Curriculum and Objective to Early Childhood Care and Education

Introduction to Early Childhood Care and Education

by

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Introduction

- Pre-school education is part of the national education system and is governed by the Education Act 1996. Children generally begin their education at preschools/kindergartens from the age of four to six.

- In order to enhance the access of pre-school education to all children regardless of race and religion particularly in the rural areas, MOE is aggressively expanding the pre-school programmed at government schools for children aged 5+ with additional classes and well-trained teachers to lead the classes.

- The Ministry also provides special pre-school classes for children with hearing or visual impairment.
Providers of Pre-schools Education

- In the system, pre-school education is for children aged four to six.
- The providers are pre-schools or kindergartens that are available throughout the country and operated by government agencies, non-governmental organizations as well as the private sector.
- The main government agencies that offer preschool education are the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Rural Development (KEMAS), ABIM, the State Religious Department and the National Unity Department.
Curricular Emphasis

- All kindergartens need to adopt the National Pre-school Curriculum (NPC) set by MOE.
- The curriculum enables pre-school children to acquire sufficient basic communication, personality development, social and other positive skills that will prepare them for primary schooling.
Emotional personal and Social development

- With the benefit of wilderness and space each child has opportunities to make choices as to how to interact with others: alone, in pairs or as part of a larger group.
- They are able to retreat to their own world, possibly quietly in a tree or hiding in the undergrowth, or step out into the larger group activity.
- The child has time and space to reflect on their own experience.
Emotional personal and Social development

- We have found that each child takes ‘the lead’ at some point: be it in choosing a special place to go in the woods, or initiating an activity once in the woods.
- Some favour particular activities such as sawing and they know to ensure that we have the correct tools before setting out to the woods.
- This develops their independence, self esteem and confidence; their understanding of their own preferences and needs and how to ask for them to be met.
Communication and Language

- Talking is an important part of journeying, the banter of travellers describing their progress, what they see and interact with on the way.
- On our walks into the woods much is seen and commented on, no journey being the same, despite travelling the same path.
- There are favoured places with favoured stories, retold day after day, the children taking part and interacting, taking the story away to bring about new endings.
- There is mimicry of the sounds of the birds and animals; there is repetition of our own words and sounds, rhythms and rhymes.
- There is a need for clear descriptions to take us to our destination, finding the way.
Communication and Language

- We have tools to make marks with, woodland resources to mark the way, dust and mud to write in.
- We talk about the need for signs to warn people of dangers or help them to understand.
- We use books to identify birds and creatures, plants and fungi, take a favourite story to be read in a favourite place.
- We have drawing and writing materials for exploration for the written and pictorial moments.
Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- Being out in all weathers develops a deep understanding of what the world is really about.
- We can meet and greet each day differently because the circumstances are rarely the same.
- The children learn how to make the best of each day by finding the most favourable spot in the wood and then interacting with that place, developing their own sense of place, confidence and understanding in this part of the world, developing a sense of respect and care.
- Using their senses leads to their own discoveries and learning of this natural world: trees, plants, grasses, birds, animals, sights, sounds, smells.
Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- The basic need for food, shelter and warmth can drive their play: building and sharing homes, using natural resources to create comfort, initiate ways in which to keep warm, forage for wild food, make pretend of all the other foods they could have.

- They learn what tools are used for which tasks and what the rules are to keep them safe within this spacious environment.

- There is a woodland of problems to be solved: tree fallen over path, den blown down, can’t find the perfect spot from yesterday, and there are many ways to interact, search, negotiate, work together to solve them.
Expressive and Aesthetic Experience

- Within the natural environment the Inspired Creative Child has a freedom of expression.
- All around are resources that can be utilised to create, demonstrate, manipulate and integrate into play.
- Opportunities for role play, reality or fantasy based, takes on a new meaning when the child can make use of a space the size of a bus without impeding anyone else’s play.
Expressive and Aesthetic Experience

- As the location of discovery changes so does the desire to create something different.
- The ‘guggle’ factor for the child, working alone or with others, demonstrates the development of creativity and concentration, the smallest detail in a creation becomes sacred, leading to a sense of wonder and continued inspiration.
- As we wander through the woods we enjoy the sound of song, our own musical creations with instruments collected on our travel, drumsticks and logs make our percussion band, grass whistles our own calls.
Physical Development and Movement

- When a child first comes to the SG there is a period of adjustment as they watch what the other children can do and what they as yet don’t have the physical ability to do: march into the woods with no sense of weariness, clamber trees with no assistance, strong legs, upper body strength developed from pulling upwards, an agility as they avoid obstacles on the forest floor, an awareness of rabbit holes and other ‘traps’.

- If the child embraces the style of play at the SG in no time they’re developing their own physical stamina and individual perseverance and resilience; still unable to get high into the tree but knowing that it takes time, effort and hard work.
Physical Development and Movement

- An element of risk taking may be needed and in doing this another level of physical and emotional competence is achieved.

