

Meghalaya Foundational Stage Curriculum



Government of Meghalaya
Directorate of Educational Research & Training
Meghalaya

2025

DEPT

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Foreword

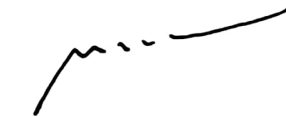
It is with great pride and dedication that I present the Meghalaya State Curriculum for Foundational Stage. This Curriculum represents a significant milestone in our collective effort to enhance the quality of Early Childhood Education across our State.

Our aim is to provide a robust inclusive, and child centric curriculum that nurtures the Holistic Development of every child during their foundational years. This period is crucial for laying the ground work for lifelong learning and development. Our approach emphasizes not only academic skills but also Socio-emotional and Cognitive growth of the child.

This Curriculum has been developed through extensive consultation with educators, parents and experts, reflecting our shared vision for a progressive and responsive Educational System. It incorporates best practices and innovative strategies tailored to meet the diverse needs of our children, by honouring the rich cultural heritage of Meghalaya while aligning with the principles laid out in the NEP 2020.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all who contributed to this endeavour. Your insights and unwavering support have been instrumental in shaping this Curriculum. Together we are paving the way for our brighter future for our children by empowering them to reach their full potential.

Let us continue to work together with dedication and enthusiasm to implement this curriculum effectively, ensuring that every child in Meghalaya gets the opportunity to thrive and succeed.



Shri. Vijay Kumar Mantri, IAS
Commissioner and Secretary to the Government of Meghalaya
Education Department
& Chairman
State Steering Committee for School education & SCF-ECCE

19th December, 2025

Place: Meghalaya, Shillong

DERT

Preface

We are delighted to present the Meghalaya Curriculum for the Foundational Stage, a comprehensive framework that has been designed to provide young learners with a strong educational foundation. This curriculum is the result of extensive collaboration and research, aiming to address the diverse needs and aspirations of the children of Meghalaya.

The curriculum focuses on understanding how children learn and the importance of nurturing all domains of child development. We recognise that each child is unique, and their learning journeys are influenced by their physical, cognitive, language, socio-emotional, and creative development. By acknowledging and promoting these domains, we strive to create a holistic learning experience.

We believe that a strong foundation in these skills is crucial for future academic success. The curriculum emphasises on evidence-based instructional strategies, such as phonics, sight word recognition, and number sense development. Through targeted and differentiated instruction, we aim to ensure that every child acquires the necessary literacy and numeracy skills.

Creating an enriching learning environment is the core aspect of the Meghalaya Curriculum. We understand the profound impact that the learning environment has on children's motivation, engagement, and wellbeing. We encourage educators to design classrooms that foster active learning, exploration, and imagination. Adequate resources, including books, materials, and technology, are provided to create a conducive learning environment that supports the growth and development of each child.

The curriculum advocates for a variety of assessment methods, such as formative and summative assessments, to provide a holistic view of learners' achievements. Authentic and performance-based assessments are also included, which evaluate practical skills and the application of knowledge. The emphasis is on utilizing assessments to inform parents regarding the progress of the children.

The curricular goals of the Meghalaya Curriculum are aimed at nurturing competent, confident, and critical thinkers. With a focus on promoting inquiry, problem-solving, and creative thinking skills, we envision empowering students to become lifelong learners and contributors to society.

A unique feature of the curriculum is theme-based approach. By integrating meaningful and relevant themes such as Me and My Family, My Neighbourhood, My School, Market, Festivals, Hills and Forests, we aim to make learning more engaging and connected to the real-world contexts. This approach encourages interdisciplinary learning, promotes deeper understanding, and enhances the application of knowledge and skills.

The curriculum introduces contextualised exemplars of 60 learning experiences. These exemplars serve as valuable resources for educators, providing practical guidance on how to design and implement engaging and purposeful learning activities. The learning experiences are carefully crafted to align with the curricular goals, encompassing various subjects and aspects of development.

The Meghalaya Curriculum for Foundational Stage is a product of collective effort, expertise, and a deep commitment to the education of our younger generations. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the teacher educators, curriculum developers, teachers, and stakeholders who have contributed to its development.

We are confident that this curriculum will empower our children, laying a strong foundation for their lifelong learning journey. We invite educators and stakeholders to embrace this framework, making it a catalyst for transformative change in the State's educational scenario. Together, let us create a nurturing and inspiring learning environment that nurtures the potential and dreams of our young learners.

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Introduction

Significance of early years

Early childhood years, spanning from birth to eight years, constitute a pivotal phase in human development with far-reaching implications for individuals and societies. One of the key reasons for prioritizing early childhood care and education (ECCE) lies in its profound impact on brain development. During this period, the brain forms critical neural connections, shaping cognitive abilities and emotional intelligence. Quality ECCE programs provide stimulating environments that enhance these neural pathways, laying the foundation for a child's future success. Additionally, ECCE is instrumental in ensuring school preparedness by imparting essential social and emotional skills. Children exposed to well-structured ECCE programs learn to interact with peers, manage emotions, and cooperate with others, fostering positive relationships and aiding in their transition to formal schooling. Furthermore, early childhood education significantly improves learning outcomes. It provides the fundamental knowledge necessary for literacy and numeracy skills, cultivating a passion for learning that lasts a lifetime. This educational foundation empowers individuals to engage meaningfully in the learning process, enhancing their academic achievements and future opportunities. Economically, investing in early childhood education is a strategic decision. A well-educated and skilled workforce is essential for a nation's prosperity. Quality ECCE equips individuals with cognitive and social skills crucial for economic growth, innovation, and productivity, shaping a nation's economic trajectory positively. Moreover, ECCE promotes equality and justice within societies. By providing equal access to enriching educational experiences, irrespective of socioeconomic backgrounds, it bridges gaps and fosters social inclusion. This inclusivity ensures that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential, contributing to a more equitable and just society.

The Foundational Stage: Policy Context

Considering the above, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has defined the age group of 3-8 years as the Foundational Stage within the 5+3+3+4 educational framework. The Foundational Stage is envisioned as a single pedagogical unit with an integrated foundational curricular and pedagogical framework. As per the NEP, the Foundational Stage will consist of five years of flexible, multilevel, play/activity-based learning and the curriculum and pedagogy of ECCE (NEP 2020, p. 11). The National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage 2022 (NCF-FS 2022) is an extensive educational framework designed to steer early childhood education in India. It delineates the vision, principles, and teaching methods tailored for children in the Foundational Stage. Emphasizing a comprehensive and child-centered perspective, the NCF-FS 2022 prioritizes development in all the domains viz. physical, cognitive, language and literacy, socio-emotional and ethical, and art and aesthetic.

Meghalaya Foundational Stage (FS) Curriculum

The Meghalaya Foundational Stage Curriculum is a crucial step towards ensuring that the Foundational Stage as envisioned in the NEP 2020 and NCF-FS 2022 is realized in the state of Meghalaya. The Curriculum is written in practitioner-friendly language and designed specifically as a guide for Foundational Stage teachers and teacher educators. Rich examples and illustrations, both from inside the classroom/school and outside, make it a document that is not only grounded in core principles of ECCE but an enjoyable read for practitioners.

Part A begins with an overview of the child's context in Meghalaya – the family environment, cultural identity, community, physical and natural environment, and so on. The focus then shifts to how children learn in the Foundational Stage, emphasizing the selection of suitable content to nurture concepts, skills, and dispositions. The curricular approach integrates five key developmental domains: physical, socio-emotional, cognitive, language and literacy, and aesthetic and cultural development. Foundational literacy and numeracy, essential building blocks, are given special attention. Emphasis is laid on a safe and stimulating learning environment – both physical/infrastructural and social. Organizational aspects such as daily routines and illustrative daily routines for different age groups are also outlined. Assessment methods conducive to the Foundational Stage viz. observation and analysis of artefacts, are detailed, along with tools for self-assessment and peer evaluation. The curriculum's structure, with its aims, Curricular Goals, Competencies, and Learning Outcomes, provides a clear roadmap for teaching. Moreover, an eclectic teaching approach is adopted, incorporating themes like 'Me & My Family,' 'My Neighbourhood,' 'My School,' 'Market,' 'Festivals,' and 'Hills & Forests.' These themes, rich with stories, projects, and other appropriate activities recommended by NCF-FS, make learning engaging and meaningful for young learners in Meghalaya.

Part B of the Curriculum has exemplar activities designed as “learning experiences” for each class in the Foundational Stage i.e., Preschool I to class 2. Corresponding worksheets and exemplar weekly plans for Preschool III, class I, and class 2 are also provided. The learning experiences exemplify developmentally appropriate practice and are aligned to the Curricular Goals and Competencies of the Foundational Stage, as outlined in the NCF-FS 2022. The hallmark of these learning experiences is that they are culturally relevant and sensitive to Meghalaya's context, making learning more engaging and meaningful for young learners. When learning experiences to nurture concepts, skills, and dispositions are grounded in the local context, children from diverse backgrounds are able to forge an emotional connect with learning.

Curriculum development process

The Curriculum that you hold in your hands is the result of the painstaking efforts of the Curriculum Development Team that met regularly over the course of 8 in-person workshops in 2022-23. The Team of experts in early childhood comprised of DERT faculty; faculty from various DIETs; representatives from the Department of Social Welfare, Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, and private schools; and retired teacher educators. The Team was first oriented to the key perspectives and principles of early childhood care and education, after which the writing process began. The writing process was iterative and involved several rounds of review.

As the Curriculum development process was kickstarted before the release of the NCF-FS 2022, various national-level documents served as crucial references. The NEP 2020, NIPUN Bharat Guidelines (MoE, 2021), National ECCE Curriculum Framework (WCD, 2014), and National ECCE Policy (WCD, 2013) provided essential frameworks. Position Papers such as the one on Early Language & Literacy in India (CECED, 2016) and on Early Childhood Education (NCERT, 2006) were also studied. Curricula documents such as The Preschool Curriculum (NCERT, 2019), curricula from different states and even other countries were studied. With the coming of the NCF-FS in October 2022, the Core Team realigned the Curriculum to the new curricular framework (aims of education to domain-wise developmental Curricular Goals – Competencies – Learning Outcomes) and incorporated new curricular and pedagogical inputs.

Guiding Principles for the Foundational Stage

1 Every child is capable of learning regardless of the circumstances of birth or background.



2 Each child is different and grows, learns, and develops at their own pace.



3 Children are natural researchers with great observational skills. They are constructors of their known learning experiences and express feelings and ideas through different representations.



4 Children are social beings; they learn through observation, imitation, and collaboration. They learn through concrete experiences, using their senses and acting upon the environment.



5 Children's experiences and ways of learning must be acknowledged and included. Children learn best when they are respected, valued, and fully involved in the learning process.



6 Play and activity are the primary ways of learning and development with continuous opportunities for children to experience, explore, and experiment with the environment.



7 Children must engage with material, activities, and environments that are developmentally and culturally appropriate and develop conceptual understanding and problem-solving.



8 Content should be drawn from the experiences of children. The novelty of the content or its challenges should be based on the familiar experiences of children.



9 Content should be suited to the developmental needs of children and should provide several opportunities for fantasy, storytelling, art, music, and play.



10 Equity in issues such as gender, caste, class, and disability should be emphasized in the content.



11 Teachers should facilitate and mediate the learning. Scaffolding should be provided by asking open-ended questions, enabling exploration.



12 Family and community are partners in this process and are involved in multiple ways.



13 Care is central to learning. Children at this age naturally perceive familiar adults as caregivers first. Classroom activities must emphasize the emotional aspect of learning (e.g., through storytelling or art).



Adapted from *National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage* (pp. 35-36)

Part A



Chapter I

The child's context

For the Foundational Stage practitioner, it is important to understand the context of a child growing up in the state of Meghalaya. What do we mean by the context of the child? It means the cultural, linguistic, religious, historical, and social aspects of the child. Let us understand this better in this chapter.



a. The child's context

The child's context means the family and cultural background of the child, environmental setting, interests, likes, dislikes, curiosities, dreams, and any other circumstance or factor that influences the child's life and development. A child in Meghalaya might, for example, grow up eating dishes like *jadoh* and *dohneiiong*, go with family members to religious gathering, listen to popular folklore, get drenched in incessant rains, go to lakes and rivers for fishing, play five stones, enjoy berries and fruit, celebrate Christmas, Wangala, or Shad Suk Mynsiem, etc.

As the early steps of learning for a child occur through the process of interaction with the immediate surrounding, where the child lives – family, relatives, friends, community, or media, the child meaningfully learns her/his social and cultural role from the environment and how it functions. Children's language, cognitive, physical, aesthetic and socio-emotional competencies are developed and enhanced with the exposure to songs, stories, games, dramas, social interactions, to name a few. Various daily life experiences and activities embedded in local context also contribute to the development of these capacities of the children where they can think and find a solution to a problem.

Children are naturally curious and find joy in learning new things, solving problems on their own and making meaning of their observation from the environment. A child also learns from his/her peers and adults in the immediate environment.

For example, *Ka Dpei* (hearth) among the Khasi community is a setting where knowledge is transmitted from one generation to another in a family through songs and stories. The stories and songs impart values which play a role in shaping a child's beliefs and perception related to his/her surroundings and how the community perceives it. Traditional knowledge, for example, weaving baskets, making a dish, farming, etc., is passed on to children through interaction with their immediate social environment. Thus, traditional knowledge is something that some children may come to school with, which must be addressed by the teacher.

b. The learning context

The learning context means the environment, experiences and resources which contributes to the learning and developmental growth of the child when she/he comes to school. So, it is the teacher's responsibility to create a learning environment based on the child's context where the child can grow, both physically and mentally.

A supportive and positive environment boosts a child's development. When children move from home to school, they become the part of new environment and system, therefore it is important that the familiarity of content and process remains intact so that 'the learning context' is not hampered; rather it should act as an aid in the developmental process of the child. Thus, it is suggested that the concepts introduced in school moves from known to unknown, so that ideas are built based on the present context of the child. Familiar learning context makes a child grasps things faster, grow organically and it creates an environment of familiarity and meaning in a new setting.

Why is the child's context important?

Child's context is important for a teacher to bridge the gap between the child and the teacher, so that the teacher can comprehend the needs of the child and smooth communication takes place between them for the child's developmental benefit. The child's context gives meaning to the curriculum. In a classroom, it is important for a teacher to understand the background of each child to give adequate support and aid necessary for his/her learning. Let's investigate two classroom situations:

Teacher begins the day with a conversation around fish by asking questions like: Have you seen ponds? What is it? How big is it? Is it as big as this mat, as big as this room, or even bigger? What all do we find in a pond? Have all of you seen fish in a pond? What is the smallest size of fish you have seen so far? What is the biggest size of fish have you seen so far? What different colours of fish have you seen?

Teacher does a rhyme on fish with children. They all enjoy singing the rhyme and moving like fish around the classroom.

Next, teacher distributes colourful papers. She/he teaches children to make a fish by folding the paper. Children follow and make their fish.

Teacher lays down a blue chart paper, asks children to paste their fish and draw all the other things they see in a pond (like they had shared during the conversation) such as frogs, crabs, grasses, flowers, and weeds.

Teacher writes down the rhyme on the chart and pastes it on the wall.

Teacher begins with a rhyme on sea animals. Children repeat after teacher and follow the actions and gestures.

Then she/he shows some flashcards of sea animals to children which were mentioned in the rhyme, e.g., octopus, starfish, whale, sea horse and tortoise. She/he tells the names and describes each of the animals. She/he asks children to tell the names of the animals.

Teacher gives drawing sheets to children and asks them to draw a picture of the sea with the sea animals and write the names.

Teacher pastes the drawings of children on the wall once they complete.

At the end, teacher conducts a conversation with children, where she asks: What did we learn today? Can you tell the names of the animals whose pictures we saw? What were the colours of these animals? What did you like about these animals? Which one was your favourite? Have you seen them? Can you give me the name and features of one sea creature that you now know? etc.

As we can clearly see in both the classrooms, the teacher is using similar pedagogical processes: conversation, rhymes, art, and craft. She/he is using fun interesting materials like flashcards and rhyme charts. However, the major difference is that of the child's context. In the first example, we see that the content is designed keeping in mind the child's context, therefore the learning looks organic and effortless. In the second example, as the teacher is introducing something which is not from the child's context, therefore it looks mechanical and even though a conversation takes place at the end, it is based on memorising and remembering facts where the child's perspective, thoughts, opinions, and experiences are lost. Moreover, only a limited skills can be assessed in this case, such as to remember and recall whether it's during the conversation time or the drawing time. Whereas in the example contextual to children, their skill of expression, creativity, imagination, cognition, etc. could be assessed. Thus, for an overall development of a child which includes development in all the five domains as mentioned in NCF-FS 2022 and Meghalaya's SCF-FS, i.e., physical, cognitive, language and literacy, socio-emotional and ethical, and art and aesthetic, it is important that the child's context is considered of utmost priority to design a meaningful learning experience for the children.

Later, the teacher can introduce the children to sea animals after working around familiar animals. So, there is no issue in talking about sea animals or any other thing that the children have not seen in their immediate environment, but the question is when to introduce and how to introduce. As mentioned earlier, it is always suggested that building of concepts should move from known to unknown or familiar to unfamiliar, so that concepts are constructed on a concrete base, and it stays strong for a lifetime to aid learning in the future. Hence, moving from familiar to unfamiliar so that children do not feel out of place, rather each child feels included, a part of the group, and their thoughts accepted.

How can a teacher know the child's context?

Let us look into an example.

Teacher gives an art activity to a classroom of Preschool II. Aiban finds the activity very interesting. Teacher can see the passion and happiness every time Aiban gets a chance to draw or colour. But Aiban draws and colours only in the classroom, where teacher provides Aiban with the resources. Whenever, she/he asks children to bring a drawing from home, Aiban never brings any. Later, teacher finds out that Aiban is the third among his five siblings. His parents work in a stone quarry. In finding out the reason that Aiban's parents find it difficult to provide him with colours and art supplies, teacher asks Aiban to bring charcoal from home and with this charcoal teacher introduces Aiban to charcoal drawing. Aiban then starts to draw on old notebooks of his elder siblings.

As we have seen in the example, once the context of the child is known, the struggle ends at both ends. A teacher can know about the context of a child from various sources, like she/he can directly interact with the child, or by involving the siblings, parents, friends, and community members. Children are always eager to share their thoughts, while taking part in a rich conversation. They would share about everything, from their family to their neighbourhood. For example, to know about the child's eating habits, the teacher may ask: *What did you have for breakfast today? Is it your favourite thing to eat in the morning? What do you like to eat in the morning? Which is your favourite meal of the day? Why?* And so on... And the children will be eager to share.

Teacher may ask children what they do during vacations, what games they would usually play or what is their favourite toys and games. Children may play with advanced electronic gadgets, like video games, mobile phones, tablet, computer, etc., or indigenous toys or games, like mud marbles, grass sliding game, *soh tyngkoh*, etc.

To know whether children are aware of their surroundings and what is it like, teacher can ask: *What do they see around their home? Do they go to these places around their home or around the neighbourhood? Which is their favourite space outside of their house? What is the best thing about their surrounding? If I visit your place, where will you take me to? What is the first thing you would show me?* And so on... However, it also important that if a child does not speak, she/he should not be forced, and teacher should search for a different source to know about her/him. Perhaps the teacher can make the same conversations with the sibling or a friend of the child.

To know the child's context at home, other than interacting with their siblings or parents in the school, she/he can go for home visits, where a teacher can get a clear picture of the child's socio-economic and cultural background. It is important for a teacher to comprehend the beliefs or ideas of culture in a diverse society like Meghalaya. Promoting a positive attitude towards differences in a multi-cultural setting requires curricular pedagogies or learning resources which are diverse, pluralistic and includes multi-disciplinary perspective. This comprehension can only be possible when the teacher interacts with the parents and community members create platforms like, annual meets, functions or involving them in learning experiences, where these interactions take place. Asking the parents *what the child likes to do at home, how she/he spends most of the time, what conversations do they (parent and the child) make, or with whom she/he is most attached to in the family, how do they interact* and so on, helps in knowing the context of the child.

Thus, the curriculum addresses children's social realities. It can be flexible and contextualized so that it fits the diverse needs and requirements of all children from different settings.

Bronfenbrenner's 'Ecological Systems Theory'

The child and its relationship with the environment can be understood better with Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological system theory. According to this theory, a child's environment is a complex system of multiple levels, namely: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem, and the chronosystem. These levels are interrelated, and this relationship affects the development of the child. (Laura, 2006).

To understand this theory better, we would look into an example.

Shidalin is a 5-year-old girl from Nongthymmai, who studies in Preschool II at Laitumkhrach. Every day, her mother dresses her up for school, and they talk about what Shidalin has in her tiffin today, how excited is she about school, what is she planning to do with her friends, what would she like to have after coming back from school, etc.

Just before leaving, Shidalin always gives a warm hug to her grandmother and everyday grandmother reminds her: You should be a good girl at school. Respect your teachers. Play with your friends, but don't fight.

On the way to school, Shidalin and her father talks about all the different activities they do in school, anything new she had learned/tried, if she likes doing these different activities, he asks about her friends and teachers, etc. Her father ensures that he is in regular touch with Shidalin's teachers and school, so that he is always updated with her progress. He is also active in any meetings or functions that the school organises. Everyone in school, who knows Shidalin, tells her father that she loves to draw and therefore, spent most of her time in drawing and colouring. At home too she does the same, as it is her favourite hobby. She also loves talking to her mother and grandmother about her dreams and imaginations. Her grandmother tells her different stories of animals, myth, moral values, and God. However, her interaction with father at home is minimal, as he comes exhausted from his work and sleeps immediately after dinner. Therefore, the 15 minutes morning ride to school is the only time she gets with her father.

Thus, Shidalin's family and home are a part of her immediate environment which falls under the microsystem. The **microsystem** is the innermost level which includes the child's immediate surroundings: parents, siblings, neighbours, friends, etc. The child directly interacts with the components of this level which effects in her/his development.

Shidalin's teachers and schools are a part of the mesosystem. The **mesosystem** is the level in which the child's immediate surroundings interact among each other and effect the child, e.g., home, school, and neighbourhood.

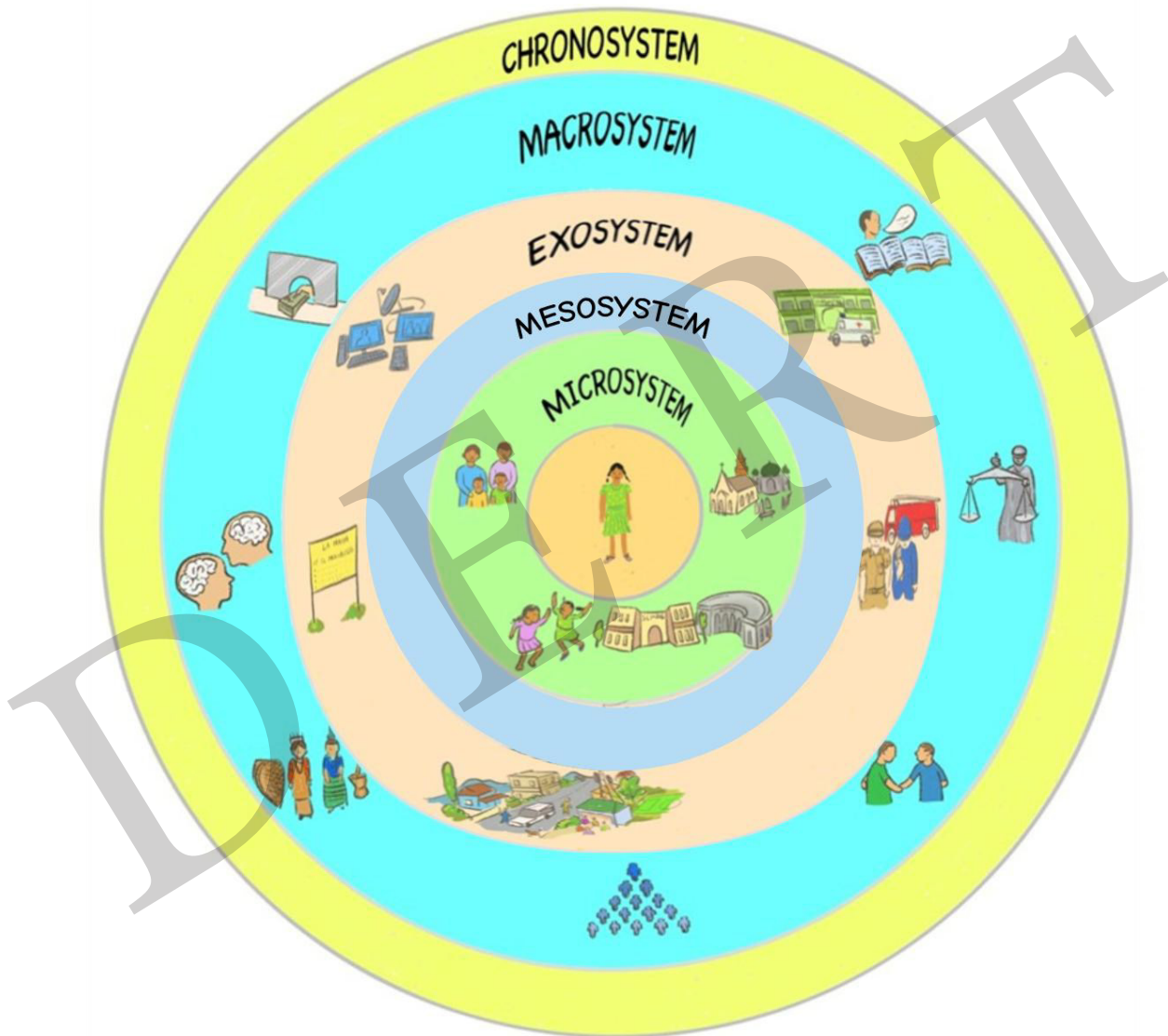
Her father regularly interacting with her teachers and school for her benefit; her father's workplace is a part of the **exosystem**. The exosystem does not include the child but it affects the child by influencing the immediate surrounding such as the parent's workplace, religious institution, or health and welfare services in the community. For example, the environment at parent's workplace may influence the parent's behaviour at home and with the child.

Her grandmother's values form a part of the macrosystem. The **macrosystem** includes law, cultural values, customs, and resources which affects the child indirectly by influencing the inner circles. For example, the law which states that children under the age of 14 years cannot work, all children must go to school and that is why there is free education for those who cannot afford, etc.

All these multiple levels of complex system affect the overall development of Shidalin. Her father's workplace influences the amount of time he gets to spend with Shidalin and the social and moral values that have influenced her grandmother, also influences her behaviour. Thus, other levels of environment impact the immediate environment or the microsystem because of the relationship these levels share. This ultimately influences the immediate environment of Shidalin which is in direct contact to her.

There is another level called **chronosystem** which refers to time. It is the outermost level. The child's environment and circumstances continuously change with time. It is not a static system. For example, during Covid-19 pandemic, the child's immediate environment included only her/his family and home, and the digital world opened a new means of interactions; for some, the family moved from one place to the other. And, with that the components of microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem changed for the children effecting the child in the core of the circle differently.

Hence, when we think about the context of a child, we move from the inner circle to the outer circle. The immediate environment is with whom the child interacts and relates to it.



Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory emphasizes the dynamic interplay between an individual (the child) and their immediate social and physical environment, depicting multiple nested layers of influence, from the microsystem to the macrosystem.

Chapter 2

How do children think and learn?



Donbok, a four-year-old, was taken to a field by his papa, where he saw a baby goat (kit) playing with the mother goat. Donbok wanted to hold the baby goat (kit), so he ran after and follow it for a long period of time. Curiously he was observing it eating grass and screaming at it to get its attention.

Donbok asked his father, "Papa, why doesn't the mother goat cook food for her baby?"

Papa replied, "The baby goat (kit) gets his own food!

Soon (looking at Donbok), you too will be getting your own food!"

Finally, Donbok managed to catch the baby goat (kit). He hugged it tightly and tried to feed it with leaves. The baby goat (kit) eventually ran away. Donbok held its tail to prevent it from running, and he ended up with tiny hair from the tail of the baby goat (kit) in his hands. Amazed, he watched as the hair flew away with the wind.

The next day, when the teacher was talking about different animals seen in the village, Donbok jumped from his seat and shared his experience with the baby goat (kit) from the previous day. The teacher intervened when Donbok excitedly talked about pulling the hair off the baby goat's (kit) tail.

The teacher asked Donbok, "Is it good to hurt others?"

Donbok innocently replied, "No, but it was a baby goat (kit), and it was really nice to see the hair floating in the wind." The teacher responded, "But baby goat (kit) are living beings, right children?" Looking at the children she again said "Wouldn't it hurt if someone pull your hair?"

Donbok nodded his head, feeling guilty.

After talking to Donbok on this issue for some more time, the teacher asked Donbok, "What other things have you seen floating in the air?"

Donbok replied, "Mama's shawl, leaves from trees, birds..."

Defining a child

Each child is unique in terms of their capacities, capabilities, and identity. The word 'child' is commonly used in everyday conversations, but its meaning can vary depending on the context and perspective. For instance, sometimes a child is referred to as someone who is in their early years and has limited speech abilities. In other cases, a child may be described as someone with limited physical and mental capabilities (James & James, 2008). Alternatively, the term 'child' can imply the concept of the 'next generation' (Alanen, 2001). Furthermore, a child is often seen as naturally dependent on others. In legal terms, a child's age determines what they are allowed or not allowed to do. The existence of a child also implies the presence of parents or caregivers who take responsibility for their well-being.

Usually, there is an unspoken assumption that we know who a child is. The answer may seem self-evident: Can't we define a child by their age? After all, this is typically the approach taken when addressing the question. Moreover, certain standards regarding physical, social, and emotional development, as well as behavioural and response patterns, are expected to correspond with a child's age.

Diverse research is carried out to understand the factors that play a crucial role in a child's development. Studies show that both nature and nurture have a significant impact on a child's developmental process. According to Jean Piaget, children are born with various abilities, some of which are genetically inherited, while others are acquired throughout their lives. These abilities empower children to explore and construct knowledge.



A child – by nature

A human child is an amazing being with innate curiosity and the capacity to explore. Environmental factors can either nurture or suppress these skills. Naturally, children learn through imitation and discovery from their immediate environment, absorbing information from their daily experiences, such as hearing sounds and observing their surroundings. Every child, by nature, possesses a set of automatically triggered perceptions, priorities, and values that gradually become noticeable at different stages of development.

Donbok, as depicted in the above illustration, is curious about everything he sees. He observes the goat kid feeding on grass and attempts to forcefully feed it. He constantly questions and wonders about his surroundings. Each new discovery excites him. When he notices hair floating in the wind, he tries to replicate it. This pattern can be observed in every child across diverse contexts. There are certain inherent characteristics and abilities that exist within a child, regardless of their specific context or environment. These abilities include exploration, observation, a tendency to imitate adults or what they see around them and responding in their unique way to stimuli. For example, a toddler's curiosity in dismantling a toy is as significant as their interest in playing with it.



The role of nurture

In the above illustration, Donbok's observation, curiosity to explore, questioning, and response to stimuli from his surroundings are innate skills. The environment and the nature of exposure to which the child is subjected, along with appropriate adult interventions, play a crucial role in enhancing these skills as the child progresses towards adulthood. Alongside the mentioned skills, other skills and values are instilled in a child through their environment, including their family, peers, community, and school. For example, in the above illustration, Donbok's papa emphasises self-sufficiency and sets a goal of being independent when talking about eating food. Donbok's teacher emphasises the ethical value of considering the well-being of all living beings. She also make them to think about floating. While nurturing contributes to a child's development, there is no guarantee that an ideal or optimal environment, parenting style, and socio-emotional factors will have the same impact on every child.

Child development perspectives

Early childhood is a sensitive stage where experiences have a profound impact on development, and the benefits of interventions during this period are amplified in later stages of life. It is crucial for early childhood teachers to be aware of various perspectives, as providing appropriate support and guidance in the early years fosters experiences that are essential for enhancing a child's ability to learn, succeed, and thrive.

There are diverse perspectives on children and childhood. Parents, families, schools, and communities all play a role in providing lifelong benefits to a child through nurturing care, protection, and a positive environment. These beneficial interventions begin even before pregnancy and continue throughout birth and early childhood.

A child's development and perspective building are greatly influenced by environmental factors such as geographical differences, culture, and history. The term 'child development' encompasses various aspects including physical, mental, cognitive, and socio-emotional dimensions.

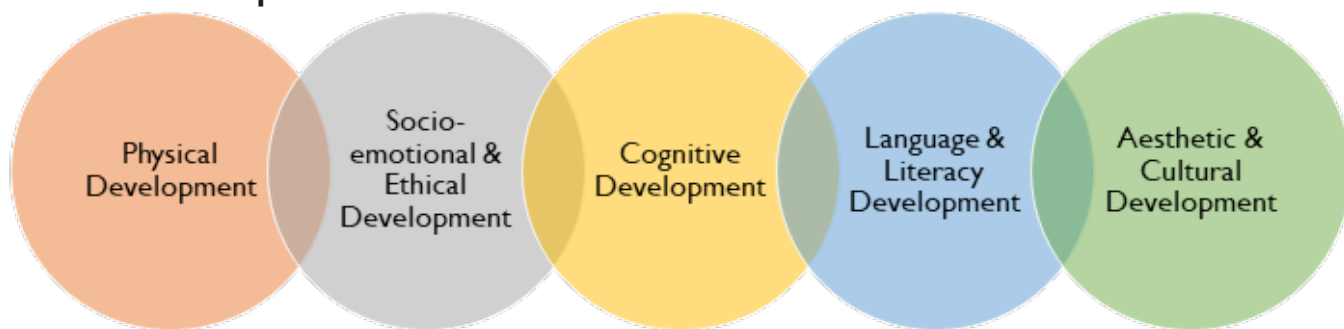
To ensure the physical and mental well-being of a child, it is crucial for them to feel secure in their environment. Access to healthcare, nutritional stability, and acceptance for who they are all contribute to the child's overall development across different stages. Interactions with peers and adults also play a significant role in fostering socio-emotional growth. Listening to and correctly interpreting a child's responses in various contexts is a key tool in understanding their needs. It allows for the provision of necessary support and scaffolding in essential areas without overwhelming the child with excessive care.

Significance of early years

The early years are the most critical period for human growth, development, and learning in all children. The construction of neural connections in the brain is an ongoing process that begins before birth and continues into adulthood. Early experiences have a profound impact on shaping the structural formations in the brain, providing the foundation for learning, health, and development throughout life. Children have a remarkable capacity to absorb vast amounts of information through various sensory stimuli, such as visual and auditory inputs. Processing this information and integrating it into their knowledge base, while establishing the right connections, is crucial during a child's development. Therefore, it is important to expose children to positive factors, such as stable and nurturing relationships with parents and other adults, in safe and supportive environments both physically and emotionally. Emotional well-being and social competence are closely linked to the cognitive abilities that emerge in children. The physical, emotional, cognitive, and linguistic skills that develop during the early years are all essential capacities for individuals to make effective contributions in school, the workplace, and society as a whole.

Environmental conditions during the early years have a significant impact on the development of children's neural pathways. Offering optimal stimulation at the appropriate time is crucial for the establishment of connections between brain cells. Early stimulation through creative play, games, and age-appropriate activities can enhance children's working memory, concentration, and perseverance in goal achievement. This exposure will lay the foundation for children to become confident and proficient learners in later years.

Domains of development



There are five domains of development. As visible in the diagram above, they are not water-tight compartments but interrelated and interdependent. The child's development in one domain influences the development in other domains. To know more about the domains of development and how they contribute to the development of the curricular framework of the Foundational Stage, refer to Chapter 3 '*Curricular framework: From Aims to Learning Outcomes and thematic approach*'.

Developmental milestones

There are specific developmental milestones that are expected from children at different stages of their development, encompassing the different domains. Children are expected to reach these milestones within a certain timeframe. However, it is important for adults to recognize that, as mentioned in the opening paragraph of this section, each child is unique. Some children may achieve these milestones earlier than expected, while others may take more time to reach them. This individual variability may or may not have implications for their activities and learning processes.

Here are some examples of developmental milestones for the different domains:

Domains of Development	PS I	PS II	PS III
Physical Development	Attempts to follow basic safety rules to avoid dangers e.g., not touching harmful objects like fire, hot stove, electric plugs etc.	Recognizes common dangers/hazards and takes precautions as guided by adults.	Explains the dangers of a few common situations to other children with support e.g., what will happen if you touch the electric plug, what will happen if you touch a hot stove, what will happen if you don't follow playground rules, etc.
Cognitive Development	Identifies and names common objects, people, pictures, animals, birds, events, etc., with support.	Identifies and describes common objects, people, pictures, animals, birds, events etc., independently.	Notifies and describes general details/ characteristics of common objects, people, pictures, animals, birds in the immediate environment and in pictures/models e.g., the big door in the house.

Socio-emotional & Ethical Development	Shows kindness and care while touching or dealing with life forms.	Shares the reason behind their care towards animals or plants using short sentences e.g., dogs can cry if hurt, Flowers bloom when cared for etc., when asked.	Stops other children or familiar adults from harming any animal or plant.
Language & Literacy	Tells short stories and expresses needs/thoughts/feelings about daily life experiences, stories, rhymes and poems, etc., using wider vocabulary with support.	Expresses needs/thoughts/feelings, initiates conversations, and asks simple questions on a variety of topics using rich and vivid vocabulary with support.	Expresses needs/thoughts/feelings, initiates conversations, participates in longer narrations, and asks simple questions using rich and vivid vocabulary and encourages other children.
Aesthetic & Cultural	Creates forms and imprints by mixing materials with support e.g., mud and water, sand and water, flour and water, and paint and water.	Creates new colours by mixing two or more different coloured paints.	Makes deliberate attempts to create and talk about 3D art forms with clay or dough representing a personal meaning e.g., a doll, house, fruit, rocket, etc.

