Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

BEST PRACTICES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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Preface

“I touch the future. I teach.”
—Christa McAuliffe

What are developmentally appropriate practices, and how effective are they?
How can you create the best programs for young children?
As an early childhood educator, what is your role in shaping children’s educational experiences? What is the child’s role? What is the role of the family and community?
How can you know if children are actually learning?

Questions such as these are typically asked by early childhood professionals-in-training as well as by seasoned practitioners in the field. Our work with students and increasing numbers of educators probing for answers indicated the need for a comprehensive guide to support the exploration, planning, and implementation of developmentally appropriate programs for young children. Thus, our goal in writing Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: Best Practices in Early Childhood Education is to bring together the best information currently available for developing an integrated approach to curriculum and instruction in the early years. We also hope to bridge the worlds of childcare and early education, as well as those of preprimary and primary programs. This book addresses early childhood professionals-in-training and professionals working in formal group settings with young children from 3 to 8 years old. We realize that early childhood spans birth to age 8 years; however, we see infancy and toddlerhood as unique ages within this period, requiring specialized knowledge beyond the scope of this text. For this reason, we do not focus on infants or toddlers in our discussions.

We believe the information in this book will be valuable to both newcomers to the field and to master practitioners. The ideas in this text have been extensively field tested and found to be effective. All are designed to give you a cohesive view of the what, why, and how of developmentally appropriate practices.

Finally, we have had many years of working directly with young children and their families and with educators in preprimary and primary settings. We have participated in urban, suburban, and rural programs; large, medium, and small classes; public, private, not-for-profit, and profit-seeking organizations; half- and full-day programs; preschool classes; and the elementary grades. We have sought out experiences with diverse populations, with children who speak a language other than English as their home language, and with children who have special needs.

New to This Edition

Of the many changes in the new edition, we are delighted to introduce a more advanced version of Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: Best Practices in Early Childhood Education as the newest Pearson eText. The Pearson eText is an affordable, interactive version of the print text that includes:

- Multiple videos in every chapter that provide concrete examples of chapter content.
- Interactive Check Your Understanding quizzes at the conclusion of major sections of the text give readers an opportunity to confirm their understanding of key concepts.
- A list at the beginning of each chapter that shows how chapter content aligns with NAEYC Early Childhood Standards for Professional Preparation Programs. This helps students familiarize themselves with the standards and connect those standards to the book’s contents and to classroom practice.
- Glossary terms pop up when clicked upon.
- Notetaking, notemaking by instructors, highlighting, bookmarking, and other useful functions.
To learn more about the enhanced Pearson eText, go to www.pearsonhighered.com/etextbooks.

In addition, there are some significant content changes to the seventh edition:

- Each chapter includes a new You’re the Observer feature, which consists of a 2- to 3-minute video that readers watch with a stated purpose in mind. For instance, “As you view this this learning center, how might a child with a visual impairment interact here?” Sample answers are provided at the conclusion of each exercise so that students can read how an experienced early childhood educator might have responded to the prompt.
- Several new videos have been added to each chapter, illustrating a wider array of teaching strategies and examples of childhood learning.
- Expanded and more thorough coverage of STEM skills appears in Chapter 11 especially, as well as in other chapters. Our focus is on addressing STEM in the early years by integrating science, technology, engineering, and mathematics concepts and activities throughout the curriculum.
- A wider range of state early learning standards have been incorporated as examples throughout the text.
- References have been significantly updated, with more than 300 new citations appearing throughout the text.

Our Distinctive Approach

Among the popular elements we maintained from previous editions are a focus on developmental domains, a robust research basis for the information provided, and a strong emphasis on practical classroom strategies. This is very much a “how-to” book. The curriculum chapters include rationales and sample teaching strategies specific to each domain, objectives, and illustrative activities. Examples featuring children, families, and professionals from a variety of backgrounds, with a special focus on children with special needs, continue to be a feature of the chapters that compose the book.

Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: Best Practices in Early Childhood Education offers a distinctive approach that increases reader understanding and skill development.

- We treat curriculum as everything that happens to children in early childhood settings. Therefore, the text addresses all aspects of classroom life, including children and adults, the physical and social environments, and teaching and learning from a “whole child” perspective.
- The concept of developmentally appropriate practices is pervasive throughout the text. Each chapter addresses principles of age appropriateness, individual appropriateness, and sociocultural appropriateness. All of the DAP material incorporates the latest version of Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood (NAEYC, 2009).
- This book spans the early childhood years from 3 to 8. It provides a comprehensive, cohesive approach that results in greater continuity for children and practitioners.
- Each chapter progresses clearly from theory and research to practice. There is a strong emphasis on the what, why, and how of teaching.
- We use developmental domains to address early childhood curriculum. Doing so helps practitioners better understand the link between development and learning and program implementation.
- National and state standards for learning serve as the basis for curricular goals.
- Detailed directions facilitate the application of developmentally appropriate teaching strategies in relation to the content of each curriculum chapter.
- Every curriculum chapter includes sample activities.
- The text addresses individual curricular domains as well as curriculum integration.
- Readers learn a comprehensive approach to conceptualizing, planning, implementing, and evaluating curriculum within individual domains and overall (see Chapter 16).
Format and Chapter Sequence

*Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: Best Practices in Early Childhood Education* has an introduction and four parts. The introduction offers an overview of early childhood education today. Part 1, Foundations of Early Childhood Education, consists of Chapters 1 and 2, which address the philosophy of developmentally appropriate practice. Characteristics of the field, the knowledge base associated with developmentally appropriate practice, and critical issues in early childhood education are all outlined in Part 1. Setting the stage for learning is the focus of Part 2, Chapters 3 through 8. In these chapters, we describe the overall understandings and skills necessary to create effective programs for young children. We begin with planning, implementing, and organizing small-group, then whole-group, activities. Organizing the physical space and selecting and storing materials used in the classroom are combined in structuring learning centers. Child guidance, authentic assessment, and family involvement are treated as fundamental building blocks of effective teaching, with individual chapters devoted to each of these topics. In Part 3, Chapters 9 through 14, the curriculum is explained within the context of six developmental domains: aesthetic, affective, cognitive, language, physical, and social. Each of the domain chapters has a discussion of theory, research, and educational issues related to children’s development and learning in that particular arena, a suggested outline of goals and objectives, teaching strategies that characterize the domain, and examples of classroom activities. The curriculum domains are presented in alphabetical order to underscore the idea that no one domain is more important than any of the others. The last section of the book is Part 4, Integrating Curriculum. This part includes Chapters 15 and 16, both focused on creating a cohesive whole. First, we consider the integrative nature of pretend play and construction and, second, we consider the integrative aspects of using projects and theme teaching.

Text Features

The seventh edition of *Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: Best Practices in Early Childhood Education* includes numerous features designed to pique reader interest in the material and provide a framework upon which to reflect on and apply the chapter content. Here are a few things to look for:

**A modular chapter organization built around critical learning outcomes and aligned to professional standards**

- Chapter-opening learning outcomes align with the major text sections of the chapter. In the eText, readers can click on the learning outcome to be taken directly to the relevant section of the chapter.

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**Learning Outcomes**

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- Describe how affective development occurs in young children.
- Discuss conditions under which children cope with stress and develop resilience.
- Accommodate differences in children’s development, needs, and abilities.
- Implement developmentally appropriate curriculum and instruction in the affective domain.
Concrete examples bring developmentally appropriate practices to life

- Chapter-opening scenario examples engage readers and set the stage for the chapter.
- Direct links to video examples in the eText provide concrete examples of text concepts and show early childhood educators in action.
- New “You’re the Observer” video analysis exercises encourage critical thinking in responding to questions about teaching, development, and learning.
- Activity suggestions in a variety of instructional approaches—Exploratory Play, Guided Discovery, Problem Solving, Discussion, Demonstration, and Direct Instruction—provide students with high-quality learning activity models to try out with children and learn from.

Problem-Solving Activity

What’s the Question? (For Children of All Ages)

Goal 30 ⇒ Write original stories, poems, and informational pieces.

Materials ⇒ Journals, markers, pencils, easel, easel paper

Procedure ⇒ After reading or telling a story, stimulate the children to imagine what something looks like that cannot be seen, such as a leprechaun. Have them take out their journals and draw a picture of the thing on the left-hand page of the journal. Afterward, have younger children dictate a question they have (e.g., “How big is the leprechaun?” “Where does he live?”); older children can write a question they would like to ask. Tell the children to leave their journals open to that page, and sometime after they leave the classroom and before they return the next morning, an answer appears on the right-hand page of the journal. Although children know that the teacher is providing the answer, they love the fun of imagining that the answer has come from the leprechaun. Some teachers add to the fun by making small footprints across the page to accompany the answer.

To Simplify ⇒ Children at the prewriting stage may act as a group to dictate some of their questions, which you write on the left-hand side of a piece of easel paper. That evening, the questions are answered on the right-hand side. The next day, in large group, ask the children to help you read each question and answer.

To Extend ⇒ Challenge the children to illustrate and write to other imaginary or mythical characters (e.g., unicorn, fairy, or man in the moon) or real objects that are difficult to see (e.g., germs or a mouse that hides). When answering the question they have written, add a question they must answer in turn.

NAEYC Standards and Key Elements Addressed in This Chapter

Standard 1c: Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments
Standard 4a: Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with children
Standard 4d: Reflection on own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child

In the eText, new chapter-opening links correlate the chapter contents to the specific National Association for the Education of Young Children standards covered.
Features help readers assess and apply their understanding

- Interactive Check Your Understanding quizzes in the eText following major text sections give readers the opportunity to confirm their understanding of concepts before moving on.

