

Implementing Curriculum in Child Care Centers

Participant Handouts

SESSION 2

Science Activities and Thinking

For each science activity listed, generate some “thinking” questions you might ask. You can add activities of your own on the bottom

Science Activity	Prediction	Why or How?	Classify or Compare
Animal observation: Worms? Caterpillars? Other?			
Objects that make noise			
Mirrors			
Cooking			
Magnets			
Bubbles			

SESSION 3

Implementing Curriculum

Extending Children's Learning

Our daily interactions with children are opportunities to “stretch children’s thinking and knowledge.” We begin by making a connection with the child and noticing closely what the child is doing. There are many ways to use this “teachable moment” to extend children’s learning

Help children see themselves as thinkers

Ask children to explain their thinking or why they did or said something. For example, “What are you thinking about?” or “How did you figure that out?”

Respond to curiosity

Encourage curiosity and exploration. Notice what children are curious about, notice details, and describe what you see. Ask questions, be curious yourself!

Use mirror talk

Describe what a child is doing. “You are splashing your hands in the water!” Give children words for what they are experiencing.

Have conversations

Share conversations with children. Keeps the conversation going for several turns.

Inspire imaginative play

Join children in their pretend play. Use your rich language to describe what children are doing. Consider adding ideas to the play that stretch children’s knowledge.

Solve problems together

Participate in problem solving with children. Help them identify strategies and encourage them to be persistent, and reflect with them about what they discover

Use rich vocabulary

Use words that stretch children’s language and give them a little information about what the words mean, either by describing, or by gestures, or by showing.

Laugh with children!

Be playful with children. Share moments of enjoyment and let them know it!

Ask questions

Ask questions that fit what the child is thinking about and stretch their thinking a bit.

Link the new to the familiar

Help children understand new ideas and experiences by relating them to what they already know.

Adapted from "Powerful Interactions: How to connect with children to extend their learning," Dombro, Jablon and Stetson.