To know more about how the developmental milestones lead to the development of learning standards for the Foundational Stage, refer to Chapter 3 '*Curricular framework: From Aims to Learning Outcomes and thematic approach*'.

How do children learn?

There are various theories in the literature that explain the thinking and learning processes in children. In his book 'How Children Learn', John C. Holt interacted with young children to analyze how they learn. He observed their natural inclination to do things in their own way and on their own terms. Holt proposed the idea that children learn most effectively when they are motivated and interested in what they are learning. He emphasized that children should not be pressured to learn in ways that hold no interest for them. Instead, children learn through observation, listening, exploration, experimentation, and questioning.

Piaget's theory suggests that children's intelligence undergoes changes as they grow. Cognitive development in children is not solely about acquiring knowledge; it also involves building and developing a mental model of the world around them (Miller, 2011).

Erikson's theory addresses development across the lifespan, emphasizing the role of social relationships in shaping personality and growth at every stage of development. Vygotsky's theory has inspired a focus on interactive and collaborative approaches to teaching and learning, highlighting the importance of social interactions with peers and teachers in the learning process. Bandura's social learning theory offers a valuable framework for understanding how individuals learn through observation and modelling (Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018).

Though expressed in different words, most of these studies emphasize the idea that teaching should not be the sole focus in the early years. Instead, children should be encouraged to explore, think, and learn on their own. Children can learn more effectively and efficiently when driven by their own curiosity. They have unique ways of perceiving, learning, and approaching tasks that should be supported and nurtured.



Banri sits with her group of five friends in the creative art corner of her classroom, where her teacher has arranged crayons for them to draw and colour. They are all enthusiastically engaged in colouring. Banri, curious about her friends' work, decides to move around to see their drawings. When her teacher comes around, Banri eagerly shows her drawing, which depicts a pond filled with many fish and green-coloured water. The teacher asks Banri why she painted the water green. Banri explains that she saw a similar pond with fish in a comic book and wishes to have one like it in the courtyard of her home.

The teacher then asks Banri, "What colour is the water you drink?"

Banri replies, "I can see through the water, but I can't name its colour."

The teacher asks again, "Then why is the pond water green?"

Banri starts to ponder the question.

Banri's example illustrates how children learn through observation of their surroundings. Banri's perception of ponds being green with lots of fishes reflects her preconception based on her observations. However, she also recognises that the water she drinks is transparent. The teacher's question stimulates critical thinking in Banri. She thinks about the colour of the water she drinks and possible reasons for the green colour of water in the pond. She also attempts to connect to the colour of other water resources she has observed before. Children learn through experiences and exploration. They often require support to express themselves and to comprehend and interpret information accurately. Adults often exert pressure on children to conform to their perceived notions of what is appropriate. This often conditions the behaviour and thought process of children in a certain way, which can have adverse effect.

Summary

As discussed in this section, it is important for teachers and the child's environment to nurture the innate skills and capabilities of the child. Furthermore, the learning experiences a child goes through should promote holistic development while considering their socio-emotional well-being. Adult intervention in a child's learning process should not aim solely to correct or impose a specific perspective but rather enhance the child's learning in their own unique way. To ensure this, early childhood educators must have a deep understanding of the child, their context, environment, and the monitoring of specific milestones to track their progress.

DEPT

Chapter 3

Curricular framework: From Aims to Learning Outcomes & thematic approach

Domains of development

In the previous chapter, we saw how the domains of development and developmental milestones help us better understand the holistic development of the child in the early childhood stage. In this chapter, we will see how they contribute to the development of the curricular framework for the Foundational Stage. In other words, how they act as a useful guide for developing learning standards.

First, let us better understand the different domains of development in some more detail.

	Domain: Physical development A healthy body houses a healthy mind. Also, in this Stage, children learn most when they use all their senses and whole body to engage in playful activities. Hence, the focus here is on developing healthy eating and hygiene habits, becoming aware of safety, sharpening sensorial attention, and exercising and coordinating their different muscle groups.
Domain: Socio-emotional & ethical development Along with physical and cognitive development, it is important to pay attention to the emotional development of the child. It is now well established that emotional intelligence, the ability to understand and manage our emotions, is equally important as cognitive intelligence. Understanding and managing our own emotions along with understanding others emotional state helps us build empathy and compassion. A strong foundation for emotional and social intelligence is articulated through Learning Outcomes in this stage.	

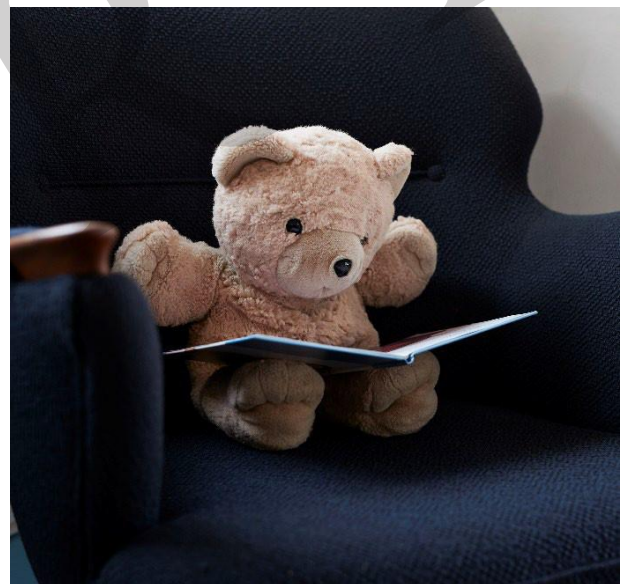


Domain: Cognitive development

Children in this age group are rapidly developing concepts about the world around them based on their experiences. For learning with understanding, concept development in formal education should give priority to experience and development of understanding. Mere recollection of facts should not be the intention. Here, cognitive development is seen through development of object knowledge, development of general abilities in logical thinking and problem solving, development of mathematical abilities and thinking, and concepts related to the natural and social environment around the child.

Domain: Language & literacy development

Language and literacy development are among the fundamental aims of education. All forms of understanding are mediated through our linguistic capacities. There is a very strong connection between our linguistic capacities and cognition. Whether as a form of communication, or as a medium of understanding, or as an aesthetic experience language is central to human experience. While language is innate to our human biology, literacy is a cultural achievement and hence needs more directed attention. Literacy is not a mere decoding of text but making meaning out of the text and the world that it represents.



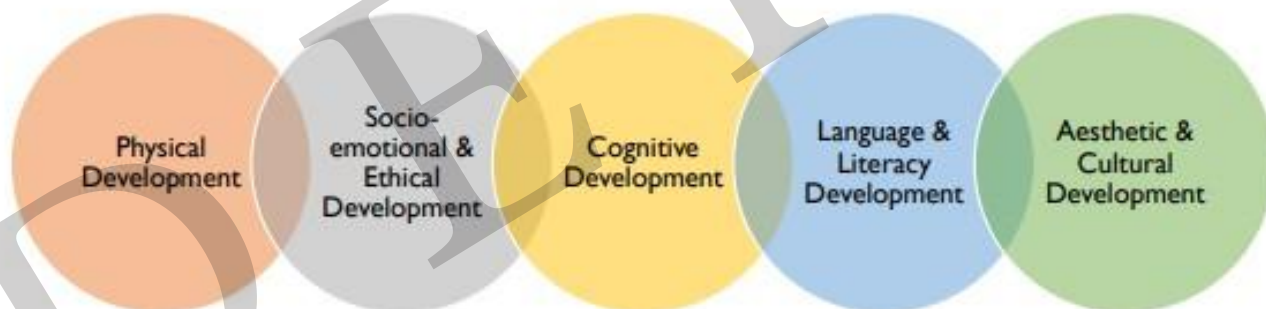
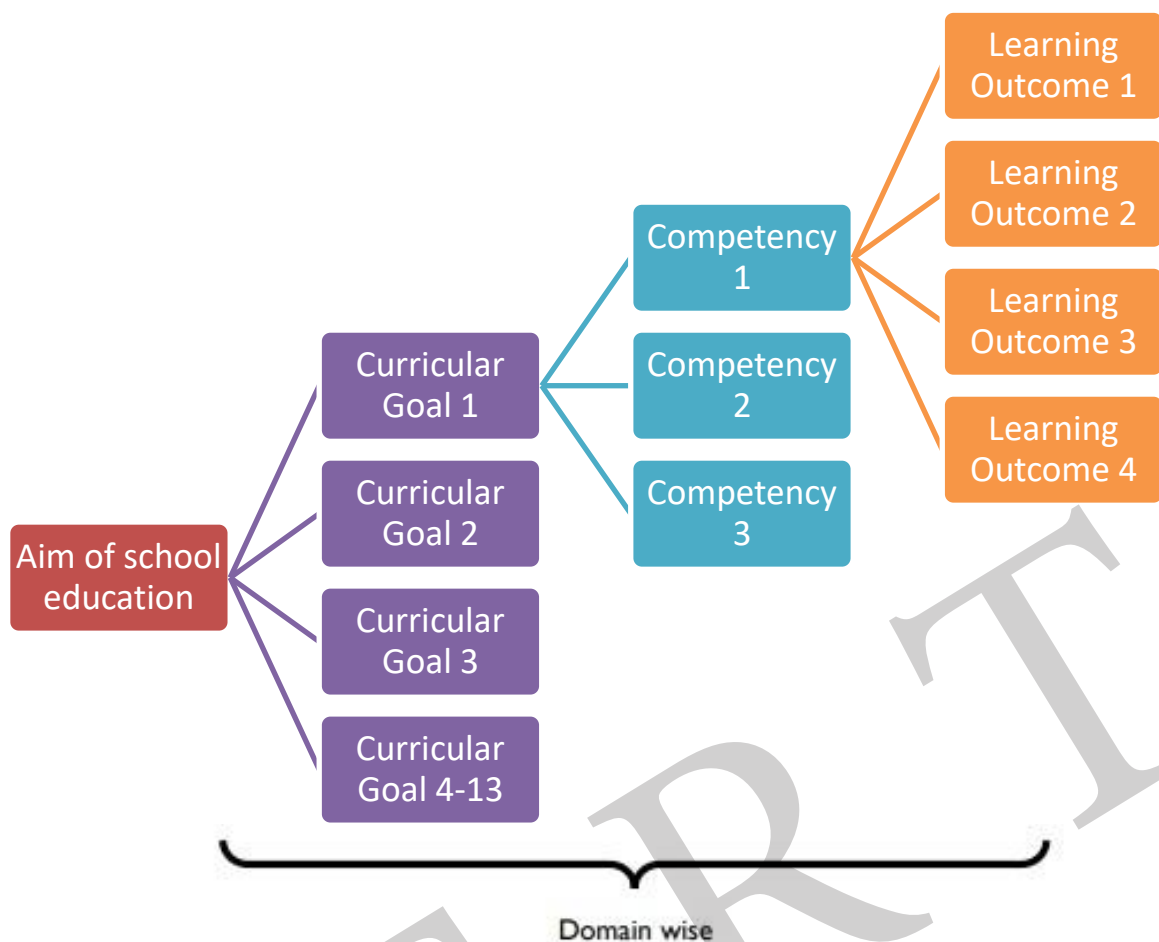
	<i>Domain: Aesthetic and cultural development</i> Children of this age group are not only enjoying expression of art and beauty they also develop their sensorial and fine motor abilities through engagement with arts. Artistic expression is also a medium of emotional expression and regulation. Talk and oral articulation of the work in art should be encouraged. Observing, reproducing, and extending patterns is a core ability in all forms of art. Thus, engagement with arts, through visual arts, music, movement, and drama is a holistic engagement of all aspects of development in the Foundational Stage. It has to be remembered that in this stage of development, more emphasis should be given to free and creative expressions of the child rather than building skills.
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Source: *National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage* (pp. 225-266)

Curricular Framework: From Aims to Learning Outcomes

The Meghalaya Curriculum follows the new curricular framework suggested in the NCF-FS 2022, where the learning standards for the Foundational Stage are articulated at different levels of specificity. From broadest to most specific, they are: Aims of School Education, Curricular Goals, Competencies, and Learning Outcomes. In the diagram given below, you can see how they are arranged.

The Foundational Stage has 13 domain-wise Curricular Goals. These are further broken down into Competencies, which are further broken down into Learning Outcomes. The Learning Outcomes are most granular but illustrative in nature. Teachers have the autonomy to modify the suggested Learning Outcomes or design more based on their classroom contexts.



Domain-wise Curricular Goals and Competencies

Domains of Development	Curricular Goals	Competencies
Physical Development	CG-1 Children develop habits that keep them healthy and safe	C-1.1 Shows a liking for nutritious food and does not waste food
		C-1.2 Practices basic self-care and hygiene
		C-1.3 Keeps school/classroom hygienic and organised
		C-1.4 Practices safe use of material and simple tools
		C-1.5 Shows awareness of safety in movements (walking, running, cycling) and acts appropriately
		C-1.6 Understands unsafe situations and asks for help
	CG-2 Children develop sharpness in sensorial perceptions	C-2.1 Differentiates between shapes, colours, and their shades
		C-2.2 Develops visual memory for symbols and

Socio-Emotional and Ethical Development		representations
		C-2.3 Differentiates sounds and sound patterns by their pitch, volume, and tempo
		C-2.4 Differentiates multiple smells and tastes
		C-2.5 Develops discrimination in the sense of touch
		C-2.6 Begins integrating sensorial perceptions to get a holistic awareness of their experiences
	CG-3 Children develop a fit and flexible body	C-3.1 Shows coordination between sensorial perceptions and body movements in various activities
		C-3.2 Shows balance, coordination, and flexibility in various physical activities
		C-3.3 Shows precision and control in working with their hands and fingers
		C-3.4 Shows strength and endurance in carrying, walking, and running
		CG-4 Children develop emotional intelligence, i.e., the ability to understand and manage their own emotions, and respond positively to social norms
		C-4.2 Recognises different emotions and makes deliberate efforts to regulate them appropriately
		C-4.3 Interacts comfortably with other children and adults
		C-4.4 Shows cooperative behaviour with other children
		C-4.5 Understands and responds positively to social norms in the classroom and school
		C-4.6 Shows kindness and helpfulness to others (including animals, plants) when they are in need
		C-4.7 Understands and responds positively to different thoughts, preferences, and emotional needs of other children
	CG-5 Children develop a positive attitude towards productive work and service or 'Seva'	C-5.1 Demonstrates willingness and participation in age-appropriate physical work towards helping others
	CG-6 Children develop a positive regard for the natural environment around them	C-6.1 Shows care for and joy in engaging with all life forms
Cognitive Development	CG-7 Children make sense of the world around through observation and logical thinking	C-7.1 Observes and understands different categories of objects and relationships between them
		C-7.2 Observes and understands cause and effect relationships in nature by forming simple hypothesis and uses observations to explain their hypothesis

		Uses appropriate tools and technology in daily life situations and for learning
	CG-8 Children develop mathematical understanding and abilities to recognize the world through quantities, shapes, and measures	C-8.1 Sorts objects into groups and sub-groups based on more than one property
		C-8.2 Identifies and extends simple patterns in their surroundings, shapes, and numbers
		C-8.3 Counts up to 99 both forwards and backwards and in groups of 10s and 20s
		C-8.4 Arranges numbers up to 99 in ascending and descending order
		C-8.5 Recognises and uses numerals to represent quantities up to 99 with the understanding of decimal place value system
		C-8.6 Performs addition and subtraction of 2-digit numbers fluently using flexible strategies of composition and decomposition
		C-8.7 Recognises multiplication as repeated addition and division as equal sharing
		C-8.8 Recognises basic geometric shapes and their observable properties
		C-8.9 Performs simple measurements of length, weight and volume of objects in their immediate environment
		C-8.10 Performs simple measurements of time in minutes, hours, day, weeks, and months
		C-8.11 Performs simple transactions using money up to INR 100
		C-8.12 Develops adequate and appropriate vocabulary for comprehending and expressing concepts and procedures related to quantities, shapes, space, and measurements
		C-8.13 Formulates and solves simple mathematical problems related to quantities, shapes, space, and measurements
Language and Literacy Development	CG-9 Children develop effective communication skills for day-to-day interactions in two languages	C-9.1 Listens to and appreciates simple songs, rhymes, and poems
		C-9.2 Creates simple songs and poems on their own
		C-9.3 Converses fluently and can hold a meaningful conversation
		C-9.4 Understands oral instructions for a complex task and gives clear oral instructions for the same to others
		C-9.5 Comprehends narrated/read-out stories and identifies characters, storyline and what the author wants to say
		C-9.6 Narrates short stories with clear plot and characters

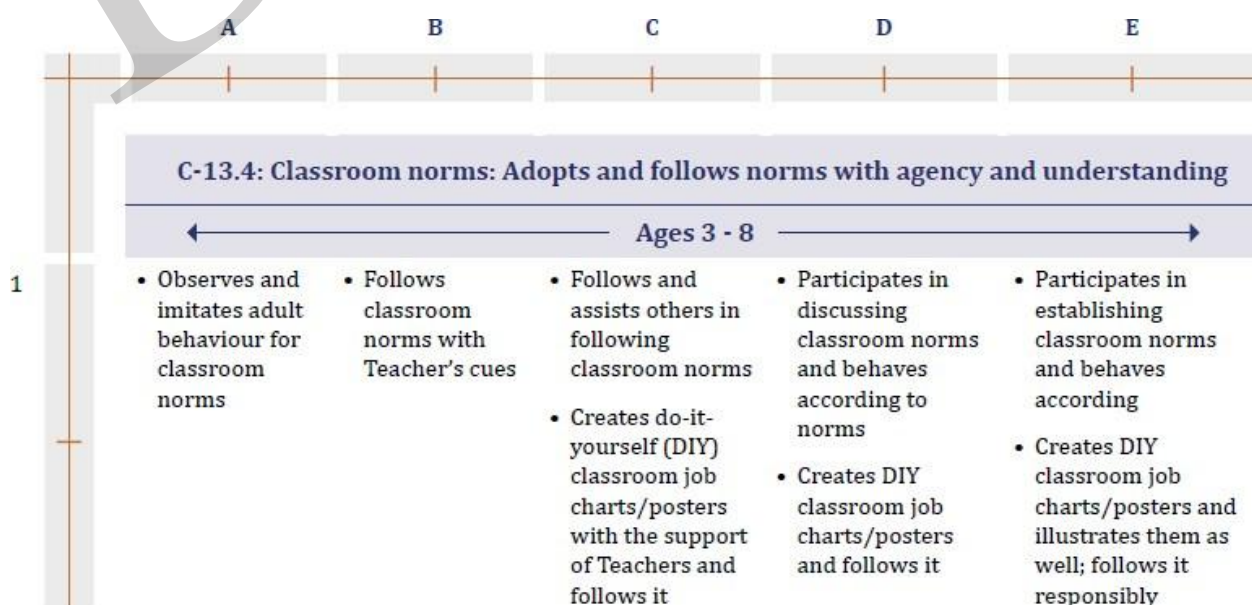
		C-9.7 Knows and uses enough words to carry out day-to-day interactions effectively and can guess meaning of new words by using existing vocabulary
	CG-10 Children develop fluency in reading and writing in Language 1 (L1)	C-10.1 Develops phonological awareness and blends phonemes/ syllables into words and segment words into phonemes/syllables
		C-10.2 Understands basic structure/format of a book, idea of words in print and direction in which they are printed, and recognises basic punctuation marks
		C-10.2 Recognises all the letters of the alphabet (forms of akshara) of the script and uses this knowledge to read and write words
		C-10.3 Reads stories and passages with accuracy and fluency with appropriate pauses and voice modulation
		C-10.4 Reads short stories and comprehends its meaning – by identifying characters, storyline and what the author wanted to say – on their own
		C-10.5 Reads short poems and begins to appreciate the poem for its choice of words and imagination
		C-10.6 Reads and comprehends meaning of short news items, instructions and recipes, and publicity material
		C-10.6 Writes a paragraph to express their understanding and experiences
		C-10.7 Shows interest in picking up and reading a variety of children's books
		C-10.8 Writes a paragraph to express their understanding and experiences
		C-10.9 Shows interest in picking up and reading a variety of children's books
	CG-11 Children begin to read and write in Language 2 (L2)	C-11.1 Develops phonological awareness and are able to blend Phonemes /syllables into words and segment words into phonemes/syllables
		C-11.2 Recognises most frequently occurring letters of the alphabet (forms of akshara) of the script and uses this knowledge to read and write simple words and sentences

Aesthetic and Cultural Development	CG-12 Children develop abilities and sensibilities in visual and performing arts and express their emotions through art in meaningful and joyful ways	C-12.1 Explores and plays with a variety of materials and tools to create two-dimensional and three-dimensional artworks in varying sizes
		C-12.2 Explores and plays with own voice, body, spaces, and a variety of objects to create music, role-play, dance and movement
		C-12.3 Innovates and works imaginatively to express a range of ideas and emotions through the arts
		C-12.4 Works collaboratively in the arts
		C-12.5 Communicates and appreciates a variety of responses while creating and experiencing different forms of art, local culture, and heritage
Positive Learning Habits	CG-13 Children develop habits of learning that allow them to engage actively in formal learning environments like a school classroom	C-13.1 Attention and intentional action: Acquires skills to plan, focus attention, and direct activities to achieve specific goals
		C-13.2 Memory and mental flexibility: Develops adequate working memory, mental flexibility (to sustain or shift attention appropriately), and self-control (to resist impulsive actions or responses) that would assist them in learning in structured environments
		C-13.3 Observation, wonder, curiosity, and exploration: Observes minute details of objects, wonders, and explores using various senses, tinkers with objects, asks questions
		C-13.4 Classroom norms: Adopts and follows norms with agency and understanding

Source: National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (pp. 59-63)

Learning Outcomes

Here is an example of Learning Outcomes for Curricular Goal 13, Competency 13.4:



Source: National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (p. 274)

Competencies are broken down into Learning Outcomes. They are the most specific level of learning standards and can be arranged in the form of 5 indicative stages of growth in the form of a rubric – A, B, C, D, E. These stages do **not** directly map to specific age groups of 3-4 years, 4-5 years, 5-6 years, 6-7 years, and 7-8 years. This is because children develop at their own pace; some might progress quickly whereas some may take more time. For example, if we look at the Learning Outcomes given above, some children in a class might need teacher's help to follow classroom norms (B) whereas some might be able to create and follow new classroom norms (E).

Teachers have the autonomy to modify the suggested Learning Outcomes or design more based on their classroom contexts. For an indicative list of Learning Outcomes for the different Competencies, refer to National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (Annexure I: Illustrative Learning Outcomes, pp. 225-274).

Curricular approach: Themes and learning experiences

The Meghalaya Curriculum adopts an eclectic approach, integrating suggested themes with diverse methods such as stories, projects, and other developmentally appropriate practices recommended by NCF-FS. This inclusive strategy ensures a comprehensive learning experience, fostering cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Themes serve as overarching topics guiding specific learning experiences for children. Unlike traditional subject-focused learning, themes facilitate in-depth exploration of a singular topic over an extended period. This approach enhances contextual understanding and relevance by grounding learning experiences in real-life situations, making concepts tangible and relatable for children.

Themes encompass diverse aspects of children's lives, encouraging exploration of personal interests, relationships, and interactions within their environment. Teachers play a crucial role as facilitators, mediating the learning process. The curriculum emphasizes the significance of the learning journey over the final outcomes, prioritizing the process of exploration, discovery, and understanding.

Additionally, the Curriculum recognizes the importance of contextual diversity, incorporating various life experiences of children into the planning of learning activities within these themes. This holistic approach ensures that knowledge is not isolated but seamlessly integrated into the fabric of children's daily lives, fostering meaningful connections and generalizations across different experiences.

The Curriculum grants creative freedom to both children and teachers, allowing for the emergence of child-led interests and teacher-initiated explorations. It emphasizes the development of new concepts, acquisition of skills, formation of attitudes, and emotional experiences within each sub-theme. Ultimately, this aims to provide children with a concrete foundation upon which they can build abstract ideas, promoting a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of the world around them.

**Theme 1: Me
& My Family**

**Theme 2: My
Neighbourhood**

**Theme 3: My
School**

**Theme 4:
Market**

**Theme 5:
Festivals**

**Theme 6: Hills
& Forests**

Chapter 4

What should be taught at the Foundational Stage?

Mr. Tham is a newly appointed teacher. On his way to school, he observes a group of children playing. They are huddled in a circle, engrossed in a game of five stones! In the center lie five flat, smooth stones. Each child takes turn in throwing a small cloth ball into the air, attempting to pick up one of the stones before catching the ball again. Their faces are a mix of concentration and determination, fingers moving swiftly and precisely. They chat and laugh. The children tease each other in a very good nature way. Sometimes the ball is fumbled, but when a child successfully completes a round, there are high-fives and cheers all around. Mr. Tham wonders – there is so much that children know and can do even before they come to school! So many experiences, games, and rich ways of using language! What do I need to teach them? What kind of resources should I use? Will parents agree with what I want to teach them? Oh! Everyone has so many expectations from young children!

Both parents and teachers have specific expectations from children. Parents anticipate the development of essential skills such as reading, writing, and arithmetic (the 3Rs), along with creative activities like singing, storytelling, and arts and crafts. They also emphasise on social skills, discipline, and the ability to manage tasks independently. Teachers, on the other hand, expect children to follow school rules, complete assigned tasks, cooperate with both teachers and peers, and maintain cleanliness and hygiene standards. These combined efforts from parents and teachers contribute to the well-rounded growth of children during their early years.

Contemporary expectations of parents from children in the early childhood stage can sometimes be misplaced. In the age of information, there is a tendency to over-emphasise academic achievement at an early age which may lead to undue pressure on children. Children in the initial phases of education frequently encounter an excess of information that exceeds their developmental readiness. Modern education tends to introduce intricate subjects and detailed concepts too early, confusing their emerging comprehension. This can hinder their natural learning process, causing frustration. Teachers and educators are crucial in adapting the curriculum to match children's cognitive and emotional abilities. By doing so, they create a supportive learning atmosphere, enabling children to understand and absorb knowledge at a pace that suits them. The question then arises: **How should content be selected for the Foundational Stage?** To understand this let us take the example below:

Ms. Lin enters the Preschool III classroom. Under the theme 'Me & My Family', children have already talked about the food they eat at home and how meals are prepared and served during dinner time. Yesterday, Ms. Lin narrated a story about a boy Phillip who makes fruit salad with his mother for a Christmas party. Today, Ms. Lin wants to talk more about fruit. She wants children to identify common fruit, talk about their colour, shape, taste, and texture, and realise the importance of washing fruit before consumption. Using a big picture from the previous day's story where Phillip and his mother are in the kitchen surrounded by lots of chopped fruit, Ms. Lin asks children to identify what they see. Children then talk about their favourite fruit and its taste. The discussion naturally leads to a guided conversation about the significance of washing fruit before consumption. In subsequent classes, Ms. Lin places assorted fruit on a table. Children sort the fruit into labelled baskets and count them. A circle game follows, where children play 'Who Am I?' to identify the fruit by asking a number of questions e.g., Is it red in colour? Is it sweet and sour? Ms. Lin enhances the preschoolers' engagement with art and aesthetic development by introducing a creative art project related to fruits. Inspired by the story of Phillip making fruit salad, she provides each child with a large piece of paper, colourful paints, and brushes. Encouraging them to use their imagination, she asks the children to paint their favorite fruits or create their own fruit salad masterpiece.

Ms. Lin's teaching methods in the Preschool III classroom are notable for their developmental appropriateness – the activities ensure the holistic development of children in all domains and are deeply rooted in the child's daily life experiences. The use of the theme '*Me & My Family*' provides a meaningful context for learning. The storytelling session enhances the language and literacy development of children by encouraging them to express their thoughts about their favorite fruits, integrating both cognitive and language domains. The exploration of the characteristics of fruit, including colours and shapes, caters to their cognitive development, enhancing their recognition and classification skills. The emphasis on hygiene practices like washing fruits instills essential life skills and socio-emotional development by promoting responsibility and self-care. Incorporating interactive games such as 'Who Am I?' further enhances cognitive skills, including problem-solving and logical thinking. The art project not only boost their creativity and aesthetic skills but also nurture their fine motor skills as children handle brushes and paints.

Involving parents and community members in teaching learning processes

The Foundational Stage is the first step towards formal education of a child. At this stage, it is crucial that the child feels safe and comfortable. One way of ensuring this smooth transition from home to school can be to involve parents and community members. Parents, community members, and schools need to work collaboratively to ensure that the child is able to adjust himself/herself. The role of parents and community members is to share information with the school regarding the child. They should actively participate in school events and contribute to the learning process. Similarly, the role of school and teacher is to invite, inform, update and involve parents and community members in these events and processes. Parents and community members can also help to highlight the local context of the child so that learning is contextualized. It should reflect the child's real life experience and understand their culture. All the entities need to come together and contribute towards the holistic development of the child.

While including community members and parents to take an active role in child's learning is important, we must be mindful of who we include. Children at this stage are very young. Therefore, ensuring their safety and wellbeing inside school premises is the teacher's responsibility. Even when we include an external person in the school from the community, the teacher must always be there and take charge of the learning process.

Some ways of including parents and community members are suggested below-

- Sharing updates in class WhatsApp group.
- Parents volunteer to support the teacher during field trips and nature walks.
- Teaching of local/indigenous skills in the classroom such as pottery making by inviting a local potter in the class.
- Volunteering and supporting teachers to organise school events.
- Giving permission to use community hall/fields etc. for school events.

The teacher should have the autonomy to be creative in including members from the community as a resource in teaching the young children. This will only be possible if the school becomes an integral part of the community and there should be a mutual trust between the two. Therefore, the school must create platforms and have mechanisms to build trust among parents and community members.

Criteria for content selection:

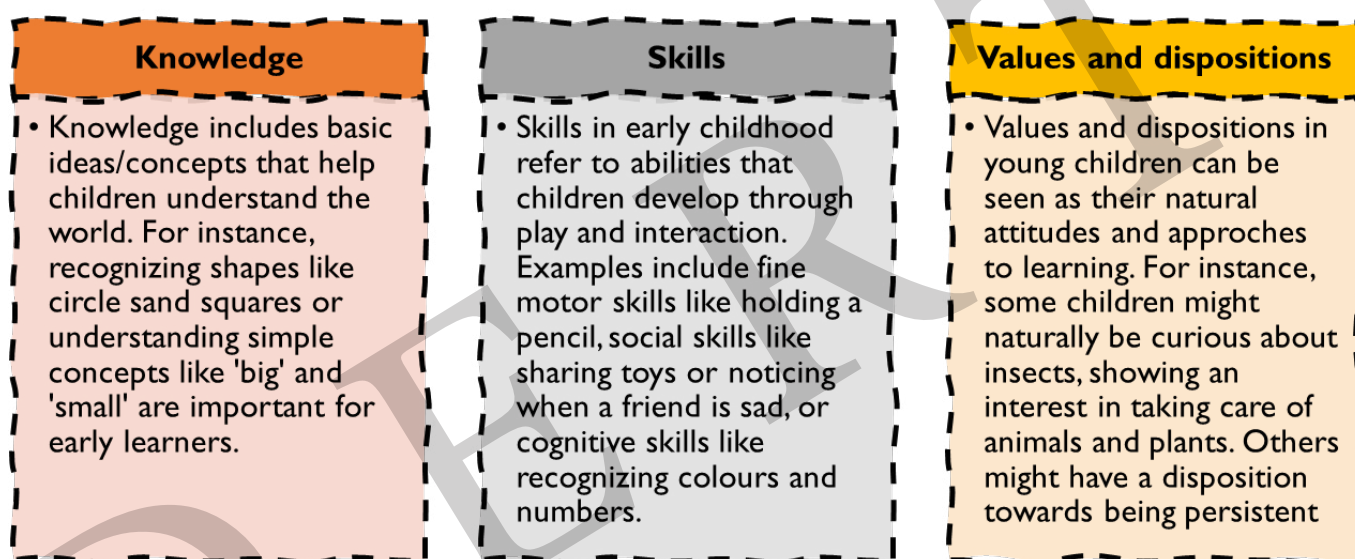
The syllabus, activities, TLMs, worksheets, story books, activity books, etc., in the Foundational Stage should be chosen and organized by keeping the following criteria in mind (NCF-FS 2022, p. 138):

1. Content chosen should be sensorially engaging (e.g., activate the child's senses, have aesthetic appeal) and/or be practically relevant in the context of the child's experiences.
2. Content should be derived from children's life experiences and reflect the cultural, geographical, and social context in which the child is developing and growing.

3. Content should move from familiar to unfamiliar, simple to complex, and from self to others.
4. Content should reflect topics and themes which will acquaint children with the natural and human environment in which they are growing and developing, the social and the physical world, people, places, living and non-living things.
5. The content should be diverse and inclusive to accommodate the varied interests of individual children.
6. Special care should be taken to avoid promotion of stereotypes e.g., owls and snakes as evil, or dark-skinned people as scary, or the mother always handle the kitchen.

Concepts, skills, dispositions, and emotional experiences

The NCF-FS 2022 and the NCF-SE 2023 highlight the importance of organising content in a way that not only develops children's knowledge and skills but also nurtures values and dispositions. Let us better understand what they mean.



In Ms. Lin's class described above, Ms. Lin works on children's knowledge, skills, values and dispositions simultaneously. Can you re-read the classroom description and figure out how?

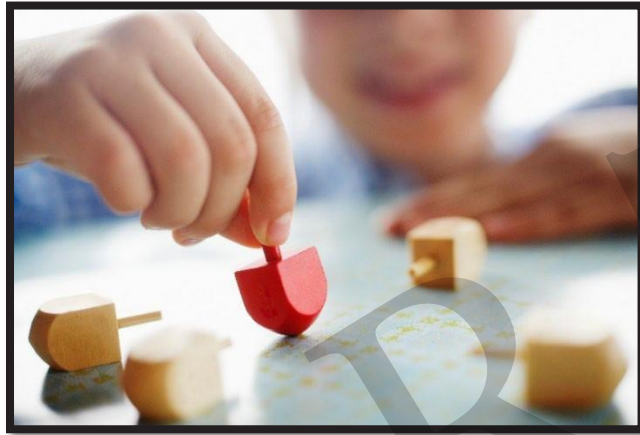
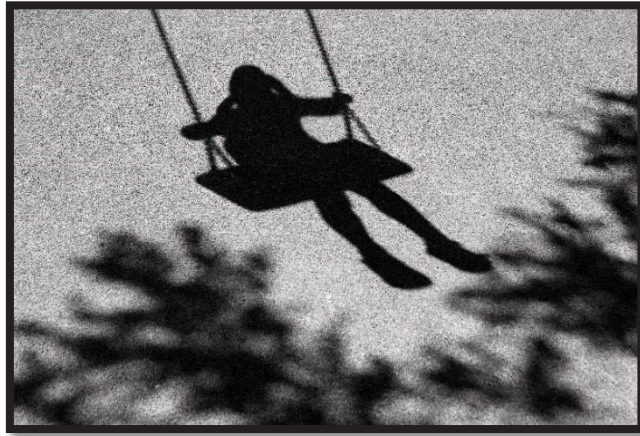
Section 4.1 Physical Development

Physical development is the ability to control body movement through gross and fine muscle coordination and hand-eye coordination. Gross muscles are the large muscle in the arms and legs, development of these muscles is important to everyday activities like walking, running, jumping, throwing, dancing, kicking, etc. Fine muscles are the small muscles in our hands, fingers and wrist. Development of fine muscles is important as it helps children perform important tasks like eating, grasping object, writing and dressing themselves. Hand and eye coordination is the ability to do work with the hands while being guided by the eyes. Eye-hand co-ordination is important as it allows children to use their eyes/vision and muscles to perform tasks such as writing, drawing catching a ball or lacing one's own shoes.

Aspects of physical development include:

- Development of co-ordination and control of large motor muscle.
- Development of strength and coordination of small motor muscles.
- Integration of movements of different body parts.
- Developing a sense of balance in movement.
- Display adequate nutrition and sound health status.
- Display personal hygiene skills.
- Recognise the importance of safety rules.

Motor development means development of control over bodily movements through coordinated activity of the nerve centres, the nerve and muscle. A child cannot learn any skill until she/he is matured enough and ready for it. For example, a 2-year-old child cannot be forcefully taught to write since she/he is not mature enough nor ready to do the task. Motor development follows a predictable pattern e.g., a child learns to crawl first before she/he learns to walk. Though there are individual differences in the rate of motor development, the sequence remains the same. Early childhood is very important for development of motor skills not only for future learning in school but also for later activities as an adult.



Gross motor coordination means to develop control over the movement of large muscle of the body such as thighs, legs, arms etc. development of motor coordination is important, as it will help children perform better in activities like sports, dancing, gymnastics, dramatics etc. activities for enhancing gross motor coordination may be organised by the teacher like walking, balancing, running, jumping, creeping, crawling, rolling, swinging, hopping, climbing, rhythmic movement, playing with a ball, throwing catching and kicking.

