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# Plan Developmentally Appropriate Activities

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**Unit:** Lesson Planning

**Problem Area:** Planning Developmentally Appropriate Activities

**Lesson:** Plan Developmentally Appropriate Activities

■ **Student Learning Objectives.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

- 1 Identify developmentally appropriate activities for young children and older adults.**
- 2 Explain how to plan developmentally appropriate activities.**

■ **Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

Altmann, Tanya Remer. *The Wonder Years*. Bantam Books, 2006.

Corresponding E-unit(s). Danville, IL: CAERT, Inc. [www.mycaert.com](http://www.mycaert.com)

Feldman, Jean R. *A Survival Guide for the Preschool Teacher*. The Center for Applied Research in Education, 1991.

“Play Activities for Children Birth to Nine Years,” *National Network for Child Care*. Accessed June 23, 2009. <<http://www.nncc.org/Curriculum/play.activities.html>>.

“Retirement and Elderly Activities,” *Elder One Stop, LLC*. Accessed June 24, 2009. <<http://www.elder-one-stop.com/elderly-activities.html>>.



## ■ **Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities.**

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials

## ■ **Key Terms.** The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- ▶ attention span
- ▶ implementation
- ▶ interest approach
- ▶ objectives
- ▶ sedentary activities
- ▶ transitions

## ■ **Interest Approach.** Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situation. A possible approach is included here.

*Tell students they will be responsible for planning a lesson or activity for preschool children. Ask them what factors they need to consider when planning the lesson. Give examples of activities that may be appropriate for different age groups, and ask students for suggestions on how the activities could be adapted for use with older or younger children.*

# CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

**Objective 1:** Identify developmentally appropriate activities for young children and older adults.

**Anticipated Problem:** What are developmentally appropriate activities for young children and older adults?

- I. Caregivers should consider the participant's developmental level.
  - A. Caregivers should be aware of an individual's **attention span**—the amount of time an individual is able to spend focusing on one activity.
    1. Infants and toddlers change activities frequently. Their attention spans may only be a few minutes long.

2. Preschoolers can focus on a single activity for a longer time, such as 10 to 20 minutes.
  3. Older adults' attention spans may vary based on the health and cognitive level of the individual.
  4. Caregivers should plan activities that can be completed by participants who usually display the shortest attention spans in the group. Individuals with longer attention spans may choose to spend longer on an activity.
    - a. Individuals may spend additional time adding details to an art project.
    - b. Small groups of participants may repeat an activity or a game.
- B. Activity level of participants
1. Caregivers should provide a mix of active or noisy activities and **sedentary activities** (activities that occur in one place and are generally quiet). For example, caregivers should follow music/dance time with quiet story time.
  2. Children may be able to sit still and focus better after expending their energy.
  3. Older adults may remain more alert for quiet activities if they also are encouraged to participate in physical activity at times.
- C. Abilities of participants
1. Children typically develop at different speeds, but they generally master skills in the same sequence.
    - a. Their skills build upon existing skills.
    - b. Skills for children begin with simple accomplishments and work toward complex accomplishments (e.g., walking before jumping).
    - c. Children learn general skills and work toward specific goals (e.g., waving hands before properly holding a pencil).
    - d. Concrete skills are mastered before moving to abstract skills (e.g., identifying objects before expressing feelings with words).
  2. Older adults may lose complex or specific abilities but retain simple or general skills.
  3. Activities should be adaptable to serve the different developmental levels of the participants.
    - a. If activities are too easy, children do not learn, and older adults may become bored.
    - b. If activities are too difficult, participants may become frustrated, and the individual's self-esteem may suffer.
    - c. Inappropriate activities could cause injury. For example, children under three should not play games with small pieces, which could pose a choking hazard. Likewise, older adults with mobility problems should not be led through rocky, uneven ground on a nature walk.

**Teaching Strategy:** *Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective. Use VM–A to review the factors activity planners should consider. Ask students how teachers can modify different activities, making it possible to accommodate the skills and abilities of all participants.*

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**Objective 2:** Explain how to plan developmentally appropriate activities.

