

Ohio Early Learning and Development Standard (Birth to 5): Implementation Guide

Domain: Approaches Toward Learning

Introduction

Approaches Toward Learning centers on the foundational behaviors, dispositions, and attitudes that children bring to social interactions and learning experiences. It includes children’s initiative and curiosity, and their motivation to participate in new and varied experiences and challenges. These behaviors are fundamental to children’s ability to take advantage of learning opportunities, and to set, plan, and achieve goals for themselves. This domain also includes children’s level of attention, engagement, and persistence as they do a variety of tasks. These factors are consistent predictors of academic success (Duncan et al., 2007). Finally, children’s creativity, innovative thinking and flexibility of thought allow them to think about or use materials in unconventional ways, and to express thoughts, ideas and feelings in a variety of media. Approaches Toward Learning consists of the following strands: Initiative, Engagement and Persistence, and Creativity.

The strategies in this guidance document are not designed to be specific activities or “storytime plans.” Rather, they represent broad approaches to implementation in each strand that may help storytime providers become more intentional to support the early learning domains in fun, creative and meaningful ways. These strategies are not comprehensive. You may think of other ways that you support the strands.

Strand <i>Topic</i>	Standard Statement The child will	Storytime Provider Strategies The storytime provider may
Initiative <i>Initiative and Curiosity</i>	<u>Infants</u> Show interest in people and objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include books representing diverse populations and featuring faces of people from various cultures and racial backgrounds. • Provide multiple copies of books so that each parent and child can share a book together. Point out illustrations and give time for the infants to observe where you are pointing, with the support of their parents/caregivers. • Provide sensory opportunities in baby storytime, including objects that infants and parents/caregivers can touch/manipulate. • Facilitate games like <i>Peek-a-Boo</i> between parents/caregivers and infants to encourage self-awareness and object permanence. • Encourage parents/caregivers to make eye contact with infants when sharing songs and rhymes. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.

Strand <i>Topic</i>	Standard Statement The child will	Storytime Provider Strategies The storytime provider may
Initiative <i>Initiative and Curiosity</i>	<u>Young Toddlers</u> Explore the environment through a variety of sensory-motor activity Practice new skills with enthusiasm Demonstrate a willingness to try new activities and experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide shakers, bells, or other musical toys for children to use when singing songs or sharing rhymes in storytime. • Include dancing and other whole-body movement. • Include songs, fingerplays or other storytime elements that encourage the children to participate physically (e.g. <i>Pat-a-Cake</i> and <i>Wheels on the Bus</i>). • Gradually incorporate new activities and experiences into storytime while maintaining predictability and a safe, comfortable environment. • Provide multiple copies of books so that each parent and child can explore and share a book together. • Provide open-ended play time after the formal storytime program, encouraging interaction between children and between children and their adults. Provide blocks, craft supplies, nature items, or other play objects. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Initiative <i>Initiative and Curiosity</i>	<u>Older Toddlers</u> Experiment in the environment with purpose Ask questions to gain information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share books, flannels, and songs about characters, places, and phenomena outside of the children's experience, including representation of different cultures and ways of life. • When children ask questions for more information, ask questions to determine what they already know and when responding, include enough detail to be meaningful. • Provide materials in open-ended playtime that encourage experimentation and discovery. • Provide opportunities for children to reflect and share their observations during storytime. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Initiative <i>Initiative and Curiosity</i>	<u>Pre-Kindergarten</u> Seek new and varied experiences and challenges (take risks). Demonstrate self-direction while participating in a range of activities and routines Ask questions to seek explanations about phenomena or interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share books, flannels, and songs about characters, places, and phenomena outside of the children's experience, including representation of different cultures and ways of life. • When children ask questions for more information, ask questions to determine what they already know and when responding, include enough detail to be meaningful. • Provide materials and time for imaginative play that reflects the content of the books shared. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.