Fine motor coordination means developing control over the movement of finer muscles, mainly finger and wrist muscles and eye-hand coordination. Development of fine muscle coordination is important as it will help children perform better in activities like writing, creative art, drawing, self-grooming, self-dressing, clay-modelling, etc. Activities for enhancing fine motor coordination are threading of beads, tearing, cutting, pasting, drawing, colouring, painting, paper folding, clay work, pattern making, etc.

Activities for physical development: Children in preschool should be given adequate opportunities for engaging in interesting and age-appropriate outdoor play activities such as running, jumping, climbing, hopping which involved the use of large muscles. Besides outdoor activity, indoor activities should also be organised such as manipulative play, blocks, art activities etc. This will strengthen eye-hand co-ordination besides enhancing children fine muscle development and helps in nurturing their creativity and imagination. Play activities should be planned progressively i.e., from simple to complex and they should be localised and should cater to all children including children with disabilities.

For children with physical disabilities like cerebral palsy, vision impairment, hearing loss, etc., it is important to introduce inclusive games and exercises such as bike riding, wheelchair sports, and modified playground activities. This brings together all children inclusively. Involving children in taking care of each other helps them in developing their socio-emotional skills.

Section 4.2 Numeracy

Numeracy

Numeracy or number literacy refers to the foundational mathematical reasoning with numbers and applying mathematical concepts in daily life problem solving. The numeracy which is acquired at the early childhood stage is called early numeracy. It encompasses the ability to use mathematical understanding and skills to solve problems in daily life. To develop such competency, young learners should be able to reason and communicate quantitatively, to have spatial awareness, to observe and understand patterns in numbers and shapes, to make informed decision by making sense of data and to apply mathematical reasoning to solve problems.

Why early numeracy?

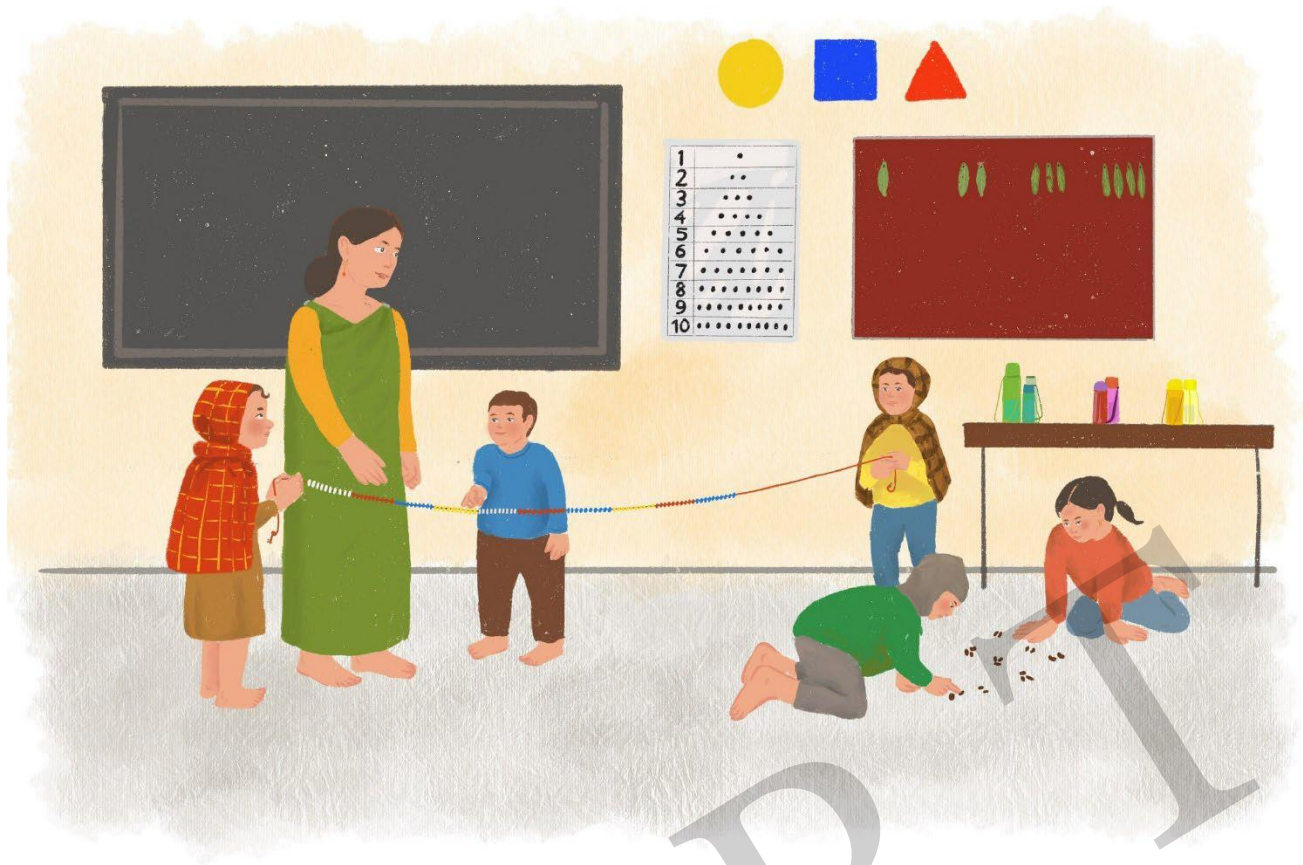
Children are born with skills of curiosity and exploration. A child is always inquisitive in one's environment. Mathematics helps children to observe, organise and explore and make sense of their environment. Mathematic education fosters process skills like logical thinking, reasoning, problem solving and connecting mathematical ideas as well as connecting across other curricular areas.

Curricular Goals and Competencies associated with numeracy

Curricular Goals	Competencies
CG-8 Children develop mathematical understanding and abilities to recognise the world through quantities, shapes, and measures	C-8.1 Sorts objects into groups and sub-groups based on more than one property
	C-8.2 Identifies and extends simple patterns in their surroundings, shapes, and numbers
	C-8.3 Counts up to 99 both forwards and backwards and in groups of 10s and 20s
	C-8.4 Arranges numbers up to 99 in ascending and descending order
	C-8.5 Recognises and uses numerals to represent quantities up to 99 with the understanding of decimal place value system
	C-8.6 Performs addition and subtraction of 2-digit numbers fluently using flexible strategies of composition and decomposition
	C-8.7 Recognises multiplication as repeated addition and division as equal sharing
	C-8.8 Recognises basic geometric shapes and their observable properties
	C-8.9 Performs simple measurements of length, weight and volume of objects in their immediate environment
	C-8.10 Performs simple measurements of time in minutes, hours, day, weeks, and months
	C-8.11 Performs simple transactions using money up to INR 100
	C-8.12 Develops adequate and appropriate vocabulary for comprehending and expressing concepts and procedures related to quantities, shapes, space, and measurements
	C-8.13 Formulates and solves simple mathematical problems related to quantities, shapes, space, and measurements

Components of numeracy in the Foundational Stage

1. **Pre number concepts:** Even before a child starts to count object or develops number sense, he/she observe things around and tries to match or classify or sequence them. Such skills are prerequisite which in turn develop into understanding numbers. These are called pre number concepts. Activities on classification help children to develop ideas about different criteria for classification. They also understand that there can be more than one way of classifying the same collection of objects. Experience of object-to- object matching is the pre-cursor to counting and it gives the basic idea that each object in a set corresponds with another object irrespective of the arrangement and this helps in comparison, ordering and later forms the basis of one-to-one correspondence with numbers that help in developing understanding of counting.
2. **Number and its relations** refer to understanding number concepts (Sound, Symbol, and Quantity) in various contexts, counting, representation, and its relation. Children demonstrate interest and awareness of numbers when they come across situations of counting to determine quantity. For example – finding how many breads they want, number of members in their family etc. They begin to associate number concepts by using vocabulary, identifying quantities, and writing numerals in meaningful ways.
3. **Basic mathematical operations** refer to understanding concepts of calculation and developing strategies to solve problems using them. From knowing about quantity, children begin to use language to compare numbers of objects with terms such as more, less, greater than, fewer, equal to. They acquaint situations where they combine, separate and name “how many” concrete objects.
4. **Shapes and spatial understanding** refer to developing an understanding of shapes and making and classifying shapes as well develop spatial sense understanding. Children get to see so many things around them. They begin to recognise, describe, compare, and name common shapes, parts and attributes. They progress in the ability to compose and decompose shapes. They reason and determine whether two shapes are the same size and shape. Children come to school with varied experiences of space. They try to draw and represent space while they play and communicate. They develop an understanding of the relation between two objects and also between any object and space. Children are able to locate the position of an object, giving directions to reach a place, building structures are some examples of spatial experiences that are commonly observed. Such spatial experiences provide a basis for mathematical development.
5. **Patterns** refer to the understanding of the repeated arrangement of numbers, shapes, and designs and making a generalization based on some rules and structure. Children become aware of patterns at an early stage of their life due to repetitive daily routines and periodic phenomenon happening all around them. While playing games, children follow certain sequence of rules and try to discover the rule. Discovering the rules for a pattern helps children to solve problems better.
6. **Measurement** refers to understanding units of measuring something and using it to quantify. At a very young age, children begin to apply ideas of measurement while comparing things, playing games like identifying who is taller, which is a longer piece/step and so on. They slowly progress in using non- standard and standard units to compare/ order and use measurement vocabulary. Measurement connects real world applications with abstract mathematical reasoning, geometry with arithmetic, the spatial world (in which we live) with the mathematical world.
7. **Mathematical communication** refers to a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through mathematical symbols, signs, diagrams, graphs. It encompasses both listening and reading (comprehension) as well as speaking and writing (expressions).



Approaches to teaching numeracy in the Foundational Stage

Mathematical concepts being abstract by nature thereby demands cognitive ability to tasks and skills. NCF- FS 2022 suggests the ELPS approach for numeracy. When children are engaged in experiential activities, they can make sense of mathematical concepts. The four-step learning process is:

Experience: The first step is engaging children with ‘real world’ situation. Here concrete materials are used to gain experience of the concept. For example: Use of counters (e.g. Abacus) to count, use of real objects to understand 3D shapes.

Language: The next step is describing the experience in spoken language. For example – Use of mathematical vocabulary ‘more’, ‘less’, ‘longer’ ‘circular table’ etc. while describing a situation.

Pictures: In the third step, the child should be able to represent the mathematical concept by using images and diagrams. For example – draw slices of breads to show number of slices eaten, draws a circle to represent a ball.

Symbols: At this step, children make use of abstract symbols (like +, -, $\frac{1}{2}$, etc.) and language to communicate mathematical concepts, such as number digits (1, 23, 205 etc.) and 3 D shape name (rectangle, circle, cone, cylinder etc.).

Key components	Suggested pedagogical practices
Number and Number Operations	• Use of concrete objects like sticks, pencils etc. • Counting activities that are related to quantity and number. • Draw attention to numbers and how they are used; such as: house addresses, prices of objects marked on packets, etc. • Use words related to estimation – more than, less than, about, nearly, approximately, and in between. • Activities on estimation of quantities. • Play simple board games, card games. • Use of situation-based problems in number operations. • Use of vocabulary like combine, together, take away, reduces, number of times, equal sharing.
Geometry (Shapes and Spatial understanding)	• Observe the objects in the environment and understand their geometrical attributes. • Use of vocabulary to describe the shapes of various familiar objects and how much space they occupy. • Identify various elements of an object such as edges, corners and faces while exploring and playing with them. • Explore and communicate the association between an object (3D) and its shape (2D). • Draw simple shapes on paper by tracing the outlines and explore more on the outlines of the objects on paper. • Drawing in the air while talking about directions and spatial relationships.
Measurement	• Use of language for comparison. • Children figure out unit for measurement. • Use real life activities for measurement. • Using a watch/clock/calendar about measurement of situation of time.
Patterns	• Observing and extending patterns in shapes and numbers. • Describing patterns. • Telling the rule of the pattern. • Creating patterns.
Mathematical Communication	• Use simple, friendly, and clear language that relates to home language. • Use the black board while giving oral and written instructions and ask questions about shapes through discussions. • While introducing mathematical ideas, symbols and signs, careful connection is required to develop the child's own language. • Make conscious effort to analyse the language of the child when communicating with them. • Appropriate opportunities should be given to all children to communicate their ideas.

Activities like stories, puzzles, poems/rhymes, field /local visits, art and craft, and games are some of the suggestive pedagogies that could be used at this stage.

Stories	Example: ‘<i>The Arab and his camel</i>’ story (NCERT class I Math textbook) could be used as a spatial understanding learning experience: https://ncert.nic.in/textbook/pdf/aemh101.pdf 
Puzzles	Example: Guessing the number by looking pattern in numbers
Poems/rhymes	Example: ‘<i>Five little monkeys jumping on the bed</i>’ could be used to teach concept of subtraction: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0NHrFNZWWh0 
Field/local visit	Example: Walk in the school campus could be linked to spatial understanding
Art and craft	Example: Vegetable printing could be linked to shapes and patterns
Games	Example: ‘ <i>Fire in the mountain</i> ’ could be used as grouping and subtraction learning experiences

Four Blocks Model for numeracy

NCF-FS 2022 suggests a Four Blocks Model for numeracy instruction. Here is an exemplar one-day plan.

Blocks	Objectives	Suggested strategies and approaches	Suggested time
Blocks 1 and 2	Math oral talk (Warm up activity to encourage oral Math)	Circle game: A Teacher draws a big circle. The children are made to join hands and stand around the circle. When the teacher says ‘in’, the children jump into the circle and when the teacher says ‘out’, the children jump out of the circle. This activity can be repeated many times.	10 mins
	Skill teaching (combining all strands) (Helping children to achieve mathematical skills through structured instructions)	Story worksheet (<i>Clever Pig</i>): https://storyweaver.org.in/en/stories/19085-clever-pig?mode=read  Teacher begins picture reading.	20-30 mins

		Teacher: Let's listen to the story of a cute pig. Have you seen pigs? What is the pig in the picture doing? Is he sleeping? Where does the pig in the picture sleep? Children: Inside a big vessel T: What else do you see in the picture? C: Leaves. T: Where are the leaves? Are they inside the vessel? C: No. T: Who is inside the vessel? C: Pig. T: What is seen outside the vessel? C: Leaves. T: Can you count the number of leaves outside the vessel? <i>Teacher continues the story and pauses at the point of the story where the pig was asked to find the hidden carrot.</i> T: Where does the pig look for the carrot? Did he look above the vessel? Did he look under the vessel? Did he find the carrot inside the barn? Did he find carrot under the roof? Where did he find the carrot finally? C: Above the roof. T: Where would you hide the carrot if you were in the story? <i>Teacher continues the story. She pauses at the last picture.</i> T: How many pigs are there in the picture? Where did they sleep inside or outside the barn? How many pigs are sleeping outside the barn? Who is there above the mountains?	
Blocks 3 and 4	Skill practices (Helping children master skills through practice)	Teacher asks the children to do a role play portraying the story of the clever pig. One child will hide the carrot (paper/ toy carrot), others find the carrot and describes where they found the carrot (using vocabularies outside, inside, under and above). Different children take turns to do the role of a clever pig and the role of a child who hides the carrot.	15 mins
	Math game for reinforcing learning (Reinforce taught skills through games)	Children play 'treasure hunt' where hints are given through picture cards. Picture cards will contain pictures showing locations of next hint as combination of picture and positional words.	20 mins

Similar to language, content in numeracy can reflect engagement with the local environment. Mathematical activities, whether understanding shapes or counting, can be integrated with engagement with the natural and human environments.

The content in textbooks and workbooks should be complemented with appropriate manipulatives in the classroom. Counting, shapes, seriation – they all need to be engaged with both in the concrete form of manipulatives and through pen and paper.

Worksheets: The primary purpose of worksheets is to provide children with adequate practice of mathematical skills and strengthen their learning. This practice should be in a meaningful context, and it must focus on specific mathematical tasks. The worksheet should have adequate space with clear instructions.

Use of manipulatives in teaching numeracy

Manipulatives are concrete objects that are used as teaching tools to engage students in hands-on learning. They can be used to introduce, practice, or remediate a concept. Use manipulatives/concrete objects in teaching – learning process gets children learn experientially. Children who progress through levels – concrete, pictorial and abstract are active learners. Manipulating objects gets students to build understanding and internalize Math concepts, processes and procedures.

The following are a few manipulatives that might be used at the Foundational Stage.

Number and number operations

Counters can be used to teach one-to-one correspondence, ordinal numbers, and basic addition and subtraction. 	Double-sided counters can be used to model one-to-one correspondence, addition and subtraction, or skip-count. 	<i>Ganit-mala</i> can be used to model one-to-one correspondence, addition and subtraction, or skip-count. 
Place-value mats can be used to show each digit's place value when using base-10 blocks. Flats-longs-units can be used to model the variety of ways a number can be represented, and to model regrouping when adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing.	Money, in coins or bills, can be used to count, skip-count, or model regrouping when adding or subtracting.	Fraction circle/strips, fraction rod/cubes can be used to show equivalent fractions, to add/subtract fractions.



Geometry

Rangometry can be used in making patterns, identifying 2 D shapes, developing an intuitive understanding of the properties of shapes, and boosts creativity.

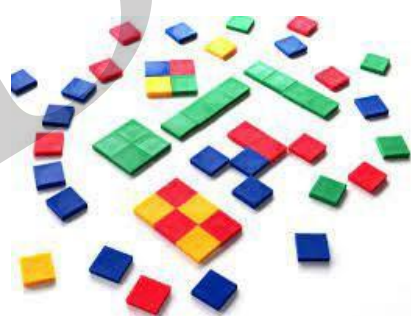


Geometric solid shape models can be used to teach solid shapes, their physical properties, and spatial reasoning.



Measurement

Counters/tiles can be used to find the perimeter or the area of an object.



Non-standard and standard measuring tools can be used to measure length, weight and volume.

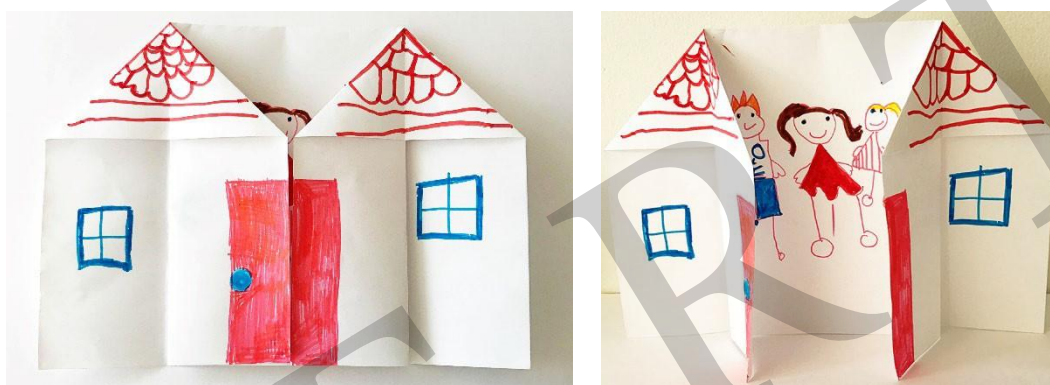


Section 4.3 Scientific temper

It refers to an attitude of logical, rational and scientific thinking. A child is considered to have a scientific temper if s/he is capable of critically analyse a scenario prior to decision-making in their everyday life which includes repeatedly observing and verifying a fact before drawing an inference. The term 'scientific temper' was coined by India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru in his book 'The Discovery of India', where he believed that scientific temper would take a crucial role in the nation's socio-economic development.

Relevance of scientific temper in the early years

Children right from the very beginning should be educated to critically look at contexts at his/her environment, home, school, community, etc.



During free play time, Junebirth folded a piece of paper, making paper dolls of all his family members. He tried to make the paper dolls stand up on the table, but the paper dolls kept falling down. Junebirth's friend Sandra was observing all this. She brought a pencil to support the paper, but the pencil kept slipping and falling, making the paper fall too. Kyrshan joined the group. He folded one side of the paper to make it stand. Junebirth folded the other side too, and he finally got a paper house that could stand on its own!

The above example demonstrates the impact of promoting critical thinking and problem solving in early years. Junebirth initially did not realize that something could be done to the paper to make it stand up. Sandra's solution worked to an extent, but the pencil was simply too slippery to make the paper stand still on the table. Kyrshan's idea finally inspired Junebirth to finally fold the other side and make a paper house that could stand firmly on the table. All children worked together and solved a problem by thinking critically! They used tools in their environment to experiment with what works, and found the best solution.

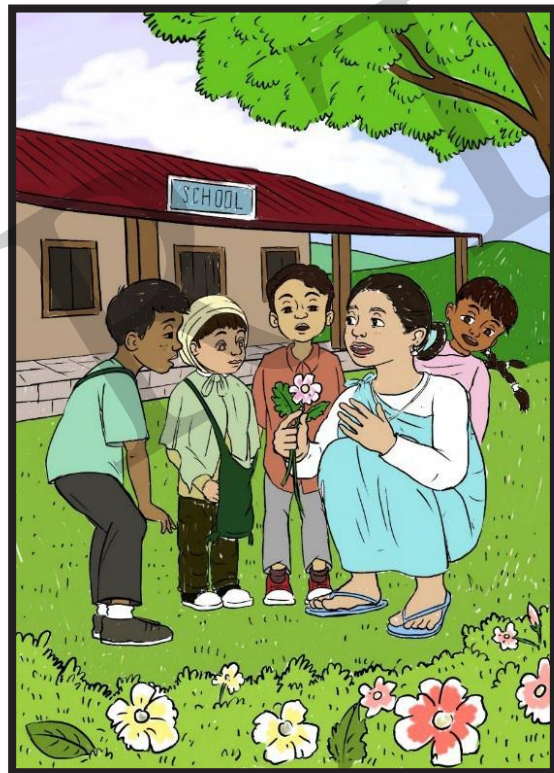
Mini draws a picture of the Sun rising between mountains. Teacher appreciates the drawing and ask the following questions:

- *Have you seen the sun rise before?*
- *Why have you drawn the sun rising from the mountains?*
- *Where does the sun come from?*
- *Why is the sun yellow in colour?*

In the above example, if the teacher stops by just appreciating Mini's work, it will gradually suppress her inquisitiveness, curiosity and investigatory skills. Young children are naturally inquisitive, full of questions about the world around them and that drives them to investigate how things work. Therefore, we should take advantage of this innate curiosity by channelling their enthusiasm for further explorations.

When it comes to promotion of scientific temper in early years in our childcare setting, there are plenty of resources available to get started as well as ideas for activities. The key aspects to be considered during learning process in early years is:

- The process is more important than the results.
- Be open to child-led discovery. For instance, the child in the illustration below is exploring the outcomes of mixing various colours.



- Offer active, fun, and hands-on experiences. Encourage children to explore, observe, question, test, analyse, apply, discuss, argue, and communicate.
- Create a safe learning environment in the classroom where children can question, debate, and discussion. Appreciation is essential to motivate children.

Components that promote scientific temper	Sample Learning Outcomes	Sample pedagogical processes
Acquire awareness about immediate/wider surroundings through live experiences on various themes related to daily life, e.g., family, plants, animals, food, water, travel, and shelter etc.	• Recognises hierarchical relationships within categories (e.g., animals and their younger ones) • Makes comparisons within and between categories • Makes connections between objects and their uses (e.g., spoon is for eating, bucket is for bath)	Role play, where children enact a day in life of an animal that they are familiar with.
Nurture natural curiosity and creativity for the immediate surroundings	• Identifies the missing part of a familiar picture of a familiar object • Identifies 3-5 missing parts of a picture of a familiar object • Identifies 4-6 missing parts of a picture of a familiar object	Children make clay models of a pond, a river, a waterfall, etc.
Develop various processes/skills, e.g., observation, discussion, explanation, experimentation, logical reasoning, through interaction with immediate surroundings.	• Uses ideas based on observations (e.g., imitates adults blowing on hot food before eating) • Applies known information in a new context (e.g., builds a castle out of blocks as seen in a story book) • Observes and forms generalisations (e.g., notice things that roll – tires, bangles, and so on. They are “round” in shape) • Forms and tests simple hypothesis (e.g., plates float and pins sink, drop a piece of paper and a stone together and see which will reach the ground first) • Applies their understanding to solve simple problems (e.g., while making a sand house, use a stick to support the structure, or add water to set it)	Children use objects like (sponges, stone, feather etc) to see which of them floats or sinks in water.

Section 4.4 Socio-emotional and ethical learning

Socio-emotional and ethical learning (SEEL) is a rapidly expanding domain. It is stressed a lot around the world due to the urgent need of developing informed, compassionate, empathetic, and responsible citizens. The approach to nurturing a child to become informed, compassionate, empathetic, and responsible can be viewed within and beyond school space. Schools play a major role in nurturing these skills within an individual. But what are these skills? What do we understand by SEEL?

‘Social, emotional, and ethical skills’ refer to the abilities to regulate one’s thoughts, emotions, behaviour, and take responsible decisions. These skills differ from the core academic abilities such as literacy or numeracy because they are mainly concerned with how people manage their emotions, perceive themselves, and engage with others, rather than indicating their raw ability to process information. But these skills are equally dependent on situational factors and are responsive to change and development through formal and informal learning experiences. Importantly, social, emotional, and ethical skills influence a wide range of personal and societal outcomes throughout one’s life.

Why is SEEL important?

With Covid-19, children and adults across the world have displayed increasing levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. As per an estimate shared by United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), one in every four children in India is suffering from some form of depression. Our country also has the undesired distinction of having the highest rate of suicide among teens, with many children showing a bent towards violent behaviour, substance abuse, and similar negative emotions. With the advent of 21st century and the extreme polarisation in views leading to violence, aggression, discrimination, and intolerance across the world, the education system has also realised that accomplishment of learning outcomes is not enough if the feelings, wants and needs of the children are not considered. To make children socially and emotionally literate is a critical human competence which makes a child happy and content.

In India – as per the National Mental Health Survey 2015-16, nearly 15% of Indian adults need active intervention for one or more mental health issues. In addition, children with poor social skills are at a risk for bullying, teasing, and social isolation. As children experience social isolation, school becomes a place that they try to avoid. There is a direct relationship between being bullied and higher absenteeism (DeRosier, et al., 1994). Children become victims of bullying and prefer to keep it a secret which can lead to hazardous consequences in later lives. Children can grow up to have low self-esteem and confidence. Since children spend a major amount of their formative years in schools, it is imperative to create a nurturing environment to make them feel safe and secure. It is common to see that with higher social isolation, bullying, and teasing cases, the likelihood of serious negative outcomes and other mental health issues in children also significantly increases. This is again a country, where talking about mental health is a taboo or is seen as problematic. How do we then create a framework for not only imbibing skills that will help children become ready for their future, but also help them build a strong identity?

The NEP 2020 has made SEEL a mainstream concept. However, SEEL still does not find the space it deserves, even though data suggests that its benefits go way beyond academic performance. Besides the knowledge of different disciplines, several other skills like the ability to identify and manage emotions, develop and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions are also equally central for the overall development of an individual. Our Aims of school curriculum as stated in NCF-

SE 2023 clearly indicate the significance of rational thought and autonomy, health and wellbeing, democratic participation, economic participation, and cultural and social participation which can be achieved if we nurture the skills under socio-emotional and ethical development.

However, the challenge of integrating these into school curriculum is realised by everyone. Nurturing emotional resilience is more challenging and complex than teaching addition or multiplication. Although these skills have been valued for long, they have become significantly prominent today. The monumental shift from the industrial age to the information and knowledge age of today has been life altering. It is inevitable that more such transformations are yet to come, and we need to nurture our children with more such skills that will help them deal with the complex demands and challenges of the ever-changing society.

Curricular Goals and Competencies associated with SEEL

Curricular Goals	Competencies	Sample observable outcomes
CG-4 Children develop emotional intelligence, i.e., the ability to understand and manage their own emotions, and respond positively to social norms	C-4.1 Starts recognizing 'self' as an individual belonging to a family and community C-4.2 Recognizes different emotions and makes deliberate efforts to regulate them appropriately C-4.3 Interacts comfortably with other children and adults C-4.4 Shows cooperative behaviour with other children C-4.5 Understands and responds positively to social norms in the classroom and school C-4.6 Shows kindness and helpfulness to others (including animals, plants) when they are in need C-4.7 Understands and responds positively to different thoughts, preferences, and emotional needs of other children	• Shares personal information such as home address, family members, their occupations etc., Shares what they dream of becoming as when they grow up. • Labels their emotions and describes the causes in words. • Explains why they are feeling upset/happy with familiar adults. • Offers help to adults or peers when in need and shows care towards nature (plants/animals).
CG-5 Children develop a positive attitude towards productive work and service or 'Seva'	C-5.1 Demonstrates willingness and participation in age- appropriate physical work towards helping others	Assists adults to clean and organize the surroundings such as rolling the carpet after story-telling session, keeping toy materials back in shelves etc.
CG-6 Children develop a positive regard for the natural environment around them	C-6.1 Shows care for and joy in engaging with all life forms	Shares their interest in taking care of plants or animals

Social development

During a child's early years, they discover a lot about themselves by interacting with people around them. Social development is the process of gradually obtaining language, attitude, relationship, and behavioural skills that allow children in early years to interact with their peers and other people they meet. It is the foundation for interacting with people in the world around us. The social development of children in early years has a deep impact on their social and emotional interactions as they get older. Learning to socially engage with others while developing their own identity and individuality in the community is not always an easy task. The balance of being honest to self while productively learning to communicate and act around other people is a process that requires a lot of practice. Children in the early childhood period are learning these skills while also still learning how the world around them works.

- **Self-awareness:** It is a skill that requires the child to accurately recognise one's own emotions and their influence on behaviour. The skill also focuses on the child's ability to respond appropriately to different social situations. Self-awareness helps a child to tune into their feelings as well as to the behaviours and feelings of others. The more one knows about self, the better they are at adapting to any change in routine. For example, a child may say, "I like painting", and will try to spend more time in the creative corner. When the child has a better understanding of themselves, they are empowered to make changes and build on their areas of strength, as well as identify areas where they would like to make improvements. Self-awareness is often the first step to setting goals. An open and supportive environment where adults actively listen to and appreciate efforts of children promotes creativity, exploration, and risk-taking in children.

Children with good self-awareness skills will:

- Recognize the needs of other children and adults around them such as bringing the cup if one extends their hand, holding hands while crossing the road, etc.
- Understand the influence of their behaviour on others. For example, someone might be sad if you hurt them or shout at them; if a peer is upset, a hug can make them feel better, etc.
- Exhibit the ability to understand and articulate their feelings. For example, a child may say, "I am sad because I wanted to play with the toy, but my friend took it away", "I am happy because I finished making the sandcastle".
- Understand their own strengths and weaknesses. For example, "I have a loud voice, I can call them"; "I don't like horror stories, I get scared easily".

- **Relationship skills:** These skills require the children to understand the perspectives of others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts, and appreciate these perspectives. Outside of school, social situations can include being around family members at home, friends at the park, or community members at the local library or grocery store. Building and maintaining healthy relationship is an important skill for children to nurture collaboration, resolve conflicts, and have positive well-being.

Children with good relationship skills will:

- Display empathy and compassion towards peers and adults when appropriate. For example, children may apply ointment to peers when hurt, children may listen attentively to stories of peers, etc.
- Identify social cues (physical or verbal) to determine how others may feel. For example, a child may go and ask, "Are you upset?" if a peer doesn't play or looks sad; read facial expressions of anger, happiness, and sadness, and reacts accordingly.
- Practice collaborative problem-solving and teamwork with peers.
- Resolve conflicts constructively. For example, a child may give away their toy and decide to play with it later, just to avoid any conflict.

Emotional development

Emotional development begins at birth and continues throughout life. Emotional literacy is the ability of the child to identify their own emotions as well as the emotions of others. Children should be able to express their emotions in a healthy way so that their actions and words do not have a negative impact on others and themselves.

Teachers should be aware that emotions play a vital role in the teaching-learning process. Some emotions might be pleasing, and some might not be very pleasing but as human beings we always go through a varied array of emotions throughout our lives. Therefore, knowledge on dealing with emotions on the part of both the teacher and child will lay a good foundation for development of required skills to be healthy and productive individuals in society.

- **Empathy:** Being empathetic requires the child to be aware of other's feelings and imagine what it would feel like to be in their situation. One might wonder how a child in their early years is able to grasp such complex ideas. However, empathy may be observed in children from a very young age. Children can demonstrate empathy in different ways. For some kids, it will look like kindness and compassion towards others. For others, it will be reflected in a heightened form of personal stress over a situation. Being empathetic also helps in building and maintaining healthy relationships because to be able to show care and compassion to others is crucial in developing relationships.

Empathetic children will:

- Show awareness of the connection between needs and emotions. For example, most children by age 3 can see that if a child doesn't get a toy, that child may show signs of anger, sadness, or happiness (if the child gets a pleasant surprise).
- Associate their own emotions with the feelings of others. For example, when a child has stomach-ache, some 4-year-olds may come over to comfort her.
- Imagine what another person might need at a particular moment. By age 5, children begin to show appropriate and comforting responses to people in need.
- Share their own feelings in depth. By age 5, children begin to talk about how they are feeling about a person, situation, or an incident.

- **Self-regulation:** If the child can correctly identify their feelings and how they drive their behaviour, then they should be able to act on those feelings. Self-management allows children to develop the ability to control their behaviour and mood, which can be very empowering. Emotional self-regulation is a skill that can be developed throughout childhood and adolescence till adulthood. It is often observed that children also get short-tempered, have outbursts and mood swings, or experience negative emotions. In early years, it is necessary to model ways to regulate emotions.

Self-regulated children will:

- Show flexibility in changing tasks. For example, a child playing outdoors might easily get into appropriate transitions to indoor play when asked.
- Recognize that other children may have different emotional reactions to same situations. For example, some children may show excitement for a story-telling session while some might not have observable responses to the same.
- Begin to disguise emotions when upset or disappointed with peers or adults. For example, a child may control tears when upset in certain situations/places.

Ethical development

It is a process through which children learn to differentiate right from wrong based on society's social and cultural laws and norms. Parents and teachers play an important role in developing ethical perspectives in children at a very young age. This can help in raising responsible citizens. According to Piaget, children between the ages of 4 and 7 see the world through a Heteronomous Morality (Piaget, 1932). In other words, children think that authoritative figures such as parents and teachers have rules that young people must follow absolutely. For example, children believe that the rule of not touching the crockery cupboard is fixed and absolute. At this stage, rules are thought of as real, unchangeable guidelines rather than evolving, negotiable, or situational. It is necessary to provide age-appropriate stimulus to nurture ethical skills in children.

- **Critical thinking:** Critical thinking includes multiple skills such as questioning, predicting, investigating, hypothesising, analysing, reflecting, revising, comparing, evaluating, and forming opinions. Children are innately curious beings, and they begin asking questions, performing experiments based on observations, and investigate anything and everything around them. Curiosity is a precursor to critical thinking and as educators, we can leverage that ability.

During circle time, Mrs. Marak announces to her class, "When you get to the water tub, we're going to do a neat science experiment!" When children reach the table, Mrs. Marak greets them and asks, "What do you think will happen if I put three plastic bears on top of the boat? Will the boat sink or float?" As each child gives a respond, Mrs. Marak smiles and asks further, "Why do you think the boat will sink/float?" After children make their predictions, Mrs. Marak places the three plastic bears on the boat to test whether it would sink or float.

Through her thoughtful selection of an activity and careful questioning, Mrs. Marak encourages the children in her classroom to engage in critical thinking.

Children are critical thinkers when they:

- Recognise that a problem exists and find ways to solve it. For example, if a toy is kept at an unreachable height, the child may pull a stool to climb on to get the toy.
- Ask a lot of questions and reflect on it. For example, why is there a recess? Why do we have to brush after meals?
- Evaluate ideas and form opinions. For example, children form an opinion on which sport must be the hardest to play based on certain observations and analysis.
- Predict what may happen in certain situations. For example, a child looks at the picture of a forest on the cover page and explains why she/he thinks that the book is about a tiger.

- **Responsible decision-making:** When children are able to make caring and constructive choices about personal behaviour and social interactions across diverse situations, they can be called good decision makers. Decision-making is a crucial life skill to be able to adapt to the fast-changing and developing world. Young children, just like adults, frequently confront situations in their lives where they must make decisions – from choosing which toy to play with to selecting which dress to wear. Teachers need to give children the opportunity to practise decision-making as early as possible. It is crucial to model the decision-making process for children.

Mr. Singh talks to children about what they would do if they were invited to a friend's birthday party, which is on the same day as a picnic with other friends. Mr. Singh asks, "Would you go to your friend's birthday party, or would you go for the picnic with your other friends?" Mr. Singh asks children to share their reasons for going or not going to the birthday party and discusses how their friend might feel if they skipped the party to go for a picnic with other friends. Mr. Singh tries to explain how their decision may impact others too.

Asking children to share their opinions and reasons is equally important to convey to children that their thoughts are important and help in making a decision. When modelling decision-making, an educator may focus on the following questions:

- What decision do I need to make?
- What are my options, including less-preferable ones?
- What are the pros and cons of each choice?
- Are there any rules (school policy, curfew, etc.) I need to consider when making my decision?
- How will this decision impact others?
- What is my gut telling me to do?
- How does that decision make me feel?

Children are responsible decision-makers when they:

- Ask several questions and begin to weigh the pros and cons of all alternatives. For example, "I like to play in the sand but there are many children inside the sandpit. I also like to play on the swing, but I need someone to push me".
- Express their preferences and choices clearly with reasons. For example, "My favourite fruit is pineapple because it tastes sweet. I do not like watermelon because it has many seeds."
- Understand the consequences of their actions. For example, "I might hurt someone if I push them."
- Bounce back from mistakes and exhibit resilience. For example, using different strategies to solve a problem and trying multiple times.

