texts.)
Developmental Stages: Handwriting

Palmar grip stage 1
The pencil is held across the palm, holding the top end. The tip of the pencil is pointing down, with thumb facing upwards.

Palmar grip stage 2
Pencil is held with the thumb on one side and all fingers on the other side. The palm faces down.

Tripod grip stage 1
The thumb opposes the index finger with the pencil held between them. The middle finger may extend down the shaft or support the pencil along the side of the finger. There is more control towards the tip of the pencil. Whole arm movements are still used, with little control over the small muscles of the hand.

Tripod grip stage 2
In stage 2 of the grip, less whole arm movements occur because the shoulder, elbow and then the wrist become more stable to provide a fixed posture.

Further Information

Pencil grip Latest research says any grip is acceptable as long as it is functional and stable, that is, the pencil does not slip, the child has control and can write without tiring. In the functional stable pencil grip, there is less whole arm movement as the shoulder, elbow and then the wrist becomes more stable to provide a fixed posture. A functional, stable pencil grasp is one that allows the child to hold the pencil without slipping and controls writing without tiring, that is, the muscles are relaxed.

A child may use an inefficient pencil grasp as long as the grip is functional and stable. Holding a pencil properly can be difficult for a child who does not yet have enough strength in his/her hands and fingers. A thick, soft lead pencil is easier for a small child to hold and use. If a child is not yet accustomed to using a pencil, a crayon is a good starting tool. Encourage the child to use relaxed rather than cramped movements as he/she writes.

Foundation
- adopt correct posture and pencil grip
- learn to produce simple handwriting movements
- follow clear demonstrations of how to construct each letter (for example where to start, which direction to write)
- learn to construct lower case letters and to combine these into words
- learn to construct some upper case letters.

(Department of Education 2014)
Learning Opportunities: to develop handwriting

Educators encourage children to participate in fine motor activities to develop a functional stable hand grip.

They...

- encourage children to manipulate play dough and clay with their hands
- provide scissors, rollers, garlic presses and cutters for play dough or clay
- provide a spray bottle with water or paint
- provide objects and templates for children to trace around
- provide blocks, manipulatives, puzzles and threading
- engage children in finger rhymes and action songs
- provide glue, staples, tape and scissors for box construction and collage
- engage children in sewing activities, hammering boards and wood work
- encourage children to collect and manipulate small objects

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
5.3 Express ideas and make meaning using a range of media

connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Critical and creative
connects with The Arts Curriculum

a. investigate, view and create in a range of media

Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:

- explore making music using a variety of instruments or improvised musical instruments
- experiment with the elements of texture, colour, shape and space and form in two or three dimensions
- view and listen to simple printed and multimedia texts and music
- begin to learn descriptive language while experimenting with ways to express ideas and feelings and make meaning using creative arts, for example, drawing, painting, sculpture, drama, dance, movement, music and storytelling
- use language to engage in play to imagine and create roles, scripts and ideas
- share stories and symbols of children’s culture and re-enact well known stories
- use multi-sensory experiences to express ideas, for example, finger paint, construction, collage and sand

Further information

Express and make meaning using a range of media

Asking and answering children’s questions, joining in children’s play, teaching children vocabulary, skills and techniques that enhance their capacity to express themselves are strategies to help children talk about their drawings, role play, dance, music or different mediums they may be using.

For children to express themselves, they need to first feel safe, secure and comfortable with themselves, the educators and other children so they are willing to take risks. They require time to explore, experiment and grow at their own pace. For a child, creating through art activities, music or role play is a way of expressing themselves and making meaning of the world around them.
5.4 Begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work

connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy and Numeracy

a. begin to understand symbols and patterns

Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:

- use symbols in play to represent and convey meaning, for example, street signs in block area and pictographs to follow instructions
- recognise simple patterns and relationships, for example, in the environment, (traffic lights, animal footprints, paving designs), threading, letters, numbers and manipulative objects
- recognise some letter names, for example, letters in own name
- recognise number symbols, initially 0 – 5 and then 0 – 10
- recognise that letters are different to numbers
- begin to understand and use language to describe and talk about patterns, for example, long/short/long; red triangle/blue square/red triangle; repeat again, before, after, next
- recognise, continue and create simple patterns (two-three part patterns)
Phases of Learning: Symbols

- Notices print in the environment, for example, notices the name of the school, stop sign, the police station symbol.
- Recognises and identifies a few letters or numbers by name, for example, points to letter B in a book and says that's the same as my name, recognises $ symbol means how much to pay.
- Recognises and names some letters and numbers, for example, cuts out letters or numbers from a magazine and names them, points out numbers on a road sign.
- Begins to connect a letter to a sound or numeral to a number, for example, writes D to represent Dad.

Phases of Learning: Patterns

- Completes a sentence that repeats in a familiar story, for example, We're going on a Bear Hunt.
- Notices and recreates simple patterns with objects, for example, make a row of blocks alternating big-small-big-small, string beads in repeating patterns of 2 colours.
- Extends patterns or creates simple patterns of own design, for example, makes a necklace of beads in which a sequence of two or more colours is repeated, continues a block pattern of two colours.
- Creates increasingly complex patterns of own design or by copying, for example, imitates hand-clapping pattern (long clap followed by 3 short claps), designs a 3 coloured pattern using coloured cubes and repeats it.

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(Adapted from: The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Trister Dodge, Colker, Heroman 2002) (ACARA, 2016)

54 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) (n.d.), Mathematics/Foundation Year/Number and Algebra, English/Foundation Year/Language, English/Foundation Year/Literacy.
Symbols and patterns
A symbol is an object or concept that can represent a word, sound, gesture, idea or visual image. A red octagon symbolises stop, a black line on a map can represent a road; numerals are symbols for numbers and an alphabetic letter symbolises a sound. Symbols are part of everyday life and children require an understanding of symbols to read and write or work with number.

Patterns are also a part of our everyday life. Being able to look at patterns and note their underlying regularities and ongoing repetition allow us to predict, expect and plan. Knowing the patterns that happen regularly in everyday situations helps us know what to do, and say what is likely to happen in the future, for example, knowing the pattern traffic lights follow allows us to predict that a red light will come soon after we see a yellow light, therefore we need to plan to slow the car down. Patterning increases in difficulty and complexity through life. Children may start with separating red and blue blocks, move on to look for patterns in numbers when learning to count; look for letter patterns in words, make patterns in music and art; explore patterns to help with multiplication, spelling and reading and eventually may progress towards discovering patterns in algebra, calculus or chemistry to solve problems.

