

CHART 5

Standard 5: Knowledge, Application, and Integration of Academic Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum

By Camille Catlett, Eva Horn, and Florianna J. Thompson

Each chart corresponds to a standard in [NAEYC's professional standards and competencies](#). These standards reflect consistency with the guidelines in the statement on developmentally appropriate practice and in *Developmentally Appropriate Practices in Early Childhood Programs*, fourth edition. Each chart offers sample readings from NAEYC's foundational documents and *DAP* as well as additional resources, activities, assignments, and reflections that faculty can incorporate into courses across their higher education programs.

Readings	Activities/Assignments	Thought/Reflection Questions
<p>Essential Readings</p> <p><i>DAP</i>, 4th ed., book chapters:</p> <p>Chapter 4: "Teaching Content in Early Childhood Education"</p> <p>Chapter 5: "The Power of Playful Learning in the Early Childhood Setting"</p> <p>Chapter 10: "Planning and Implementing an Engaging Curriculum to Achieve Meaningful Goals"</p> <p>NAEYC's Foundational Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education" (pages 7–8) "Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators" (pages 20–23) "Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)" (pages 25–27) "Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment" (pages 2–4) <p>Vignettes</p> <p><i>DAP</i>, 4th ed., Chapter 4: "Teaching Content in Early Childhood Education"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7 	<p>1. Adapt any of the vignettes in Chapter 4 to create an activity or assignment.</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>Practice using universal design for learning (UDL) principles in activities and interactions to support children's active engagement.</p> <p>Directions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask students to read about how to apply the principles of UDL in a source like "Integrating Principles of Universal Design into the Early Childhood Curriculum" (https://fpg.unc.edu/sites/fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/presentations-and-webinars/Dimensions_Vol41_1_Dinnebeil-1_0.pdf). 	<p>From Chapter 4</p> <p>Thought Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why is it important to be intentional about supporting children's content learning? What are some ways to do that? What knowledge, skills, and understanding do teachers need to have to effectively support children's content learning? <p>Reflection Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What new ideas did you learn from the chapter about supporting content in the early childhood years? What specific practices could you incorporate into your future teaching to better support children's content learning? Think about planning environments and then interacting with children during their play. What content could you plan and enact to enrich the children's experience? What content could you develop by slightly, but importantly, modifying routines of the day? What more do you want to learn about supporting children's content learning? What professional learning opportunities and resources might help you?

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<p>DAP, 4th ed., Chapter 5: “The Power of Playful Learning in the Early Childhood Setting”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9 <p>DAP, 4th ed., Chapter 10: “Planning and Implementing an Engaging Curriculum to Achieve Meaningful Goals”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10.1, 10.2, 10.3 <p>Additional Readings and Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Asking Questions that Support Children’s Understanding About Diversity” https://naeyc.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Big-Questions.pdf Book excerpt “Assessing Opportunities to Support Each Child: 12 Practices for Quality Inclusion” naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/jul2019/practices-quality-inclusion YC article “Diverse Children, Uniform Standards: Using Early Learning and Development Standards in Multicultural Classrooms” naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/nov2019/diverse-children-uniform-standards YC article “Early Childhood Inclusion” naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/ps_inclusion_dec_NAEYC_ec.pdf Position statement “Effective Conversational Strategies: A Preschool Teacher’s Approach to Fostering Science Vocabulary” naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/summer2021/effective-conversational-strategies YC article 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign students a vignette from Chapter 4, such as vignette 4.5. Review the components of UDL: multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression. Ask the students to describe one or two strategies that they would utilize to address each UDL component in the context of the vignette activity. To support their thinking, suggest that the group of young children for whom they are planning the activity might include young children who are dual language learners, a child who is nonverbal, and a child who is homeless and doesn’t have a kitchen. Ask them to also consider how they would build from the interactions depicted in the vignette to reinforce the vocabulary in other parts of the curriculum. <p>2. Designing DAP activities and interactions</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>Practice designing components of curriculum that reflect DAP</p> <p><i>Note:</i> This is an assignment that may be adapted for use in a variety of ways, in terms of both children’s age and topic. For example, for a language and literacy course, this might be an assignment focused on preschool literacy; for a creative arts course, this assignment might focus on second grade art and music.</p> <p>Directions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask students to read Chapter 10. 	<p>From Chapter 5</p> <p>Thought Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you think play and learning are related? Think of examples from your own classroom or one you have observed. How are you currently using playful learning in your classroom, or how is it being used in a classroom you have observed? How might the approach be expanded to incorporate more domains of development (e.g., cognitive development, social and emotional development) and content areas (e.g., literacy, mathematics) as well as executive function, spatial reasoning, and problem solving? What are the contexts of the children you are teaching, and how might you make play experiences more relevant to their contexts? If you are not currently teaching, think of children in a classroom you have observed. <p>Reflection Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the best places to start is by thinking about your teaching strengths. Perhaps you are great at sparking joy and engagement. Or maybe you are able to frequently leverage children’s home lives in your lessons. How can you expand practices you already use as an educator, or are learning about in your courses, to incorporate the playful learning described in this chapter? How can you share the information in the chapter with families, administrators, and other educators? How can you help them understand how play can engage children in deep, joyful learning?