Pedagogical approaches for developing SEEL

Create an interactive and engaging school environment

An interactive and engaging school environment demands for a culture of 'active learning'. Active learning is an umbrella term for several approaches focusing on learner-centricity. The main motive is to put the responsibility of learning in the hands of the learner i.e., the child. In a traditional school environment, we expect the child to merely memorize and assimilate the information provided by the teacher. Active learning is the active opposite of such learning. Here, the teacher is a facilitator instead of an instructor. The job of the teacher is to guide the children to learn on their own through various active learning strategies.

When active learning is promoted in schools, children tend to develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Creative thinking, collaboration, and healthy relationship management skills also are highly improved through active learning strategies. Research has proven that children are able to learn better when they are actively involved in the process. Children are required to take risks with strategies of active learning with which they have no prior experience.

Some active learning strategies are:

Reciprocal questioning: Encouraging children to engage in reciprocal questioning gives them the opportunity to have an open dialogue and take the role of a teacher. It allows the child to develop their own questions on any topic. The teacher can act as a facilitator showing the different points of view that can be explored. The child can be encouraged to think from different perspectives and develop questions.

- a. **Think-Pair-Share:** Children can be paired and asked to share their thoughts on a topic, concept, idea, belief, etc. with each other. Each pair can later share in the large classroom discussion. This process nurtures children to think individually, and then allows them to analyse and clarify their responses collaboratively. It helps children organise prior knowledge, brainstorm or summarise, and apply and integrate new information.
- b. **Peer-learning:** Children tend to learn social-cognitive skills along with academics through peer-learning methods. During child-led discussions and in group settings, there is an opportunity to speak more freely and with less pressure. Peer learning strategies foster healthy relationships and develop multicultural acceptance. Through peer-tutoring, children learn to provide critical feedback and develop social responsibility.
- c. **Unclear point:** Let the children highlight the most unclear or confusing point from their lesson, assignment, or classroom discussion. This can be encouraged more when the children are 6+ years old. This exercise compels them to analyse themselves and their knowledge. Being critical of oneself is a powerful socio-emotional skill which can be fostered through rating or grading oneself.



Teachers as role models: Modelling socio-emotional & ethical skills in school

Role modelling is a powerful tool for passing on knowledge, values, and attitudes in children. Modelling positive behaviour and attitude by the teacher creates a healthy and safe environment for the children to practice the same behaviours and attitudes.

Some strategies for modelling socio-emotional and ethical skills by the teacher are:

- a. **Modelling respect:** Teachers can model respect for others by actively listening to children and their views without any judgements. Teachers can show interest and respect for things and ideas that are important to children. Apologising to children as a teacher for forgetting something promised earlier, for losing temper, or for making a mistake is a quality that nudges children to take risks and make mistakes. Encourage respectful behaviour and language during classroom activities and provide positive reinforcement by praising those who follow. Children who feel that their voices are of value become active participants in their own learning.

- b. **Thinking aloud:** Demonstrating on how a problem/dilemma is solved by thinking out loud provides children with the opportunity to get involved in the problem-solving process. The teacher can ask the children to come up with ideas to teach a lesson or ways to achieve a learning outcome. The pro and cons of every idea shared can be discussed where everyone in the class is thinking out loud. This fosters the ability to respect other's ideas and thoughts.
- c. **Showing empathy:** Children are quick to observe it when the teacher is disconnected. All teachers care for their children's well-being, but expressing it is equally crucial. It is necessary to show the care and concern to the children and respond with compassion. It is the teacher's responsibility to model empathy and present that caring is an integral component of empathy.
- d. **Sharing personal experiences:** Sharing different aspects of one's personal life leads to building healthy and strong interpersonal relationships. Sharing about life outside school is an opportunity for the teacher to model talking positively about oneself. Such conversations and discussions help children positively think and talk about themselves, which develops self-esteem.



Promote co-operative and collaborative learning

Co-operative and collaborative learning involves a group of children working together to accomplish a goal such as building a project, creating a product, etc. Children learn better when exposed to different viewpoints from people with different backgrounds. While it is important to achieve a particular learning outcome, it is also important to learn to work effectively in groups even if there is a disagreement on views. In a co-operative and collaborative environment, a child is required to listen to various viewpoints and articulate and defend their ideas. Doing such an activity, a child begins to develop their own framework of building knowledge rather than merely relying on a text or an expert. When tackling difficult concepts or ideas, collaborative work can provide support. Working with peers reduces the anxiety and stress of performance.

Some strategies to nurture co-operative and collaborative learning are:

- a. **Creating complex collaborative learning experiences:** Young children may find it difficult to collaborate without any guidance or purpose. They will need an assignment. If the assignment is too simple, they will prefer doing it individually. The assignment should be challenging, with several complex pieces then children will sit together to collaborate. One way is to assign a project where they need to identify a problem and assemble to discuss and debate.
- b. **Identifying the strengths of children:** To nurture collaborative skills in children, an educator needs to deliberately select children with different strengths and from diverse backgrounds. It is important to understand that a strength is not something that a child is best at, rather something the child has developed and is inclined to be best at. Identifying strengths can aid the teacher to assign specific tasks or activities to the children where they can perform well and consequently build their self-confidence.

Such groupings allow children to listen to diverse viewpoints, diverse ideas and arrive at a conclusion as a group.

- c. **Encouraging collaboration with other classes:** When children are familiar with co-operative and collaborative learning, the next step can be to organize inter-class collaborative activities. Children of varying age groups can work on one project or one problem. This will not only enhance their learning but also foster their ability to accept, negotiate and make decisions.

Celebrate the art

There is no value or socio-emotional skill that cannot be fostered through art. Art is a powerful medium in developing socio-emotional and ethical skills. Teachers need to appreciate and acknowledge art as an integral part of education. Art can be an excellent medium to explain complex ideas, concepts, or thoughts. Art experiences help children develop self-management, self-expression, and interpersonal and relationship skills, consequently building a positive identity.



Some strategies to incorporate arts into the classroom are:

- a. **Expressing thoughts, feelings and ideas through art:** Some children might have difficulty expressing their thoughts and feelings verbally or through writing. Art can be a way to allow children to communicate their feeling, thoughts and ideas. Art in the form of a painting, poem, or story can be seen as an expression of feelings and must be encouraged. It is important to include learning experiences which have ample opportunities for the child to express through art.
- b. **Role-playing:** Role-play is an effective tool to develop social awareness as it provides the opportunity to step into someone else's shoes. Role-playing characters in a story or event helps children understand in a more meaningful manner and develop confidence. When learning becomes fun, engagement increases. Through role-play, children develop various socio-emotional skills like self-control, self-confidence, empathy, positive communication, and cooperation.
- c. **Using visual art, music, or dance as a prompt:** Use a form of art piece, a video of a dance, or some music associated with an event or a situation to initiate discussion on a theme. The art can provoke interesting thoughts from different perspectives. Music activities lead to better communication and self-regulation. For example, sing a familiar song and challenge children to leave out a phrase in the song. This is a fun way to exercise self-control and self-regulation. Dance allows the children to associate their body with their emotions. Recognizing emotions helps develop self-awareness. For example, the teacher can bring attention to the way children move when they are angry or when they are proud

Section 4.5 Language and literacy



Language and literacy domain

The domain of language and literacy involves the development of knowledge, skills, and dispositions associated with:

- communicating with others through language (language development)
- reading and writing (literacy development)

The development of language is generally understood as the acquisition and refinement of the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Oral language development i.e., the development of listening and speaking skills, is the foundation of literacy development i.e., the development of reading and writing. However, language development is not a linear process. These four skills must be developed simultaneously. A more detailed overview of the different components of language and literacy along with suggested pedagogical processes is given in this chapter, along with the approach to language and literacy in the Foundational Stage.

Why is the language and literacy domain important ?

Language and literacy skills are really important for young children's overall development and success in life. These skills help children communicate with others, understand the world around them, and learn new things.	Early language development is key to children's cognitive and social-emotional development. By learning to talk and understand language, children can express their thoughts and feelings, build relationships with others, and explore the world around them.	Children who develop strong language and literacy skills in their early years are more likely to succeed in school and beyond. These skills are the building blocks for academic success and lifelong learning.	Early exposure to literacy promotes a love of reading and learning that can last a lifetime. By reading and sharing books with children, we can help them develop a positive attitude toward learning and a lifelong love of reading.
Language and literacy skills help children communicate effectively with others, which is essential for building relationships and navigating social situations. By learning how to express themselves and understand others, children can build strong connections with their peers and caregivers.	Early literacy experiences develop pre-reading skills such as phonemic awareness (the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words), print awareness, and letter recognition. These skills help children become successful readers by teaching them about language sounds, shapes, and patterns.	Literacy skills are important for accessing information and navigating the world in the digital age. By being able to read and write effectively, children can access a wide range of information and communicate with others using a variety of tools.	Children who struggle with language and literacy in their early years may be at risk for academic and social difficulties later in life. By providing support and intervention early, we can help these children develop the skills they need in order to succeed.

Language diversity and medium of instruction in Meghalaya

The medium of instruction in education refers to the language used as the primary language for formal teaching-learning processes, assessments, textbooks, and other material. The choice of medium of instruction at the early education level is a complex and often debated topic. It depends on various factors, including the country's language policies, the linguistic diversity of the student population, parental aspirations, views of experts, cultural considerations, educational goals, and resources available.

In Meghalaya, English is the official language whereas Khasi and Garo are the associate official languages. Therefore, all Government and private sectors use English as the language for official communication. In schools, the medium of instruction in all government schools till class 4 is the regional languages viz. Khasi, Garo, Bengali, Assamese, Nepali, and Hindi. There are also a few English-medium Government schools. Class 5 onwards, the medium switches to English in all Government schools. In private schools, English is the medium of instruction right from the preschool years, with regional languages taught as subjects. This is because of the demand for English education in the state and because it is perceived as providing better opportunities for employment, higher education, and global communication. There is a dearth of quality children's literature and Learning-Teaching Materials (LTMs) in the local languages.

Smooth transition from L1 to medium of instruction

In case the child's home language (L1) is not the medium of instruction in the Foundational Stage, it should still consciously and deliberately be used in the oral domain. This will also help children build meaningful connections with the world of reading and writing (either using one or two scripts simultaneously i.e., R1 and R2, though introducing only one script in the beginning is preferred).

As early as class 1 and 2, children can be involved in tasks such as orally identifying similarities and differences in vocabulary, grammar, and other aspects between L1 and the medium of instruction. All teachers, at least in the Foundational Stage, must be encouraged and supported to develop a working familiarity with the children's language and with effective strategies for multilingual pedagogy.

- Primary medium of instruction should be the home/familiar language (L1).
- Children should be exposed to multiple oral languages (L2, L3...).
- Literacy should be initially and preferably developed in the home/familiar language (R1).
- Once concepts of literacy are developed in R1, additional scripts can be gradually introduced.
- If the child's language is not L1 or R1, it should still be used formally in the oral domain.

Guiding principles for including children's languages

- Language is not just for communication but closely related to the child's personal, social, and cultural identity.
- Multilingualism has significant cognitive and social benefits.
- Children should be exposed to multiple languages orally.
- Basic literacy skills should first be taught in one language, preferably the most familiar language.
- Concepts and skills learnt in one language transfer to other languages.
- Children need to feel emotionally secure in order to learn, which can be fostered through their languages.

Multilingualism is the ability of a child or person to speak or understand (or may even write) more than one language. If a child is multilingual, it benefits him/her to be able to communicate with other children from different language background.

For instance, Miss Mary is a teacher at a preschool in Upper Shillong. Her preschool has children from multiple language backgrounds. Today she is teaching rhymes in Preschool II. Let us see what she does.

Miss Mary asks children to stand in a circle and follow her. She sings:

*My hands are for clapping.
My arms can hug tight.
My fingers can snap,
Or can turn on the light.
My legs are for jumping.
My eyes help me see.
This is my body,
And I love all of me!*

Children follow Miss Mary line by line along with gestures. Miss Mary does this a few times until everyone sings the rhyme together. She asks children to touch the body part when she calls out its name. She plays this vocabulary game for a while. Then, she asks Rahul to name the same body parts in his

language, Bengali. As Rahul points to his body parts and calls out the names, other children follow him. At first, children find it difficult to say the names, but they enjoy the game. Rahul helps his friends by repeating the words. After this, Miss Mary asks all the children to say the names of the body parts in their languages. She writes the words on the board in Roman script. She reads out the names and children touch the corresponding body parts. In the end, everybody sings the rhyme together once again.

In the above example, the intention of Miss Mary is not to teach children different languages but to give all children the opportunity to make use of the languages they know for learning. This practice has multiple benefits. It helps children feel included, strengthens conceptual clarity, develops vocabulary, and helps develop familiarity and respect for other languages.

To formally use LI in the oral domain:

- Vocabulary games and word play
- Songs, poetry, drama, TPR to play, listen, talk!
- Provide natural settings for conversation
- Partner with parents, youth, community, teachers
- Include local culture and traditions
- Make language buddies
- Encourage mixing of languages
- Use LI for explaining, discussing, thinking, reasoning, higher order comprehension, expression, and communication.
- Tell/read-aloud stories multiple times in L1 before L2, L3...
- Develop familiarity with children's languages

Curricular Goals and Competencies associated with language and literacy

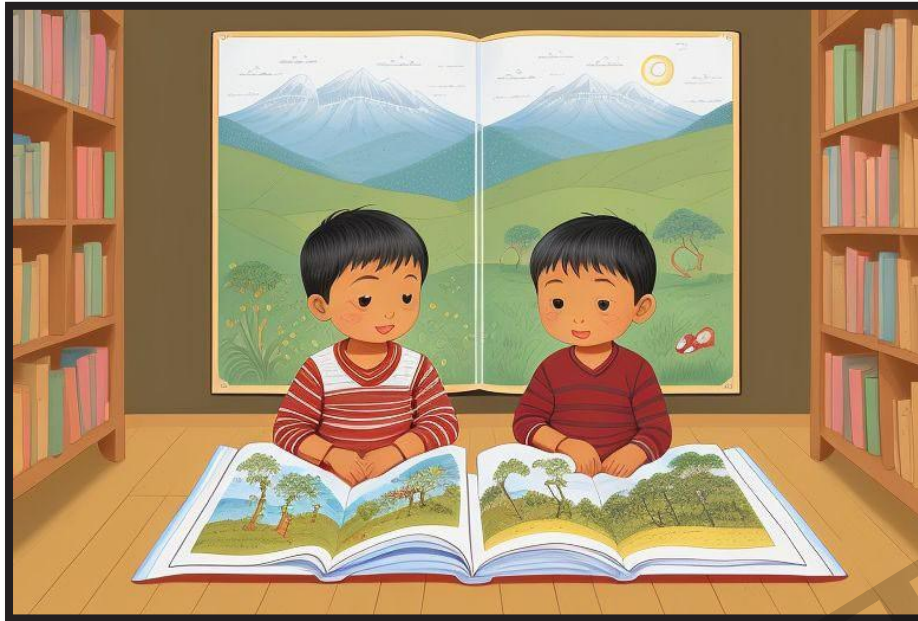
Curricular Goals	Competencies
CG-9 Children develop effective communication skills for day-to-day interactions in two languages	C-9.1 Listens to and appreciates simple songs, rhymes, and poems C-9.2 Creates simple songs and poems on their own C-9.3 Converses fluently and can hold a meaningful conversation C-9.4 Understands oral instructions for a complex task and gives clear oral instructions for the same to others C-9.5 Comprehends narrated/read-out stories and identifies characters, storyline and what the author wants to say C-9.6 Narrates short stories with clear plot and characters C-9.7 Knows and uses enough words to carry out day-to-day interactions effectively and can guess meaning of new words by using existing vocabulary
CG-10 Children develop fluency in reading and writing in Language 1	C-10.1 Develops phonological awareness and blends phonemes/syllables into words and segment words into phonemes/syllables C-10.2 Understands basic structure/format of a book, idea of words in print and direction in which they are printed, and recognises basic punctuation marks C-10.3 Recognises all the letters of the alphabet (forms of akshara) of the script and uses this knowledge to read and write words C-10.4 Reads stories and passages with accuracy and fluency with appropriate pauses and voice modulation C-10.5 Reads short stories and comprehends its meaning – by identifying characters, storyline and what the author wanted to say – on their own C-10.6 Reads short poems and begins to appreciate the poem for its choice of words and imagination C-10.7 Reads and comprehends meaning of short news items, instructions and recipes, and publicity material C-10.8 Writes a paragraph to express their understanding and experiences C-10.9 Shows interest in picking up and reading a variety of children's books
CG-11 Children begin to read and write in Language 2	C-11.1 Develops phonological awareness and are able to blend phonemes/syllables into words and segment words into phonemes/syllables C-11.2 Recognises most frequently occurring letters of the alphabet (forms of akshara) of the script and uses this knowledge to read and write simple words and sentences



Oral language development

Oral language development is the ability to communicate using spoken words. It not only includes the skills of listening with understanding and speaking with confidence, but being a fluent speaker, responding appropriately in conversations, using appropriate vocabulary, etc.

Through language, children interact with the world, comprehend it, and construct knowledge (learn). Children's language development is influenced by many factors, including their environment, experiences, and interactions with others. In the classroom, children should be provided with ample opportunities to listen to the language and speak it in an interactive manner. This helps them develop richer and more complex language skills. A language-rich environment that includes exposure to a variety of words, concepts, and experiences can enhance children's language development. Supporting multilingualism and cultural diversity can also be important in language development. Development in the language and literacy domain facilitates cognitive and socio-emotional and ethical development.



Literacy development

Literacy is not just about reading and writing; it also involves thinking and understanding what is read. It starts when children are very young and continues as they grow up. To become good at reading and writing, children need to learn how to communicate well and understand what written words mean. This is important for school and for learning new things throughout their lives.

In early childhood, literacy development can be supported through various activities, such as reading stories aloud, showing pictures with words, and engaging in interactive conversations. It is essential to create a language-rich environment that exposes children to a diverse range of words, ideas, and experiences. However, it is important not to force children to read or write at adult levels before they are ready, as this can cause frustration and negatively impact their confidence and motivation to learn. Instead, it is important to provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for children to explore and experiment with language and literacy in a playful and enjoyable manner. Additionally, promoting family involvement and cultural diversity can help support and enhance children's literacy development.

Understanding reading

Children naturally begin to encounter written material in their environment before they are formally taught to read and write. They become curious and attempt to read what they see on signs, wrappers, advertisements, etc. This stage of reading is known as 'emergent reading'. The major components of emergent reading are:

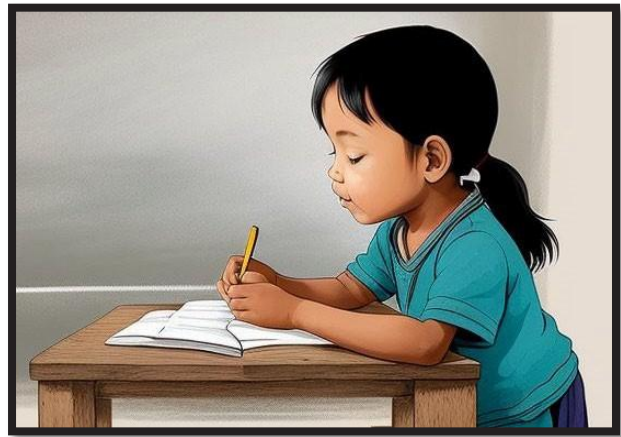
- **Reading pictures:** While reading pictures is not the same as reading the script, it involves the use of visual cues to understand what is printed. Therefore, it is an important reading strategy among emergent readers. Reading pictures also helps the development of vocabulary, narration (there is a story that can be told), prediction (what happens next in the picture story), and an interest in reading.
- **Conventions of print:** The knowledge and understanding of how print works. It includes:
 - Print awareness: Print carries meaning.
 - Directionality: Direction in which the script is written and must be read e.g., left to right and top to bottom for English and many other languages.
 - Words are formed of letters.
 - There is spacing between words.

- Role of punctuation.
- **Phonological awareness:** Recognizing and manipulating the sounds of spoken language at the word, syllable, and individual sound level. The latter is also known as phonemic awareness.
- **Letter knowledge:** Recognizing letters, both uppercase and lowercase, and understanding that letters represent different sounds.
- **Vocabulary:** Understanding the meanings of words and being able to use them appropriately in different contexts.
- **Developing the inclination towards reading:** The support and encouragement given by the teachers, as well as family members to develop a child's interest in reading. It includes the willingness of the child to independently select a book, hold it, flip through its pages, or read it.



After emergent reading, children can move towards more conventional reading. Here, children continue to expand their vocabulary, use pictures to support their reading, and develop their inclination towards reading. Apart from these components, conventional reading includes:

- **Sound-letter correspondence:** The relationship between the sounds of spoken language and the letters used to represent them in written language. Includes the understanding that there is a predictable relationship between sounds and letters (phonics).
- **Decoding:** The ability to use the knowledge of sound-letter correspondence to pronounce written words aloud. Includes the ability to recognize individual letters and blend their corresponding sounds.
- **Reading with comprehension:** While comprehension is at the core of emergent reading as well, reading with comprehension is the ability to decipher a written text and make an understanding of what is written. Fluent reading is the ability to read with accuracy, expression, reasonable speed and comprehension.
- **Reading strategies:** Good readers use different approaches and techniques to comprehend the text. These must be actively taught in the classroom. Common reading strategies that can be used in the Foundational Stage include activating prior knowledge, identifying sight words, inferring, predicting, re-reading, visualizing, etc.



Understanding writing

Children who attend school have already developed proficiency in conversational language. However, to enhance their writing skills, it is important to first provide them with opportunities to express their thoughts and experiences through drawing. The early steps that children take in developing their writing skills are known as emergent writing. Children's emergent writing skill must be supported through providing materials, modelling writing, and giving feedback.

- The first stage is scribbling, where children make random marks on paper.
- The second stage is letter-like forms, where children begin to make shapes that resemble letters.
- In the third stage, children start writing letters that represent the sounds they hear in words.
- The fourth stage is transitional writing, where children begin to write simple words and sentences.
- Finally, in the fifth stage, children are able to write more complex sentences and stories with a greater understanding of grammar and punctuation.

By building on these foundational skills and encouraging children to write in a way that is meaningful and authentic to them, educators can help to foster a lifelong love of writing and communication.

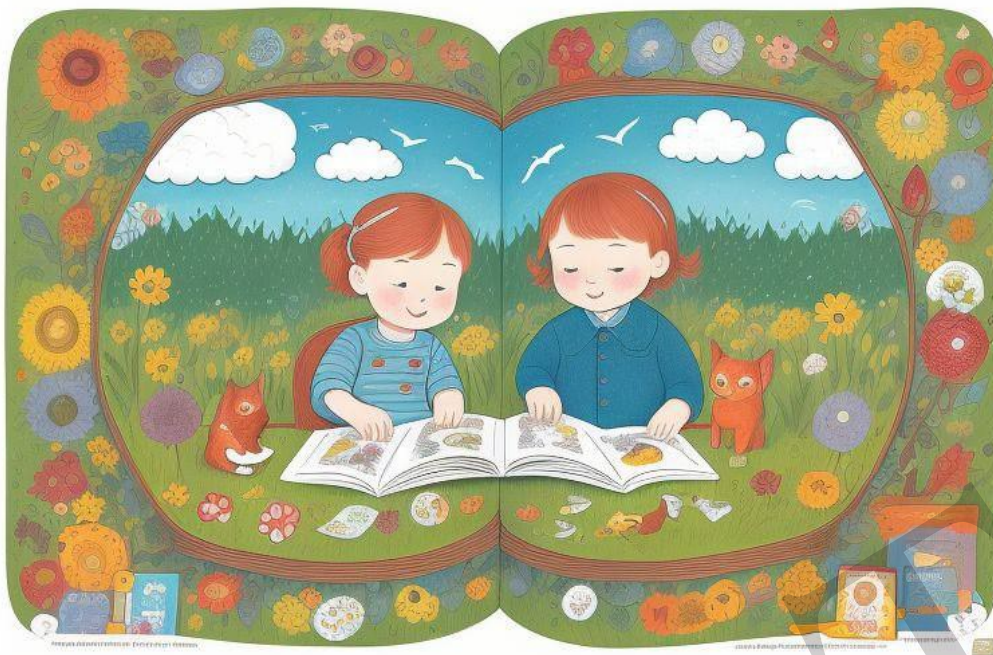
Key components of the language and literacy domain

Each of the key components are elaborated above. Here are sample pedagogical processes for each:

Key components	Suggested pedagogical processes
Emergent Literacy Skills	Emergent reading • Teacher does picture reading using big pictures and conducts a conversation around it. • Teacher provides children with opportunities to hold a book and do pretend reading by moving their finger from left to right, from top to bottom of the page and turning the page from right to left. • Teacher gives children a set of picture cards and a set of word cards. She/he asks them to match picture cards with word cards. • Teacher asks children to read sentences with the help of pictures. E.g., A picture of 'ball' is made and beside the ball the sentence '<i>This is a ball</i>' is written. Emergent writing • After a storytelling session, teacher gives children to colour a simple drawing which is based on a scene from the story. The drawing should have bold outlines and less details for younger children.

	- Teacher gives drawing sheets to children to make a drawing of their village, colour it and write their names. Then she/he asks them to review each other's work, give a tick mark and put their signature (their signature would just be a scribbling). - After a rhyme session, teacher writes down the rhyme on a chart paper. Children are asked to make drawings related to the rhyme on the rhyme chart. They write their names and teacher hangs the chart on the wall. - After a storytelling session, children are asked to tell the story in their own words and as they speak, teacher writes it down on a chart paper. Children are asked to make drawings of the characters and teacher helps children write the names of the characters by pointing it on the story chart. - Teacher shows children picture flashcards of objects they see in their classroom. She/he asks children to recognise the objects. Teacher also speaks out the names of the objects and children are asked to write the alphabet that corresponds to the beginning sound of each word.
Oral Language Development	- During circle time, teacher and children have a conversation on what they have had for breakfast that day. Teacher conducts the conversation around questions like: <i>What did you have for breakfast today? Do you like it? Do you eat yourself or someone helps you eat? What do you generally have in your breakfast? Etc.</i> - Teacher asks children to follow her/him while singing rhyme along with actions and gestures. Then children independently sing the rhyme later. - Teacher and children sing a popular local song together in chorus and dances to it. - Teacher does read aloud from a story book and conducts a guided conversation based on the story. - Teacher asks children to make a drawing of their favourite thing to do with their family. After completing, she/he asks them to share about their drawing with the whole class. - After a storytelling session, teacher asks children to dress up as characters and do a role-play. E.g., dressing up like shop keepers, customers, police, etc. and creating a scene of the market with the use of interesting and fun dialogues.
Phonological Awareness	- Teacher and children sing a rhyme and extend the rhyme together. Children are asked to give rhyming words that fit the rhyme. Later children create their own rhymes. - Teacher says a word and children are asked to clap to the number of syllables in the word. E.g., if teacher says 'pot' they clap once, for 'flower' they clap twice and thrice for 'cinema'. - Teacher speaks some lines to children with alliteration e.g., <i>The green grass grows all around, Sporty Samuel is swimming, Paul picked a pear</i>, etc. Children are asked to pick up the letter card for the beginning sound in each sentence (G, S, and P respectively). - Teacher asks children to find out names of their friends from the name chart which end with the same sound, for example, 'e': <i>Dame, Silme, Silte</i>, etc.
Decoding	- Teacher asks children to read out the names of their peers from the name chart. - Teacher asks children to recognise and say aloud the letters of the words from a set of word cards. She/he shows the word cards one-by-one to children. She/he makes conversation around the words, e.g.: <i>How many 'A' do you see in this word? So, with which letter does this word begin? With which letter does it end? Etc.</i> - Using alphabet cards, teacher makes monosyllabic words i.e., words with a single syllable (e.g., <i>tap, gap, nap, cap</i>, etc.; <i>pot, dot, not, hot</i>, etc.) and asks children to read them out. She/he keeps changing the beginning alphabet cards and asks children

	to read the new word formed. • Pointing to the rhyme chart, teacher asks children to recognise and read words as many as they can. • Teacher gives children to read a picture story book which has one simple sentence describing each picture.
Reading with Comprehension	• Teacher gives children to read picture story books in groups and then ask them to discuss about it. • Teacher asks children to point and read out their names from the name chart. • After a storytelling session, teacher asks a few questions. She/he writes down the replies on the board and asks children to do finger point reading of their replies as written on the board. E.g., teacher asks: <i>Do you like the story?</i> Children say: <i>Yes, I like the story.</i> Teacher writes the sentence on the board and children read it out (children may speak in their mother tongue, teacher writes it down as it is). • After a rhyme session, teacher puts the rhyme chart on the wall, e.g., <i>Old Macdonald had a farm</i>. Then asks children to point where is <i>Old Macdonald had a farm</i> written on the chart. After singing the rhyme for a few days with teacher doing finger point reading, she/he asks children to do finger point reading of the rhyme on the rhyme chart. • Teacher does shared reading using a big book, where she/he read the book together with children. • Teacher asks children to read a book together with a friend or 2-3 friends and discuss about the story. Then she/he asks them to talk about some similar experiences that they have had in their life. E.g., 3 children read a book on going on a picnic near the river. After reading the story, they share their experiences of going on a picnic and if they have anything similar to the story that they have read. • Teacher asks children to go to the book corner and pick up a book to read. After reading, they are asked to share the story/ text that they have read.
Writing	• Teacher asks children to draw their family members and writes their names or the names with which they call their family members on their drawings. • After singing a rhyme about family, teacher asks children to write 3-4 lines about their family. • Teacher gives children picture story cards to arrange in sequence and write dialogues in the speech bubble. Children do this activity in pairs or small groups. • After a storytelling session, teacher asks children to write a small paragraph on their favourite character from the story.
Developing the Inclination Towards Reading	• After a drawing session, teacher pastes the drawing of children on the walls of the classroom. Children go and look at each other's work, tries to understand what has been drawn and appreciate each other. • Teacher brings a new storybook in the class for a storytelling session. Children take it from him/her with interest, flip the pages and read the book. Teacher gives time to go through the book. • Teacher asks children to go to a corner and do something of their own, they go to the book corner and pick their favourite book to read. • Teacher asks children to read a book at home and bring it to school the next day. Next day, she/he asks them to show the book and share about it to the whole class.



Forms of textual content for language and literacy

Picture books are a wonderful way to introduce young children to the world of reading. These books typically have simple text and vibrant illustrations that capture children's imaginations and help them develop their comprehension and critical thinking skills.	Story books can help children develop their reading skills and spark their creativity. They often feature engaging narratives, relatable characters, and colourful illustrations that draw children into the story.	Comics are a great way to engage reluctant readers and help children develop their reading comprehension skills. They often feature dynamic illustrations and exciting storylines that can capture children's interest and keep them engaged.
Worksheets can help children develop their reading and writing skills by providing them with practice exercises that reinforce key concepts. They often feature activities such as fill-in-the-blank sentences, matching exercises, and writing prompts.	Rhyme charts can help children develop their phonemic awareness by introducing them to rhyming words and word families. They often feature colourful illustrations and catchy rhymes that can help children remember new vocabulary.	Posters can help reinforce key concepts and vocabulary words in the classroom. They often feature eye-catching graphics and clear, easy-to-read text that can help children develop their literacy skills.
Flashcards are a great way to help children develop their vocabulary and reading comprehension skills. They often feature images and text that help children associate words with their meanings.	Word games and puzzles can help children develop their literacy skills while having fun. They often feature activities such as crossword puzzles, word searches, and jumbles that help children develop their spelling and vocabulary skills.	Children's magazines can be a great way to introduce children to new topics and ideas while helping them develop their reading skills. They often feature engaging stories, informative articles, and colourful illustrations that can capture children's interest and keep them engaged.

Points to keep in mind while identifying textual context

Age-appropriate: Choose materials suitable for children's age and skill level.	Relevant: Materials should relate to the curriculum or students' interests.	Engaging: Materials should be visually appealing, interesting, and capture children's attention.	High-quality: Materials should be free of errors, well-written, and well-illustrated.
Diverse: Materials should reflect the diversity of the students and the world around them.	Varied: Use a variety of materials to keep children engaged.	Accessible: Choose materials that are easy to access in the classroom.	Flexible: Materials should be adaptable to different learners and teaching situations.

Approach to language and literacy in the Foundational Stage

The Four Blocks Model recommended for language and literacy development in NCF-FS 2022 has four major blocks – oral language, word recognition, reading, and writing. This is as per a balanced approach to language and literacy instruction, which combines both explicit teaching of phonics, grammar, and vocabulary, with opportunities for meaningful, context-rich reading and writing experiences. It emphasizes the importance of integrating systematic instruction with authentic language use, fostering comprehensive language development in children.

Let us look at the Four Blocks Model for language and literacy instruction in action. Here is an exemplar weekly plan for class I.

Class: I (NCERT English textbook: <https://ncert.nic.in/textbook/pdf/aeen102.pdf>)



Unit: 2

Chapter: I (After a Bath)

Duration: 6 days

Learning Outcomes:

- Identifies characters and sequence of the story.
- Recites poems/rhymes with actions.
- Responds orally to comprehension questions related to stories/poems.
- Names familiar objects seen in the pictures.
- Finger point reads with/without support.
- Scribbles/writes familiar words and short sentences with/without support.
- Draws/scribbles in response to poems/stories.
- Talks about self /situations/ pictures in English.
- Recognizes a few letters and their sounds.
- Participates in role play and drama.
- Enjoys simple phonological awareness games.
- Carries out simple instructions to complete a task.

Day	Block (component)	Pedagogy	Pointers for formative assessment	Material required
Day I	Oral language Rhymes/ songs/ poems; Free/guided conversation; Drama and Role play	• Teacher animatedly recites the rhyme and children follow with actions and expression with teacher's support. They also respond to a few comprehension questions. (Reference pages: 17) • Teacher plays an action game using words like <i>wash, dry, shake, wipe, scrub</i>, and <i>splash</i>. Teacher repeats each word thrice (<i>wash, wash, wash</i>) and children do the action.	• How well is the child engaged and involved in reciting the rhyme? • How well is the child able to demonstrate her/his understanding of the rhyme? • Is the child able to follow the actions of the spoken words?	Rhyme chart
	Oral language; Writing Sharing experiences;	Children share their experiences of bath time. Teacher asks: • Do you like to take a bath?	• Is the child able to share information and state	Rhyme chart Worksheet: Circle what you

	Independent writing	• What do you use to take bath? • What time do you like to take bath? • How do you get ready afterwards? Home assignment: Worksheet on circling what they do after taking bath.	preferences related to bath time? • Is the child able to follow directions to complete the worksheet? • Is the child able to explain the reason for making the choices in the worksheet?	do after taking bath
	Oral language; Word recognition Rhymes/ songs/ poems; Letter and word reading	Children recite the rhyme again. Teacher points out the repeating words from the rhyme chart and 2-3 children come forward to point at and read the same words with support – <i>try, dry, shake</i> . Children also recognize a few letters with support.	• How well is the child engaged and involved in reciting the rhyme? • Does the child attempt to read a few words and recognize a few letters with support?	Rhyme chart
Day 2	Word recognition Skill-focused writing (of letters and words)	• Children label the boy's picture with words related to body parts like <i>head, fingers, toes, hands, legs, nose, eyes, ears, and mouth</i>. (Reference pages: 16) They count the number of each body part. • Children complete a worksheet where they match pictures and words. (Reference pages: 17)	• Is the child able to follow directions to complete the worksheet? • Is the child able to explain the reason for matching pictures and words?	Worksheet: Matching pictures and words
	Oral language Storytelling	Teacher shows picture cards of the daily routine of the boy from the poem. Children arrange the picture cards and build a story.	• Is the child able to arrange the picture cards? • How well is the child able to weave a story based on the arranged picture cards?	Picture cards of daily routine of boy
	Writing; Reading Modelled writing; Shared reading	Based on the previous activity, teacher writes a short story on the board using familiar words and uses it for finger point reading.	• How effortlessly is the child able to repeat what is read aloud?	