When teaching patterning, young children need to start with play and explore concrete objects. They then progress towards representations such as pictures and then symbols (numbers or letters). Being able to describe, copy, continue and then adapt the concept in other situations shows progressively deeper understandings of the concept.
Learning Opportunities: *for symbols and patterns*

*Educators interact with children to develop the language and understanding of symbols and patterns.*

They...

- sing songs - The Three Bears Rap; Heads, shoulders, knees and toes; Open Shut Them, record pictorially, leading to the use of symbols
- use local community members to help teach local dances - Hokey Pokey, folk and contemporary dances
- use body parts to make sound patterns, then jointly visually record patterns with hands and feet shapes, then later record these patterns using symbols. Read and act out the pattern, for example, clap, stamp, stamp, clap, stamp
- use clapping sticks, bells or other found materials to make patterns, visually record patterns using straight lines to represent clapping and perhaps curvy lines to represent humming/ringing
- provide bead pattern cards to copy a pattern while threading, for example, blue, red, blue, red
- provide objects to print with using 2 – 4 colours; set up dot painting with different colours; provide pre-cut shapes for pasting in patterns

*These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net*
5.4 Begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work

connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy and Numeracy

b. develop number and algebra concepts

*Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:*

**Number**
- count using one-to-one correspondence
- recite number names in order, initially to five, then to ten or beyond consistently
- recognise numerals initially to five, and then to ten or beyond and begin to order them
- identify and name the numeral that matches a given collection – initially to five and then up to ten
- subitise small quantities of objects or standard patterns on a die
- partition small numbers (part, part, whole), for example, four counters can be split into two and two counters
- compare collections of objects and describe whether there are more, less, the same or not the same
- estimate how many objects in a collection and check by counting them

**Money**
- begin to use everyday language related to money in play situations, for example, buy, sell, dollars, cents and change

*Patterns see 5.4.a*
- use language to describe and talk about patterns
- recognise, continue and create simple repeating patterns
Phases of Learning: Number

- Understands the concept of one, for example, picks up one object when asked.
- Understands the concept of more, for example, asks for more juice or picks up more of something when asked.
- Imitates counting behaviour using number names – may not be in correct sequence or may not use 1:1 Correspondence, for example, say numbers one to five while moving fingers across eight objects.
- Counts sequentially up to 5 using 1:1 Correspondence, for example, counts five sticks taking one at a time from the collection.
- Counts to ten connecting number words and symbols to the objects counted and knows that the last number is the total, for example, counts eight stones and says ‘I have eight’, rolls the dice and moves a counter six places on a board game.

Further Information

Number

Encouraging children to count how long, far or tall something is, incorporates number tasks in an authentic context. When children hear numbers, learn to count [using one to one correspondence] and order objects, through play and planned activities, they eventually realise that numbers are symbols that represent something. Interacting with children to model and help them verbalise the maths happening in their investigations brings awareness to concepts such as sharing, comparing small amounts and representing collections with stories, materials, pictures or numbers.

(*Adapted from: The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Trister Dodge, Colker, Heroman 2002)

55 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Mathematics/Foundation Year/Number and Algebra.
Learning Opportunities: for number

Educators interact with children to develop the language and understanding of number.

They...

- use daily routines such as eating times, mat times and movement between in/outdoors to count, compare, share and match everyday objects
- use finger plays, songs, stories, puzzles, movement to music, perceptual motor sessions and authentic opportunities to talk about number concepts
- use number plates with play dough (plastic plates with a numeral on each) to encourage counting, one to one correspondence and numeral identification
- encourage children to jump on shapes with dots or numerals, encourage children to say the numbers as they are jump on them
- demonstrate how to throw a bean bag onto a numbered target and say the number
- have a number on threading string, for example, a string has number five, thread five blue macaroni then five red macaroni and so on
- use insects as a provocation for counting different features
- NT Preschool Maths Games; Game 76 Show one, two, three; Game 73 Counting building blocks; Game 89 Giving one to each; What’s the time Mr Dingo?; Game 93 Pairing and Sorting Pictures; Game 87 Choosing and Threading; Fun with Mosaics; Can You Copy Me?

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
5.4 Begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy and Numeracy

C. develop measurement and geometry concepts

_Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:_

**Measurement**
- understand the concepts and use the language of measurement, for example, length, height, width, time, area and volume
- order objects or events by time, length, height, width, mass, volume, for example, shortest to tallest; heaviest to lightest
- use comparative language related to measurement, for example, the red car is faster than the blue car, Tom is taller than Rachael
- begin to use arbitrary measuring tools, for example, use a block to measure the length of a mat

**Time**
- use and understand language to describe duration of time (how long events/things last), for example, short/long time, until lunch
- use and understand language to describe the rate of time (the speed of events/things), for example, fast/slow, day
- use and understand language to measure time, for example, before/after, clocks and calendars
- order events using language of time, for example, first, then, after, daily routine and days of week begin to use past, present and future tenses correctly

**Geometry**
- sort, describe and name familiar two-dimensional shapes in the environment, for example, circle, square, triangle, rectangle and oval
- become aware of three dimensional objects in the environment, for example, the balloon is the same shape as a ball
- identify, draw and describe lines using everyday language, for example, round, straight, pointy, corner, curved
- use and understand positional and movement language in everyday activities, for example, under, behind, between, over, around
- use properties of shape to make things balance, fit and transform, for example, jigsaw puzzles
- observe and talk about observing people, places and things from different spatial viewpoints, for example, close and far away
Developmental Stages: Measurement

Notices something new or different, for example, a new classmate or new toy.

Notices similarities, for example, ‘We have the same hat.’

Notices similarities and differences, for example, ‘I can run fast in my new shoes.’

Uses comparative words related to number, size, shape, texture, weight, colour, volume, speed, for example, ‘I run faster than you’, ‘The red bucket is heavier than the blue one.’

Understands and uses measurement words and some informal measurement tools.

Measurement

In preschool, the focus is on laying a solid foundation for measurement by understanding the related principles, uses and language needed to describe time, length, area, capacity and volume. Knowing the language also contributes to word comprehension needed for early literacy.