Infants = Birth to 8 Months, Young Toddlers = 6 to 18 Months,
 Older Toddlers = 16-36 Months, Pre-Kindergarten = 3 to 5 Years

Strand <i>Topic</i>	Standard Statement The child will	Storytime Provider Strategies The storytime provider may
Initiative <i>Planning, Action and Reflection</i>	<u>Infants</u> Act on the environment to meet needs or interests Respond to people and objects in the immediate environment based on past experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate various facial expressions, changes in tone of your voice, and body language. • Narrate what you are doing and why between storytime segments (e.g. “Time to get out the shakers so that we can make music!”) • Encourage parents/caregivers to interact with their babies during storytime and throughout the day, using facial expressions, body language, and changes in tone of voice. • Provide continuity by setting up the storytime room in a similar fashion each week and having some elements that repeat. • Provide nametags or learn the babies’ names and address each by name during storytime. • Expect infants to get to know you gradually and that they may be wary of you until you are familiar to them. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Initiative <i>Planning, Action and Reflection</i>	<u>Young Toddlers</u> Use a variety of ways to meet simple goals Approach tasks with repeated trial and error	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When sharing stories, point out characters’ persistence and effort (e.g. <i>Pete the Cat</i> by James Dean or Eric Litwin, <i>Now I’m Big</i> by Karen Katz). • Talk about things that are easy or hard. • In a positive light, point out examples of frustration and trying again (e.g. <i>The Itsy-Bitsy Spider</i>). • Offer open-ended play time with materials that let children practice trial and error (e.g. stacking objects). • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Initiative <i>Planning, Action and Reflection</i>	<u>Older Toddlers</u> Make choices to achieve a desired goal. Use previous learning to inform new experiences with people and objects in the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When sharing stories, point out characters’ persistence and effort (e.g. <i>Go Away Big Green Monster!</i> by Ed Emberley, <i>Pete the Cat</i> by James Dean or Eric Litwin, <i>From Head to Toe</i> by Eric Carle). • Introduce new experiences or topics in storytimes by relating to children’s previous experiences, encouraging conversations between children and their caregivers. • In a positive light, point out examples of frustration and trying again (e.g. <i>The Itsy-Bitsy Spider</i>). • Offer playtime, including materials that allow children to make choices. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Initiative <i>Planning, Action and Reflection</i>	<u>Pre-Kindergarten</u> Develop, initiate and carry out simple plans to obtain a goal Use prior knowledge and information to assess, inform and plan for future actions and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When sharing stories, point out how characters set and meet goals (e.g. <i>The Very Busy Spider</i> by Eric Carle, <i>The Little Red Hen</i>, <i>The Tortoise and the Hare</i>). • Introduce new experiences or topics in storytimes by relating to children’s previous experiences, encouraging conversations between children and their caregivers. • Offer playtime; including materials that allow children to develop their own plans and complete a step-by-step process. • Encourage children to pursue their interests during open-ended play. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.

Infants = Birth to 8 Months, Young Toddlers = 6 to 18 Months,
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Strand <i>Topic</i>	Standard Statement The child will	Storytime Provider Strategies The storyline provider may
Engagement and Persistence <i>Attention</i>	<u>Infants</u> Demonstrate awareness of happenings in surroundings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrate your actions (e.g. “Next we will sing the train song”). • Point to and talk about pictures in books or other items used in storytime. Encourage shared attention by asking parents/caregivers to also point to item. • Use your voice and props to draw the infants’ attention to you. • Offer playtime where infants can see each other. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Engagement and Persistence <i>Attention</i>	<u>Young Toddlers</u> Focus on an activity but is easily distracted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit potentially distracting stimuli in room. • Use a higher-pitched voice when reading books (parentese). • Use songs, rhymes, and fingerplays with simple motions that the children can imitate. • Use props, voice changes and singing to capture children’s attention. • Point to and talk about pictures in books or other items used in storytime. Encourage shared attention by asking parents/caregivers to also point to item. • Keep stories brief; don’t feel obliged to read the entire book; model to parents/caregivers that books need not be read cover-to-cover. • Tell parents/caregivers it is okay if their child is distracted or inattentive during storytime. • Gently and without criticism, encourage children to return to the group activity after being distracted. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Engagement and Persistence <i>Attention</i>	<u>Older Toddlers</u> Focus on an activity for short periods of time despite distractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit potentially distracting stimuli in room. • Use songs and fingerplays with motions the children can imitate. • Use props, voice changes and singing to capture children’s attention. • Be flexible within each storytime element, following the children’s leads and adapting storytime to their level of attention as needed. • Gradually introduce longer books with more complex stories, but don’t feel obliged to read the entire book; model to parents/caregivers that books need not be read cover-to-cover. • Share factual books to encourage children’s interests. • Provide open-ended play time to encourage concentration and independence. • Encourage parents/caregivers to help children focus on storytime content while being responsive to children’s needs. • Gently and without criticism, encourage children to return to the group activity after being distracted. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.