Day 3	Oral language Picture conversations	Teacher asks simple riddles (Reference pages: 17) and children guess the animal. For example: • <i>I bark, I wag, a friendly sound, Count my legs, don't look around!</i> (Answer: Dog) • <i>Fluffy and cute, I purr in delight, Count my legs, they're quite a sight.</i> (Answer: Cat) • <i>I hop, I jump, and I croak, Count my legs, it's not a joke.</i> (Answer: Frog) • <i>I'm big and strong, with a trunk so wide, Count my legs, it's easy to decide.</i> (Answer: Elephant)	• How well is the child able to decipher verbal cues to solve the riddles? • To what extent is the child able to describe the picture card?	Picture cards of animals from the riddles
		After children guess each animal, teacher shows its picture card and children describe the animal.		
	Reading Read aloud	Teacher tells a short story about a dirty dog who did not want to take bath, but gets a bath anyway then immediately jumps into a puddle of mud! Teacher asks: • Did you like the story? Which part did you like the most? • What name would you like to give the dog? • Do you run away from taking bath too?	• How well is the child able to express preferences and opinions about the story? • Is the child able to relate personal experiences to the story?	
	Writing Independent writing	Worksheet: Take the dirty dog to soap and a water for bathing	• Is the child able to follow directions to complete the worksheet?	Worksheet: Take the dirty dog to soap and a water for bathing
Day 4	Oral language development Drama and Role play	Children go outdoors and do a role play of giving bath to the dog using words like <i>wash, dry, shake, wipe, scrub, and splash</i>. Teacher keeps a bucket of water and soap ready, and children make bubbles of different sizes.	• How expressive is the child during role play – both verbally and through actions and gestures? • Is the child able to follow instructions to make bubbles of different sizes?	Bucket, water, soap

	Word recognition Skill-focused writing (of letters and words)	Worksheet: Colour the wet dog who has just taken bath! Now label its different body parts.	- Is the child able to follow directions to complete the worksheet? - To what extent is the child able to label the picture e.g., number of body parts labelled, legibility, stage of spelling?	Worksheet: Colour the wet dog who has just taken bath! Now label its different body parts.
	Oral language Storytelling	Teacher shows picture cards of the wet dog story. Children arrange the picture cards and retell the story in their own words. Teacher encourages children to build new stories using the same picture cards.	- Is the child able to arrange the picture cards? - How well is the child able to weave a story based on the arranged picture cards?	Picture cards of the wet dog story
Day 5	Word recognition Letter and word reading	Children play a treasure hunt game in their classroom. Teacher hides stationery items around the room, saying 'hot' when the object is very close, 'warm' when it is nearby but not very close, and 'cold' when it is far away.	How well is the child able to follow directions to find the treasure?	Stationery items to hide for treasure hunt
	Oral language development Drama and Role play	Children put all their collected stationery items on the table and talk about their uses e.g., <i>pencil is for writing, crayons are for colouring, scissors are for cutting, and glue is for pasting</i> . While talking about the different uses, they enact/mimic the movement.	- How well is the child able to describe the uses of stationery items? - Is the child able to mimic the movement of using different stationery items?	Stationery items from the treasure hunt
	Word recognition Sound-symbol association	Children sit in pairs and make familiar words using letter cards. Home assignment: Worksheet on matching pairs of words. (Reference pages: 18)	- Is the child able to follow directions to complete the worksheet? - Is the child able to explain the reason for matching the words?	Letter cards Worksheet: Match pairs of words

Day 6	Writing Independent writing	Children draw a picture of themselves and their friend and write their name and their friend's name. They also write 2 things they like about their friend. (Reference pages: 18)	- Is the child able to follow directions to complete the drawing? - To what extent is the child able to write names and things they like about their friend e.g., legibility, stage of spelling, attempt to write a short sentence? - Does the child seek support in writing?	Drawing sheets, crayons, sketch pens
	Oral language Storytelling	Children build stories about themselves and their friend using prompts given by the teacher: - My friend's birthday! - Superhero friend! - My friend and I go on a magical adventure!	- Does the child seem to enjoy weaving a story? - How imaginatively is the child able to weave a story based on the given verbal cues? - What kind of vocabulary does the child use to make for an impactful storytelling? - Is there any sequence in the manner of storytelling e.g., indicating a beginning, middle, and end with some plot and characters?	
	Writing Shared writing; Independent writing	Teacher writes a few of the stories narrated by children in the previous activity, with their help, and uses them for finger point reading. Home assignment: Worksheet on tracing (Reference pages: 19-20)	- Is the child able to follow directions to complete the worksheet? - What is the quality of the child's tracing?	Worksheet: Tracing

Four Blocks Model for language and literacy

- The blocks are oral language, word recognition, reading, and writing.
- The blocks are not sequenced.
- Activities for the four blocks may be implemented in an integrated manner but children must spend time working on each of the blocks on a regular basis.
- Each block can be planned for roughly 30 mins each
- Ideally, use 3 blocks per day.
- Do not wait for children to learn all letters before reading and writing activities.

Chapter 5

Environment as the teacher

Let us look at a classroom scenario:



Questions to ponder upon:

1. What kind of an environment is seen in the comic strip?
2. How will such an environment impact a child's learning?

In the illustration you have just read, the classroom environment doesn't allow free movement around the space and the events are all teacher-initiated where the child doesn't seem to have any say. Such an environment definitely provides the children with useful information but without any experiential learning. The teacher seems to ignore the teachable opportunities¹ where the children display curiosity by asking questions. It restricts the child's innate curiosity and likeness towards exploration, leaving no joy in learning. For instance, from the above illustration, we can understand that the teacher is preventing the child from touching the toys and encouraging more desk work through worksheets. An environment which promotes 'sit still' mode of learning doesn't provide ample opportunities to explore, experiment and experience the world around them. Such a learning environment adversely affects the learning of the child by restricting them from discovering new ideas or skills which hamper their potential of being creative. It might also affect the child on the social skills such as communication, interpersonal relationships and lack of participation in any kind of learning activity. Let us look at another example:



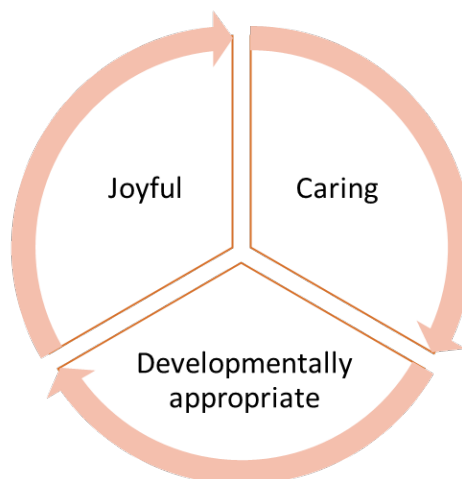
¹ Teachable opportunities are unplanned opportunities that arises in the classroom where a teacher has a chance to offer insight to his or her children.

Questions to ponder upon:

1. What kind of an environment is seen in the comic strip?
2. How is this environment different from the environment in the earlier example?
3. How will such an environment impact a child's learning?

The above illustration is a stimulating learning environment where both the teacher and the children are engaged in the learning process with questions and exploration. The teacher seems to be trying to build a language rich environment by providing them enough opportunity to ask questions, explore and experiment with bamboo. Consequently, the children are learning to learn by themselves through experiences. The teacher groups the children in pairs which leads us to think that the teacher encourages peer-learning and collaboration. A developmentally appropriate learning environment that meets children's developmental needs and capacities has positive effects on children's development (Maxwell, 2007; Sanoff, 1995; Stankovic & Stojic, 2007, as cited in Karlidağ, 2021). A learning environment where there are easily available and accessible reading resources, engaging activities, toys, organized arrangements of classroom for example having learning corners, friendly and warm atmosphere by the adults, nurturing them to the development of cognitive, fine motor, socio-emotional and creative aspects, is a positive learning environment to the children.

The components of learning environment are not limited to the four walls of the classroom, but it goes beyond the classroom too. **When we say environment, we do not just mean the materials, equipment or toys present in that space, but we mean how the ambience feels in its entirety.** Space and ambience have a powerful influence on all learning and teaching that happens in the room, as we have seen in the second illustration. A child learns best in environments where there are safe and secure relationships, caring adults and where children can safely move around to explore and learn. A well-designed environment supports exploration, gives young children a sense of belonging and enables them to engage in focused and self-directed play. Nurturing spaces that support development of all young children within an early childhood setting can be termed as a **joyful, caring and developmentally appropriate learning environment.**



Characteristics of a quality learning environment

Children learn a diverse array of knowledge, skills and dispositions by mere observing and interacting with the environment. In such a situation, it is crucial to provide the right materials, equipment and ambience which is safe, healthy and engaging for the child. The above figure displays the three interacting broad characteristics that define a quality learning environment. Let us look at each of these characteristics.

Joyful and caring learning environment

What do children find joyful and interesting? Can there be learning in joyful activity? What are their favourite activities? What draws the most engagement in the classroom? What can I do to make these occurrences more frequent? If we as teachers can find answers to these questions, we might be able to design a joyful and caring learning environment for our children. When children enter a classroom with excitement and full of wonder, it supports their learning. A space that makes them excited to come back the next day aids in their holistic development. With the pandemic and two years of lockdown between 2020 and 2021, children have been deprived of social interactions. In such situations children and adults have experienced uncertainty, anxiety, and stress. But we can still bring happiness within the walls of the classroom as well as in their lives too.

To make any space a joyful space it first needs to be safe. Safety in schools would mean a safe environment for a child to grow and learn. School safety efforts would consider all hazards that might affect the well-being of children. This would include safety from abuse, violence, accidents, socio-emotional issues etc. The school is required to provide a positive environment with no punishment, bullying, harassment, intimidation, or use of any derogatory language within school premises. For many years we have been socialised to believe the proverb 'spare the rod, spoil the child' which means that children should be punished else they will be spoiled. Research have proven that a space which hurts the child, physically or emotionally, can hinder their development crucially. Keeping schools safe allows children to look forward to being in environments that supports learning. When children feel at risk, they might stop attending schools, or may not be able to focus on learning. Safe environment provides the children with a space to explore, play, learn and grow.

Creating such an environment requires continuous and comprehensive attention to infrastructure, health and hygiene systems and psycho-social dynamics within the school.

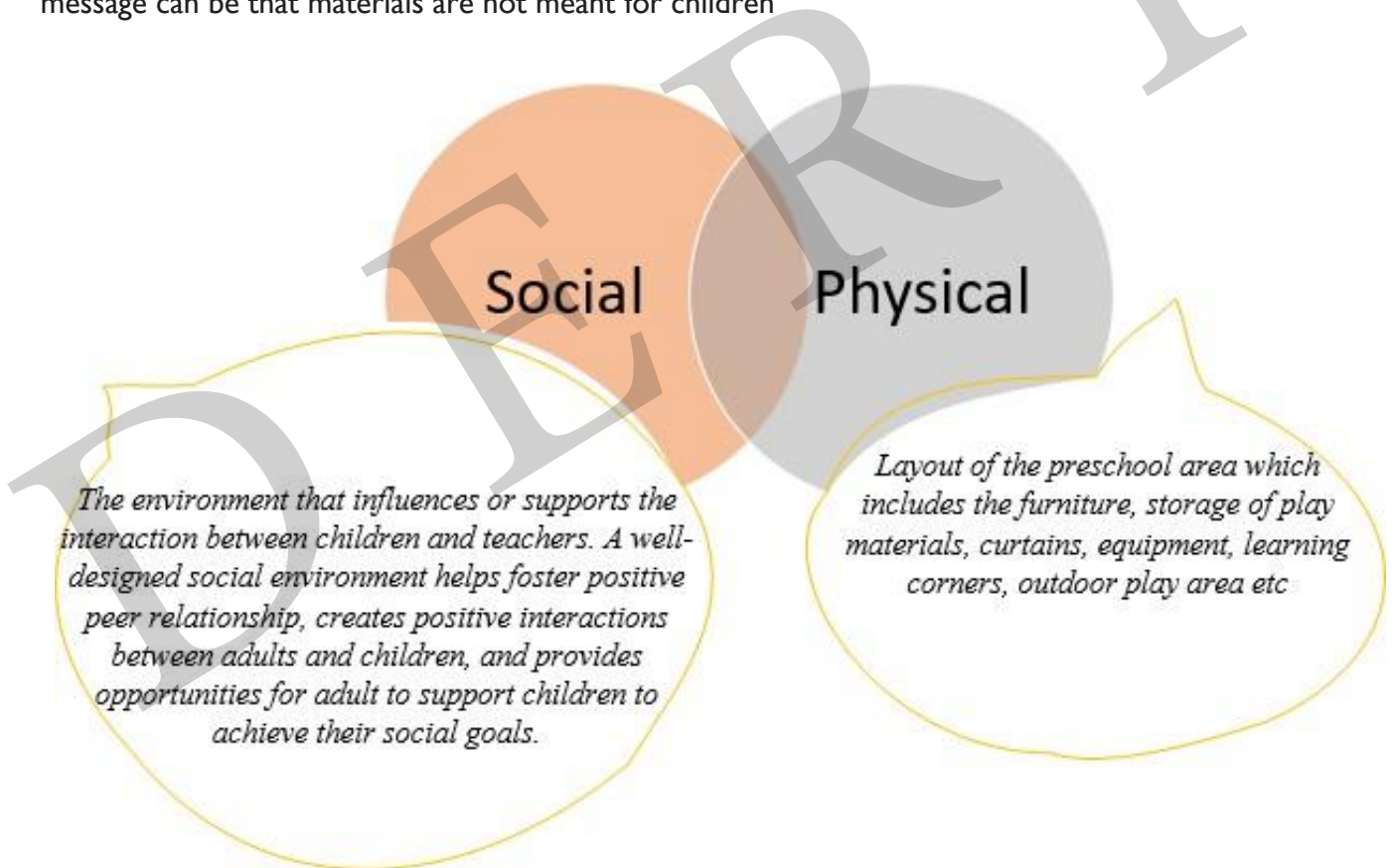
Engaged in playful activities: An environment where children are constantly engaged in the learning experience. Take the example from the above illustration, where children were grouped in pairs and were exploring the bamboo picked during their nature walk, we could assume that the children will be exploring, touching, observing the colour, and playing with the bamboo. Providing such experiences can create a joyful environment.

Communication: Let's take the example of the first illustration where the teacher stops the child from asking questions. This hampers the relationship between the teacher and the child. It also hinders the curiosity in the child. Therefore, a healthy environment with a lot of discussions, questioning, conversations is critical to make a joyful learning environment.

Promoting social and emotional competence: Children that gets the opportunity to express their ideas, feelings and emotions with their peers, parents and teachers tend to become more socially and emotionally competent. Fostering more collaborative tasks, providing safe & caring atmosphere where adults are easily accessible will promote their socio-emotional skills such as self-confidence, self & social awareness and a sense of responsibility.

Developmentally appropriate learning environments

Learning environments and the daily routines of the children are the factors that indicate how developmentally appropriate a classroom is. Rich and engaging learning environments take the age and abilities of children into account. During the early childhood years, certain domains develop far more rapidly than at any other time, for example, language. Hence, there is a need for teachers to provide language rich environments to the children in order to give them maximum exposure. A teacher needs to provide, create, plan an environment which is rich in literary activities and allows a child to unconsciously explore and engage in activities around him/her to promote language learning such as conversations, games, song, stories, role play, puppetry, dramatization. Every environment sends certain implied messages to children. For example, a large playground or open spaces communicates that it is a space to run around as opposed to a small space that indicates that children are not supposed to running around. As teachers we need to be very careful of what kind of hidden message are we sending to children. From seating arrangements to accessibility to play materials can convey a lot of meanings. If we have fixed seating arrangements it might convey the meaning that there should be no movement inside the classroom, if the materials are under lock and key, the message can be that materials are not meant for children



In early childhood settings, we see two interrelated components – social and physical environment – that contribute to a joyful and developmentally appropriate learning environment.

Physical learning environment

The physical environment is the responsibility of the adults in an early childhood setting. It is where both teachers and children will spend most of their time and a place, they can call their own and relate to. It should be organized, comfortable, and personable and offer a variety of manipulatives for cognitive, social, emotional and physical development (Catron & Allen, 2007)

What is flexibility in learning environment?

Flexibility in learning environment is a way of learning where children are given the freedom in how, what, when and where they learn. A flexible learning environment addresses how the physical space is used in order to facilitate a free and joyful learning for the children in the classroom.

Physical environment of a school includes its physical surroundings and other facilities available in the school for learners. Talton and Simpson (1987) comment that 'The classroom is the basic structural unit of our educational system'. Not enough attention is usually paid to the importance of physical environment for learning. The physical surroundings and facilities differ from school to school. This difference has an impact on the meaningful engagement of teachers and children in the process of learning and thus leading to even low achievement. Good environment also makes parents and caregivers feel welcomed and involved. Designing physical space for young children blended with pedagogy and safety may help in their process of learning. Physical space for young children's activities may vary from depending upon the availability of space, resources, and number of children. One very vital characteristic of the Foundational Stage physical environment is its flexibility.

Why Learning Corners?

1. Support learning:

- a. Children learn best by experimenting with their environment through hands on activities and plays.
- b. The learning corners provide children spaces to explore and grow in an independent and joyful manner.

2. Nurture social skills:

- a. Through group activities and games, the children learn to interact, co-operate, follow instructions and converse with one another.
- b. Children will develop the sense of sharing, respect and friendship.
- c. Children become effective communicators through the regular communication and interactions.

3. Foster 21st century skills (creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking):

- a. Guided conversations, games and plays enable children to develop confidence and self-esteem which helps in problem solving abilities.
- b. The corners will facilitate the aesthetical appreciation for art and help in building the creativity and imagination level of the children.

Indoor learning corners

The Foundational Stage classroom must have learning corners. **Learning corners** are nothing but specific areas around the classroom with a purpose and includes various materials for children to manipulate and use. Learning corners provides space for children to nurture their own cognitive, social, emotional and physical skills. This is an area where children usually get engaged in small group interactions. In these corners children are exploring, practicing, reteaching themselves and experimenting on without any adult's help. Such independent engagement with materials helps them become more self-aware.

Some characteristics of learning corners:

- Learning corners can be portable, temporary or permanent.
- Each corner must have natural light, proper ventilation for effective learning to happen.
- Create an atmosphere of learning which invites and promote active, independent exploration and discovery.

- Provide a variety of manipulatives that children can use in creative ways.
- Encourage exploration by displaying and keeping materials attractively on the open shelves for easy accessibility.
- Promotes self-learning without any help from adults due to the way materials are organised.
- Fosters collaboration and cooperation in children since each corner provides enough material to prevent any argument or conflict over any toy or material.



In the above illustration, we can see:

- Running blackboard
- Child-sized furniture arranged for collaboration
- Demarcated areas for certain activities
- Low shelves/storage for accessibility
- Dynamic display areas to display children's work
- Portfolio files/bags to store children's work

Role of the teacher in setting up learning corners

These corners should promote and create an atmosphere where children can learn through active participation. The vital task of the teacher is to create such an atmosphere where the child knows that their ideas are valued, and that the teacher is going to guide them to further explore their ideas. It will provide opportunity to create, draw, discover, learn and develop new skills. Setting up learning corners as well as organizing them is equally important in creating a quality learning environment.

Some points to remember while setting up corners:

- Each classroom may have several learning corners such as- art area, block building area, pretend play area, maths/manipulative area, science/discovery area, music and movement area, book reading area, etc.
- As a teacher, the decision to set up 3-4 learning corners would be easier to organize and manage. The decision on which corners to set up in the classroom, may include children as well as fellow teachers.
- Teachers may also decide to organize different learning corners after a specific period of time. One learning corner can go up to one month and then can be replaced with some other learning corner for a month. For example, the sensory corner can be changed to pretend play corner or science and discovery corner.
- Certain learning corners such as story book corner must be a permanent learning corners in a preschool. The teacher can decide which ones can be kept permanent and which ones can be on rotation.
- Teachers need to manage resources for each learning corner and look out for locally available materials. It is preferable to use materials which are easily available in their immediate surroundings.
- Teachers need to plan, organize and prepare for the entire week so that each child can optimally make use of the learning corners based on the themes and learning experiences.

I. Story book corner

Story book corner is a space in the classroom, where each child can access variety of books to read and other materials such as poster, newspaper and even children's writings.

Having a story book corner provides a wonderful opportunity for children to have an interactive reading experience with the help of both teachers and their peers. Children with low proficient in reading can be provided with material according to their abilities and interest and it inculcate reading habit and add reflection to their work. Teacher can guide the children by reading stories in different ways for example: Read aloud, which incorporates variations in pitch, tune, pace, volume, pause, eye contact, questions, and comments to produce a fluent and enjoyable delivery.

These experiences ultimately encourage the children to become more independent and confident readers and help the children in developing reading comprehension among children.

The reading material can be displayed in a variety of ways and low-cost materials can be used for certain purpose. For example, on a table, on a rope tied around the table or classroom racks, shelves, cartoons, etc. The teacher should ensure that the arrangement is safe, and the material is within the reach of children.

What should we include in this book corner?

- A good collection of children literature of different genres, content, language, and illustrations
- Picture books
- Storybooks/ cards
- Poetry collection and rhymes with pictures
- Children magazines
- Newspaper clippings
- Colouring books
- Pencils, A4 sheets, chart papers, crayons, sketch-pens, etc. (for colouring, drawing, etc.)

The purpose of this book corner is to give a platform where they can support and facilitate children to make meaning while reading. So, teachers play an important role to transform the story book corner into a conducive, lively, and inviting space for reading.



2. Art and expression corner

Art allows early learners to establish an early foundation for art appreciation, visual analysis, imagination, expression and creativity that will extend well beyond their early years. Art and expression corner is a space in a classroom where children are stimulated to create, to draw, to sculpt, to paint and colour.

In this corner, we can include paper, pastel paper, grid paper, pencils, crayon, charts, paint, brushes, glue, threads, sketch books, play dough, stencils, tape, papers/foam, tissue, trays, various collage materials, items from nature such as feathers, clay, sticks, grass and low-cost material such as old toothbrushes, newspaper, empty boxes, etc.

Art can play an effective role in strengthening the child's curiosity, imagination, and sense of wonder. It also provides children a unique opportunity to discover and express their own voices through creative expression. Art, being naturally interesting to children, has a positive impact on the socio-emotional skills, motor skills, literacy skills and it also aids in strengthening spatial reasoning and early numeracy skills.



3. Music and movement corner

We experience music almost everywhere. With children, music serves as a language to communicate and build cultural identities, convey emotional experiences, and explore passions and acts as a support in personal and academic development. Providing exposure to music improves learning and fosters a positive classroom culture. We all know how much children love music. Giving children the opportunity to listen to music, play instruments, experiment with sound, and move their bodies is vital in early care environments, which is why a music and movement learning corner is a must-have in a Foundational Stage classroom.



We can include traditional musical instruments like *ksing shynrang* (Khasi drum), *Padiah* (small drum), *Bom* (big drum), *Dama* (Garo drums), *Besli* (flute), *duitara* (string instrument) and some modern musical instruments such as guitar/ukulele, keyboard, if possible. Teachers can help or guide children

in making low-cost musical instruments from any scrap materials, for example, from any old tin, cans, boxes, containers, cups, glasses, rocks, seeds, pencils and any natural instrument with our body part like clapping, stamping, voice, beat boxing, singing, whistling, snapping. Teacher can keep a file of modern, contemporary, folk songs that children can learn along with charts of the lyrics and song records with the help of ICT or any playback devices. In places where internet is available, age appropriate contents from YouTube or other sites can be shown to the children.

During these activities teacher may be able to identify children with development or socio-emotional needs and provide required support and intervention. Teachers must decide the maximum number of children who may work in a corner to avoid crowding at one or two corners at a time. Such corners are a perfect way to introduce children to other languages and cultures. A musical instrument or a song in a different language will help encourage cultural awareness and inclusion in classroom.

4. Construction and manipulation corner:

The construction and manipulation corner is a place where children generally work alone or in pairs on given tasks that require concentration and thought. This corner will give space for constructive play or manipulative play. Such type of play is when a child engages in manipulating objects or toys to construct or create something. The child explores the materials and objects around him and learns how to create intentionally with them. Children learn so much while constructing that the focus should always be on the process, not the product.

We can include different type of available material like plastic blocks, building blocks, clay, marble, various shapes using low- cost material, manipulatives such as magnetic tiles, tangrams, pattern blocks and maths cubes, handmade item like clay marbles, carton boxes, match boxes, laces, fabrics, ribbons, plastic bottles, doll, toys and indigenous toys, animals, sand and water play materials, etc.

The purpose to have this corner is for children to learn and practice fine motor skills, visual discrimination, eye-hand coordination, shapes, colours, textures and other skills of comparison, matching, sorting, classification, pattern recognition. Such activities encourage the child to think more imaginatively leading to creativity and problem-solving skills. It is important for the teacher to not over-organise their play since more independence will lead to more learning. It is ok to make a mess and get dirty while working in this corner. Refrain from Instructing them to stay clean or not dirty their clothes.



5. Science and discovery corner

Children are natural-born scientists. Children are innately curious and eager to explore the world and everything in it and it is our duty to provide them with such opportunities. A science and discovery corner are an interesting corner to have when we want children to explore things on their own. Such a corner encourages children to observe, experiment, create, construct, compare and question their own thoughts, experiments and their own results. As teachers, it is our job to nurture their scientific spirit and help children form questions, investigations, collect data and share their conclusions.

We can include science tools like trays, tweezers, magnifying glass, a place to examine, count, organize, and classify items; having balance scales, calculators, touch light, watches, clocks, rulers, measuring tapes, connecting cubes and other measurement tools for children to use when they are investigating and experimenting. Natural materials are easy to find and provide children with endless hours of investigating, adding shells, branches of trees, rocks and stone, sands, leaves, fruits, vegetables, seeds, feathers, sticks, pinecones, seedpods, flowers, and any other item you can find outside in nature to your science corner. A plant or a class pet can be added wherever possible. Something children can take care of and observe over time.

The purpose to have this science corner is for children to have a space to investigate, observe, and explore their own interests and at their own pace. Science encourages and teaches children how to discover and wonder about everything in the world around them. Such spaces encourage the development of scientific thinking and the desire to explore and investigate further.



6. Pretend play corner

Pretend play is an important part of childhood that provides insight not only into a child's ability to use language, but ultimately into their understandings of the world more broadly. Environments that children experience are critical to pretend play. Rich learning environments offer opportunities for extended interactions with materials and people, as well as time to explore and demonstrate their understanding and interpretations of their worlds. Examples of simple pretend play include feeding a doll with a toy fork or making a toy airplane "fly". Children also imitate familiar adult actions at this stage, such as pretending to talk on a toy telephone.

Print-rich materials can be put into the pretend play corner, including cookbooks, menus, order forms, labels, receipts, maps, tickets, brochures, and many more. It can also have kitchen utensils, mirror, some dupattas, old (but clean) clothes and shoes, old phones, radios, masks etc. One need not have to get all the props at once. Instead, one can add in one-by-one. That will allow some time to observe what the children are trying to pretend. Don't worry about bare shelves in the pretend

play corner, especially when it is just set up. Children's imagination can be out of our expectation. Things that are around them can be something creative to them.

The purpose to have a pretend play corner is to let children express themselves, become creative. Pretend play helps children learn very important socio-emotional skills which are necessary in the real world. Pretend play helps them make sense of information, analyse, compare, contrast, make inferences and practice higher order thinking skills. Pretend play helps children understand the power of language. This process helps a child to make the connection between spoken and written language — a skill that will later help learn to read.

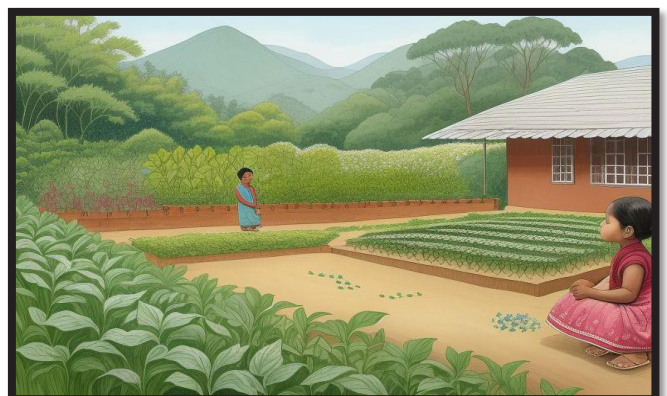


Outdoor environments

The outdoors is a very necessary element for the development of children. It provides stimulation and excitement in children. Nature has a lot of things to teach us and our children. It is very crucial for us to tap into that knowledge and facilitate outdoor time. With the increasing usage of technology in our lives, families are getting more and more alienated from nature.

Play in the natural setting is more diverse, collaborative, imaginative and creative. Outdoor play also nurtures scientific temper in children. They get the opportunity to experiment with natural objects and reach to conclusions on their own. For example, children might wonder what ants eat, or where do they go or live. They can find answers to their own questions in the natural environment.

In places where there is enough space, there can be structures that allows children to engage in motor activities like jumping, hopping, skipping, running, sliding, swinging, nature walk for collections of various type of plants and leaves etc.



In Meghalaya, we have places like Mawsynram and Sohra (Cherrapunjee) which are considered as the wettest places in India. It is common to hear that children should be indoors when it rains. On rainy

days, we tend to focus on things to do indoors but it is interesting to note that more experiential learning happens when children spend time outdoors in the rain too. Playing outside in the rain can be fun provided they wear the right gear. Many activities such as splashing the puddles, making nature boat out of leaves, flower petals or creating dams are ways to talk about characteristics of water, how water flows, etc.

Along with constructing elaborate outdoor play areas, one also has to keep aside some space with shade for children during rainy days as well. The sandpit, portable seesaws can be in that space where children can enjoy the outdoors as well as be away from rains.

The need for setting the outdoor play, maximizing the space, and ensuring safety of children is important while designing outdoor play environment. Some safety tips for teachers to keep in mind while setting up an outdoor play environment:

- While taking the children outdoors, we should ensure their safety like no crossing roads, no playing near the river side, etc.
- It is important to ensure that the outdoor area is free from animals, poisonous plants, dangerous insects or any kind of harm to young children.
- Play or activity area should be safe with a gate or wall from road traffic, trespassers and any threat to life or security.
- All drains, ditches, and potholes must be well-covered and inaccessible to children.
- During conduct of the activities, the outdoor area must be well supervised by teachers and adults, at all times.
- If the outdoor surface is hard, it should be levelled and made stone free.
- The outdoor play area must have variety of play materials, depending upon space and resource availability.
- Outdoor space must provide opportunities for gross motor play like running, jumping, cycling, etc.
- Outdoor equipment's in the garden or grass surfaces such as slides, swings should be arranged.
- In the absence of outdoor space, the gross motor activities can be organized within the available indoor space.
- Sand/clay/water play should be provided to children for sensorial and motor development.

Social learning environment

Children learn by observing and imitating the people around them. The term social environment refers to the way that a classroom environment influences or supports the interactions that occur among young children, teachers, and family members. A well- designed social environment helps foster positive peer relationships, creates positive interactions between adults and children, and provides opportunities for adults to support children to achieve their social goals.



Some aspects to consider for a positive social environment:

1. **Group size:** Children should spend time every day in different kinds of groups. Groups of various sizes open different opportunities for social interaction and learning. Activities suited to large groups include opening group circle time, story time, mealtimes, and outdoor time. Small groups allow more time for interaction with individual children and are ideal for teaching new skills and providing feedback. Additionally, small groups offer more opportunities for children to practice their language skills and for teachers to facilitate children's communication development.

When considering group size teachers should:

- a. Make sure children have opportunities to get to know each other and engage when in groups, including snack and mealtimes, to promote interactions.
- b. Consider limiting the number of children allowed in a given area at one time.
- c. Make sure that groups are big enough to discuss and work together where each child is able to hear the others.

2. **Group composition:** Groups can either be made up of children with similar skills and abilities (i.e., homogenous groups) or mixed abilities (i.e., heterogeneous groups). Homogenous groups are ideal for teaching targeted skills or skills that meet the particular needs of a subset of children. Conversely, groups that include children with diverse skills and abilities provide opportunities for all children to learn positive social skills and communication skills from their peers. In this way, all children contribute to the classroom culture while also receiving the support they need to interact with their peers and teachers in meaningful ways.

When considering group composition teachers should:

- a. Create activities that require children to work together and share materials.
 - b. Provide visual supports to promote social interaction and independence. Some children may not interact with their peers because they may not know what to do or how to do it.
 - c. Model, encourage, and teach positive social-interaction and problem-solving skills.
3. **Teacher-initiated activities:** A learning environment's daily routine should include both teacher-initiated and child-initiated activities. Teacher-initiated activities are those that the teacher plans and leads, such as story time or a small-group learning activity. When they plan activities for the social environment, teachers should:
- a. Recognize that children may demonstrate challenging behaviour during teacher-led activities that they find difficult, uninteresting, or overwhelming. Teachers can use their knowledge of children's preferred activities and materials and embed them in activities that may be more challenging (for example, if a child love trains, but does not like to use any writing materials, provide pictures of trains for the child to colour at the writing corner).
 - b. Assign classroom jobs or responsibilities (for example, plant water helper, animal feeder, lunch cart pusher, table setter) to help children feel a sense of belonging.
 - c. Make sure that every child has frequent opportunities to answer questions, make choices, or offer comments in a verbal or non-verbal way. For example, children can indicate their song choice during group time in a number of different ways (for example, speaking, pointing).
4. **Child-initiated activities:** Generally, a child-initiated activity is one that allows children to follow their interests and explore their passions. When they plan activities for the social environment, teachers should:
- a. Take note of children's preferred activities when they have the opportunity to choose their own. Doing so can help teachers to identify the children's areas of strengths and interests.
 - b. Act as guests in their world of exploration since play belongs to children.
 - c. Avoid over-organising or over-planning for the day. The most effective child-initiated activity is the one where children have enough scope to determine how the details will evolve over time.
5. **Materials and activities that nurture collaboration:** Activities, games, and toys that require two or more children to participate have been shown to promote social interaction. More, different types of materials promote different types of play and social interaction. For example, a board game might lend itself to a couple of children, a home-living area might be more appropriate for a small group, and a game of duck-duck-goose requires a large group. When they think about what materials and activities should be included in their classrooms, teachers should:
- a. Limit the amount of materials so that children have to share to promote social interaction. Be careful not to limit to the point that children argue over them.
 - b. Plan projects that can be done as groups or in pairs. For example, teachers can give two children one large piece of paper to create a collage.
 - c. Provide toys—such as dolls and building blocks—that are likely to encourage social interaction

6. **Including families:** Another important aspect of designing the social environment is to build rapport through frequent, open, and honest communication with families and by making families and those important to them feel welcome. Family members can include a child's immediate family, extended family, and others in the community or neighborhood that are important in the family's life. Family members can share information about the strategies they use in their homes and cultures to promote social interaction. Teachers should listen to and incorporate parents' beliefs, as appropriate, into their instructional practices, including suggestions about how to encourage and guide children.

More specifically, when they partner with families to design the social environment, teachers should:

- a. Offer opportunities for family members (including immediate family, extended family, and community members) to volunteer in the classroom. For example, inviting a family member who plays any musical instrument to share about their music and the musical instrument they play.
- b. Provide opportunities for families to meet and connect with each other. For example, organising a parents' get-together, may be during the parent-teacher meet, once or twice a year to connect and share their journey of bringing up a child
- c. Invite families to bring materials and share activities from their home and culture. For example, anyone from the family can come as a guest to talk about their culture or any of the material culture such as the traditional dress or traditional agricultural equipment.
- d. Collaborate with families to support the development of their child's social skills at home. For example, activities can be discussed and prepared for the child to be practiced at home under the guidance of their parents such as listening to stories created by the child, labelling emotions of others in different situations beyond classroom walls, etc.
- e. Include families in brainstorming and planning activities to meet a child's individual needs. For example, teacher can collaborate with the parents to prepare certain activities which can be supervised by the parents such as counting the number of rice cakes made for a child who is struggling to count, or giving multiple step instructions (go to the kitchen, find the smallest pumpkin, bring it to the room) to a child who finds it difficult to follow multiple instructions.

Chapter 6

Safety and security in schools



This chapter is adopted with some modifications from the corresponding NCF-F section (pp. 200-202).

Physical Safety

1. Teachers must ensure that children are physically 'visible' at all times. A responsible adult must supervise children during breaks and playtime.
2. All buildings and equipment must adhere to safety standards, e.g., grills on windows, railings on balconies, safe electrical connections, earthed electrical equipment, and open wells must be covered.
3. Safety equipment (e.g., fire extinguishers) must be immediately available and maintained in good working condition.
4. A ramp for children with special needs should be built.
5. Tables and chairs should be of appropriate height, and in addition, round tables should be available for the convenience of children for group activities/work.
6. Windows should not open into classrooms as they are often the source of accidents (e.g., children often hit their heads on window shutters as they stand up or move around).

7. The school should have a proper boundary, and the playground should be half cemented and half grass for safety during playtime.
8. All materials that may be potentially hazardous must be stored carefully and not be accessible to children, if needed; they must be used under adult supervision (e.g., knives, scissors, and blades, cleaning liquids).
9. A first aid kit should be kept in working order in the school, and all teachers must have basic first aid training.
10. Nutritious mid-day meals must be served under safe and hygienic conditions.
11. In the case of an accident or a medical emergency, the supervising adult (e.g., teacher or head teacher) must take a decision and inform parents immediately.
12. If a child feels unwell in school but it is not a medical emergency, the teacher may contact the parents and ask them to pick the child up or, if possible, some responsible person from school may take the child home after ascertaining that there will be somebody responsible at home. Alternatively, if there is a place to rest, the child may rest in the school and return home at the normal time.



Emotional safety

1. Physical violence and corporal punishment should be prohibited.
2. Adults must not bully, harass, or intimidate children, even by implication or covertly. They should not use abusive or demeaning language or label children.
3. Teachers must provide equal opportunity and ensure equal participation of all children in everyday activities (e.g., seating arrangement - reshuffling seats to avoid dominance of one over the other and to prevent bullying).
4. Teachers must use positive language with the children at all times and provide encouragement that reinforces affirmative behaviour and actions in the classroom and elsewhere.
5. Language diversity can act as a barrier between the teacher and the children, and even among the children themselves. Therefore, it would be an advantage if the teacher is multilingual and can communicate and understand with the majority of the children in the classroom.
6. Teachers must intervene if they encounter inappropriate behaviour that hurts others. If a child crosses a significant boundary, the first step would be to try to understand the reasons or underlying causes and address them (e.g., teachers can make use of anecdotal records to keep track of changes in behaviour). In extreme cases, counselling should be provided by teachers initially and later by authorized professionals.