Children learn best through experimenting and retain more information when multiple senses are used in the learning process. If children see, hear and feel concepts, such as role-playing The Three Bears, they are more likely to understand the concept of size than circling pictures on a worksheet. Children need to experience concepts physically to fully understand them. Interacting with children during Perceptual Motor, music, dance, songs, sand/water-play, blocks or cooking and daily routines supports children to link measurement concepts to the language.

At first, children make comparisons without any measuring tools. They learn concepts such as longer, heavier, shorter, lighter, faster and slower using the activities provided in a play environment. This is followed by using informal units of measurement like a block, foot, people or string. Later formal units of measurement such as a ruler, clock, scales, thermometers and measuring cups are used. Exposure to measurement tools early will allow children to explore them in their play and investigations.

Further cultural considerations

In some languages measurement is qualitative not quantitative, for example, how much flesh is on a fish, not how long it is. For these children, extra scaffolding will be needed and the planned intentional teaching of maths vocabulary is required.

Further information

Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Mathematics/Foundation Year/Measurement and Geometry.

('Adapted from: The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Trister Dodge, Colker, Heroman 2002)

56 Further information

Foundation

Uses direct and indirect comparisons to decide which is longer, heavier or holds more and explain reasoning in everyday language. (ACMMG006)

57 Adapted from Pica, R (2008), and Dodge, Colker and Heroman (2009).
Learning Opportunities: for measurement

Educators interact with children to develop the language and understanding of measurement.

They...

- use pack up time for measuring, for example, long thin blocks go on the top shelf
- provide manipulatives to make roads in various lengths, for example, Waffle blocks and Mobilo,
- provide interlocking foam mats to explore area
- assist children to draw, trace and cut around their hands or feet to measure and compare with other children or to measure the area of shapes
- provide balls to kick or throw as far as possible and then talk about whose ball went the greatest distance
- trace around children’s bodies, order by height on the wall. Children measure how long their arms, legs or body is by direct comparison with others
- talk about area while exploring art activities, for example, roller painting, finger painting, box construction, crayon and wash sponge prints
- label concrete objects in first language
- pay attention to how words of position/movement are used – reinforcing with pictures, role play and gestures
- when talking about the daily routine, discuss a variety of possibilities and times they may occur
- build picture dictionaries of mathematics terms
- NT Preschool Maths Games: Experiencing area and perimeter, Bigger than me, Measuring Things, Weighing Objects, Playing with Coloured Water, Playing with Many Sizes

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
Phases of Learning: Time

Follows steps in a simple routine, for example, washing hands, dressing self.

Demonstrates understanding of what comes next in a daily routine, for example, waits at the table for morning tea.

Uses past and future tenses and time words appropriately, for example, talks about tomorrow, yesterday, last week, ‘After morning tea we go outside.’

Associates events with time-related concepts, for example, ‘Tomorrow is my birthday’, ‘I went to the shops yesterday’, ‘I go to swimming lessons after preschool.’

Further information

Time
Though time is an abstract concept, young children experience it in concrete and sensory ways. To a young child, a week is a long time for a friend to be away and an hour can be a really long time to ride in a car but a short time to play with blocks. Most adults measure time objectively, using clocks and calendars. Young children begin measuring time by remembering what happened in the past and anticipating the future. They become aware of duration (how long something lasts), rate (the speed of events) and sequence (the order in which things happen). Looking for patterns in a daily routine or knowing the order of events in the day helps children to predict what may happen next.59

Further cultural considerations
When teaching the concepts of time, it is important to consider that some cultures have different views and values of time. Children from different cultures may be challenged with the concept of time as well as the language associated with it. Their cultural concept of time could be related to events rather than being fixed and measurable in a linear fashion. These differences need to be recognised, accepted and built upon as a bridge to learning Standard Australian English.

(Adapted from: The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Trister Dodge, Colker, Heroman 2002)

Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Mathematics/Foundation Level/Measurement and Geometry/Using units of measurement.

58 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Mathematics/Foundation Level/Measurement and Geometry/Using units of measurement.

59 (Adapted from Epstein, 2007).
Learning Opportunities: for time

Educators interact with children to develop the language and understanding of time.

They...

- jointly discuss visual daily timetables, such as, home time, snack time and pack up time
- share picture books to highlight times of the day and sequence of events – focus on the vocabulary and concept of time
- expand children’s curiosity about time in nature, living things – wet/dry season and changes over time in animal growth/environment
- recognise that some children’s concept of time may be different and they may require exposure to the concepts and language of time through fun and familiar life experiences, for example, exploring time devices such as sand timers, kitchen timers, stopwatches, clocks, watches and calendars and talking about time passing while cooking
- engage children with finger plays, songs, stories, moving to music, perceptual motor sessions and experiences related to duration and rates of time
- make or buy a one minute water or sand timer and use it to time activities, for example, packing up or running across the outdoor area
- explore objects that move and talk about fast/slow/slower, for example, toy cars, balls, marbles, spinning tops, water wheels, tins with holes punched in for water play and swings

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
Developmental Stages: Geometry

Moves objects from one container to another. Follows simple positional directions with assistance, for example, puts shoes in locker.

Shows comprehension of basic positional words and concepts, for example, puts objects in, on, under, on top of and next to another object as requested.

Understands and uses positional words correctly, for example, ‘Sit next to me’, ‘The scissors go in the tin.’

Shows understanding that positional relationships vary with different perspectives, for example, turns a board game around so another person can view it front on, a slide looks different from above than on the side view.

Further information

Geometry
Geometry includes location and positional language and concepts (on, off, on top, under, in, out, behind, below), movement (up, down, forwards, backwards, around, across) and distance (near, far, next to) as well as providing opportunities to make predictions (for example, what happens if I move this?). It leads to being able to visualise, draw and model shapes, locations and arrangements and predict and show the effect of transformations on them. Reasoning about shapes, transformations and arrangements to solve problems and justify solutions can lead to using these skills in everyday life (for example, games, art, geometry, map reading, as well as careers in fields like science, park ranging, drafting, or engineering).

To help children develop knowledge, skills and language about geometry children need to be provided with materials and experiences and given time to explore them. Interacting with children about their discoveries and allowing them to solve their spatial problems in their own way helps children increase their spatial awareness skills (awareness of themselves in relation to the people and objects around them).