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Integrating Principles of Universal Design into the Early Childhood Curriculum” https://fpg.unc.edu/sites/fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/presentations-and-webinars/Dimensions_Vol41_1_Dinnebeil-1_0.pdf Article• “International Curriculum Frameworks: Increasing Equity and Driving Systemic Change” NAEYC.org/resources/pubs/yc/mar2020/international-curriculum-frameworks-increasing-equity YC article• “Knowledge-Rich Curriculum: Supporting Positive Identity Development and Advancing Equity” NAEYC.org/resources/pubs/yc/dec2020/knowledge-rich-curriculum YC article• “Observing, Planning, Guiding: How an Intentional Teacher Meets Standards Through Play” NAEYC.org/resources/pubs/yc/mar2018/observing-planning-guiding YC article• “Understanding Anti-Bias Education: Bringing the Four Core Goals to Every Facet of Your Curriculum” NAEYC.org/resources/pubs/yc/nov2019/understanding-anti-bias YC article• “What Are You Thinking? Scaffolding Thinking to Promote Learning” NAEYC.org/resources/pubs/yc/summer2021/scaffolding-thinking-promote-learning YC article	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use one of the age-specific charts in Chapter 10 to inspire students to create activities that support the developmentally appropriate practices listed in the left-hand column. For example, use the Infant and Toddler chart to create a handout like the sample below. Ask students to complete the right-hand column by describing an activity or approach they would use to address the example in the left-hand column. Specify the expectations of the students—for example, describe the activity and any related materials, share how the activity would consider the contexts of the children, or describe how the activity might be individualized to support individual children. <table><tr><th colspan="2">Infant and Toddler</th></tr><tr><th>Examples of DAP</th><th>Example of an Activity that Would Support This</th></tr><tr><td>Educators use routines and interactions to help infants and toddlers develop confidence and trust in others, begin to see that they can make things happen and meet some of their own needs, and communicate and interact with others in joyful ways.</td><td>Students provide a specific example here including materials, directions, and so on.</td></tr></table>	Infant and Toddler		Examples of DAP	Example of an Activity that Would Support This	Educators use routines and interactions to help infants and toddlers develop confidence and trust in others, begin to see that they can make things happen and meet some of their own needs, and communicate and interact with others in joyful ways.	Students provide a specific example here including materials, directions, and so on.	<p>From Chapter 10</p> <p>Thought Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does developmentally appropriate curriculum planning affect teachers’ mindset about the effective preparation of environments, materials, and interactions and their direct impact on the learning experiences of children?• What parts of curriculum planning help educators create more engaging, hands-on learning experiences that are relevant and significant to the children as a group and for each specific child? <p>Reflection Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What steps can you take to expand your current curriculum to include greater personal, linguistic, cultural, and experiential connections to the lives and interests of the children you teach? If you are not currently working with children, think about a classroom you have observed.• How can intentional curriculum planning help you refine your teaching practices to engage children more deeply with language, content knowledge, inquiry skills, and positive dispositions for learning, such as self-agency, persistence, and motivation?
Infant and Toddler								
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	<p>3. Rich curriculum meets playful pedagogy</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>Discover the concept of playful pedagogy and how to apply it</p> <p>Directions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce students to playful pedagogy by asking them to read “Talking It Up: Play, Language Development, and the Role of Adult Support” (https://www.journalofplay.org/sites/www.journalofplay.org/files/pdf-articles/6-1-article-talking-it-up.pdf).• Ask students to write down on a card a learning concept they think would be challenging to address through play. Collect the cards and redistribute them to the students so each does not get their own.• Ask each student to identify ways in which they would address the concept on the card using playful pedagogy. Ask that they consider options that are not completely dependent on adults leading the play. <p>4. Learning about differences</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>Planning for and practicing interactions that build the vocabulary and understanding for recognizing and discussing differences</p> <p>Note: Children notice and wonder about differences from the earliest days, so developmentally appropriate ways to acknowledge and talk about what they notice needs to be part of any educator’s repertoire.</p>	