7. Confidentiality of sensitive information (e.g., regarding a child's particular circumstances) must be maintained.

Child abuse

1. According to the WHO, child abuse includes any act, deed, or word that debases, degrades, or demeans the intrinsic worth and dignity of a child as a human being. In other words, abuse can be physical, sexual, and even emotional.
2. There must be no tolerance for child abuse in any form. This includes bullying by peers or older children from other classes, uncomfortable/unsafe touch by teachers, the principal, and family members.
3. Teachers, parents, and all community members must be aware of what defines child abuse. They must be aware of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2023. They must also recognize possible indicators of different forms of abuse (Please note that these are possible indicators only and a detailed investigation must be conducted to make informed decisions):
 - a. Unexplained bruises or injuries on the face, legs, bottom, or torso; becoming withdrawn; always choosing to wear clothes that cover their bodies; aggressive or self-destructive behaviour; or other unusual behaviour or behaviour that is out of the ordinary (for the specific child).
 - b. Avoiding home, particularly avoiding familiar person(s); running away or continually staying at friends' houses; developing a poor self-image/self-esteem; having poor peer relationships; looking weak, dull, malnourished, or untidy; and coming to school without books, pens, pencils, or other necessary belongings.
 - c. Starting to stammer; being unable to speak up in class and appearing insecure or frightened or angry.
4. Teachers can use stories, plays, and creative methods to teach children about safe and unsafe touch.
5. If teachers observe consistent changes in a child's behaviour, they should promptly report it to the appropriate authority. All procedures addressing such incidents must prioritize the child's safety, and confidentiality should be maintained, sharing information only on a need-to-know basis to protect the child.

All schools must be aware of, and stringently adhere to, the laws of POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment) for adults and POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences). All adults at the school must behave in a manner that reflects the values of being an educator and a responsible adult and protect their colleagues and students from sexual transgressions and violations. Schools must show zero tolerance for violations in this regard.

Nation Curricular Framework School Education, 2023

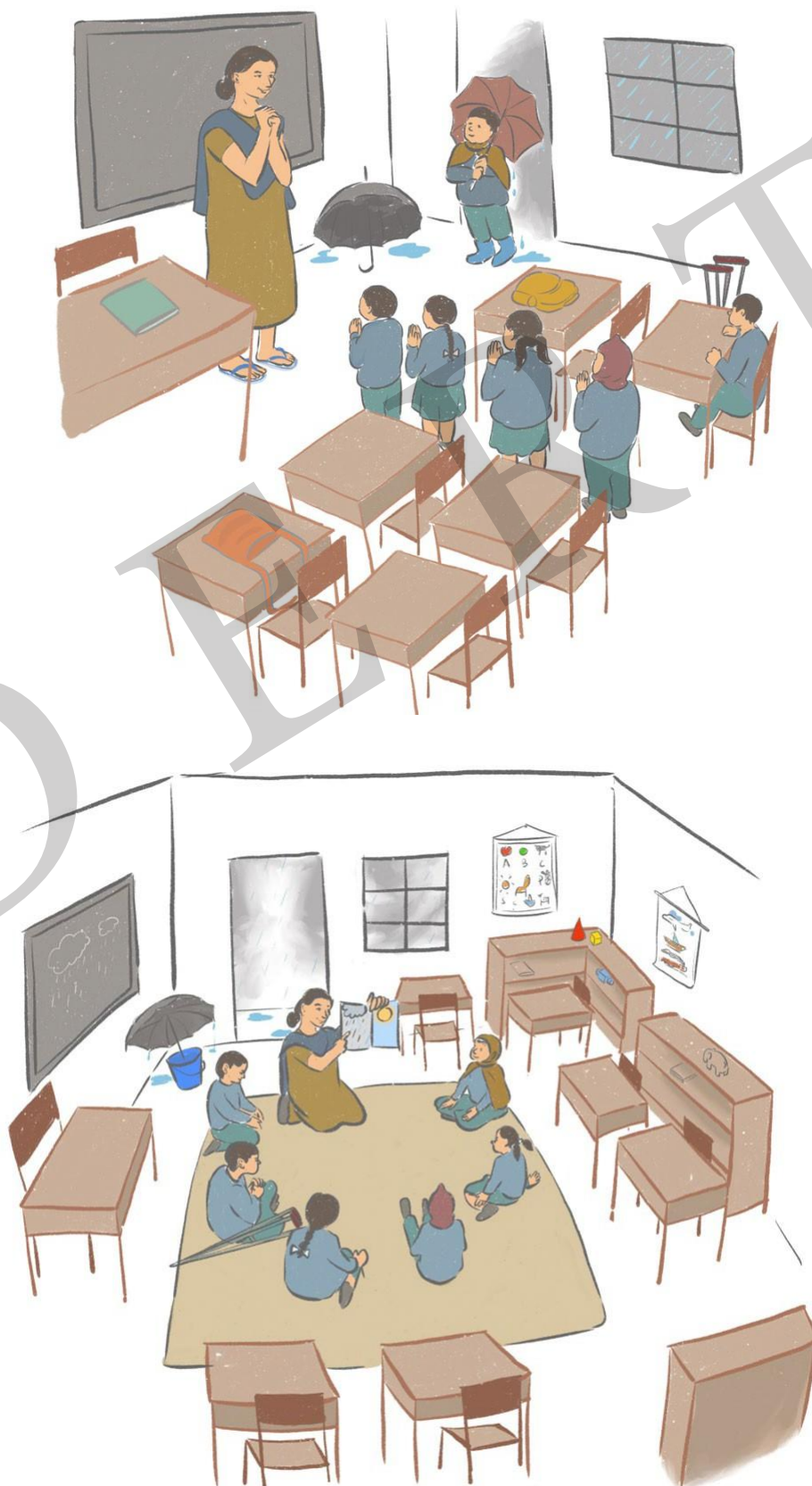
Other overall safety measures

1. Addresses and phone numbers of parents should be regularly updated and made accessible. Emergency contact numbers must be available for all children/adults. For example, children's identity cards should have the detailed profile of the child, including emergency contact numbers.
2. Information about any particular medical condition and medication or preventive measures should be obtained at the time of admission and updated regularly, making it available to all concerned. This is important for all children, particularly those at risk.
3. The school should be aware of children with asthma, epilepsy, or known allergies. Anti-epileptic or anti-allergic medicines, as prescribed by the doctor treating these children, should be available in the school. The school must have written consent from parents/caregivers to use these.
4. Information about any emotional upheaval or trauma that the child may be temporarily going through should be made available to all concerned teachers. It can also be kept as confidential records.
5. Telephone numbers of the closest medical centers/hospitals/doctors, ambulance services, fire stations, and police stations should be displayed on bulletin boards for easy access.

Chapter 7

Teaching in the Foundational Stage

Let's read what is happening in a Foundational Stage classroom of Meghalaya...







The teacher arrives before everyone else in the morning. She warmly greets the children as they come to school. The day begins with an assembly. As it is raining today, all the children of Preschool II have gathered inside the classroom. The assembly begins with everyone singing a song. After this, the teacher takes the attendance by involving children. As there are few children in class today due to the rains, the teacher decides to try out an attendance activity. She writes everyone's names on a chart paper and calls out each name one by one. Children walk up to the attendance chart and draw a flower in the empty box next to their name. A few children take time to mark their attendance, but the teacher does not rush them.

The classroom has child-sized tables and chairs. The teacher rotates the seating arrangements weekly. The classroom is attractive and welcoming, with enough space for group and individual activities. Although the classroom is not too large, the teacher has arranged small corners like the reading corner, the toy corner, and the art corner. She uses the space on the walls and has made shelves out of old cardboard cartons in which all the resource materials are kept. Some resources, such as storybooks and collections of seeds, have been donated by parents and the community. Each corner is labelled and has pictures for easy identification and use. The school also has an innovative outdoor play centre using local resources such as old tires, planks, and ropes.

After the assembly, all the children gather for a Circle Time conversation. The teacher's original plan for the day was on animals, but the rain gives her the idea of doing something around the weather. She asks, "What did you see on your way to school on this rainy day?". Children share the different things they saw and their experience of coming to school holding umbrellas and wearing gumboots and raincoats. They share in the language of their comfort, as the teacher does not impose any one language on the children. The teacher further asks, "Would you all like to see what I have?". The teacher brings out picture cards depicting different weather conditions like a sunny day and a rainy day. Children talk about what they see in the picture and the teacher asks several questions to guide the conversation.

After Circle Time, children notice that it has stopped raining. They request the teacher to take them outside. The teacher agrees and puts everyone in pairs. They come up with a plan for having fun outside, and the teacher helps the children come up with some rules to keep in mind like they will be careful where they play, they will play in the designated area only, they will wash off the mud before coming back inside, etc. The teacher also provides some instructions for the children. She asks them to notice different aspects of their environment such as the soil, the leaves, the clouds, the air, etc.

Children go out with their partners and the teacher and explore their surroundings. Once back inside, the children report things beyond what the teacher asked them to, such as the umbrella kept outside, how the water has collected in holes in the muddy area, and the fluffy clouds in the sky. The teacher thinks that this is the perfect time to tell a story. She animatedly begins to narrate:

Once upon a time, in a small village in the Garo Hills, there lived two children named Tengtang and Silte. Tengtang loved to watch the clouds, and he often lay on the grassy hillside looking up at the sky. One day, Silte came to join him, and they both lay there watching the clouds.

As they watched, they saw a cloud that looked like a big elephant. Tengtang pointed to the cloud and said, "Look, Silte! That cloud looks like an elephant. Do you see its trunk and big ears?"

Silte looked up and smiled. "Yes, I see it," she said. "And look over there, that cloud looks like a rabbit hopping through the sky."

Tengnang looked where Silte was pointing and saw the cloud. "You're right, Silte! It really does look like a rabbit."

As they continued to watch the clouds, they saw many more shapes, including a boat, a tree, and a house. They were having so much fun guessing what the clouds looked like that they didn't even notice the time passing.

Suddenly, they heard thunder in the distance. They looked up at the sky and saw that it was getting dark. "We better hurry home," said Tengnang.

Silte nodded in agreement, and they quickly gathered their things and ran home before the rain started. As they ran, they laughed and talked about all the different shapes they saw in the clouds.

From that day on, Tengnang and Silte often lay on the hillside watching the clouds and guessing what shapes they saw. They were happy to share their cloud-watching adventures with each other and couldn't wait to see what other shapes they would discover in the sky.

Everyone takes a quick peek at the clouds outside and share the different animals they can see. The teacher asks children to look at the clouds on their way back home and on their way back to school and share if they observed any more animal shapes. The next day, the children talk about the different animal shapes they observed in the clouds and how the clouds in the evening were dark because it was raining, but fluffy and white in the morning because it was sunny.

The teacher then demonstrates how to make paper boats from wastepaper. Children are excited to make the boats and test them out in the pond outside. They ask the teacher if their boats will swim like the real boats they have seen in the nearby river. Children go out to the pond and see that their paper boats swim around like the real boat! While children are out in the pond, one child who has a physical disability in the leg cannot kneel close to the water. His friends take his boat and make it race in the water, without the teacher having to request it. While doing the different activities, the teacher does not use labels like "poor," "not good," or "wrong." Instead, she says, "You are so observant!", "Well spotted!", "Give it a try!", and so on.

Children come back inside and spend their remaining time colouring an outline picture of a rainy day. They draw their own pictures too. One child asks if she can use sketch pens to colour. The teacher takes a sketch pen and demonstrates how using crayons would be a better option, and that she can use sketch pens for adding fine details or outlining her drawing. Another child asks, "Can I draw a rainbow?" The teacher gets impressed and asks, "Do you like rainbows?" The child says, "Yes, I saw one today morning when coming to school, and want to draw it." The teacher asks the child to describe the rainbow. He couldn't explain it in words but drew it with the teacher's help.

To assess the children's progress in these two days, the teacher writes down her observations in the form of anecdotal records. She also takes children's artwork and puts it in their respective portfolio files. On a rotation basis, some artwork is displayed on the walls.

Pedagogical techniques used by the teacher

The pedagogical techniques used by the teacher in the given classroom description are:

Circle Time (Free and Guided Conversations): The teacher leads a conversation with the students, allowing them to share their experiences and opinions, and guides the discussion to reinforce the day's lesson. She uses open-ended questions to promote critical thinking and problem-solving.

Storytelling: The teacher tells an engaging story to illustrate a concept, spark imagination, and foster interest and curiosity in the children.

Outdoor play: The teacher encourages children to explore their surroundings, appreciate nature, and follow safety rules while playing outside.

Art: The teacher provides the children with the resources and guidance to explore their creativity and express themselves through drawing, painting and crafting.

The teacher also does the following:

- **Warmly greeting the children:** The teacher warmly greets the children as they arrive at school, which helps in building a positive relationship with the students.
- **Assembly:** The day begins with an assembly where the teacher leads the children in singing the welcome song and taking attendance in a fun way by involving children.
- **Rotating seating arrangements:** The teacher rotates the seating arrangements of the classroom weekly, which allows the children to interact with different classmates and promotes socialization.
- **Creating learning corners:** The teacher has created different corners in the classroom, such as a reading corner, toy corner, and art corner. These corners are labeled and have pictures for easy identification and use, which encourages children to explore and engage in different activities.
- **Using local resources:** The teacher has created an innovative outdoor play center using local resources such as old tyres, planks, and ropes. This promotes sustainability and creativity.
- **Positive feedback:** The teacher uses positive feedback to encourage children and boost their self-esteem. She avoids using negative labels such as "poor" or "wrong."
- **Providing structure:** The teacher provides structure by setting rules for outdoor play and providing structured instructions for the children.

Pedagogical principles the teacher keeps in mind

Principle 1: A safe and stimulating environment is fundamental to development and learning at this Stage.

- Activities are joyful and encourage the use of all the child's senses.
- Classrooms provide variety and challenge.
- Physical and emotional safety is paramount while making pedagogical choices.
- Classrooms are clean, cheerful, well-ventilated, and well-lit learning spaces.

The teacher creates a warm and welcoming environment by greeting the children when they arrive at school. The classroom is visually stimulating with child-sized tables and chairs. There is enough space for group and individual activities, and small corners such as the reading corner, the toy corner, and the art corner. The classroom is not too large, but the teacher has arranged it efficiently to optimize the available space. Resource materials are easily accessible, and the school has an innovative outdoor play center using local resources such as old tires, planks, and ropes donated by parents and the community. Children feel comfortable in this environment and have access to various resources that promote their cognitive and socio-emotional development.

Principle 2: Play is central to learning and development at this Stage. • Play can be free, guided, or structured. • Conversations, stories, music, music, movement, arts, craft, toys and games are part of play, and of the methods to engage children in play - other methods could be innovated. • Outdoor play is actively encouraged.	The teacher uses play-based activities and a variety of materials to create learning experiences that are fun and meaningful. There is also balance in the type of play activities – some are indoors, some are outdoors, some are initiated by the teacher, while others are initiated by the children, some are guided/supported by the teacher while others are completely free for children. The simple routine of recording attendance has been converted to a fun play activity by the teacher. During outdoor play, the teacher provides instructions and helps the children come up with their own rules too. They explore their surroundings keenly after it stops raining. The teacher also uses play pedagogy with art-integrated learning through picture reading, drawing, and colouring. Making paper boats using wastepaper and sailing them in the little pond outside the classroom are also great examples of play activities scaffolded by the teacher but with opportunities for children to play freely too. Additionally, the outdoor play center also provides opportunities for children to engage in outdoor play.
Principle 3: Nurturing relationships between Teacher and child are the basis of teaching and learning. • Listening carefully to children and ‘being with them’ fully is important.	The teacher builds positive relationships with the children by warmly greeting them and involving them in the attendance process. She listens to their interests and adapts her plans accordingly. She also helps the children create rules for outside play, which promotes their social and emotional development. She uses demonstration as a powerful scaffolding tool, which further nurtures the bond between teacher and learner. She engages children in activities that they are interested in by asking them questions to guide their learning and listening to their responses. By doing so, the teacher demonstrates respect and care for the children, which helps to build a positive relationship between them.
Principle 4: Physical development is very important at this Stage. • Classroom activities encourage gross and fine motor skills, and physical movement. • This also helps socio-emotional and cognitive development.	The teacher encourages the children to notice different aspects of their environment, such as soil, leaves, and clouds, which promotes their sensory development. Children develop their fine motor skills while making their paper boats and coloring the outline pictures of a rainy day and are involved in gross motor activities while sailing their boats in the little pond outside. Their sensitivity towards helping their friend who has a physical disability highlights the connection between physical development and socio-emotional and cognitive development. The outdoor play center in general provides opportunities for children to develop their gross motor skills, such as running and jumping, and their fine motor skills, such as grasping and manipulating small objects.

Principle 5: Every child learns at their own pace and learning needs are addressed individually. • Different children respond to the same situation differently. • The same child may, at different times, respond differently to similar situations. • Opportunities are provided for all children to participate in the classroom in ways that suit each child best.	he teacher provides a safe and stimulating learning environment that accommodates the needs of all the children, including those with disabilities, by ensuring that the learning environment is accessible and inclusive. For example, when taking the children outside, the teacher helps the child with a physical disability by encouraging their friends to assist him with his paper boat. During outdoor play, the teacher helps children come up with rules to keep in mind, and the children explore their surroundings while following these rules. The teacher also adapts her plans according to the children's interests and needs. For example, she changes her plan from animals to weather based on the children's experience of coming to school on a rainy day. When a few children take time to mark their attendance on the chart, she does not rush them. She also provides structured instructions for the children, which helps those who need more guidance.
Principle 6: Children at the Foundational Stage are most comfortable and learn best in their home language. • The language of instruction and transaction is the child's home language/mother tongue/familiar language. • Use of home languages is celebrated and encouraged in the classroom. • Transition into school languages, when different from home languages, is gentle and always scaffolded by the home language. • Children are encouraged to express themselves as much as possible and never judged or reprimanded for the language that they speak in.	the given illustration, the teacher does not impose any one language on the children. Children share in the language of their comfort. This bridges the child's language and the school's language and makes for a smooth transition between the languages that are familiar to the child and the medium of instruction, which may not be a familiar language.
Principle 7: Learning experiences in the classroom are deeply connected to children's lives and their contexts. • Local stories, rhymes, songs, games, crafts, material are used extensively. • Children's home language is welcome and indeed encouraged in the classroom.	he teacher asks children about their experiences of a rainy day as a starting point for learning about weather and to guide the direction of the day's activities. The plot and characters of the story she tells are linked to children's natural and social context and reflect their interests and activities. The activity of making paper boats and sailing them in the little pond outside is rooted in children's experiences outside the classroom. Even though they have not made paper boats before, they are eager to see if a boat made of paper would work or if it would go to the bottom of the pond (sink) like

Principle 8: Learning experiences are designed to build on children's previous understanding. • Planning moves from simple to complex ideas and concepts based on this principle. • Using the home language facilitates this	the pebbles they throw into the river. The teacher also encourages them to notice different aspects of their immediate school environment after it stops raining. The home assignment of observing clouds on the way back home and on the way back to school is also fun and engaging.
Principle 9: Classroom processes address all domains of development. • Balance is maintained between activities pertaining to physical development, socioemotional and ethical development, cognitive development, aesthetic and cultural development.	he teacher integrates all the domains of development and does not devote separate time for the development of each domain. For example, the storytelling session engages children in the cognitive, language, and social-emotional domains of development. The outdoor play (including sailing the paper boats) engages children in almost all domains of development. The teacher also uses a variety of resources and materials to create learning experiences that promote development in all domains.

Other effective teaching strategies that the teacher ensures:

1. **Children always come first:** Here the teacher put the children first and offer a learning opportunity to each child to ensure that every child engages in developmentally appropriate activities and takes an active role in learning.
2. **Identifying teachable moments:** Teachable moments are those spontaneous opportunities while teaching which the teacher identifies for deeper exploration. In the classroom description discussed above, the teacher moulds her day's plan keeping in mind the rainy day. Identifying teachable moments makes the teaching-learning process more interactive and engaging.
3. **Autonomous learners lead to innovation:** Self-learning motivates each child to discover and enhance creativity and innovativeness.
4. **Children are natural researchers:** Children actively try to understand the environment to understand how things really work. Through repeating situations, children track what has happened, gain more information, and clarify misconceptions.
5. **Exploration and asking open ended questions help children how to think and learn:** Children are excellent observers, and their natural curiosity is satisfied through exploring the world around them. Children are encouraged to ask questions to clarify their doubts. Open ended questions promote thinking, reflecting, creating, and doing for further imagination. These opportunity account for the child's learning.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

To achieve the competencies and curricular goals of the Foundational Stage, teachers must adopt Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP), taking into consideration the child's age, needs, abilities, and social context. DAP involves using practices that promote learning and development for the child in different contexts. It considers the diversity of children with varying socio-economic, emotional backgrounds, abilities, and learning styles. Active learning is the core principle at this stage. Teachers must provide multiple learning opportunities to engage with the same concepts through play, storytelling, exploration, activities, observation, inquiry, experimentation, interaction, and investigation. Collaborative learning with others, communicating feelings and expressions, and critical

and creative thinking also contribute to stimulating experiences. Teachers should also create learning experiences that enable every child to make important decisions about their own capacities and areas of improvement. DAP includes assessment that is also developmentally appropriate. To know more, read the section on 'Assessment'.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice....:

- means understanding where children are in their learning and helping them learn new things that are both challenging and doable.
- must be grounded in research on child development and learning and have a broad evidence base.
- requires intentional teaching that encompasses both academic and social-emotional learning.
- should be adapted to reflect the strengths, needs, and interests of individual children and culturally, linguistically, and ability-diverse families.
- includes formative, authentic assessments to support children's learning and growth and to guide teachers' ongoing decision making.
- promotes active, meaningful, and socially interactive learning through exploration and discovery guided by knowledgeable, responsive teachers.
- must address the whole child (whole child development), including health, approaches to learning, and social-emotional development, as well as academic content.
- requires partnerships with families and communities built on mutual trust and respect, as well as ongoing communication and collaboration.
- must be supported by policies and systems at the local, state, and national levels that include adequate funding, resources, and professional development for teachers and caregivers.
- recognizes that quality early education is essential for school readiness and lifelong success and that all children deserve equitable opportunities to reach their full potential.

Teacher as a facilitator

In the context of the shift towards child-centric education at all levels, it is crucial for teachers to adopt a facilitator's role in which they enable children to discover knowledge for themselves. Facilitators:

- **ensure inclusion of all children:** Inclusion relates to cultural, social, and economic inclusion, and the inclusion of Children with Special Need (CWSN), which makes a classroom inclusive. The teacher can adapt various activities to suit the learning needs of children.
- **understand the developmental characteristics of children:** Teachers need to be supported with knowledge about the developmental characteristics of children through programs like capacity building and professional development.
- **are interactive and not directive in their approach:** Teaching - learning process will be as child-centered approach whereby the teacher interacts daily with children and not just directs or instruct them.
- **stimulate and plan appropriate learning experiences and opportunities:** Program planning (yearly – weekly – daily) will guide and direct teachers to plan appropriate learning experiences and activities that are balanced and progressive in nature from Preschool I – PS II – PS III and further. This will provide various experiences and opportunities to children.
- **form partnerships with all stakeholders:** Stakeholders will include parents, staff, teachers, community members and all agencies. Teacher's role is important to link with all stakeholders through informal interaction and through programs and meetings.
- **plan for transition of children from Preschool I-III to class I and 2:** Preparing children (during curriculum transaction) with a readiness to learn through various activities and experiences by aligning

‘Learning outcomes – Pedagogy and Assessment’ from Preschool I-III and preparing children’s entry to class I and above, with linkages in terms of curriculum (Foundational Stage).

- **understand child’s cultural background and prior experiences:** Interaction with parents before a child starts schooling helps the teacher to get an idea about the background of the child. This can be further enhanced with the preparation of a portfolio of each individual child. Portfolios can be transferred as child proceeds from one stage of schooling to the next.
- **boost learner’s confidence and allowing initiation and imagination to flourish:** Teacher can provide various experiences whereby children get opportunities to express, to present their views, likes and dislike and encourage them to speak out with continuous informal and formal talks with the teacher.
- **encourage conversation and appreciation:** It is especially important for teachers to provide a level for children to voice themselves starting with informal conversations during daily classroom teaching – learning process, during assembly and outside classroom in the language that they are comfortable with, especially at pre-school level. Children need to be infused with various situations during teaching and teacher as role model in showing appreciation towards children and towards environment.
- **maintain a safe and a comfortable learning environment for the children:** It is also important for a teacher to see that the environment around the child, is safe and provides comfort in all aspects for a child to be able to have a positive learning experience.
- **devise Developmentally Appropriate Practices:** To address the inclusivity aspect in the teaching - learning process, a teacher can devise and innovate strategies and learning experiences that can support the learning of children with diverse learning abilities and styles.

Contextual learning opportunities: Child’s context and learning context

You have already read in Chapter I ‘*The child’s context*’ about the importance of providing contextual learning opportunities to learners. This approach involves using real-life situations, experiences, and contexts to enhance learning and make it relevant and meaningful to learners’ lives. The NCF-FS 2022 recognizes that the child’s context and learning context are crucial factors in creating effective learning opportunities.

- The **child’s context** refers to their cultural, linguistic, social, and economic background that shapes their identity, experiences, and perspectives.
- The **learning context**, on the other hand, refers to the environment in which learning takes place, including physical, social, and emotional conditions, as well as available resources and tools.

By integrating the child’s context and the learning context, educators can create authentic and engaging learning experiences that cater to individual learners’ needs and interests. The NCF-FS 2022 emphasizes the importance of developing learning materials and activities that reflect learners’ cultural and linguistic diversity and incorporating local knowledge, practices, and resources into the learning process. The child’s immediate environment, including their family, relatives, friends, community, and media, plays a crucial role in their early learning experiences, which occur through various forms of interaction. When a child enters preschool, their learning experiences become more structured and enriched by incorporating their prior experiences. Teachers can create a learning situation tailored to the child’s context, needs, interests, capacities, and social and cultural background. By including cultural characteristics familiar to the child, such as traditions, norms, values, customs, arts, and folklore practiced and followed by their community, and engaging them in familiar activities like playing

games, toys, telling folk tales, and singing local songs, teachers can make learning more meaningful for the child.

Creating a conducive learning environment

A conducive learning environment refers to the physical, emotional, and social conditions that are necessary for effective teaching and learning to take place. This type of environment supports the development of a positive attitude towards learning, enhances children's engagement and motivation, and fosters their cognitive and socio-emotional growth. The NCF-FS 2022 highlights six key characteristics of such an environment: safety, inclusivity, learner-centeredness, engagement and challenge, collaboration and cooperation, and adequate resources. A safe and secure environment that is inclusive, equitable, and focused on individual learners' needs and abilities is essential for encouraging active participation, experimentation, problem-solving, and social skills development. Moreover, a well-resourced environment that promotes teamwork and communication and stimulates curiosity and critical thinking is fundamental to achieving positive learning outcomes. Overall, a conducive learning environment is essential for effective teaching and learning to take place, and it is the responsibility of educators and institutions to create such an environment for their learners. To read more about learning environment and how it can be created, refer to Chapter 5 '*Environment as the teacher*'.

Inclusive pedagogy

Inclusive pedagogy is an approach that seeks to create an environment where all children, regardless of their background or abilities, are included and provided with opportunities to learn and thrive. The NEP 2020 aims to create an inclusive education system that provides equal opportunities to all learners, regardless of their background, socio-economic status, gender, religion, or abilities. It emphasizes the need to address the diverse learning needs of students and promote social integration in classrooms. The policy recognizes the importance of early childhood care and education and calls for the creation of inclusive and safe learning environments. It also promotes the use of technology and innovative pedagogies to enhance the learning experiences of all students. Additionally, the policy highlights the need to provide special support and accommodations to students with disabilities and other special needs, and to ensure their full participation in the educational process.



Common misconceptions about inclusive pedagogy	In reality
Inclusive pedagogy is only for students with disabilities	Inclusive pedagogy benefits all students, regardless of ability, by creating a supportive and welcoming learning environment that caters to their diverse learning needs and styles.
Inclusive pedagogy requires a lot of additional resources and training	Inclusive pedagogy can be implemented using existing resources and does not require extensive training. Teachers can start by adopting simple strategies, such as creating a safe and inclusive classroom environment, using differentiated instruction, and providing multi-modal learning experiences.
Inclusive pedagogy means lowering academic standards	Inclusive pedagogy aims to provide equal opportunities for all learners to achieve academic success by adapting the curriculum to meet their diverse needs and learning styles. It does not mean lowering academic standards, but rather creating a more flexible and accessible learning environment that allows all students to reach their full potential.
Inclusive pedagogy is only relevant for special education teachers	Inclusive pedagogy is relevant for all teachers and should be an integral part of mainstream education. All teachers can benefit from using inclusive pedagogy strategies to create a supportive and engaging learning environment that caters to the diverse needs of their students.
Inclusive pedagogy is expensive and requires special equipment and materials	Inclusive pedagogy does not necessarily require expensive equipment or materials. Teachers can use low-cost, everyday materials to create learning experiences that cater to the diverse needs of their students. Inclusive pedagogy is about creating a mindset and approach to teaching that values diversity and supports all learners.

The following must be kept in mind while designing an inclusive Foundational Stage classroom:

Different learning styles: Children have different ways of learning, and it's important for teachers to recognize and accommodate these differences. Some children may be visual learners, while others may be auditory or kinesthetic learners. Teachers can use a variety of teaching strategies, such as hands-on activities, visual aids, and group discussions, to engage children with different learning styles. By recognizing and accommodating different learning styles, teachers can help all children learn and succeed.

Multilingual pedagogy: In many parts of the world, children speak multiple languages, and it's important for teachers to recognize and value this diversity. Teachers can use multilingual pedagogy to support children's learning in their home language while also helping them develop proficiency in the language of instruction. This can include using bilingual materials, incorporating songs and stories in different languages, and encouraging children to share their language and culture with their classmates.

Flexible pedagogy: Flexible pedagogy involves being responsive to children's needs and interests, and adapting teaching strategies and activities accordingly. This can include co-constructing learning experiences with children, where they have a say in what they want to learn and how they want to learn it. Teachers can also use flexible grouping strategies, such as small group or one-on-one instruction, to meet the diverse needs of children in the classroom.

Children with learning difficulties, developmental delays, etc.: Inclusive pedagogy also involves supporting children with diverse learning needs, including those with learning difficulties or developmental delays. Teachers can use a range of strategies to support these children, such as providing extra support and scaffolding, adapting activities to their level of ability, and using assistive technologies. By providing a supportive and inclusive learning environment, all children can have the opportunity to learn and succeed.



Connect with community: Inclusive pedagogy involves connecting with the wider community to create a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Teachers can involve families and community members in the learning process, such as by inviting them to share their knowledge and experiences with the children. This can help to create cordial relationship and community feeling within the classroom and beyond.

Indigenous knowledge systems: Indigenous knowledge systems refer to the traditional knowledge and practices of Indigenous communities. Teachers can use inclusive pedagogy to incorporate Indigenous knowledge into the curriculum, such as by incorporating stories, songs and rhymes, language, and cultural practices into the learning experience. This can help to create a more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment for Indigenous children and their classmates.



How pedagogy evolves from **Preschool 1** to **class 2** in the **Foundational Stage**

- In preschool, learning should be based on play activities, exploration, and discovery. As the child progresses to class 1 and 2, play-based learning should continue but with more structured activities that help children develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Children should be provided with multiple modes of learning, including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. In preschool, this can be achieved through activities such as storytelling, music, and movement. In class 1 and 2, this can be achieved through the use of multimedia resources, group activities, and field trips.
- In preschool, learning should be experiential, with a focus on hands-on activities and exploration. As children progress to class 1 and 2, experiential learning should continue but with a greater emphasis on applying knowledge and skills to real-world situations.
- Assessment should be used to support learning rather than simply measure it. In preschool, assessment should be formative and focused on identifying children's strengths and needs. In class 1 and 2, assessment should continue to be formative, but with a greater focus on helping children set goals and monitor their progress.
- In preschool, language and literacy development should be emphasized through activities such as storytelling, singing, and rhyming games. As children progress to class 1 and 2, language and literacy development should continue to be emphasized through activities such as reading, writing, and discussion.
- Wherever possible, technology should be integrated into the learning process, providing children with opportunities to explore, create, and collaborate. In preschool, this can be achieved through the use of technology such as tablets and interactive whiteboards, etc. In class 1 and 2, technology integration should continue but with a greater focus on developing digital literacy skills.

Let's understand some pedagogical techniques:



1. **Conversations**

Conversations are dialogues or discussions between the teacher and children or between children on various topics based on a daily life, a story, a rhyme, a picture, children's drawings, etc. Conversations are initially guided by the teacher with the help of some probing questions, while providing space and time for children to express their thoughts, opinions, and ideas. Some children may not want to speak at the beginning, especially when they first come to school. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the teacher to give the child enough time to be comfortable speaking. Children should get a fair chance to express themselves. All thoughts should be accepted, and the teacher must not impose his/her thoughts upon children. Gradually, conversations can take the form of open discussions, or conducted just between children in pairs/groups without the involvement of the

teacher like children. Conversations can be conducted in various settings like in the morning when children first come to school or when they go back home, during Circle Time, during recess/break time (one-to-one conversation), inside or outside the classroom, before or after an activity, and so on.



2. Storytelling

Stories are a great way to grab children's interest, and children love telling stories too! As a pedagogical technique, storytelling involves creating a complete experience for children by involving conversations, pictures, story cards, big books, picture books, drawing, role-play, etc. Thus, using different methods such as using puppets, intonation (using different voices for different characters, raising, or lowering the voice, increasing, or decreasing the volume, etc.), expression and gestures, pictures, books, and music make storytelling more fun and richer in learnings. Stories can be from the local context like folk tales and fables, as well as from children's own lives. Stories in the classroom should be on topics that are of interest and relevance to children and belong to different themes. Other than the language skills (like, comprehension, imagination, expression, etc.), storytelling also helps in the development of other skills. For example, during an interactive storytelling session, the following questions may be asked to develop children's analysis and evaluation skills.... Moreover, stories contribute to ingrain ethical values within children like acceptance, equality, kindness, empathy, etc. It needs to be kept in mind that children should not be preached values through stories, rather they must be given space and the environment to develop their own values as they witness different situations and circumstances through stories. The pace of storytelling must be age appropriate, as it is important that children get some time to reflect on a situation, involve in thinking and arrive at their own understanding, question or discussion. Children must also be given the opportunity to tell their own stories and listen to each other's stories.

3. **Read aloud**

Read aloud is a modelled reading activity where the teacher takes a story or a story book and reads it aloud with expression, intonation, for example, using different voices for different characters, raising, or lowering the voice, increasing, or decreasing the volume, etc. along with facial expression. Reading aloud by the teacher helps children bond with books, especially when they are still learning how to read. For a read aloud, the teacher selects a story that is of the listening level of children and reads it out to children at a pace comfortable for them to listen and comprehend. The 'listening level' is text which children can comfortably understand, even if they are not yet able to read it independently. Read aloud also includes brief conversations in between the reading to check if children can follow or if they have any doubts. To guide the conversation, the teacher may ask comprehension and prediction questions and also talk about the illustrations in the book. However, it needs to be kept in mind that a pause should not be so long that it breaks the flow of reading the story. There should not be too many pauses. Repeat reading of books is encouraged, though new books should ideally be introduced for each read aloud so that children get the opportunity to listen to several stories in a school year.



4. **Reading big books**

Big books are oversized books that are designed to be read aloud to groups of young children in early childhood classrooms. They are typically large in size and feature large, colourful illustrations and simple, easy-to-read text that is ideal for young readers. Big books are important in early childhood classrooms because they can help promote early literacy skills i.e., concepts of print, comprehension, vocabulary development, and encouraging love of reading. They can be used in a variety of ways, such as reading aloud to the whole group, using them as a shared reading experience, or allowing children to explore the big books independently. By incorporating big books into the classroom routine, practitioners can help foster a lifelong love of reading in their young students.



5. **Rhymes and songs**

Children enjoy singing aloud. They sing while doing their work, while playing, and simply for fun. They sing to themselves, and they sing to others too. By using rhymes and songs, the teacher can work on various components of language like oral language development, vocabulary, phonological awareness, reading, etc. The teacher can use a variety of rhymes and songs like popular rhymes, folk songs, etc., in local and other languages, and create them with the help of children too. The rhymes and songs can become more complex with each passing grade in terms of length, vocabulary, topic/theme, etc. For example, in Preschool I, the teacher can use rhymes and songs of 4-5 lines on topics related to the self, family, pet, etc. There can be more use of rhyming words, onomatopoeic words (sound words). By class 2, there can be non-rhyming poems and songs too, which are of 8-10 lines, including additional topics/themes like dreams, what children wonder about, etc. By this time, children can also extend rhymes and songs, or make their own limericks, poems (like haikus), tongue twisters, rhymes, songs, etc., with the help of the teacher (or even independently!). In the early years, the use of expressions, actions, and gestures contribute to the meaning and help children comprehend what they are singing. Rhymes and songs can initially be sung only in a group, so that children do not find themselves in the spotlight. Rhymes contribute immensely to developing children's phonological awareness. Through rhymes, children can develop their awareness of words, syllables, and sounds. Rhymes and songs can also be used in conjunction with Total Physical Response (TPR). Read more about TPR activities under point 6.