Making two and three dimensional representations of known real places and things, using pictorial representations and reflecting on the process, helps children refine and expand their spatial sense.

Further cultural considerations
Young Indigenous children may well have quite a sophisticated understanding of space; some may know the direction of compass points (North, South, East, West) together with up/down, better than left/right. Mapping, in its early simple visual forms, together with stories, may be the key strategies and strengths of these children.

(Adapted from: The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Trister Dodge, Colker, Heroman 2002)

Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Mathematics/Foundation Year/Measurement and Geometry/Location and transformation.

Foundation
Describes position and Movements, for example, between, near, next to, forwards, towards; follows and gives simple directions. (ACMMG010)
Learning Opportunities: for geometry

Educators model and scaffold location and positional language and concepts through:

- speaking while moving and then recalling the actions undertaken in obstacle courses, for example, first we went across the beam, then under...
- describing pathways to and from school or shops, for example, passing a particular tree or other landmark
- using barrier games, for example, where one person describes what to do or where to put objects
- songs and rhymes, for example, Teddy bear, Teddy Bear, The Grand Old Duke of York, Open Shut Them, Up and Down, Rolling all Around
- playing hide and seek games with figurines and other small toys, for example, Where is Teddy hiding? on/under/beside the chair?
- NT Preschool Maths Games: Game 88 In, out and around; Game 90 A fun path

Look for opportunities to expand children’s language and concepts of shape through:

- sensory motor activities, for example, walk around the circle, finger paint shapes and use touch only to identify shapes
- exploring and describing examples of artworks including those from many cultures
- providing opportunities to play with jigsaw puzzles, manipulative equipment, attribute blocks and shape bingo
- discussing class displays/photos of shapes in local contexts
- explicitly talking about shapes when constructing, painting, modelling with play dough and using shape cutters and sharing books
- explicitly talking about the features of a shape in play/construction/problem solving, for example, triangles have three sides and three points
- NT Preschool Maths Games: Game 83 Drawing around solid things to make flat shapes, Game 112 Restore the circle, Game 172 Sort Any Way You Like
- playing games, for example, identifying a shape from a feely bag or jump on a particular shape

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
5.4 Begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work

connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy and Numeracy

**d. begin to understand statistics and probability**

*Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:*

**Order**
- sort, classify and match objects according to attributes (commencing with one attribute then increasing to two or more), for example, colour, size, shape and weight
- order objects according to one attribute (seriation), for example, smallest to largest or heaviest to lightest
- sort and classify objects by one attribute and then another, for example, sort blocks by size then colour or shape
- answer simple questions to collect information, for example, which is the largest/smallest group? Are there more blue beads than red?

**Chance**
- use everyday language to state opinions on the possibility of an event or outcome happening, for example, might happen, won’t happen, will happen or could happen
Developmental Stages: Order

Finds two objects that are the same and comments or puts them together.

Groups similar kinds of objects together, for example, cars, coloured counters, leaves.

Sorts objects by one property, for example, size, shape, colour or use, for example, sorts counters by colour into three buckets, puts a large cup with other large cups.

Sorts a group of objects by one property and then by another, for example, collects leaves and sorts by size and then by shape, puts all the brown teddy bears together then re-sorts to put all the large bears together.

Sorts objects into groups/sub groups and can state the reason, for example, sorts attribute blocks into circles then splits them into large and small circles.

Further information

Order
In preschool, children are ordering objects based on differences, for example, smallest to biggest or a repeating pattern, for example, red, blue, red, blue. They compare the attributes using comparative language e.g. longer/shorter, bigger/shorter. They arrange articles in a pattern and describe the relationship such as small, smaller, smallest or red, blue, red, blue or match one ordered set against another, for example, small cup to small plate and large cup to large plate.

When teaching order, young children need to start with play and explore concrete objects then progress towards representations such as pictures and then symbols (numbers or letters). Being able to describe, copy, continue and then adapt the concept to other situations, shows progressively deeper understanding of the concept.

Further cultural considerations
Some cultures do not have comparative words to describe an attribute, for example, er/est words – bigger or biggest and smaller or smallest, therefore more time to develop the concept will needed.

In Indigenous culture, quite often animals are grouped by function/utility (whether edible or important) rather than by visual features such as feathers/fur and number of legs. Therefore when children are grouping animals by an attribute that may not at first match to Western scientific classification, be prepared to consider alternative ways of grouping which reflect other cultural views. Many languages have no ‘modals’ (will, may, might, should, could etc.) and so these are often mastered late in the English as a Second Language progression.
Learning Opportunities: for order

Educators look for opportunities to engage children in conversations that develop the language and concepts of order.

They...

- use interactive whiteboard software, providing art activities such as hand prints, traced body outlines; threading or collected natural materials to arrange in increasing or decreasing order (seriation)
- sort and match objects according to one attribute, for example, size, colour, shape and animals by skin group or moiety where applicable
- sort and match found or everyday collections and talking with children about how they categorised them
- use routines in the day to sort and classify, for example, packing up time – all glue pots, blocks, balls together or place all shoes in front of the door
- engage children in manufactured sorting games, for example, memory game, attribute blocks, counters, self-correcting toys (Babushka dolls)
- NT Preschool Maths Games: Classifying Natural Objects; Analysing Favourite Foods; My Favourite Book; What’s It For?

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
Learning Opportunities: for chance

*Educators interact with children to discuss the chance of events happening.*

They...

- use stories, games and pictorial class routines to talk about the likelihood of events happening, for example, *Do you think the wolf will catch the three little pigs? What makes you think that?*
- use everyday experiences to talk about the chance of an event happening, for example, *what might happen after we hold the balloon under the water and then let it go? There are lots of grey clouds, do you think it might rain today?*
- games of chance, for example, simple games involving dice and spinners
- model conversations with co-educators using language structures such as: *I think, What do you think? What will happen if?*
- NT Preschool Maths Games: *Predicting Weather*

*These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net*

Further information

**Chance**

*Chance can be explored when children start to give their opinion about the possibility of a situation occurring and then expand their thinking to give reasons why it may happen.*