- The woodland environment offers scrambling and balancing structures in abundance, opportunity to work individually or in groups, assisting progress or simply focusing on one’s own skill and sense of achievement.
Early Childhood Activities

- Hands-On Fun
- Food Activities
- Winter Activities
Early Childhood Activities

Hands-On Fun

- Children in preschool learn primarily through action and doing things which means that early childhood activities are among the most important aspects of a young child’s education.
- When planning a preschool curriculum, it’s best to include a variety of early childhood activities since some children learn better from specific types of play or actions.
- Every day should include at least one or two activities, since children have a short attention span and won’t be able to do one thing for very long.
- These early childhood activities fall into different theme categories, making them easy to organize and implement.
- Remember that the sky is pretty much the limit with these kids, and as long as they’re having fun they’ll be well on their way towards the path to a fulfilling and educational experience.
These early childhood activities are centered around one of everyone’s favorite preschool themes: food.

Children love to play with their food.

While that behavior may be discouraged at the dinner table, at the preschool art table it’s encouraged as long as the food is healthy and non-toxic.

This activity, called “Bread Art”, requires one piece of bread per child, butter, food coloring and sugar.

Soften the butter and divide it into a number of small dishes.

Mix the food coloring in with the butter to create spreadable colors.

Let the children choose their favorite colors to spread on their piece of bread.

For added yumminess, sprinkle the bread with sugar before popping it in the toaster.
Early Childhood Activities

Food Activities

- While children do loving playing with their often, sometimes they love wearing it even more!
- Try this “Pasta Necklace” craft when learning about shapes, or different cultures like Italy.
- This craft requires dried pasta with a tube through it like macaroni or rigatoni.
- Before the class, color the pasta using a solution of rubbing alcohol and food coloring. Bring the different-colored pasta into class along with yarn.
- Cut a length of yarn for each child and tape it to the table.
- This allows children to string the pasta onto the yarn to make a necklace.
- Alternately, this craft can be used at Christmas time to create a pretty decoration for the Christmas tree.
Early Childhood Activities

- **Winter Activities**
  - The changing of the seasons provides many opportunities for crafts and activities at the preschool level.
  - For *early childhood activities* that involve snow, be creative!
  - Egg shells, sugar, laundry soap, flour, cotton balls, whipped cream, shaving cream or dried mashed potato flakes all provide excellent representations of snow for crafting purposes.
  - For this preschool craft, “Glittering Snowballs”, each child will need a balloon, and some glue, yarn cut into small piece and glitter.
  - To begin, blow up a small balloon for each child.
  - Dip the pieces of yarn into the glue and use the yarn to cover the surface of the balloon.
  - Before the glue dried, pour glitter all over the balloon.
  - Once the glue has dried, pop the balloon using a safety pin and remove the piece of balloon from inside the snowball.
  - Use the snowballs to decorate the classroom for a winter wonderland.
Preschool Games

- Autumn Games for Learning and Play
- Turkeys and Cornucopias
- Vegetable Soup Memory Game
Preschool Games

- Autumn Games for Learning and Play
- Games are an integral part of the preschool experience, because they are a great way of integrating learning into play.
- When looking for preschool games, try selecting games that are incorporate themes with the current or upcoming season.
- For example, autumn is a great time to select preschool games on the theme of Thanksgiving or games that focus on foods specific to autumn, such as vegetables.
Preschool Games

- **Turkeys and Cornucopias**
  - These first two preschool games are a perfect way to teach the children about two of the most prevalent images of Thanksgiving: turkeys and cornucopias.
  - Children love this game, called “Gobbling Turkey”, and it will help them develop deductive reasoning skills while allowing them a chance to play pretend.
  - One child is selected at random to play the role of “farmer”.
  - To begin the game, the farmer player leaves the room so that the “gobbling turkey” can be chosen, also at random.
  - After the turkey is chosen, all the children use their hands to cover their noses and mouths to resemble the beak of a turkey as the farmer reenters the room.
Preschool Games

- **Turkeys and Cornucopias**
  - The object of the game is for the farmer to determine which player is the turkey.
  - While all the children waddle around like turkeys, the gobbling turkey makes gobbling noises from time to time.
  - The farmer has two guesses to determine the identity of the true gobbling turkey.
  - The next Thanksgiving game, called the Cornucopia Catch, requires a basket and at least five small plastic pieces of fruit or vegetables.
  - The instructor stands with the basket in their hands while the children take turns throwing the pieces of produce into the basket, one at a time.
  - This game is an excellent opportunity to practice hand-eye coordination, basic counting skills, names of fruits and vegetables and colors.
Preschool Games

- **Vegetable Soup Memory Game**
- Memory games are one of the best types of preschool games to incorporate into the curriculum, since memory is a vital skill for children to develop.
- This memory-building game called Vegetable Soup provides a great opportunity to learn the names of vegetables while working on teaching and building memory skills.
- To begin, the instructor sets out a large cooking pot while the children stand in a circle around the pot.
- The instructor begins by saying “we are going to make some vegetable soup but we need your help”.
Preschool Games

- **Vegetable Soup Memory Game**

  - The child to the left of the instructor says the name of a vegetable and walks towards the pot, miming the action of putting the vegetable in the pot.
  - The next child must say the names of all the vegetables in the soup before adding their own to the pot.
  - For example, if the first child adds carrots, the second adds broccoli and the third adds celery, the fourth child must say “we’re making vegetable soup today and we’re adding carrots, broccoli, celery” before adding the name of their vegetable to the list.
Question?