

# BUILDING BLOCKS

A Newsletter for Teachers Working with Infant, Toddler  
and Preschool  
Educational Equity For All



May 2018

## INDIVIDUALIZING INSTRUCTION IN PRESCHOOL CLASSROOMS

### THE PROCESS OF INDIVIDUALIZING INSTRUCTION CONSISTS OF

Four primary steps (pretti-frontczak & bricker, 2004):

- Get to know each child's interests, needs, and abilities
- Create opportunities for learning that build on children's interests
- Scaffold children's learning through supportive interactions
- Monitor children's progress toward achieving important goals

<https://goo.gl/zhcviw>



### ALPHABET FOR STARTERS – EASY TOUCH AND FEEL ALPHABET



Gather your materials. You will need some construction paper, double stick tape (or glue if you have time to let it dry), scissors, a marker, some materials that have various textures. We used felt, some sticky back sparkly foam and regular sticky back foam. I also used some emery boards but

they didn't stick to the double stick tape, and I was going to use some contact paper for sticky but forgot.... The main thing to remember is to have a handful of different textures.

<https://www.notimeforflashcards.com/2012/04/alphabet-for-starters-easy-touch-and-feel-alphabet.html>

## Teaching Our Youngest

A Guide for Preschool Teachers and Child Care and Family Providers [PDF \(162 KB\)](#)

Creating a Learning Environment for Young Children

Young children need instruction to develop the thinking, language, and early literacy skills needed for continued school success.

Effective preschool teachers and child care providers:

- Know when children can figure out new ideas and concepts on their own and when it is important to explain things to them step-by-step.
- Encourage children to participate in classroom activities and to honor the classroom rules.
- Listen to what the children say and expand upon their language, building their vocabulary and background knowledge.
- Know when to teach directly, when to provide time for exploration and discovery, when to practice skills, and when to encourage creativity.
- Plan activities that have a purpose and that challenge children.
- Know how to help children learn to work together and to resolve their conflicts.
- Encourage children to respect each other's time and personal belongings.
- Provide many opportunities for conversations between and among children and with adults.
- Know how to establish and maintain order in a classroom but in a manner that permits the children to learn how to participate in and enjoy learning.
- Arrange the classroom in a way that enhances their work with children and how the children spend their time.

[https://www2.ed.gov/teachers/how/early/teachingouryoungest/page\\_pg4.html](https://www2.ed.gov/teachers/how/early/teachingouryoungest/page_pg4.html)

## FEATURED IDEA OF THE MONTH



### HOW TO MAKE BUTTERFLY LIFE CYCLE SENSORY BOTTLES FOR PRESCHOOL

Shared By Mary Catherine

## Integrating Music and Movement with Literacy Video Workshop for Teachers



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-sYxMKCFmAU>

This video workshop shows how to promote literacy skills with music and movement. Using songs from Hap Palmer, Ella Jenkins, Frank Leto, Brenda Colgate, Rick Charette and others, this program teaches viewers how to integrate music, movement and literacy in the early childhood classroom. Please visit: <https://www.edact.com/professional-de...> to purchase this program in its entirety. Eight Chapters Include: Why Use Music and Movement to Teach Literacy? Listening and Understanding Vocabulary Development Developing Storytelling, Speaking, and Sequencing Through Nursery Rhymes Phonemic Awareness Alphabet Knowledge Basic Skills Math Skills Effective strategies are demonstrated with live classroom footage of teachers using music and movement to introduce, teach and reinforce a wide array of literacy concepts.

A good preschool teacher knows paper-pencil tasks and sitting still are not developmentally appropriate for young children who learn best through sensory experiences.

## WEBSITES AND RESOURCES

<http://preschoolpowolpackets.blogspot.com/>  
<http://www.kindertown.com/blog/>  
<http://preschoolponderings.blogspot.com/>



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Early Childhood Podcasts

<https://player.fm/podcasts/Early-Childhood>



The Preschool Podcast, by HiMama, is a platform for learning from leaders in early childhood education. If you work in a child care or preschool setting, the podcast will provide you with practical advice and thought-leadership for all things early education.

Why Preschool is the 'Most Important Year' In a Child's Development BY [KRIS](#) March 28, 2018  
Fostering Playful Learning

Much of the public debate around early childhood education comes down to which matters more: academics or play. That's a false dichotomy, said Bouffard. "Play is really the way that young children learn. It's a way that they experience the world, and it engages them and helps them learn more deeply."

Bouffard is concerned that the "skill and drill" approach to teaching academics is most frequently used in classrooms serving at-risk preschoolers, in an attempt to close the gap on school readiness. Unfortunately, these teaching methods can "turn young kids off to school and introduces the possibility of shame and anxiety. [Skill and drill] doesn't teach kids the curiosity and critical thinking skills that they need to develop in early childhood."

However, pure free play — an approach she hears advocated more frequently by wealthier cohorts — also misses the mark. "I hear a lot about just 'free play classrooms.'" But, Bouffard said, if it only involves setting out materials and not thinking about learning goals, there's a real missed opportunity. For example, she said, researchers have found that children used more sophisticated language about building activity when they had a goal in mind.  
<https://goo.gl/dhef5f>