Further cultural considerations

*When teaching the language of chance, be aware that many languages do not have ‘modals’ (will, may, might, should, could etc.) and so these are often mastered late in the ESL progression. Hypothetical questions, that require a lot of visualising, do not come naturally to Indigenous children which could mean that ‘predicting’ may require extra scaffolding, modelling and peer support; as part of experiential learning.*
5.4 Begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work

connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy and Numeracy

e. develop concepts of print

*Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:*

- develop increasingly acute visual discrimination skills, for example, identify and discriminate between objects, shapes, numbers and letters
- build an understanding that (in English) print is written and read left to right, top to bottom
- explore how illustrations convey the meaning of text
- become aware of basic punctuation, for example, full stops
- become aware that words are separated by spaces
- understand book features, for example, title, author, illustrator
- become aware that sentences are made up of words, words are made up of sounds and sounds are represented by letters of groups of letters
Phases of Learning: Concepts of print

- Reads environmental print, for example, stop signs, fast food chain symbol, familiar logos.
- Recognises own name in print.
- Uses illustrations to tell the story or guess what the text says.
- Makes judgements about words and text by noticing features (other than words or letters), for example, That must be Benjamin’s name because it is long.
- Uses different strategies (known words, knowledge of letters and sounds, patterns in text) to make meaning from print, for example, That word says book, anticipates what comes next based on pattern in Brown Bear, works out which words says banana because s/he knows it starts with a b.

Further Information

Concepts of print
Reading aloud to children is the single most important activity for building knowledge to ensure their eventual success in reading. When children sit next to a caring adult and hear engaging stories, they develop positive associations with books, build vocabulary, and develop contextual understanding. They also pick up small but vital concepts about print, such as how to hold a book, which direction to turn the pages, what an author is and where to find the title. Simple actions such as moving a finger along the text to show that we read from left to right, help prepare children for reading. When toddlers flip through pages, when preschool children make up silly rhymes, or look at books to learn more about Arctic animals, they are engaged in important reading activities and displaying their knowledge about print.

62 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), English/Foundation Year/Language, English/Foundation Level/Literacy.

63 (Farmer Kris 2015)
Learning Opportunities: concepts of print

Educators interact with children to develop the language and concepts of print.

They...

- collect photos children have taken and use an interactive whiteboard, tablet device or Photo Story to jointly write a class book about different topics. (Model conventions of print)

- while reading stories- point to words, question children about which way to hold a book and turn pages

- talk about and model conventions of print when writing class books about experiences

- have writing materials available for children to have-a-go at their own labels, recounts and name writing

- provide little books made from a few pieces of paper stapled together for children to draw or make their own books. (Scaffold conventions of print)

- use construction words to write signs and encourage children to write their own about what they made, for example, David built a large house out of wood

- encourage children to write their own name in finger paint – starting on the left hand side

- use computer programs and apps that highlight words being read to follow left to right and top to bottom

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
5.4 Begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Literacy and Numeracy

**f. begin to understand sequencing**

*Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:*

- use sequencing vocabulary, for example, first, then, after, next, finally
- order events, stories, letters or experiences in a logical sequence, for example, pictures, photos, letters (in own name, simple environmental words) and numbers, recipes, dances, preschool routine or simple directions
- order objects using comparative language, for example, biggest to smallest, longest to shortest or heaviest to lightest

### Daily Routine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.00 am</td>
<td>Children arrive, put bags away and food in fridge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.00 am</td>
<td>Children tidy up and have a morning mat session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30 am</td>
<td>Children have morning snack and get ready for inside/outside play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.45 am</td>
<td>Inside/Outside Play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.00 pm</td>
<td>Children tidy inside/outside and listen to story. Transition to lunch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.30 pm</td>
<td>Lunch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.45 pm</td>
<td>Inside/Outside Play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00 pm</td>
<td>Children tidy up and have an afternoon mat session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.30 pm</td>
<td>Children have afternoon snack and get ready for mat time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.45 pm</td>
<td>Afternoon mat session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.30 pm</td>
<td>Home time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Developmental Stages: Sequencing**

Give simple accounts of what happened in that day, for example, *I played in the sandpit, We went to the shops.*

Anticipate, remember and describe daily sequence of events e.g. *I’m going outside after we have morning tea. Are we going to the beach tomorrow?*

Demonstrate increasing understanding of past, present, and future using words such as before, after, now, and then.

(Adapted from: The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Trister Dodge, Colker, Heroman 2002)

Further Information

**Sequencing**

Sequencing is the ability to arrange objects, events, numbers, words or actions in a particular order. Children need to be able to visualise thoughts and select the most appropriate ideas to develop a logical order of thinking.

Children develop the concept of sequencing through activities such as arranging objects by a selected attribute, numbering in a specific order, following directions or retelling a story or experience in a logical order. They also require an understanding of the words first, then, after, next, finally to talk about their sequence.

When teaching sequencing, young children need to use personal experiences or play with concrete objects then progress towards representations such as pictures, and then symbols (numbers or letters). Being able to describe, copy, continue and then adapt the concept to other situations shows progressively deeper understandings of the concept.

(Adapted from: The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Trister Dodge, Colker, Heroman 2002)

64 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), English/Foundation Year/Literature/Creating literature.
Learning Opportunities: for sequencing

Educators interact with children while they play to develop the language and concepts of sequencing.

They...

- use photos of science experiments, field trips, and explorations to order experiences in a logical sequence
- provide opportunities for children to take a series of photos of an experience and to sequence events in the correct order
- provide opportunities for children to explain to others the steps involved in making their construction or how to cook simple foods
- use sequential vocabulary while children play with ordinal puzzles, for example, biggest, longest, shorter or ordinal numbers
- talk about buildings using opposite language, for example, which building is longer? How could we make a smaller one taller/shorter?
- provide art activities that enable children to print objects in order of size or number
- model how to use playdough to roll sausages and cut with scissors into varying lengths and order by length
- provide various sized dinosaurs, animals, trucks or cars that can be ordered and talked about
- provide measuring cups, measuring spoons, various sized containers and funnels and syphons
- provide opportunities for children to jump/hop in ordered shapes/numbers, for example, small to large shapes or longest to shortest or by counting

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
5.5 Explore tools, resources and information communication technologies to represent ideas and thinking
connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Critical and creative thinking

a. use tools, resources and technologies in play, thinking and learning

**Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:**
- use a range of tools, technologies and resources safely and appropriately
- explore simple systems e.g.
  - mechanical systems – pulleys, levers, pendulum, gears, axels and ramps
  - organisational systems – recipes and instructions
  - environmental systems – reticulation, electric circuits, water pipes and road/rail systems
- design, draw, edit, reflect and create using tools and technologies

**Further Information**

**Using tools, resources and technologies**
Technology and engineering involves finding out how things are constructed and work. It involves thinking about what can make them work differently or better. Science tries to understand the natural world; the goal of engineering is to solve practical problems through the development of technologies. Technologies developed through engineering include the systems that provide our houses with water and heat; roads, bridges, tunnels, and the cars that we drive; aeroplanes and spacecraft; cellular telephones; televisions and computers and many of today’s children’s toys. The systems that create special effects in movies are also technologies developed through engineering.