**Anticipated Problem:** How should caregivers plan developmentally appropriate activities?

- II. Caregivers should consider program resources and needs.
  - A. Activity planners should identify **objectives** (specific goals) for the activities.
    - 1. Developmental goals
    - 2. Themes and lessons
  - B. Activity planners should identify and gather materials and supplies.
    - 1. Equipment and materials already in the classroom
    - 2. New materials (purchased as the budget allows or found on a Web site)
    - 3. Created materials
      - a. Repurposed existing items
      - b. Built equipment
      - c. Created props (e.g., puppets, flannel boards, dress-up clothing, games, and flash cards)
  - C. Activity planners should create an **interest approach**, which is an introduction to the lesson or theme designed to capture the participants' attention.
  - D. Activity planners should plan the **implementation**, which is the procedure or method of carrying out the activity.
    - 1. Activities should fit within the normal daily routine.
      - a. The general order of the day should stay the same (e.g., free play, art, outside play, and snack).
      - b. For example, music time may last for 10 minutes each day, even though the activity changes (e.g., listen to CD, play instruments, finger plays, and songs).
      - c. Changes to a routine (e.g., a field trip) should be infrequent.
    - 2. The activity plan should include time for:
      - a. Set up
      - b. Clean up
      - c. **Transitions** (the time between the end of one activity and the start of the next one)
    - 3. The activity planner should consider how many individuals should participate at one time.
      - a. Entire group
      - b. Small groups
      - c. Individuals
  - E. The activity planner should summarize and follow up.
    - 1. Caregivers should review the activity at the end of the lesson.

- Caregivers should present additional activities that support the lesson.

**Teaching Strategy:** *Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective. Use VM–B to review the steps in planning a developmentally appropriate activity. Then assign LS–A.*

- **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. Questions at the ends of chapters in the textbook may also be used in the Review/Summary.
- **Application.** Use the included visual masters and lab sheet to apply the information presented in the lesson.
- **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

## ■ **Answers to Sample Test:**

### **Part One: Matching**

- b
- e
- a
- d
- c
- f

### **Part Two: Short Answer**

- Answers should include the following: identify the objectives, identify and gather materials, create an interest approach, plan the implementation, and summarize or follow up.
- Activity planners should consider the participants' attention span, activity level, and abilities.

### **Part Three: Completion**

- sequence
- adaptable
- routine
- transitions
- repurpose
- printable

# Plan Developmentally Appropriate Activities

## ► Part One: Matching

**Instructions:** Match the term with the correct definition.

- a. attention span
- b. implementation
- c. interest approach
- d. objectives
- e. transitions
- f. sedentary activities

- \_\_\_\_ 1. The procedure or method of carrying out the activity
- \_\_\_\_ 2. The time between the end of one activity and the start of the next one
- \_\_\_\_ 3. The amount of time an individual is able to spend focusing on any one activity
- \_\_\_\_ 4. Specific goals
- \_\_\_\_ 5. An introduction to the lesson or theme designed to capture participants' attention
- \_\_\_\_ 6. Activities that occur in one place and are generally quiet

## ► Part Two: Short Answer

**Instructions:** Answer the following.

1. What are the five steps for planning a lesson or activity?



2. What three factors should be considered when determining if an activity is developmentally appropriate?

### ► Part Three: Completion

**Instructions:** Provide the word or words to complete the following statements.

1. Children typically develop at different speeds, although they generally master skills in the same \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Activities should be \_\_\_\_\_ to serve the different developmental levels of the participants.
3. Activities should fit within the normal daily \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The activity plan should include time for set up, clean up, and \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Activity planners may create new materials or \_\_\_\_\_ existing items.
6. Web sites may offer ideas for activities as well as \_\_\_\_\_ patterns, decorations, and game pieces.

# DEVELOPMENTAL LEVELS

Activity leaders should consider the participants’:

- ◆ Attention span
- ◆ Activity level
- ◆ Abilities





# STEPS FOR ACTIVITY PLANNING

Activity planners should:

- ◆ Identify the objectives
- ◆ Identify and gather materials
- ◆ Create an interest approach
- ◆ Plan the implementation
- ◆ Summarize or follow up



# Planning an Activity

## Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to plan an activity for a group of young children or older adults.

## Objective

Describe an activity for young children or older adults.

## Materials

- ◆ writing utensil
- ◆ lined paper
- ◆ books or magazines for inspiration

## Procedure

1. Imagine you are planning an activity for a group of young children or older adults. Briefly describe the participants (e.g., group size, ages, and developmental levels) with whom you are working.
2. Describe an activity that is developmentally appropriate for the group. (Use books or magazines for inspiration, as needed.) Explain how it could be adapted for participants who have delayed or advanced developmental levels.
3. Describe approximately how long the activity would take, including set up, clean up, and transition times.
4. Include a brief interest approach and summary that could be shared with the participants.