Check Your Understanding 10.4
Click here to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

- Technology Toolkit features provide concrete ideas for how to use new technology to support developmentally appropriate practice, for example, how to use Skype to connect children with guest speakers and other children around the world (see Chapter 14).

Technology Toolkit: Using Projectors to Support Learning
A topic of interest to children can be enhanced by projecting photographs or video clips regarding the subject onto a large screen. This allows everyone in the group to view the material at the same time. Children can be encouraged to describe what they see and identify what they would like to learn about the topic. This discussion can help the teacher decide how to best support children’s investigation of the topic. Projecting images on a large screen also enhances the social nature of the experience as children share in the energy and excitement of the topic together. As children share their observations and knowledge with one another they also learn that their peers can be a source of answers for their questions (Fuerling, 2012).

- DAP: Making Goals Fit features illustrate how to implement goals for children of different age ranges or abilities while keeping in mind the individual needs and the sociocultural background of the children.
- Inclusion features demonstrate the actions early childhood educators take to successfully include specific students and meet their goals.

Inclusion > Adapting Science Inquiry for Children with Special Needs
Every child deserves to have the joy of acting on their curiosity about phenomena in their world, including children with special needs. For children who face greater challenges in exploring materials and the environment or conducting investigations, make use of volunteers or other professionals who can maximize potential. Put yourself in the situation from the child’s perspective to think about what accommodations can help a child cope with the difficulties caused by the disabling condition. For example, while the child in a wheelchair may be mobile, he or she is hampered if the aisles in your classroom are too narrow to move easily from place to place. Refer also to the Center for Multisensory Learning, Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California, Berkeley, California, 94720 and the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) for ideas to provide more satisfying experiences (Harlan & Rivkin, 2012).

- Chapter-ending Applying What You’ve Read sections provide readers the opportunity to extend their understanding of chapter content to their professional lives. Every chapter ends with discussion questions, potential observations to make in early childhood settings to help readers recognize developmentally appropriate
practices in action, application activities, guidelines for journal entries, suggested items to add to a portfolio, and finally, activities to help readers explore standards for learning that are most relevant to them and the children in their charge.

Supplementary Materials for Instructors

The following resources are available for instructors to download at www.pearsonhighered.com/educators. Instructors enter the author or title of this book, select this particular edition of the book, and then click on the "Resources" tab to log in and download textbook supplements.

Instructor’s Resource Manual (0-13-474757-7)

This comprehensive instructor’s manual describes how to organize a course by using the textbook; how to find, select, and maintain appropriate field placements for students; how to model skills for students to imitate; and how to provide feedback to students assigned to field placements on campus or in the community. In addition, we have included a series of role-playing and conversational activities to be carried out in class. They are designed to show students how to use particular skills prior to implementing them with children and to clarify basic concepts as they emerge during class discussions. A rubric for self-evaluation of the certification or licensure exam examples offered in the chapter-end activities is also provided here. Finally, the instructor’s manual contains a criterion-referenced observation tool, the Curriculum Skills Inventory (CSI). This is a unique feature of Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: Best Practices in Early Childhood Education. The CSI can be used by instructors and practitioners to evaluate the degree to which students demonstrate the skills taught.

Test Bank (0-13-474759-3)

The Online Test Bank consists of multiple-choice, true–false, short-answer, and essay questions for each chapter. The questions are aligned to the chapter-opening learning outcomes.

TestGen Computerized Test Bank (0-13-474756-9)

TestGen is a powerful assessment generation program available exclusively from Pearson that helps instructors easily create quizzes and exams. You install TestGen on your personal computer (Windows or Macintosh) and create your own exams for print or online use. It contains a set of test items organized by chapter, based on this textbook’s contents. The items are the same as those in the Test Bank. The tests can be downloaded in a variety of learning management system formats.

PowerPoint® Slides (0-13-474758-5)

For every chapter, a series of PowerPoint® slides has been created to highlight key concepts and strategies.
Acknowledgments

We would like to recognize the major contributions to this text by our colleagues in early childhood education: Barbara M. Rohde, early childhood educator and artist from Durham, North Carolina, wrote Chapter 9 for the earlier versions of this text; in addition, she supplied artwork for the classroom floor plans and the pictograph that appears in Chapter 5. Laura C. Stein, early childhood consultant, Stein Associates, East Lansing, Michigan, produced Chapter 14 for the first four editions of this book. It was an important contribution on which we continue to build. We owe these initial authors much for their insights and for helping our ideas come alive on the page. Their influence remains. Carolyn Pope Edwards, professor emeritus, Child, Youth and Family Studies and Psychology, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, contributed the section “The Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education”; and Ann S. Epstein, former director of the Early Childhood Division, HighScope Educational Research Foundation, wrote the portion titled “The HighScope Approach to Early Childhood Education.” These two segments appear in Chapter 1. Sylvia Chard, professor emeritus, University of Alberta, wrote the original material describing the project approach, featured in Chapter 16. This work has broadened the scope of the text and has enabled us to present multiple voices describing developmentally appropriate curriculum.

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