6. **Music and movement**

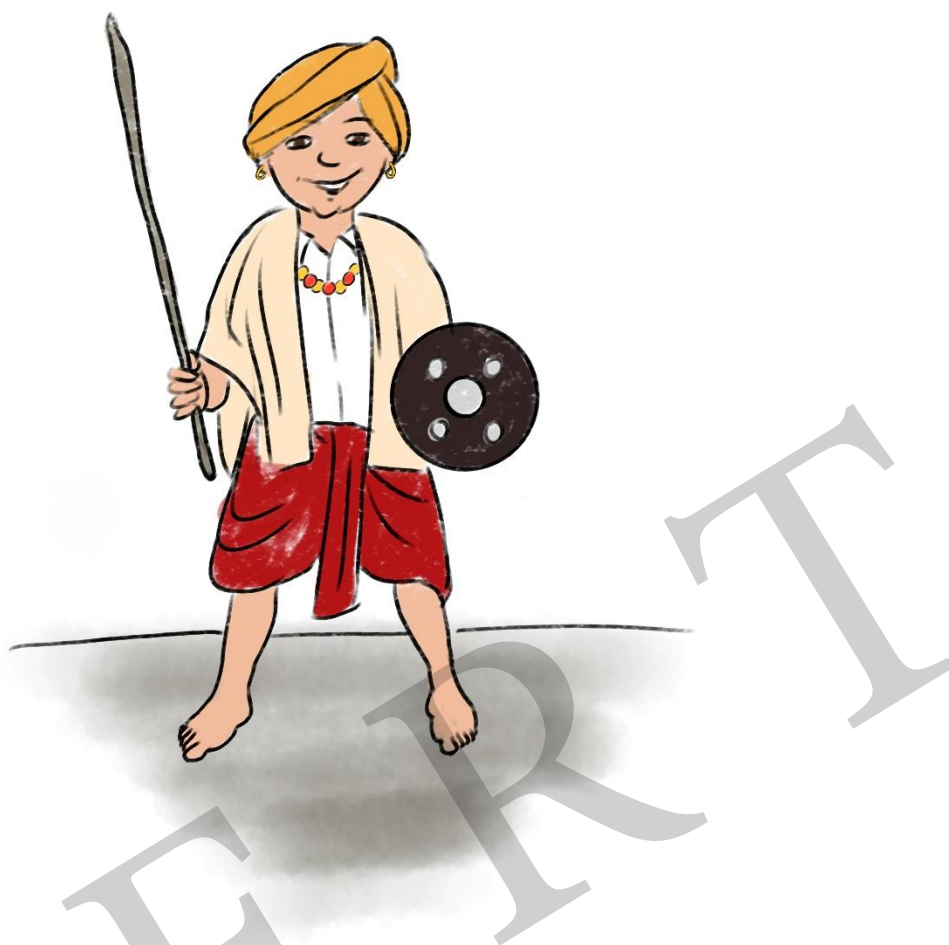
Music and movement activities are prominently used in early childhood classrooms. They are usually interactive in nature and combine music and physical movements. They promote physical development, coordination, social skills, and cognitive skills. They are also known to have a harmonizing and stimulating effect and encourage learning. Children should be encouraged to not

only follow the rhythm of musical instruments and songs but also sing their own songs and play their own instruments, which can be made using simple and low-cost materials. For example, a drum can be made using spoons and a plastic bucket. There are various ways in which music and movement activities can be organized in the early childhood classroom. Children can dance individually, in pairs, or in groups. They can mirror each other's movements and create their own dance. The same can be done with singing, humming, following beats by clapping/thumping, etc. It is important that children enjoy the process of music and movement activities, as there is no 'final performance' towards which the children need to be coached.



7. Total Physical Response (TPR)

Total Physical Response or TPR is a method of developing language skills in children by combining language with movements and actions. Children learn through the association of speech and action. For example, in a simple game like *Apsanan Jakpa Dokna* (Let's Clap Our Hands) where children listen to the teacher's instructions and follow his/her actions, children build a physical response to the verbal instructions given by the teacher and simultaneously develop their language comprehension skills. *Indake Chinga Ja•ku Ga•a* (This Is How We Walk) and *Chonchongipa laksirang* (finger play game of family members) are other examples. Such TPR activities are especially helpful for children who are not conversant with the medium of instruction or when the teacher is attempting to introduce a new language in which children are not yet fluent. TPR can be used in conjunction with many other pedagogical techniques in the early years' classroom e.g., during Circle Time and Goodbye Time, storytelling, singing of action rhymes and songs, art and craft activities, music and movement, role play, etc. For example, children participating in the role play of the hare and the tortoise can listen to the teacher say, "The rabbit goes hop, hop, hop!" and watch the teacher pretending to hop like a rabbit. After some time, when children form the association between the actions and words, the teacher can simply say "The bunny goes hop, hop, hop!" without actions and children can respond with the hopping action.



8. **Pretend play**

Pretend play is an important sub-set of play, which is an important developmental play preference in young children. It holds immense value during the children's growing up years. It emerges as a preferred form of play among young children as they can assume different roles and engage in make-believe activities which may not be possible in their real lives (or may not be immediately possible). For example, children love to act like superheroes, their grandparents, their teacher or doctor, a jungle animal, a pirate or an explorer, the mother/father of a baby, etc. When children pretend play, they not only take on the role of the character they are playing but also imagine elaborate scenarios in which their character is present. Pretend play activities can be done without any specific materials, though they can be aided by objects from daily life, props, and toys. For example, a child pretending to be a sailor can sail an imaginary boat by standing on top of a chair or a child pretending to be an emperor can make a fort out of old carton boxes. They can dress up in clothes that are lying around at home, often wearing ordinary clothes in interesting ways such as tying a pillow cover around the chest to make the emperor's robe or using a piece of cloth to wrap around the head like a turban. Children also love to use dolls and imagine them in elaborate storylines with dialogues and internal monologues for their dolls, which is a fascinating feat! In the classroom, opportunities for pretend play must be routinely created, and a pretend play corner must be set up as a learning corner.



9. Picture reading

Picture reading is an interactive activity where children look at a picture and talk about the details they notice, the thoughts and stories that come to their mind, etc. To facilitate picture reading, the teacher asks a number of questions. For example, in a picture of a local market, children can spot the people, animals, shops, etc. The teacher can then ask deeper questions to prompt children's thinking and imagination. For example: *Where is the little girl going with her mother? What are they carrying in their shopping bag?* etc. The teacher can also ask questions to help children link the picture to their daily life. For example: *Have you seen a market like this? With whom do you go to the market?* etc. The teacher can also use the same picture for telling stories, drawing, and writing. To have a quality picture reading session, it is important that the picture is complete, including a lot of details. The pictures that are used for picture reading should have a variety of details and actions which are familiar to children, and which capture their interest. Isolated images like that of a ball or a car cannot facilitate a meaningful picture reading session. Instead, the picture of two children playing with a ball in a park or the picture of a car driving through a mountain landscape will facilitate more meaningful picture talk. However, it should also be kept in mind that the picture should not be too crowded with details and should not be so small that it becomes visually challenging for children to read it. The teacher can use big pictures, story cards, illustrations from story books, blackboard drawings, and even drawings of children for picture reading.



10. Indoor games

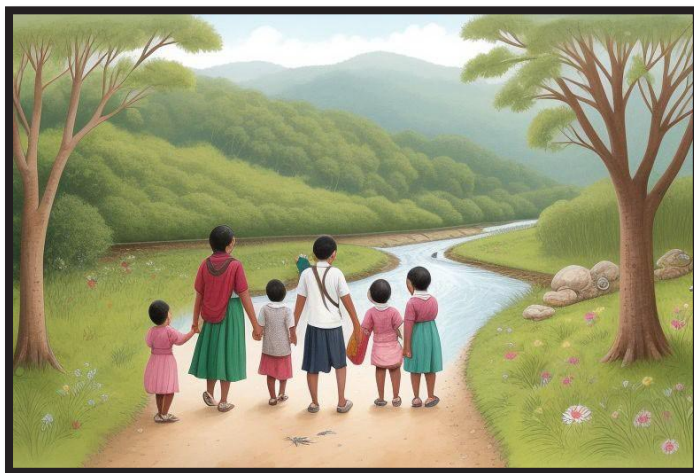
Indoor play may or may not involve physical movement but certainly develops children in all other domains, particularly their skills of creative thinking, logical and mathematical reasoning, problem solving and strategizing, spatial and verbal reasoning etc. Indoor play requires a stimulating indoor environment comprising material like blocks, jigsaw puzzles, mazes, beads, clay, soft toys, board

games, etc. Indoor games like word games, riddles, tongue twisters, logic puzzles in the form of stories/riddles, etc., are less resource intensive and are an important part of indoor play. Indoor play can take place individually or in pairs/groups. Setting up different learning corners with diverse play material is a critical step in ensuring that children have a meaningful indoor play experience. Indoor games can include games that are contextual to the region (local and traditional games), plus there is always a scope for the teacher to invent new games based on the content being taught.



II. Outdoor games

Outdoor play is an integral part of childhood and must be integral to the everyday routine/ timetable of children in school as well. Children love to play outdoors by climbing trees, digging holes in the ground, playing with a ball, etc. Children also love to play games with rules such as games with stones or marbles (*marble kal•a*), *tanggitu kal•a*, *gut gut kal•a*, clapping games, hopscotch, etc. These games become more complex as children grow older. Nature walks and field trips (given next) are a part of outdoor play. Outdoor play helps develop children's gross motor skills, but it also helps children develop in the cognitive, language, and socio-emotional domains as well. For example, in a collaborative outdoor game like seven stones, children not only run, jump, and throw the ball but also help each other understand the rules of the game, argue with each other, cheer each other, think of strategies to win the game, etc. In outdoor play like making shadows using sunlight or building sandcastles, children develop in the aesthetic domain as well. The outdoor play area in school should be safe and stimulating. It does not have to contain expensive outdoor play equipment. Material like old tires, ropes, and soft mud that is locally available can be sourced with the help of the community to create sand pits, swings, jungle gyms, etc. Outdoor play may not be possible on days when it rains heavily, but the timetable can be adjusted so that children go outside and explore the puddles, wet grass and leaves, etc., when the weather permits. Indoor play can be a temporary substitute for outdoor play on such days, but it should be noted that it is only a temporary substitute as both outdoor and indoor play are important and serve very specific purposes.



12. Nature walks and field trips

Short day trips to nearby places, both familiar and unfamiliar, push children to notice their surroundings and ask questions, and children also learn to take care of themselves and others more independently. Field trips can be made to a nearby shop, kitchen garden, post office, police checkpoint, etc. It can be any place that is safe for young children, even though it may appear to be mundane to us as adults. Nature walks are a type of field trip and can be conducted in the natural environment surrounding the school e.g., a park or a garden, a wooded area, a stream, etc. Spending time with nature helps children nurture their curiosity towards their surroundings through observation, experimenting, predicting, hypothesizing, etc. Necessary preparation must be in place so that children have a fun and safe experience. Children can be involved in preparing for field trips. For example, necessary precautions like listening to the teacher, holding hands, and taking care of each other can be rules that are collectively discussed. This also ensures that children will follow the rules that they themselves have made with the teacher's support. Field trips can be challenging to organize for a teacher in the beginning, so it is a good idea to take the support of other teachers in the school and community members. Their voluntary efforts can enrich the experience and ensure that field trips are organized at a desired frequency and not organized only occasionally.



13. Using toys

There is something about toys that makes them magical for children! You must have noticed how young children are not always drawn to expensive toys that are purchased from the market but prefer playing with everyday objects that are not very expensive, and which do not strictly fall under the conventional category of 'toys' as we understand. For example, a child may love pulling apart a

torchlight to see how it works or create an elaborate story using rag dolls, rather than playing with a flashy and expensive toy car in which they quickly lose interest. Children also form emotional connections and attachments to toys that hold sentimental value, such as a handmade toy from a loved one, a favorite stuffed animal, or a toy with personal significance. These toys may not be expensive, but they hold sentimental value for the child, making them more interesting and cherished than expensive store-bought toys. This gives us the freedom to design low-cost toys using locally available materials e.g., a bundle of grass for making a doll or clay beads of different sizes. For a child, a toy is something that promotes play. It presents the opportunity for open-ended imagination, exploration, manipulation, and discovery. At the same time, puzzles and games with fixed solutions challenge children to figure out the solutions by themselves. This highlights the importance of providing children with a variety of toys. Children too can be involved in making their own toys. Taking care of toys, sharing toys, and keeping toys back in the designated places after playing with them are important skills that are nurtured in the classroom. It is preferable that opportunities are created for children to independently play with toys in the classroom, whether alone or in pairs/groups.



14. Art and craft

Art and craft activities are a great medium of expression for young learners, even when they are comfortable expressing themselves through language in the form of talk and conversations and writing. Through art and craft, children can express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings. Often, art and craft activities are not seen beyond drawing, colouring, painting, and some paper crafts. However, art and craft encompass a wide range of activities and material. For example, working with clay, tearing and pasting (collages, papier mâché, etc.), cardboard construction and modelling, thumb printing, etc., are important art and craft activities essential to the early childhood classroom. It is important to keep in mind that in the early years' classroom, the children's experience of working on an art or craft project is more important than the final product. Also, the experience of art and craft should be more open ended so that children engage in artistic expression without being judged. To engage with different art and craft forms, it is important that a variety of methods, material, and tools are available in the classroom. These need not be expensive. For example, everyday objects like empty refills, old spoons and toothbrushes, and bottle caps can be used for clay moulding activities.



15. Projects

Projects help children work individually or in pairs/groups on a particular topic or question for an extended period of time. They are a type of inquiry-based learning. It is often thought that project work can only be undertaken by older children. However, both short and long duration projects can be used in the early childhood classroom. Examples of short projects include mini science experiments like mixing paints or dunking things in water, making sensory bins, making a volcano with baking soda and vinegar, exploring the properties of different liquids, etc. Examples of more long- duration projects include making a family tree, making a recipe book of favourite food items, building a classroom mural, making a collage, developing a storybook, making a meal plan for an imaginary local cuisine restaurant, going on a scavenger hunt, planning a small party in the classroom, interviewing community helpers and so on. Projects help children develop skills like scientific inquiry, language and literacy skills, cultural awareness and sensitivity, sensory and fine motor skills, socio-emotional skills, etc. A project- based approach can be used in class from time to time. Short projects for fun home assignments may be given for children in the Foundational Stage.

16. Worksheets

Worksheets are important instructional strategy that facilitate child's learning. Typically, worksheets are used for the purpose of assessment, but they can be used for other purposes as well. For example, a cut-and-paste worksheet can be created on different food items in which children cut out their favourite food items, colour them, then paste them on a paper plate. This worksheet can be used not only to develop children's fine motor skills but also for self-expression, creativity, visual discrimination, following instructions, developing vocabulary, and food awareness to name a few. Worksheets at the Foundational Stage can include activities such as tracing, drawing and colouring, and writing. Worksheets can be used for cutting and pasting, picture reading, completing mazes and puzzles, recording information, story sequencing, etc. Take-home worksheets can be used for fun home assignments that children can either do independently or with the help of their family members. On the whole, Teacher can use worksheets regularly as a pedagogical strategy as well as for assessment to enhance learning of the child.

Specific strategies for inclusive pedagogy.

The involvement of special educators is crucial to the success of a combined learning environment in the following areas:

- **Curriculum Design:** Special educators help craft the lessons for inclusive classrooms to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities are considered. Teachers may work together to develop a curriculum that is accessible to all students, or the special educators might make modifications to the general teacher's lesson plans. A special educator will also create supplemental learning materials for specific students, including visual, manipulative, text and technology resources, and determine when one-on-one lessons might be needed.
- **Classroom Instruction:** Many inclusive classrooms are based on a Co-teaching model, where both teachers are present or Push-in model, where special educators provide lessons at certain time in the classroom. Special educators often sit with or near special students with IEPs to monitor their

progress and provide any special instructions or supplementary learning materials. Special educator might also pull students out of the classroom for one-on-one lessons or sensory activities.

- **Learning Assessments:**
 - In inclusive classroom special educators is to conduct regular assessment to determine whether students are achieving academic goals.
 - Special educators to organize periodic IEP meetings with each student, their family, and certain subject teachers to determine whether adjustments need to be made to the student's plan.
- **Advocacy for Students:** Special educators serve as advocates for students with special needs. This includes ensuring that all school officials and employees understand the importance of inclusion and how to best implement inclusion in all campus activities

Summary

As a teacher in a Foundational Stage classroom, it is crucial to adopt a flexible pedagogical strategy that caters to the diverse needs of learners in all aspects, including social and cultural backgrounds, learning styles, learning difficulties, and developmental delays. Since children come from different backgrounds and have varying prior experiences, hence a teacher needs to be cognizant of using appropriate pedagogy to make classroom an inclusive space for learning. Applying developmentally appropriate practice and integrating art, music, sports, parents, community, local knowledge and traditions, teachers can devise multiple strategies that work well for their respective classrooms. Teachers should keenly observe, guide and support children's learning.

Chapter 8

Assessment in the Foundational Stage

Dear Teachers,

- Does assessment feel like an added burden to your teaching?
- Do you struggle to combine teaching and assessment?
- Do you struggle to gather qualitative data through observation while in classroom?

If your answer to the above-mentioned questions is YES, then you need not worry. This section on assessment will provide you with easy and feasible strategies to assess children and guide instruction. Let us look at Ms Bada's classroom for 4-5 years old children:

Teacher	Children
Ms. Bada enters the classroom "Good morning, children!"	Children stand up from their seats and greet their teacher together, "Good morning, teacher!"
"How are you doing today?"	Some reply, "Good, teacher!". Others say, "Very well, teacher!"
"Alright children, do you want to hear stories today?"	"Yes, teacher!"
Ms. Bada shows a big picture to the children. She says, "Children, look at this big picture. Do you like it?" Ms. Bada uses the big picture to tell a story.	"Yes. Teacher." Children look at the pictures and listen to the teacher. One or two of them at times get distracted from their own playfulness.
After completing telling the story, Ms Bada asks these questions? • What was the name of the story? • Who was the main character? And so on...	Some of the children respond to the questions. A few children continue to look away.
"Very good, children!", exclaims Ms. Bada. "Now you have learnt the story, isn't it? Tomorrow, I will ask you questions. Those who get all questions correct will get 5 stars".	"Yes, teacher!" (in chorus)

What is the illustration trying to say?

Ms. Bada is practicing a 'one-size fit all' approach in her class to assess her children. The teacher focusses on lower order thinking skills such as asking remember level questions based on the story, which was answered by only a few of the children.

The main issues that can be highlighted through Ms. Bada's class are that:

- The focus is on completion of the lesson where the discussion was solely on the story and nothing else.
- Questioning is the only mode to assess the understanding in children.
- The class lacks inclusion and doesn't encourage the participation of all children in the discussions.

- Assessment is associated with rewards such as stars.
- Summative assessment is preferred by the teacher at the end of the lesson.
- No records or documentation of children's responses.

Assessment over the years

Assessment and teaching-learning are complimentary to each other. They cannot be segregated or viewed in isolation. We have witnessed over the years how several education policies talk about assessment in school education from focussing on learning than (National Policy on Education, 1968), de-emphasising memorisation (National Policy on Education, 1986) to Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) where children are assessed holistically. However, the focus on assessment in early childhood education was not stressed upon in these policies. As we entered the 21st century, the National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy, 2013 duly recognised the assessment for the early years where it discusses about ensuring quality and conducting programme assessment and child assessment. It recommended formative assessment and continuous assessment at ECCE centre.

National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 has brought light upon the crucial stage of early years and hence the need to assess the learners for their holistic growth and development. NEP, 2020 has stated that main focus of assessment for foundational years should be formative with a focus on continuous assessment to optimise learning and development for all students.

All the policies and research on education, neuroscience and economics has time and again stressed upon the fact that ensuring free, accessible, high quality early childhood care and education is perhaps the best investment any country can make for its future.

National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage, 2022:

Assessment is a process to gain an understanding of a child's overall development. This is helpful for the teacher in order to identify the areas where specific scaffolding is required. It also allows the teacher to modify their pedagogy as per the diverse learning styles and needs of children. Some examples are projects, questioning etc.	Evaluation is the process of making judgments about the merit, value, or worth of educational programs, materials, or techniques. Assessments can be a part of educational evaluation in order to make these judgements. Some examples are National Achievement Survey, ASER study etc
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Guiding principles for Assessment

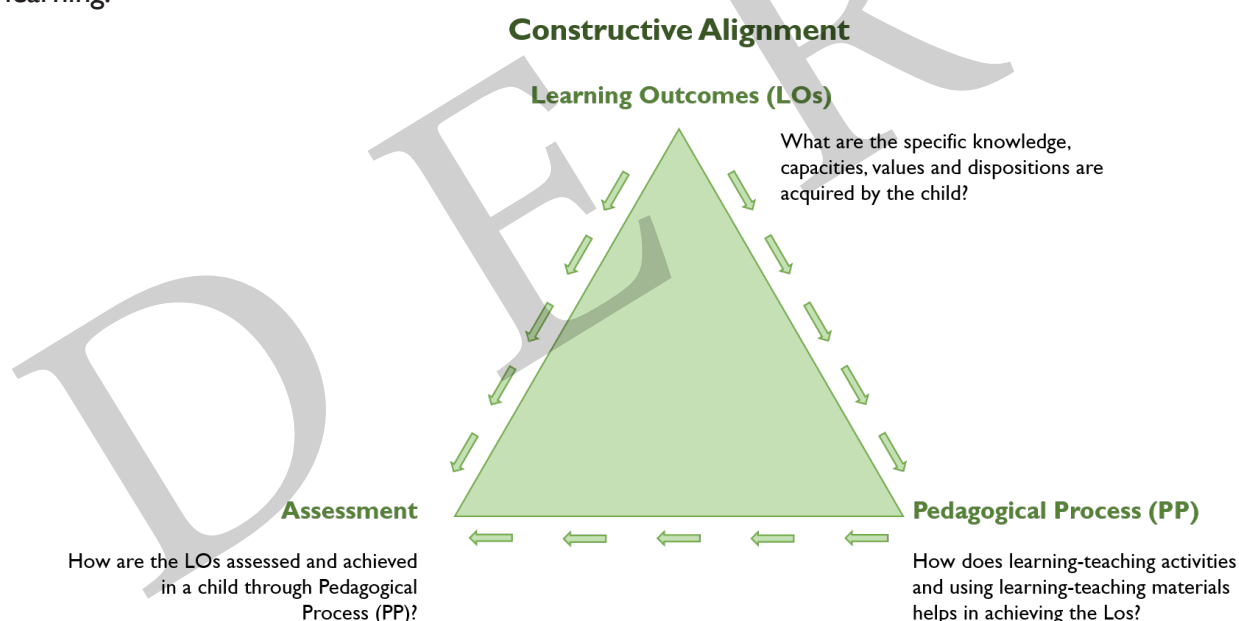
- Provide a stress free, emotionally secure and stimulating learning environment.
- Treat assessment as a part of teaching-learning process and not as a separate activity to be done at the end of a session. Focus on formative assessment.
- Create ample opportunities to explore, experiment, experience to learn and make decisions .
- Ensure constructive alignment of early learning outcomes, pedagogy and assessment (Refer to Table I).
- Apply variety of assessment methods to suit the diverse needs of children and their different learning styles.
- Record and document through systematic collection of evidence.
- Provide qualitative feedback on child's strengths and weaknesses as much as possible.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment in foundational years consist of observation of the child and analysing of children's work samples. There are other forms of assessment such as self-assessment and peer assessment too which supplements the assessment done by the teachers. This section will primarily focus on the two forms of assessment namely observation and analysing children's sample work.

A few characteristics of formative assessment:

- It is assessment for learning and as learning carried out during the learning process.
- The objective of formative assessment is to find out the learning capacities of children, gaps of learning, changes or progress made as per the learning outcomes and feedback and follow up measures are given to each child.
- Such assessments assess all learners inclusively during teaching-learning process.
- Teachers practicing formative assessment monitors progress of each learner and provides quality feedback to learner's performance.
- Any modifications in the pedagogical process if required is decided based on the data gathered from formative assessment.
- It is understood as an aggregation, summarisation and analysis of all assessment during a term without any paper-pencil test.
- Formative assessment aims to shift the paradigm from assessment of learning to assessment for learning.



Constructive Alignment

Providing a conducive learning environment for children involves the interplay of three crucial components: learning outcomes, pedagogical processes, and assessment practices. When there is a mismatch between these components, it can affect the overall goal of teaching and learning activities for children. To address this, teachers should strive to achieve constructive alignment, where these components are harmoniously integrated to support children's learning experiences.

Constructive alignment is a two-fold process that involves the teacher and the learners. It starts with the understanding that learners construct their own learning through relevant activities, and teachers must create a learning environment that supports these activities. In practice, constructive alignment

means that teachers align learning outcomes, pedagogical processes (learning-teaching activities and relevant teaching and learning materials), and assessment tasks in a constructive way throughout the teaching-learning process. When these three components are aligned, children have a greater chance of learning effectively. Alignment between activities and assessments allows children to focus on developing the necessary skills toward achieving the intended learning outcomes.

Constructive alignment involves several steps. First, teachers should thoughtfully determine what children should learn and how they will demonstrate their achievement of these intended learning outcomes. This should be communicated clearly to the students. Second, teachers should design teaching and learning activities that effectively engage children in achieving these learning outcomes. This includes selecting relevant and age-appropriate learning resources. Finally, teachers should create assessments that will allow children to demonstrate their attainment of the learning outcomes and enable teachers to evaluate how well these outcomes have been achieved.

To design a course unit or a lesson plan, teachers should consider and answer the following four questions:

1. What learning outcomes do I want children to achieve at the end of the lesson or unit?
2. Which teaching and learning activities are required to achieve these competencies?
3. What are the relevant learning resources to support effective learning?
4. How can I design appropriate assessment tools to evaluate if children have achieved the specific learning outcome?

1. **Observation: primary key to intentional teaching in early childhood care and education**

When we watch children carefully and intentionally, we see them learning from their environment. We can see the richness of their play and interactions if we observe children with an open mind. Through observation we can determine what children know and can do and use this information to ensure that what we provide and how we interact is closely linked with their abilities and needs.

Observation is a process of keenly watching each child's learning, expression, action during play or activities naturally. What the child knows, what the child are able to do or express in term of feelings, attitude or interest and preferences can be addressed largely through observations. It involves recording the observed activity, attitude or qualities exhibited by each child. Observations help every teacher in many ways to find out the competencies or learning outcomes achieved by the child, to align the instructional strategy as per the needs of the child and to understand the developmental appropriateness of learning-teaching materials.

NCF-FS, 2022 has detailed out the steps for observation to be effective and meaningful.

1. **Planning:** Identify few children to observe in the classroom. Determine which curricular goals to be observed. Make a list of competencies and learning outcomes to be observed within them. Determine and prepare the tool needed to record observations.
2. **Gather evidence:** Find out a time where the selected competencies or learning outcomes can be exhibited by children. For example, if it is related to gross motor development, then outdoor play would preferably be a good setting for observation. Keep recording exactly what is observed in any tool being used, may be a check list or rubrics that would serve as evidence.
Reflect and assess: Read the evidence and the records to track the progress of each child over a period of time. Every concrete evidence would inform the teacher how to plan and modify her
3. teaching for the children in future.

Table 1: Illustrative pointers for observation

Pedagogical Techniques	What to Observe?
Guided conversation	Does the child ✓ listen to others during circle time? ✓ wait for their turn to speak? ✓ express their pleasure or displeasure listening to others? ✓ predict what is going to happen next?
Story telling	Does the child ✓ get involved in the story? ✓ describe the picture? ✓ ask questions about different characters of the story? ✓ connect personal experiences with the events of the story? ✓ recall familiar words from the story? ✓ express likes or dislikes about the story? ✓ narrate own short story with simple plots and characters? ✓ show abilities to analyse and evaluate the story? ✓ draw out ethical values from the story
Read Aloud	Does the child ✓ attentive when the teacher read a story? ✓ comprehend few words/sentences in relation with a story? ✓ describe and illustrate/give example to a story? ✓ ask question to the teacher during/after narrating the story? ✓ respond to the question being asked by a teacher? ✓ identify the character/plot or sequence of a story (picture, objects or activities)? ✓ enjoy reading along with Teacher? ✓ imagine and create their own story?
Picture Reading	Does the child ✓ look at the picture keenly? ✓ talk about detail notices in the picture? ✓ make story from the picture? ✓ link the picture to their daily life and talk about it? ✓ make story from the picture? ✓ show interest in picture reading?
Rhyme and Songs	Does the child ✓ show interest to listen and be attentive to a wide variety of songs and rhymes? ✓ follow the tunes of a song and rhyme? ✓ hum or sing any familiar song? ✓ ask questions while listening to a song or rhymes? ✓ imitate with intonation and gestures? ✓ sing/recite few words independently? ✓ re- produce the right sound of animals/Birds/ Insects and many more
Music and Movement	Does the child ✓ differentiate sound and tunes? ✓ distinguish between high and low pitches, between linear and non-linear given

	musical progression of musical tunes in a given scale, between slow and fast tempo? ✓ identify change in tempo in any given musical piece? ✓ follow rhythm, beats of musical instrument and songs? ✓ sing, hum, follow beats by clapping, thumping, stamping? ✓ sing their own songs? ✓ play one's own simple instrument? ✓ create one's own dance? ✓ dance individually, in pairs or in group and follow each other's movements?
Art and Craft	Does the child ✓ grasp relevant art materials, tools and instruments? ✓ create form and imprint by mixing materials and water? ✓ create three-dimensional forms by rolling and patting materials? ✓ create three-dimensional arrangements by combining a variety of found materials and objects? ✓ create collages by combining materials of varying consistencies, colours, and textures in one's own arrangement? ✓ create patterns by combining and arranging materials in a variety of shapes, forms, textures and colours? ✓ create a variety of textures with one material through its manipulation? ✓ combine forms, colours, size imaginatively to represent their ideas, expressions in art form? ✓ collaborate with one another during the art and craft activities? ✓ share one's own ideas, tools, materials methods of working the art and craft with their peers?
Total Physical Response	Does the child ✓ listen instructions and follow actions from the teacher? ✓ do actions as per instructions given? ✓ use balance, co-ordination and flexibility in various actions? ✓ participate in various actions and respond to the activity? ✓ show comfort, energy in doing actions?
Pretend Play	Does the child ✓ imagine and perform a role of their own character? ✓ show readiness to take a role when asked for (shy/eager/angry/happy/sad) ✓ act or pretend the different unseen character (dog, cat, hero) ✓ depict any emotions while playing a character. ✓ create simple improvised sound. ✓ produce a variety of sounds while playing a role or character? ✓ show interest in developing their own character? ✓ identify objects that are available for use as a prop to present their character? ✓ dress up or wearing ordinary clothes to act like emperor, teacher, wedding, parents?
Play free, guided or structured	Does the child ✓ solve simple problems? ✓ use large and small muscles to engage in play material? ✓ express different emotions? ✓ respond appropriately to the emotions of others? ✓ express needs and feelings through short meaningful sentences?

	✓ share responses and ideas in peer group? ✓ appreciate multiple responses in the group?
Using Toys	Does the child ✓ play the toys independently? ✓ share the toys with others? ✓ make their own toys for learning? ✓ take care of toys and keep in their designated place? ✓ show interest, joy and happiness in playing with toys?
Nature Walk and Field Trip	Does the child ✓ enjoy spending time in the garden/ nature? ✓ show curiosity and wonder during nature walk/field trip? ✓ show eagerness to explore the natural surrounding with or without adult support? ✓ take initiative in exploring the nature and use resources from nature responsibly? (Under adult guidance) ✓ like to share their joy with other children on nature walk/ field trip through play, music and dance? ✓ engage with others without fear but respectfully? ✓ follow instructions /rules appropriately during nature work/ field trip?
Projects	Does the child ✓ work individually with or without adult support? ✓ work freely with others, with or without adult support? ✓ co-operate and collaborate their work with others? ✓ show joy, interest and comfort in doing the project? ✓ ask relevant questions and collect right information while doing their projects? ✓ co-operate and collaborate their work with others?
Worksheets	Does the child ✓ show readiness to work on worksheet provided by the teacher? ✓ compare their worksheet with others? ✓ understand and follow the instruction given by the teacher while working on the worksheet? ✓ show any unique skills while working on the worksheet?

Note: Adapted from *National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage*, by NCERT, 2022, p. 174.

2. Analysing samples of children's work: A window into the inner world of children

Artefacts in the context of foundational learning class refers to the object created by the child during teaching-learning process. They provide important information about the level of understanding of the child of a particular learning outcome or about the strengths and abilities of the child. The teacher may keep children's completed work or photographs of their work including drawings, worksheets in a folder/ portfolio. A compiled folder of all the writings, drawings, worksheets can give a comprehensive understanding of the child's learning, growth, and development.

Some of the samples that are commonly seen in a classroom are:

- Drawings** are second language for children. They use drawings to express their feelings, thoughts and emotions. It is crucial to decode children's drawings. However, it is true that professional analysis of children's drawings is a complex process and requires expertise. But teachers can attempt to analyse the drawings to gain an understanding of their fears, joys, dreams, hopes and nightmares.

- a. First step is to let the child tell you what the drawing means to them. Asking questions such as what the people in the drawing are doing, why do the trees look different etc. Responses to such questions can reveal a lot of things about the child.
 - b. Second step is to assess it developmentally. Looking at all the drawings made by children of the same age group and then gaining an understanding of the child's development. To assess it developmentally the teacher needs to know the stages of children's drawings:
 - i. Children between the age group 2-4 are usually in the scribbling stage. At this stage they scribble with simple, random lines and shapes without any tangible form or structure
 - ii. Children in the age group of 4-7 are in their pre-schematic stage. At this stage they begin to draw basic shapes and lines representing objects. Children attempt to create things they see with their eyes.
 - c. Third step is to store the drawings and record the information gathered through the interaction based on the drawings made by children.
- ii. **Worksheets** provide the opportunity for children to display their thoughts, opinion, knowledge in written form. Using worksheets one can design tasks aligned to learning outcomes. Analysing worksheets help the teacher to understand the learning levels and learning gaps in children. Worksheets can be developed for all the domains to understand their prior knowledge as well as to assess their learning after a session. Teachers have to be careful to not make worksheets look like tests or examinations. Steps to designing a fun and meaningful worksheet (Sharma & Kaur, 2022):
- a. First step is planning. A Foundational Stage teacher first needs to decide the reason behind developing a worksheet. Every worksheet must serve a concrete purpose in the five domains of development, namely, physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and language. Several worksheets focus solely on cognitive and physical development but miss out on social and emotional development
 - b. Second step is preparing. Each worksheet must align with Learning Outcome(s). This also ensures the validity of the worksheet. A worksheet can be tagged as 'valid' if it is able to measure what it is supposed to measure.
 - c. The third step is using the worksheets for the assessment of children's learning. Once children fill up the worksheets, teachers can use these to identify areas where improvement is required. The information gathered through worksheets helps both teachers and parents

How to record and document assessment data:

There are several tools to record observations such as anecdotal records, checklist, and rubrics. The artefacts can be carefully stored in a folder/portfolio (physical portfolio or digital portfolio) with qualitative comments for each of the artefact.

- I. **Anecdotal records** refer to a brief, narrative, factual description of the child's progress or significant incident, or behaviour on the basis of observation. But no single anecdote can give conclusive evidence. It provides valuable information across different developmental areas, the strengths and learning gaps in the child. Simultaneously anecdotal record helps in detecting additional support on any areas if needed in the child. It also helps to assess the progress of the child overtime and the teacher to determine if the child is ready for the next activities.

Guiding principles for anecdotal records:

- Anecdotal records should be used to understand behaviour when there are no other means to assess it directly. These behaviours may include attitude towards learning, emotional development, peer relationship etc.
- Anecdotal records should always be made in naturalistic settings when children are play or doing

their activities naturally.

- Anecdotal records should be recorded as promptly as possible. It is useful to record only a single event and the behaviour displayed during the event for better understanding of the child.
- Anecdotal records should only record what was observed. Interpretation of the behaviour should be done separately.
- Anecdotal record should include contextual information to help the teacher interpret it later.

How to write anecdotal records:

- Every anecdotal record should have some basic information such as name of the child, age, class, date, time, location and the name of the observer/teacher.
- Write exactly what was observed. Describe what was seen, felt, heard in a particular event.
- Refrain from summarising the behaviour.
- Avoid using adjectives such as shy child, aggressive child etc. and try to be as objective as possible.
- Interpret the behaviour later to design a plan of action for future.
- Plan of action can be designed based on multiple interpretations of anecdotal records.

Table 2: Sample anecdotal record during story telling session

Name: Kerilin Age: 4 years Class: Preschool II	Date: 22 nd November 2023 Time: 11 am Location: Classroom	Name of observer: Ms. Sandra
Incident/behaviour observed	Interpretation	Plan of action
Teacher reads aloud a story about the peacock and the sun. During the narration Kerilin was trying to respond to all the questions the teacher was asking. After narration, Kerilin asked a question to the teacher 'Why did the peacock not get burnt being with the sun?' She later tried to make a clay model of the sun and the peacock in the art corner. When her friend, Piyali came to help her, she brushed her aside and said, 'No! I will make it myself.'	• Kerilin is a keen listener • She shows inquisitive skills • She participates during class activities • She struggles to work in collaboration	• She needs to work more in groups. • More books and activities that lets her to critically think should be introduced to her. • More activities to nurture her relationship skills.