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	<p>Directions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a list of discernible differences (e.g., hair, skin color, height, family configuration). Ask each student to select a difference and to develop a process through which they would explore that aspect of difference with children. Each student will need to identify the age of the children and the steps in the process they would use. Parameters of the assignment might include the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to introduce new vocabulary and concepts (e.g., same and different)• How to incorporate that vocabulary across the curriculum related to other topics and indoor/outdoor settings• How to incorporate UDL approaches to make sure all children are engaged in the learning• How to use respectful language when recognizing and discussing similarities and differences• As part of this assignment/activity, it will be important to show respect for and sensitivity to children's differences and to help children do the same. One source for ideas about how to support children in developing the practices and vocabulary to thoughtfully consider both similarities and differences is at https://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/natural-resources-free-resources-about-similarities-and-differences.• Possible extension: Ask students to present their plans to at least two other students for feedback and suggestions. This practice of engaging other perspectives reinforces the idea that each of us sees the world differently and has insights to offer from our own contexts.	

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	<p>5. From all to each and every</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>Practice individualizing to support children within a caring, equitable community of learners</p> <p>Directions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students to read “Assessing Opportunities to Support Each Child: 12 Practices for Quality Inclusion.” (https://NAEYC.org/resources/pubs/yc/jul2019/practices-quality-inclusion) and “Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners” (DAP position statement, pages 15–17).• Provide students with a chart that reflects how time is spent in a typical preschool setting (see sample below). <i>Note:</i> Adjust the vignette and the chart to use this activity/assignment with an older or younger child focus. <table><tr><th>What’s Going On?</th><th>DAP to Support Taylor’s Success</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>Students write in this column</td></tr><tr><td>Group meeting/circle</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Tabletop activities</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Small group play</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Language & literacy</td><td></td></tr></table>	What’s Going On?	DAP to Support Taylor’s Success		Students write in this column	Group meeting/circle		Tabletop activities		Small group play		Language & literacy		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students to complete the chart by adding specific examples of how they would support Taylor's success in each segment of his day. Specify that they should reflect on everything they learned in the article to identify how to set up the environment, plan the materials, and structure each activity/interaction. Specify that they should also incorporate equitable strategies that build connections among the children.• Consider using this activity to promote thinking about how to effectively include any child. Imagine other versions in which the vignette is about a child whose racial, ethnic, and/or linguistic contexts differ from those of the teacher and/or the other children; a child who is new to the program; a child who is very active and boisterous; or a child who is very shy.	