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Strand <i>Topic</i>	Standard Statement The child will	Storytime Provider Strategies The storytime provider may
Engagement and Persistence <i>Attention</i>	<u>Pre-Kindergarten</u> Focus on an activity with deliberate concentration despite distractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit potentially distracting stimuli in room. • Use props, voice changes and singing to capture children’s attention. • Gradually introduce longer books with more complex stories, but don’t feel obliged to read the entire book; model to parents/caregivers that books need not be read cover-to-cover. • Share factual books to encourage children’s interests. • Ask open-ended questions to increase focus on book. • Recognize and verbally acknowledge children’s persistence in listening or doing an activity, both as a group and individually. • Observe the children during open-ended play to learn their interests; share your observations with parents/caregivers (e.g. “I notice your child enjoys drawing/sorting/building and appears very focused”). • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Engagement and Persistence <i>Persistence</i>	<u>Infants</u> Attempt to reproduce interesting and pleasurable effects and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage participation by repeating books, songs, rhymes, and fingerplays from week or week or within a program. • Include activities that involve parents/caregivers making eye contact in interacting with their infants. • Use a higher-pitched voice when reading books (parentese). • Facilitate interactive, back-and-forth games like <i>Peek-a-Boo</i> between parents/caregivers and infants. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Engagement and Persistence <i>Persistence</i>	<u>Young Toddlers</u> Repeat actions intentionally to achieve goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage participation by repeating books, songs, rhymes, and fingerplays from week or week or even within a program, especially when requested. • Select predictable books and books that tell a cumulative story (e.g. <i>We’re Going on a Bear Hunt</i> by Michael Rosen; <i>Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?</i> by Bill Martin) • Display board books and allow children to choose a book to share with their caregiver. • Encourage parents/caregivers to re-read favorite books at home, and note which books that their toddler wants to hear repeatedly. • Offer open-ended play time where children may make choices and have opportunities for repetition and persistence. • Model the growth mindset for parents/caregivers (i.e. that intelligence can be developed and challenges are opportunities to grow). • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.

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Engagement and Persistence <i>Persistence</i>	<u>Older Toddlers</u> Engage in self-initiated activities for sustained periods of time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display board books and allow children to choose a book to share with their caregiver. • Offer open-ended play time where children may make choices and have opportunities for repetition and persistence. • Model the growth mindset for parents/caregivers (i.e. that intelligence can be developed and challenges are opportunities to grow). • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Engagement and Persistence <i>Persistence</i>	<u>Pre-Kindergarten</u> Carry out tasks, activities, projects or experiences from beginning to end. Focus on the task at hand even when frustrated or challenged Use different strategies when trying to solve a problem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point out examples of persistence when they occur in books/stories shared during storytime (e.g. <i>Flight School</i> by Lita Judge, <i>The Little Engine That Could</i> by Watty Piper). • Recognize and verbally acknowledge children's persistence in listening or doing an activity, both as a group and individually. • Provide plenty of open-ended play time to encourage repetition and persistence. • Model the growth mindset for parents/caregivers (i.e. that intelligence can be developed and challenges are opportunities to grow). • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Creativity <i>Innovation and Invention</i>	<u>Infants</u> Make discoveries about self, others and the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include songs and fingerplays that involve reference to infants' bodies (e.g. <i>Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes</i>, <i>This Little Piggy</i>). • Include books that reflect diversity and that describe a wide range of environments, cultures, and experiences. • Provide sensory opportunities in baby storytime, including objects that infants and parents/caregivers can touch/manipulate. • Include touch-and-feel and lift-the-flap books in storytime, or have such books available for open-ended playtime after storytime. • Incorporate a variety of music, colors, textures, and formats in storytime and free playtime. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Creativity <i>Innovation and Invention</i>	<u>Young Toddlers</u> Use objects in new ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point out creativity and using items in new ways when encountered in books (e.g. <i>Not a Box</i> by Antoinette Portis, <i>What Can You Do With a Rebozo?</i> by Carmen Tafolla). • Model using objects in different ways. A music scarf can become a blanket, long hair, or a river or lake. • Provide open-ended play time with materials that allow children to use objects in multiple ways. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.