Preschool children can begin to develop concepts in engineering as they design, build and test solutions through their play – as they construct sand castles and build cities out of blocks. They can also begin to understand that tools help people do things better or more easily, or do some things that could otherwise not be done at all.65

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Learning Opportunities: for using tools, resources and technologies

Educators interact with children while they investigate to develop the language around using tools, resources and technologies.

They...

- use exploratory play situations to talk about simple systems, for example, pulleys in the sandpit, levers to lift heavy objects or swings as pendulums
- provide opportunities for children to develop engineering concepts by designing, building and testing solutions through play, for example, constructing sandcastles, cities from block or aeroplanes from box construction
- use blocks, sandpit play, construction and manipulative toys to encourage children to explore environmental systems such as water, road, rail systems,
- use cooking situations to talk about following recipes, as well as tools and their uses, for example, beaters, microwaves
- encourage children to use the senses to explore and extend their knowledge of the properties of familiar materials, for example, glue is sticky, gears fit together to move or the sticky tape dispenser has sharp edges to cut tape
- provide hands-on activities, tablet devices and interactive whiteboard learning objects to determine how things work and create designs to construct
- explore different methods and materials children could use in their constructions. After construction they encourage children to reflect on ways to improve designs or consider different ways that it could be done
- provide tinker tables for children to safely pull apart old machines to see how they work and classify the parts

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net
5.5 Explore tools, resources and information communication technologies to represent ideas and thinking

connects with the Australian Curriculum General capabilities – Critical and creative thinking

b. use Information Communication Technology (ICT)

Children in preschool are effective communicators when they:

- experiment with a range of tools, media, sounds and graphics in ICT play and discovery
- develop basic skills to use ICT, for example, swipe, click/press to open a program or app, develop mouse skills, touch and hold an object to move interactive whiteboard objects, develop keyboard skills and use a camera
- engage with ICT for fun to promote thinking and learning
- use imaginary technologies as props in play e.g. pretend iPads, computers, mobile phones

Further Information

Using ICT

Using technology is one of the many tools children can use in their play, thinking and learning. Children in preschool require hands-on learning with real materials that can provide physical, sensory, intellectual and social experiences. Integrating technology into children’s play experiences and projects helps them to make meaning.

When selecting ICT to use in the preschool, it should be interactive and open-ended so that it promotes inquiry, creativity and problem solving. It should allow for social interactions where children are able to share their discoveries and help each other. Adult interactions that promote learning and language are just as important when engaging with technology as they are in other areas.

Technology is only effective when teachers mediate its use with the same developmentally appropriate practices they apply to any other type of learning experience.66

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Learning Opportunities: for using information communication technology

Educators interact with children while they play to develop language through ICT.

They...

- allow children to freely explore touch screens loaded with a wide variety of developmentally appropriate interactive media experiences that are well designed and enhance feelings of success
- provide opportunities for children to begin to explore and feel comfortable using "traditional" mouse and keyboard computers to use websites or look up answers with a search engine
- capture photos, and assist children to capture photos, of block buildings or artwork that they have created or videotape dramatic play to replay for children
- celebrate children's accomplishments with digital media displayed on a interactive whiteboard or a classroom website
- incorporate assistive technologies as appropriate for children with special needs and/or developmental delays
- record children's stories about their drawings or their play- make digital audio or video files to document their progress
- explore digital storytelling with children, co-create digital books with photos of the children's play or work and attach digital audio files with the child as the narrator

These are only some suggestions. For more ideas go to learninglinks.ntschools.net

(Technology and Young Children, 2005)
Resources and References

Northern Territory Preschool Curriculum
For Teachers and Early Childhood Professionals

- work with your teacher, assistant teacher or other early childhood professionals to familiarise yourself with the EYLF Principles, Practices and Learning Outcomes (http://www.education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/20538/BelongingBeing-Becoming.pdf)
- use the curriculum throughout the planning cycle to guide your planning (Refer Appendix)
- familiarise yourself with the content of the curriculum – the learning outcomes, elements, sub-elements and elaborations
- refer to the curriculum for information about why the content is important; the phases of children’s learning in the elements; and ideas for learning opportunities
- use the curriculum and the planning cycle to plan for individual children, small groups and whole class needs
- use the curriculum to plan for daily, weekly/fortnightly, term and year level
- maintain a play based learning approach where frequent interactions with children extend their vocabulary and learning
- have a mind-set of what learning did I see happen?; what learning needs to happen next for this child? rather than what did I teach?
- consider your context – children demonstrate the outcomes in a range of ways – add new examples and learning opportunities to the material
- work in partnership with assistant teachers to identify the characteristics of exemplary early childhood professionals and use critical reflection to improve your team’s practice
- use videos of children playing to identify and discuss, with other colleagues, the learning that is happening and what the next steps would be, and how best to support that learning
- share your experiences of the curriculum with colleagues, that is Transition teachers and Families as First Teachers educators.

‘Children are capable learners, everyone can teach and everyone can learn. We need to practise and work hard until we have learnt or acquired a skill. Time is needed to learn. We all learn in different ways. Some things are easier or more difficult to learn because of our age, size, language background, level of confidence and self-belief, prior experiences, and preferred learning styles. We can all help others to learn.’