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Strand <i>Topic</i>	Standard Statement The child will	Storytime Provider Strategies The storytime provider may
Creativity <i>Innovation and Invention</i>	<u>Older Toddlers</u> Use materials in new and unconventional ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point out creativity and using items in new ways when encountered in books (e.g. <i>Not a Box</i> by Antoinette Portis, <i>What Can You Do With a Rebozo?</i> by Carmen Tafolla). Model using objects in different ways. A music scarf can become a blanket, long hair, or a river or lake. Provide open-ended play time with materials that allow children to use objects in multiple ways. Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Creativity <i>Innovation and Invention</i>	<u>Pre-Kindergarten</u> Use imagination and creativity to interact with objects and materials. Use creative and flexible thinking to solve problems Engage in inventive social play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point out the use of imagination when encountered in books (e.g. <i>Duck Rabbit</i> by Amy Krouse Rosenthal, <i>Where the Wild Things Are</i> by Maurice Sendak, <i>Harold and the Purple Crayon</i> by Crockett Johnson). Incorporate riddles and simple mental challenges to encourage flexible thinking. Provide open-ended materials and experiences that promote discovery through interaction Offer opportunities for children to draw or write their own story. Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Creativity <i>Expression of Ideas and Feelings through the Arts</i>	<u>Infants</u> Demonstrate preferences, pleasure or displeasure when interacting with various media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a variety of music, colors, textures, and formats for infants to explore. Provide a hands-on storytime component to allow infants to grasp and explore board books, blocks or balls, or other objects. Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Creativity <i>Expression of Ideas and Feelings through the Arts</i>	<u>Young Toddlers</u> Seek out experiences with a variety of materials and art materials based on preferences and past experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a variety of music, colors, textures, and formats for toddlers to explore. Provide open-ended play time with art supplies or other materials to promote creativity. Model the use of open-ended materials during storytime. Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.
Creativity <i>Expression of Ideas and Feelings through the Arts</i>	<u>Older Toddlers</u> Use self-selected materials and media to express ideas and feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point out creativity and artistic processes when encountered in books (e.g. <i>Mouse Paint</i> by Ellen Stoll Walsh, <i>I Ain't Gonna Paint No More</i> by Karen Beaumont). Include opportunities for dance and creative movement for children to express their ideas and feelings. Include music reflective of various cultures and experiences. Provide open-ended play time with art supplies or other materials to promote creativity. Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.

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Creativity <i>Expression of Ideas and Feelings through the Arts</i>	<u>Pre-Kindergarten</u> Express individuality, life experiences, and what they know and are able to do through a variety of media Express interest in and show appreciation for the creative work of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point out creativity and artistic processes when encountered in books (e.g. <i>The Dot</i> by Peter H. Reynolds, <i>Beautiful Oops</i> by Barney Saltzberg, <i>Extra Yarn</i> by Mac Barnett). • Include opportunities for dance and creative movement for children to express their ideas and feelings. • Include music reflective of various cultures and experiences. • Encourage parents/caregivers to ask their children their thoughts on the books shared in storytime. “Which illustration do you like best?” “What can you notice in the pictures?” • After storytime, provide paper and crayons, markers, or colored pencils, and invite the children to make drawings based on books, storytime theme or their own experiences and feelings. • Display children’s artwork in the storytime room and revisit it on subsequent weeks. • Articulate to parents/caregivers what you are modeling and the importance of these activities for approaches toward learning development and school readiness.