(LARAPAINTA PRESCHOOL)
For Principals and Educators Leaders

- visit your preschool on a regular basis and talk with the teacher and early childhood professionals about what you observe happening and why
- familiarise yourself with the key resources including the Early Years Learning Framework, the Preschool Curriculum and the National Quality Standard
- have high expectations about the learning of young children but remember that play based learning is integral to children achieving the five learning outcomes
- support your early childhood staff to undertake joint professional learning and link to other preschools and early childhood settings to build a community of practice
- include early childhood resources and reports as part of your own professional learning
Conclusion

This curriculum is an important step forward in acknowledging and supporting the importance of the early childhood years for enhancing children’s learning and development. Children attending preschool will be being supported in critical areas of development but also may be encountering content knowledge for the first time. It is therefore important that teachers and early childhood professionals set the foundation for later understanding and success.
Resources to support the Preschool Curriculum

Introduction

1. Early Years Learning Framework

2. English as a Second Language
   • Clarke, P. Support Children learning ESL in the Early Years 2009. VCAA
   • Hutchins, T et al Indigenous Early Learning and Care, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2007
   • Frigo, T et al., Supporting English Literacy and Numeracy Learning for Indigenous Students in the Early Years ACER Research Monograph 57
   • Wise, S. Improving the early life outcomes of indigenous children: implementing early childhood development at the local level, Closing the gap clearinghouse issues paper no.6 2013 AIHW & AIFS
   • NT ESL Levels Early Childhood and Primary Learners

3. Learning outcomes in the EYLF
   • Australian Government: EYLF Educator Guide

4. Pedagogy
   • ECA research in Practice series: Intentional Teaching
   • ECA research in Practice series: Pedagogy
   • Epstein, A.S The Intentional Teacher, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Washington DC 2007

5. Guided play and learning
   • Teaching and play in the early years – a balancing act? Ofsted, Manchester UK July 2015 reference no 150085

6. Adult-led and Child-directed play and learning
   • ECA Research in Practice series: Inclusive pedagogy from a child’s perspective
   • ECA Learning Hub – Children’s Rights
   • ECA: Everyday Learning about agency in the early years
   • VEYLD Integrated teaching and learning resources (see below)
   • ECA – Everyday Learning about play and learning
   • ECA – Everyday Learning about supporting children’s creativity in ECEC
   • ECA – Everyday learning about talking about learning
7. Teacher Professional Practice in Preschool
   a. All resources below sourced from www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/edcare/pages/profresource.aspx-resources for professionals or Victorian DoE or VCAA websites
      • Family Centred Practice: VEYLDF Evidence paper 1 and Practice Guide 1; Early Years Exchange suite of 7 guides
      • Partnerships with Professionals: VEYLDF Evidence paper 2 and Practice Guide 2; Early Years Exchange Newsletter 2
      • High expectations for every Child: VEYLDF Evidence paper 3 and Practice Guide 3; Early Years Exchange Newsletter 6
      • Equity and Diversity: VEYLDF Evidence paper 4 and Practice Guide 4; Early Years Exchange Newsletter 8
      • Respectful Relationships: VEYLDF Evidence paper 5 and Practice Guide 5; Early Years Exchange Newsletter 3
      • Integrated Teaching and Learning Approaches: VEYLDF Evidence paper 6 and Practice Guide 6; Early Years Exchange Newsletter 5 and video presentations by Prof. Lilian Katz
      • Assessment for Learning: VEYLDF Evidence paper 7 and Practice Guide; Early Years Exchange Newsletter 9 and 13
      • Reflective Practice: VEYLDF Evidence paper 8 and Practice Guide 8; Early Years Exchange Newsletter 2
   b. National Quality Standard Professional Learning Program: various topics focusing on all aspects of the EYLF and professional practice @ www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

8. The Early Years Planning Cycle
   • ECA Research in Practice series: Documenting Children’s Learning
   • VCAA: The Planning Cycle

9. The importance of Pedagogy in ECEC
   • Reflect, respect, relate: a resource for supporting the quality of teaching based on the importance for curriculum of an active learning environment, relationships, wellbeing and involvement. DECS SA

10. Planning
    • ECA Learning Hub – AEDC resources
11. Partnerships with Family and Community
- ECA research in Practice series: Professional Partnerships in Children's Services
- ECA Learning Hub – Reconciliation
- ECA: Belonging: at the heart of relating to others
- VEYLDF Practice Guide 1 and Evidence paper on Family Centred Practice

12. Developmental stages
- Australian Govt: Developmental Milestones
- ECA: Supporting brain development
- Center for the developing child: in brief: the science of early childhood development, Harvard University website www.developingchild.harvard.edu.resources

13. Importance of reading
- G.Kalb and J.C. van Ours Reading to Young Children: A Head-Start in Life – 2012 research report and summary, Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research and DEECD Research Partnerships

14. Numeracy
- Let's Count – The Smith Family
- ECA: Everyday Learning about maths and numeracy

15. Brain Development and Brain Architecture
- Resources (publications, presentations, videos) from the Harvard University Center for the Developing Child website www.developingchild.harvard.edu.resources

16. Major reports
- OECD Starting Strong Reports I,II, III and IV

17. Curriculum in the Early Years
- Bennett, J 2000, Goals, curricula and quality monitoring in early childhood systems, The Institute for Child & Family Policy, Colombia University, NY, pp. 1 – 34.
- Bennett, J Five Curriculum Outlines: Curricula and Pedagogy in ECEC
- Curriculum in ECEC UNESCO Policy Brief on ECEC no 26, Sept 2004
18. Quality in ECEC
- Doherty-Derkowski, G 1995, Quality matters: excellence in early childhood programs, Revised edn, Addison-Wesley, Don Mills
- OECD Starting Strong Report IV, October 2015
- Pascal and Bertram: Comparative Study

19. Monitoring and Assessment and impact of EC education and care
- Sylva .K et al Research Reports on the EPPE Study eg The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project: Findings from Preschool to end of Key Stage 1; Students Educational and Developmental Outcomes at age 16 EPPE/EPPSE Longitudinal Study Findings at age 16
- Gilley.T et al ‘too late and not enough for some children: ECEC program usage patterns in the years before school in Australia’ published in the International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy July 2015 and available from the E4Kids website
20. National Agreements
- Council of Australian Governments, National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Preschool Education
- Council of Australian Governments, National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the NT

21. NT documents
- NT Strategic Plan
- IERI Review
- IERI Strategic Plan
- Great Start Great Future
- NT Early Childhood Workforce Plan

22. Websites
- ACECQA
- ECA
- OECD
- UNESCO
- DfES (UK)
- VCAA (Vic)
- E4Kids.org.au
- Harvard University website
  www.developingchild.harvard.edu.resources
### OUTCOME 1: IDENTITY

1.1: Feel safe, secure, accepted, and supported  
   a. build a sense of stability and trust  
   b. build a sense of belonging  

1.2: Act with increasing autonomy, interdependence, resilience and sense of agency  
   a. show resilience  
   b. make choices and decisions  
   c. manage routines, organise self and belongings  

1.3: Build knowledgeable and confident self-identities  
   a. show confidence in own learning and capabilities  
   b. display a positive image  

1.4: Interact with others with care, empathy and respect  
   a. participate positively as part of a group  
   b. respond to others appropriately  

### OUTCOME 2: CONNECTEDNESS

2.1: Develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation  
   a. develop skills for working with others  
   b. develop inquiry and communication skills  

2.2: Respond to diversity with respect  
   a. explore diversity of culture, heritage, background and tradition  
   b. respond respectfully to diversity  

2.3: Become aware of fairness  
   a. understand fairness  

2.4: Become socially responsible and show respect for the environment  
   a. explore natural and constructed environments  
   b. investigate the interactions between the environment and its people  
   c. respect, care for and sustain the environment  

### OUTCOME 3: WELLBEING

3.1: Become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing  
   a. interact positively to form relationships and friendships  
   b. recognise simple emotions and build self-regulation  

3.2: Take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing  
   a. build knowledge, skills and positive attitudes to physical movement  
   b. explore ways to promote their own and others' health and safety  

### OUTCOME 4: LEARNING AND THINKING

4.1: Develop dispositions for learning  
   a. develop curiosity, enthusiasm, resourcefulness and reflexivity  
   b. build confidence, cooperation, commitment and persistence  
   c. develop creativity and imagination  

4.2: Develop a range of skills and processes for learning and thinking  
   a. develop problem solving, investigation and inquiry strategies  

4.3: Transfer and adapt what is learnt from one context to another  
   a. to make choices and organise self for learning  
   b. reflect on thinking and learning and transfer and adapt what they have learnt  
   c. resource own learning  

4.4: Engage in creative and inventive ways of thinking and doing  
   a. use imagination and innovation  
   b. represent ideas, feelings and experiences in creative ways  

### OUTCOME 5: COMMUNICATION

5.1: Interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes  
   a. develop oral language and active listening  
   b. develop phonological awareness  
   c. begin to extend literacy vocabulary  
   d. begin to extend numeracy vocabulary  
   e. begin to use and extend language in a range of contexts  

5.2: Engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from them  
   a. begin to comprehend and make meaning from texts  
   b. begin to develop reading and writing  

5.3: Express ideas and make meaning using a range of media  
   a. investigate, view and create in a range of media  

5.4: Begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work  
   a. begin to understand symbols and patterns  
   b. develop number and algebra concepts  
   c. develop measurement and geometry concepts  
   d. begin to understand statistics and probability  
   e. develop concepts of print  
   f. begin to understand sequencing  

5.5: Explore tools, resources and information communication technologies to represent ideas and thinking  
   a. use tools, resources and technologies in play, thinking and learning  
   b. use Information Communication Technologies (ICT)
**Planning cycle process at child level**

**TEACHERS' ACTIONS**

- Refer to the Preschool Curriculum.
- Read Elaborations to locate number expectations.
- Check the Phases of Learning to establish where the child is at and note what stage is next (from imitating counting to counting sequentially to 5).

**TEACHERS' THOUGHTS**

Where to next for the child:
- Needs 1:1 correspondence.
- Needs to count sequentially.
- Knows some number names.

**TEACHERS' ACTIONS**

- Refer to the Learning Opportunities in the Preschool Curriculum that may be appropriate.
- Look for appropriate NT Preschool Maths Games.
- Plan experiences and opportunities to use 1:1 correspondence and reciting numbers in order to 5.
- Ensure there are a range of multisensory learning experiences across different learning areas (e.g., songs, chants, collecting bugs, playdough, puzzles, etc.).
- Discuss/organise how other educators and family may be involved.

**TEACHERS' THOUGHTS**

Could I use Meagan’s interest in insects to engage her in play-based number and counting games? What incidental opportunities are available each day for counting?

**TEACHERS' ACTIONS**

- Use professional knowledge.
- Refer to the Preschool Curriculum to locate ‘number’ in the relevant Outcome (Outcome 5: Communication).
- Ask other Educators and child’s family what they might have observed or know.

**TEACHERS' THOUGHTS**

What are these observations telling me about Meagan’s understanding of number and counting? How can I extend her understanding further through enjoyable play-based experiences? Could I include Gordon to encourage Meagan’s participation?

**TEACHERS’ ACTIONS**

- Organise learning experiences e.g., counting children coming through the door, number mats/cutters in playdough activities, number chants.
- Interact with child/ren to explicitly teach the language and concepts of 1:1 correspondence and counting sequentially to 5.
- Model explicit teaching to educators and families (if necessary).
- Involve educators and families in learning experiences.
- Observe, note, and monitor how the child/ren is/are progressing.

**TEACHERS’ THOUGHTS**

How is Meagan responding? How are the other children responding? What needs to be changed/included?

**TEACHERS’ ACTIONS**

- Plan.
- Collect information.
- Reflect/review.

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY**

Northern Territory Preschool Curriculum
Endnotes

16. VEYLF 2016 p11
26 Clarke, P. (2009), *Supporting Children learning English as a Second Language in the Early Years (birth to six years)*, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).
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35 (MCEETYA, 2008).
36 Biemiller 2005).
37 Konza 2011).
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40 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), *Critical and Creative Thinking Learning Continuum, Personal and Social Capability Continuum*.
41 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), *English/Foundation Year/Language/Expressing and developing ideas*.
42 (Konza 2011).
43 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), *English/Foundation Year/Literacy/Interacting with others*.
44 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), *English/Foundation Year/Literacy/Sound and letter knowledge*.
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47 (Konza 2011).
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49 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), *English/Foundation Year/Literacy/Interpreting, analysing, evaluating*.
50 (PETAA 2012).
51 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), *English/Foundation Year/Literacy/Creating texts*.
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55 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Mathematics/Foundation Year/Number and Algebra.
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59 (Adapted from Epstein, 2007).
60 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Mathematics/Foundation Year/Measurement and Geometry/Location and transformation.
61 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), Mathematics/Foundation Year/Measurement and Geometry/Shape.
62 Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACRA) (n.d.), English/Foundation Year/Language, English/Foundation Level/Literacy.
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