2. **Checklists** are a list of indicators indicating the presence and absence of a particular knowledge, skill or disposition needed to be observed. This helps in finding out the learning of the child in a particular developmental area. It gives quick and easy information specific to learning outcomes within different domains. It helps in pointing out a trend of how and when skills have been acquired by the child as well as group of children.

Guiding principles for checklist:

- Use checklists only in situations in which the learning outcome are defined by the existence of an attribute, not its quality.
- Checklists can either describe behaviors of a general nature (e.g., problem-solving skills, social skills, critical thinking skills, attitudinal characteristics) or of a specific nature (e.g., oral fluency in read aloud, steps in performing a science experiment, skills required to perform a specific dance sequence, concepts required to perform mathematical operations).
- Ensure that you have a thorough understanding of the sequence of behaviors or skills required to perform a task or produce a product while constructing checklists.
- Always use checklists with other assessment tools.

How to develop and use a checklist:

- Identify the goal for the checklist you are creating- what to expect from a particular age group.
- Decide when and where you're going to use the checklist. Doing so will guide what you choose to include and how you plan to implement it.
- Observe the child in variety of natural settings to check off the relevant skills and behaviors.
- Add a column for comments by the teacher to include remarks or any specific behaviour while observing.
- To make a more specific record on the display of behaviour, you can add the date when the child exhibited that skill or behaviour.

Table 3: Sample checklist for a collage-making activity

Name: Appera Age: 6 years Class: I				
Indicators/Skills	Beginner	Progressing	Proficient	Remarks
Cuts out simple shapes, pictures.			✓	
Tears out shapes and pictures			✓	
Pastes cut outs and pictures			✓	
Sorts colour and shapes of pictures		✓		
Creates visual patterns by collaging materials in a structured way	✓			
Arranges and organises the complete artwork/ activity.		✓		
Estimates sizes and shapes in collaging		✓		
Demonstrates joy, interest, cooperation in the activity.		✓		
Creates patterns by combining and arranging materials in a variety of shapes, forms, textures and colours.	✓			

3. **Rubrics** are a set of standards relating to learning competencies and learning outcomes stated according to different levels of performance. They are quantitative measures applied to children's work for the purpose of assessment. It gives a structure to observation. It limits the subjectivity in classroom-based assessments. Matching the observations of a child's work to the descriptions in the rubric averts the rush to judgment. Instead of judging the performance, the rubric describes the performance. The resulting judgment of quality based on a rubric also can be used later for feedback and teaching. This is different from a judgement of quality based on a score or a grade arrived at without a rubric. Rubrics can be used for formative assessment of children to assess performances as well as products.

Guiding principles for rubrics:

- Rubrics should not be describing the requirements of the assignment rather should focus on the learning.
- Rubrics are effective assessment tool when co-constructed with students.
- Rubrics must be aligned to Learning Outcomes.
- The performance levels can be graded for measurement at the end of the session.
- Refrain from providing quantities in performance levels such as ranging from no mistakes to 1-2 mistakes and 2-3 mistakes.

How to develop rubrics:

- Decide appropriate criteria by asking the questions- What are the criteria for good work on the task that the rubric is to assess? What should a student or teacher be looking for?
- Select criteria which are most appropriate, definable, observable, distinct from one another and can vary along a continuum from high to low, so that one can write meaningful performance-level descriptions.
- Decide on the levels of performance. It can range from 2-5 levels.
- Performance must be described, with language that depicts what one would observe in the work rather than the quality conclusions one would draw.
- Begin with the performance level you intend for most students to reach, for example, Proficient, describe that, and then adjust the remaining descriptions from there, either building up (Advanced) or backing off (Progressing).
- Do not write four or five completely different descriptions for the different levels of performance. Instead describe a continuum of levels of performance quality which are distinguishable. (Refer to table 4).

Table 4: Framework for rubrics

Learning Outcome	Level 1: Beginner	Level 2: Progressing	Level 3: Proficient
Age-appropriate learning outcome specific to a domain	Shows serious misconceptions or lack of understanding of the concept or an inability to perform the skill as articulated in the learning outcome	Shows partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and a rudimentary or incomplete understanding of the concept or a rudimentary ability to perform the skill as articulated in the learning outcome	Shows a complete and correct understanding of the concept or the ability to perform the skill as articulated in the learning outcome.

Table 5: Sample rubric to assess reading skills

Learning Outcome	Beginner	Progressing	Proficient
Observes with interest of illustrated books/ posters with big font	Looks at the books/ posters without touching them and diverts attention to other objects.	Touches the books/ posters, holds them, observes them closely and plays with them.	Takes the books /posters with both hands and observes the pictures and the big fonts passionately and examines the front and the back covers.
Observes with interest and talks about available children's literature in class with friends	Shares the name of the book when asked and talks about it vaguely with a lot of distractions.	Shares a story from a book in brief with friends	Shares about the plot and the character of the book with friends
Narrates the story with the help of the pictures and predict the written text.	Examines the pictures but cannot understand the flow of the story and is unable to predict the written text.	Examines the pictures and attempts to narrate the story sequentially but is not able to predict the written text.	Examines the pictures and narrates the story with the help of pictures and is able to predict the written text on the basis of given pictures.

4. **Portfolios** are purposeful collections of the actual work of every child which contain all kinds of work and not only the best works, to identify the true progress and growth of the child in terms of the abilities, knowledge or interests of each child, over a period of time. It provides a holistic record of how competencies emerge and develop in the process. It gives useful feedback to parents regarding the specific progress of children after certain period of time, especially the abilities and interests not seen at home.

Teacher may select either physical portfolio or digital portfolio to capture and document child's learning and progress.

Physical Portfolio	Digital Portfolio
It is a traditional paper-based portfolios used to document an individual child's learning.	Child's work samples and artefacts are captured and documented using mobile technology or appropriate multi-media applications.
Child's work samples and artefacts require parents/caregivers to view the contents at school.	Child's work samples and artefacts can be accessed by parents/caregivers faster and at any time, any place. Teacher however control who has accessed to the portfolio.

Note to the Teacher on using of portfolios.

- The teacher should analyse the portfolio of the child with regard to specific learning outcomes and mark the child progress against competencies.
- Organisation of portfolio of the child should clearly indicate outcomes to be achieved.
- It is important to note that while selecting of work to be put in portfolio, it should have a specific reason.
- Not all items of work should be included in the portfolio as it would be difficult to manage.
- Moreover, it is needed to arrange the selected types of work in a chronological order so that the teacher can code them with coloured pens or stickers which can be related to various domains of learning.

Types of items that can be included in the Portfolio:

- Sample of drawing, printing, pasting, attempts of writing, practice worksheets, any artwork.
- Photographs of children engaged in their activities and play.
- Photographs of collage done by children.
- Selected worksheets

Steps to create digital portfolios

1. Teacher identify and select the sampled works and artefacts of each child.
2. Categorise them domain-wise
3. Use the camera function on a mobile device to take pictures or record a video or use appropriate multi-media applications such as note taking apps and so on and place them in the digital folder for each child.
4. Organise them by tagging and titling the entries by date, name, and domain.
5. Show the progress of child's learning in line with the learning competencies or learning outcomes
6. Share the child's progress with parents/caregivers regularly.

Note:

Teacher may refer to the link given below regarding digital portfolio

<https://kellivogstad.com/2015/08/31/digital-portfolios-making-the-learning-visible/>

Communicating assessment

Formative, continuous assessment in the foundational years is a compulsory practice in assessment. But it is also essential to “periodically aggregate, summarise and analyse all the assessment during a term” (NEP-2020 page no-182). General Information about Family Background, Teacher Narrative Summary, and Holistic Progress Card (HPC) are ways to document and communicate assessment for this stage.

1. **General Information about Family Background:** The general information is at the heart of the profile of the child. It plays a vital role in interpreting children's behaviour, participation, and progress. Basic details like the child's name, date of birth, information about the family, the child's likes and dislikes, information about the health of the child like height, weight, growth, immunization need to be recorded and periodically updated.
2. **Teacher Narrative Summary:** The narrative summary is a description of the child's learning with qualitative information about the child's progress based on interpretation of multiple sources of information (e.g., anecdotal records, checklists, rubrics portfolios, worksheets). It can be recorded every term. The narrative summary covers the following aspects:
 - Child's strengths and challenges, development and learning progress
 - Child's interests, likes and dislikes

- Areas that need strengthening
 - Teacher narrative summary helps parents and other teachers to gain an in-depth understanding of child's learning progress across different domains of development.
3. **Holistic Progress Card (HPC):** NEP 2020 suggests that HPC is a 'multi- dimensional report that reflects in great detail the progress as well as the uniqueness of each learner in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.' (Para 4.35). HPC for foundational years is an individualised and comprehensive documentation of a child's 360-degree (holistic) progress and development based on evidence gathered through classroom activities for all domains of development over a period of time either in every three terms or term as decided by the school. It captures assessment not only of teachers but also caregivers/parents, peers and children themselves. HPC contains the following aspects:
- General information about the child
 - Her/his medical history
 - Average attendance term wise
 - Summary report of the child as per the domains
 - Assessment of care givers and parents, peers, self (child) and teacher
 - Domains of development, goals/competencies and levels of proficiency

The HPC tracks the progress of the child against each competency that is defined for specific curricular goals under each domain. These competencies are broken down further into early learning outcomes which act as parameters for assessment tools to assess the achievement of children accordingly. The learning outcomes can be taken from NCF-FS, 2022 or can also be developed by the teachers.

Other forms of assessment in the Foundational Stage

Self-assessment refers to the child's own assessment of any activity they perform. It is a simplified format where written details are not provided for the child keeping in mind their developmental appropriateness. Self-assessment helps the child to understand her/his learning gaps and progress. It also gives the child to develop self-reflection skills, which is an important life skill that must be nurtured right from the foundational years. Self-assessment will help the teacher to comprehend child's attitude and motivation towards learning meaningfully. It can be done by the child not only once in every term but as and when it is required during teaching-learning process.

Peer assessment is an assessment of one child by fellow child/children from the same grade or one grade senior or junior. There are areas of child's development where teacher assessment is inadequate unless is supplemented and complemented by the assessment of a fellow child/children. Various aspects of socio-personal and emotional development can be useful using this type of assessment. Certain competencies such as cooperative behaviour, interaction with peers, etc. can be effectively assessed when data is gathered from peers. Peer assessment is done on a simplified format. It can be done by the peer/peers as and when it is required during the learning process.

Early intervention

If you have children who may be at risk of poor outcomes or who may be children with disabilities, or who have developmental delays in your class, what do you address their challenges? As teachers/caregivers one requires assessment for early identification and early intervention to address their needs at the right time.

By early intervention we mean identifying the disability or problem early on and providing early support to prevent any future problems occurring before they get worse. This helps to foster a whole set of personal strengths and skills that prepare a child for adult life. Early intervention approaches often focus on supporting four key aspects of child development – their physical, cognitive, behavioural, and social and emotional development – where it has the potential to make the biggest difference and provide benefits throughout a person's life.

While some have argued that early intervention may have its strongest impact when offered during the first few years of life, the best evidence shows that effective interventions can improve children's life chances at any point during childhood and adolescence. As a teacher at foundational stage, the following major points need to be taken into consideration-

- a. Careful observation of children's behaviour and any noted change in behavioural aspects which is not as per developmental change
- b. Careful observation of children's performance to look for any deviation from the expected development

A number of assessment tools and strategies were discussed and detailed out in this chapter. The teacher can pick and choose from the list of the given tools and strategies to perform classroom-based assessments. As per NEP, 2020, examinations or tests are to be avoided during these years which is why more focus should be on formative assessment to further learning and improve pedagogy.

Chapter 9

Organising the day

Young children enjoy free time exploring their immediate environment. However, as they grow older, they also need organised activities that are play-based but guided and structured. The day needs to be carefully organised so that all domains of development receive adequate time and attention. While activities of each domain of development are connected with other domains (e.g., a good story will help language development as well as socio-emotional and ethical development), the routine must ensure that children get ample opportunity for a range of experiences in every domain.

Having a routine in early childhood settings is crucial because:

- Routines provide a sense of structure and predictability for young children, which promotes a feeling of security and stability. Knowing what to expect and when helps children feel more comfortable and confident in their environment, reducing anxiety and stress.
- Routines help establish important habits and self-regulation skills. By following a consistent schedule, children learn to manage their time, develop good hygiene practices, and understand the expectations of different activities.
- Routines support the development of social and emotional skills. Through regular interactions and shared experiences within a routine, children learn to cooperate, take turns, and build relationships with their peers and caregivers.

Guiding principles of organizing the timetable

The following principles can guide organising the timetable in early childhood settings:

1. Establish a daily routine that provides predictability and reduces anxiety for children by maintaining consistent timing for activities.
2. Use visual cues, songs, or verbal prompts to signal smooth transitions between activities, minimizing disruptions and providing children with a sense of flow.
3. Ensure a well-rounded timetable by balancing indoor and outdoor activities, quiet and active experiences, small group, large group, and individual activities, as well as child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities, while ensuring that activities cater to all aspects of development and learning.
4. Maintain an appropriate pace during the day to avoid fatigue and boredom, allowing for sustained engagement and optimal learning.
5. Design experiences that gradually increase in complexity and challenge, building on children's prior knowledge and experiences.
6. Adapt the routine based on the interests and preferences of the children to foster engagement and motivation.
7. Ensure that teachers are present and available to support and guide children during individual or group activities.
8. Provide individualized attention and differentiated instruction within the schedule to meet the unique needs and abilities of each child.
9. Form groups of children from different age groups to promote peer learning, cooperation, and mentorship opportunities.
10. Incorporate visual timetables in the classroom to help children understand and anticipate the daily schedule, promoting organisation and a sense of routine.

Considerations for the Daily Routine

The organisation of the day is based on the institutional setting and the number of working days, and daily working hours for each day. Each activity may be planned keeping in mind the attention span of the child. There may be a balance between child-initiated and teacher-guided activities, group (whole group or small group) and individual or pair activities, and alternating activities (e.g., quieter activity after physical activity, group activity after individual activity, indoor activity after outdoor activity). Art and craft, outdoor play, and free play must have adequate time and focus in the day.

Illustrative Daily Routine for Ages 3-6

There are multiple ways to organise the daily routine for children of ages 3-6. Two illustrations in NCF-FS 2022 and adapted by Meghalaya SCF-FS are given below.

Illustration 1:

Duration	Activity
Morning Routine/Free Play/Corners Time	
45 minutes	Circle time/Conversation
15 minutes	Snack Break
15 minutes	Rhyme/Song/Music/Movement
1 hour	Concept Time/Pre-numeracy
30 minutes	Arts/Craft/Free Play
45 minutes	Corners Time
45 minutes	Lunch Break (ages 3-4 go home)
45 minutes	Emergent Literacy/Story Time
30 minutes	Outdoor Play and Wind Up

Illustration 2:

Duration	Activity
Morning Routine/Free Play/Corners Time	
45 minutes	Circle Time (Conversation, Songs, Poems)
15 minutes	Snack Break
1 hour, 45 minutes	Work Time
45 minutes	Arts/Crafts/Sports/Free Play
45 minutes	Lunch Break (ages 3-4 go home)
1 hour, 15 minutes	Language and Emergent Literacy (ages 4-6)

Illustration 2 is more appropriate in contexts with fewer children and a range of appropriate material available for them to use. Emphasis is on self-learning and children learn to use materials independently and with care. 'Work Time' is allotted for children to independently choose the activity they would like to engage in. Children select activities of their choice and work with materials for those activities independently. Teachers observe children's activities and extend support as and when required. Teachers also decide and present the next activity to an individual child based on the observations during Work Time. Activities and the corresponding materials are arranged according to the domains of development (e.g., Physical, Cognitive, Language, Arts) and children are made familiar with this arrangement.

Illustrative Routine for Ages 6-8

The daily routine for ages 6-8 would be slightly longer and a little more structured. While for ages 3-6, all languages can be handled together; for this age group, dedicated time for each language is necessary. Specific blocks of time for literacy, numeracy and arts can be incorporated. L1 would need 90 minutes every day and L2 would need 60 minutes. Mathematics and numeracy would require 60 minutes a day. A longer day would allow more time for activities like arts, sports and gardening. The illustrative weekly timetable below allows for such possibilities.

Illustrative daily routine:

Duration	Activity
Morning Routine/Free Play/Corners Time	
30 minutes	Circle Time – Song/Movement
30 minutes	L1 – Oral Language
30 minutes	L1 – Word Recognition
15 minutes	Snack Time
1 hour	Mathematics
30 minutes	Arts and Craft
30 minutes	L1 – Reading/Writing
45 minutes	Lunch Break
1 hour	L2 – Oral Language, Word Recognition
30 minutes	Play

Illustrative weekly routine:

From	To	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
09:00	10:00	Math	Math	L2	Math	L2
10:00	10:45	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1
10:45	11:00	Snacks				
11:00	12:00	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1
12:00	13:00	L2	L2	Math	L2	Art
13:00	13:45	Lunch				
13:45	14:45	Art	Math	Art	Art	Math
14:45	15:30	Library	Gardening	Sports	Gardening	Sports

Annual School Calendar

The school calendar is an annual plan of knowing when specific events will occur over the year. This allows Teachers to plan their classroom activities accordingly. It informs children and families of what is coming up as far as the school is concerned so they too can plan for it. This calendar should be accessible to all, including parents and families.

The annual calendar detailing all important school events and timings may be drawn up prior to the commencement of the school academic year. This should be done collaboratively keeping in mind the local requirements. Minor changes may be made to accommodate the exigencies of a particular school's situation.

The calendar should cover all important events of the school over the year (e.g., duration of the school term, vacations, annual day, sports day, other school celebrations, exhibitions/field trips, parent teacher meetings, teacher professional development programs, school meetings). Schools may also develop an annual calendar of activities in accordance to their context. This helps Teachers to schedule classroom activities and track progress on the curriculum better.

DEERT

Part B



Exemplar activities or 'learning experiences'

The following pages contain exemplar activities designed as 'learning experiences', for all classes of the Foundational Stage, keeping in mind the guiding principles of the Curriculum. The themes are common for all classes.

Theme 1: Me & My Family

Theme 2: My Neighbourhood

Theme 3: My School

Theme 4: Market

Theme 5: Festivals

Theme 6: Hills & Forests

In other words, the activities emerge from the daily life experiences of children and how they understand the world. They describe how the 'action' unfolds in the classroom! As a teacher, you will get all the information you need to implement the learning experiences in your classroom.

Here are some important things for you to keep in mind while going through the exemplar learning experiences:

1. The exemplars are suggested only. Please feel free to modify them based on the needs of your children and the classroom, keeping in mind the guiding principles of the Curriculum.
2. Some learning experiences can run for more than one day.
3. A few learning experiences also have worksheets.
4. It is hoped that the exemplar learning experiences help you become more resourceful as a practitioner and encourage you to design more thematic learning experiences for children.
5. You can develop daily and weekly plans using ideas presented in the exemplars.

Theme 1: Me & My Family

Preschool I

Learning Experience 1: *Ko pa ko mei baieit jong nga!*

Learning Outcomes:

1. Explores and participates in music, dance, and creative movements.
2. Recites repeatedly interesting poems/songs with actions. Participates in rhythmic activities.

Material required:

Musical instruments (drum, tambourine, ka bom, ka ksing, dama, chigring, duitara, etc.)

How?

Teacher sings a song. Children first listen to the song and then attempts to follow teacher:

Ko pa jong nga, ko mei jong nga

Nga ieit eh tang ia phi

Hajan jong phi man la ka sngi

Nga sngewsuk kynjai hi

Ko pa jong nga ko mei jong nga

Nga ieit eh tang ia phi

Ngam lah ban klet ruh da leilei

la phi, ko pa ko mei

Ko pa jong nga, ko mei jong nga

Phi bsa ki pjiah ia nga

Haba nga iam, haba nga thngan

Phi ai jingbam ban kdang

Ko pa jong nga, ko mei jong nga

Sha skul phi btin ia nga

Ba ngan nang thoh bad nang pule

İu ABKDE

Ko pa jong nga, ko mei jong nga

Nga ieit eh tang ia phi

la nga phi ieit, phi kdup phi doh

Kum phi nangno ngan ioh

English translation:

*My dearest Daddy, my dearest mummy, I love you very much
To be there by your side, I feel secure and safe
My dearest Daddy, my dearest Mummy, I love you very much
While I cry and I am hungry, you feed and care for me
My dearest Daddy, my dearest Mummy,
You take me to school, to learn the Alphabet ABCDE
My dearest Daddy, my dearest Mummy
I love you both, you hug and kiss me
Where on earth to find loving parents like you.*

After singing the song 2-3 times, teacher asks children to choose a musical instrument. Children play the instruments they have selected, and all sing the song together.

Note to the teacher:

- Since this learning experience is at the beginning part of the year, children will still be new to the school set up. So, even if a child is not showing any interest in singing or playing instrument and he/she need not to be forced. Let her/him listen and enjoy.
- You can use any tune to the song or change the song in context to children. Some children may not have one or both parents, you choose a different song or change the lyric of this song depending on the situation.
- Not all children would want to play an instrument, but you should keep instruments according to the number of children in the classroom. You can also give children any other materials to produce music like spoons, old cans, desk/table, etc.

Preschool II

Learning Experience 1: My loving family

Learning Outcomes:

1. Identifies close family members, friends, and neighbours.
2. Exhibits fine motor skills and performs tasks that require more complex eye-hand coordination.
3. Attends, participates, and listens to others during conversation.

Material required:

Passport size photos of family members, water colour paints, brush, small container, drawing sheet, worksheet (TI/PSII/LEI)

How?

Teacher conducts a conversation with children regarding their family members. He/she asks questions such as: *How many members are there in your family? Who is the oldest in your family? Who is the youngest in your family? Do you love your family members? What do you like about them? And so on...*

Teacher gives sketch pen to each child. She/he demonstrates to draw emoticon faces of family members on the tip of the fingers. Children and teacher help each other to draw. Then teacher sings a rhyme showing the fingers and with action and children follow.

*Daddy finger, daddy finger
Where are you?
Here I am, here I am.
How do you do?*
*Mommy finger, mommy finger
Where are you?
Here I am, here I am.
How do you do?*
*Brother finger, brother finger
Where are you?
Here I am, here I am.
How do you do?*
*Sister finger, sister finger
Where are you?
Here I am, here I am.
How do you do?*
*Baby finger, baby finger
Where are you?
Here I am, here I am.
How do you do?*

Teacher gives drawing sheets to each child. She/he makes groups of children to sit together. She/he distributes paints and brushes in each group. Teacher asks children to put paint on their palm and press it on the drawing sheet to make the impressions of their palms. She/he asks children to paste the passport size photo of their family members on each of the fingerprints. The Teacher writes the names of the members as the children call them, above each photo. Teacher helps children in the whole activity.

After this activity, teacher asks children to share about their painting and family members. Teacher initiates a conversation with children by asking questions like: how many members are there in your family? *What type of work do each of the family member do at home? Who is the tallest in your family? Who is the funniest?* And so on...

When children complete this activity, teacher displays their work in the classroom.



Note to the teacher:

- You should make all the necessary arrangements needed for the day in advance. You can request the parents of children to bring or send passport size photos of their family members. If photos are not available, the child can draw the faces of their family members.
- Some children may have more than 10 family members. In that case you can ask the child to add multiple hand impressions to include all family members. If a child has 1 or 2 family members, then the child can draw their friends or teacher in their hand impression.
- If a child stays with some other family member, like their uncle, then change the lyrics of the rhyme by including that member. And do the same for the palm printing activity. Help children to paint and print their palms.
- Guide children to wash their hands thoroughly.

Preschool III

Learning Experience 1: Let me draw myself!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Describes self and others in terms of physical characteristics, gender, interest, likes, dislikes.
2. Demonstrates independence in activities.
3. Focuses attention to complete tasks/topics assigned by others.
4. Sings songs or rhymes with action.
5. Attempts to scribble/write a few familiar words.

Material required:

Full size mirror, chart paper, drawing sheets, pencil, eraser, sharpener, crayon, sketch pen, glue, worksheet (T1/PSIII/LEI)

How?

Teacher begins with an action rhyme. She/he sings and children follows.

*My hands are for clapping.
My arms can hug tight.
My fingers can snap.
Or can turn out the light.*

*My legs are for jumping.
My eyes help me see.
This is my body.
And I love all of me!*

Teacher and children sing the rhyme a few times. Teacher writes down the rhyme on a chart paper and hangs it on the wall.

Teacher asks children: *Show me your legs. Show me your hands. Show me your arms. Show me your eyes.* And so on... Children show their different body parts by pointing to it or raising it in the air.

Teacher asks children to look at themselves in the mirror. Children take turns to take a good look at themselves. Then teacher distributes drawing sheets, and other stationary materials. She/he asks children to draw themselves, write their name and label their body parts.

When children complete drawing themselves, teacher pastes it on the wall. Children talk about themselves: their physical characteristics, things they like, their hobbies, etc. Children look at each other's self-portraits and appreciate each other.

Note to the teacher:

- You can use any tune of your choice for the rhyme. You can also play some action games after the rhyme.
- Ask children to take a good look at themselves. Let them take some time for this. If they want to take a look at themselves in between their drawing work, let them do so. You can also guide their observation with the help of questions: *Look how your hairs are tied. Can you draw your clothes? Take good look.* And so on...

Class 1

Learning Experience 1: Whistling name!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Respect other rights and culture, diversity sensitive to special needs.
2. Shows curiosity and interest in exploring environment, takes interest in experimentation, draws inferences and predicts.
3. Shows increase attention span, chooses, and completes an activity started.

Material required:

Chart paper, sketch pens, cello tape/glue

How?

Teacher orally narrates a story about a child who lived in the whistling village Kongthong, East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya.

Aiban and the Whistling Village

Do you know the story of the Whistling Village? Everyone in the village could whistle like a bird, even the kids! But there was a young boy named Aiban who could not whistle to save his life.

Aiban's grandmother, who was known as the best whistler in the village, noticed how sad he was. So, she gave him a special name. She whistled it out – tu-wee-tu! Aiban felt proud of his new name and promised to try his best to learn how to whistle.

Days went by, and Aiban practiced every chance he got. Finally, one day, he blew out a faint whistle. His grandma heard it and was so delighted that she started teaching him how to whistle names and messages.

Soon, Aiban became an expert whistler, and he could whistle anyone's name in the village. Whenever his grandma needed to send a message to someone in the village, she would ask Aiban to whistle it out. And Aiban never failed to deliver the message.

One day, a visitor came to the village, and Aiban's grandma wanted to welcome him. But the visitor didn't speak the same language as the villagers. So, she asked Aiban to whistle a special tune to greet the visitor. Aiban whistled the tune – wee-too-wee-too! and the visitor was so impressed that he asked Aiban to whistle his name.

Aiban happily whistled the visitor's name – twee-wee-twee! and everyone in the village cheered. From that day on, Aiban became known as the best whistler in the village, just like his grandma.

And that's how Aiban, also known as tu-wee-tu learned to whistle names and messages and became a hero in the Whistling Village!

After the storytelling session, teacher conducts a conversation around the story. She/he asks: Did you like the story? What did you like about it? Let's see how many of us can whistle. What was Aiban's whistle name? Have you heard about Kongthong village?

Teacher asks children to come up with a whistle name for themselves. She/he asks each child to share their whistling name. As one-by-one each child whistles his/her name, other children try to whistle the tune. Then all children collectively write their whistling names on a chart paper with the help of their teacher. The teacher displays the chart in one corner of the classroom.

At the end of the class, teacher gives a home assignment to children. She/he asks children to:

1. Share the story of Aiban from Kongthong village with the family members.
2. Discuss and come up with whistling names for the family member.
3. Write their whistling names on the notebook.

Note to the teacher:

- Use expression, hand gestures and voice modulation while narrating the story. Whistle out the names during storytelling.
- You can also show pictures/videos of the Kongthong village showing the mothers of that village calling their children not by regular names but by a special whistling names.
- If a screen is used to show videos and pictures, it should be positioned in a manner that it is visible to all children.

Class 2

Learning Experience 1: This is me, as my...

Learning Outcomes:

1. Take initiatives in creative activities, dance, music, drama, role play, mimicry, imitation, etc.
2. Writes small sentences about family members.

Material required:

Drawing sheets, pencil, eraser, sharpener, crayons, cello tape/glue

How?

Teacher asks children to close their eyes for 2-3 minutes and think about the family member they love the most, the way they talk and dress. After they have thought about their favourite family member, teacher asks children to go to the pretend play corner and dress up like that family member.

Teacher asks children to do a role play of their favourite member by enacting some of their regular habits and saying a few dialogues. Each child comes to the front/middle of the circle and enact their favourite family member. After the role play, children share why they like the family member.

Teacher distributes drawing sheets and stationary materials. She/he asks children to make a drawing of their favourite member and write 3 sentences about him/her. After children completes their work, teacher pastes the drawing sheets on the wall for the other children to see, read and appreciate.

Note to the teacher:

- Keep *jaiñsem*, *paila*, *dakmanda*, *mekhla*, sticks, office bags, handbags, spectacle frames, newspapers, utensils, etc. ready in pretend play corner. Children might need your support to get dressed up. It is not necessary for children to get into a full costume, they can just pick an element like spectacle frame, cup or newspaper and do the role play. If there is a shortage of materials in the pretend play corner, encourage children to share among each other.
- You can develop the task at the end as a drawing and writing worksheet also.

Theme 2: My Neighbourhood

Preschool I

Learning Experience 1: My colourful neighbourhood

Learning Outcomes:

1. Exhibits fine motor skills and simple eye-hand coordination in various activities like scribbling, painting, colouring, etc.
2. Attempts to engage in conversation/small talk with known/unknown adults in their own language/home language.
3. Listens attentively and repeats familiar words and their sounds.

Material required:

Stick puppets (Aibor, friend, father), pictures of houses (colourful houses, colourless house), pencils, erasers, worksheet (T2/PSI/LEI)

How?

Teacher tells a story about a colourless house, using stick puppets. The story goes like this:

My Colourful Neighbourhood

Once upon a time there was boy named Aibor. He lived in a village name Bunrong. He loved spending his time around the village because his neighborhood was filled with colours, like colorful houses, school buildings, flowers, vehicles and many other things.

One fine day, he and his friend went out for a walk in the neighborhood where they saw a house which was dull and had no paint on it. So, Aibor being a kid who loves colors, was sad and curious to find out why the house was not painted. On their way back home, he kept on thinking about the colourless dull house. On reaching home, he decided to enquire about that house from his father. Then the father told him that the reason that the house was dull and without any colours was because the house belonged to his Father (Aibor's grandfather) and no one lives there anymore. So on hearing that, he requested his father if he could go and paint the house. Aibor's father then replied, Yes! Why not?!

On hearing that, Aibor was very excited and he asked his father to buy him some paint to colour the house. He even invited his friends to help him paint the house. After painting the house, he was so happy that he decided to name the house as House of Many Colours (Ing Bun rong) where he and his friends go to play everyday.

Teacher conducts a conversation around the story, like: *Did you like the story? What was the best thing about the story? Have you ever painted a house like Aibor? Have you painted anything else if not a house? Do you also know any house that has no colour? Do you know any house that has beautiful colours? And so on...*

After the story, teacher distributes colouring worksheets to children. Teacher shows children what to do in it and children start working on the worksheets. They join the dots to complete the house, colour it and extend the picture by drawing other things around it.

When children complete their drawings, teacher pastes them on the wall for children to look at each other's work and appreciate.

Note to the teacher:

The pictures of houses can be the backdrop for the stick puppets during storytelling. You can ask children to extend the story. You can also bring some clothes (like bed sheets) and sticks and build a tent along with the children. They can decorate it with your help by putting things from the toy corner, their own art and crafts works, etc. This will give them a fun experience of building a house where they can sit or play. After 4-5 days, remove the worksheets from the wall and put them in the profiles of children.

Preschool II

Learning Experience 1: Things in our neighbourhood!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Plays cooperatively with other children and makes plans for what and how they will play.
2. Exhibits fine motor skills and performs tasks that require more complex eye-hand coordination with moderate level of precision and control.

Material required:

Cardboard cutout shapes (triangle, rectangle, square, circle), coloured papers, safety scissors, glue

How?

Teacher starts by asking children about their neighbourhood: *What things do you see near your house? Is there a river/lake/forest near your house? Do you go there often? What do you see the most near your house? What do you like the most among all these things near your house? And so on...*

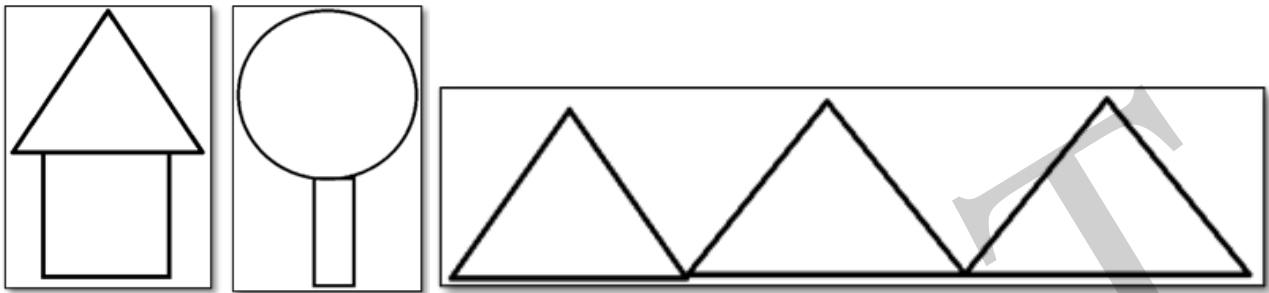
Teacher makes groups of three children. She/he asks the groups to sit together in different corners of the room and provides each group the materials for the activity: cutout cardboard shapes, coloured papers, glue, safety scissors, pencil, and eraser. Children trace the cutout cardboard shapes on the coloured paper. They cut the shapes out of the coloured papers with the help of teacher. Children paste them to the cardboard cutout shapes, e.g., paste triangle colour paper cutout on triangle cardboard cutout.

Teacher asks the groups to put together the shapes and make things that they see near their house in the neighbourhood. E.g., a rectangle put perpendicularly under a circle makes a tree, a square under a triangle is a house, a few triangles together are hills, etc. Teacher asks the groups to draw other things on the floor itself using chalk, like trees, road, hills, houses, etc.

After each group completes their work, teacher takes children on a walk around the classroom to see and appreciate each other's work. The groups speak about their work: *What are the things? Where do they see it? And so on.*

Note to the teacher:

- If safety scissors are not available, the Teacher can use regular scissors and cut out the shapes for children. While putting together the shapes to construct different objects, do not judge children based on imperfection. Their imagination and output can vary.
- Depending on children, you can eliminate the group work of tracing, cutting and pasting the coloured shapes on the cardboard shapes. You can provide coloured shapes of cardboard to the groups to do the task.
- If children find constructing object using the shapes difficult, you can provide them with pictures and the groups can assemble the shapes by looking at them. For example:



Preschool III

Learning Experience 1: Everybody loves Roofus!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Focuses attention to complete tasks/topics assigned by others.
2. Takes interest in writing (invented spellings) own names, names of their friends and objects around them.
3. Sings songs or rhymes with action.
4. Notices and describes finer details of common objects, sounds, animals, etc. in the immediate environment.

Material required:

Chart paper, sketch pens, cello tape, worksheet (T2/PSIII/LE1)

How?

Teacher narrates a story about Roofus using picture story cards, the neighbourhood dog.

Everyone loves Roofus!

Roofus is a big brown dog in our neighbourhood. He stays in a kennel near the bus stop. Roofus is very friendly. He plays with all the children in the neighbourhood. He never bites them. Sometimes, he barks at moving cars and run behind motorcycles. Nonai gives Roofus bread from her bakery every morning. Bahdeng, the butcher, gives Roofus meat from his shop every day. Roofus keeps the neighbourhood safe. Everyone Loves Roofus!

Teacher conducts a conversation with children: Did you like the story? What did you like about it? Do you love animals? Which animal do you like the most? Why? Which animals live in your neighbourhood? Do they have any names? Have you ever given them food and water? Have you ever tried to pet them? And so on...

Teacher and children sing an action rhyme. Teacher sings and children follows.

*Our neighbourhood has a little dog,
Little dog, little dog,
Our neighbourhood has a little dog,
And the dog says Haw! Haw! Haw!*

*Our neighbourhood has a little goat,
Little goat, little goat,
Our neighbourhood has a little goat,
And the goat says Meh! Meh! Meh!*

*Our neighbourhood has a little cow,
Little cow, little cow,
Our neighbourhood has a little cow,
And the cow says Boo! Boo! Boo!*

Teacher extends the rhyme with the help of children. They sing the whole rhyme together. Teacher writes the rhyme on a chart paper and hangs on the wall.

Teacher distributes writing worksheet to children. She/he shows children what to do in it and children start working on the worksheets. They draw their favourite pet/animal and write its name.

Note to the teacher:

- During the storytelling, give some time to children to take a good look at the pictures. After the storytelling, you can ask a few questions based on the pictures, like: *Who is this in the picture? Do you like him/her? Why? Is Bahdeng doing good by giving food to Roofus? Why do you think so? And so on...*
- While making the chart paper, you can tell children to draw and colour pictures based on the rhyme to decorate the chart paper.

Class 1

Learning Experience 1: Let's go on a tour!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrates gross motor coordination and control in play activities involving walking, running, jumping, climbing, etc.
2. Labels the self-drawn pictures and the pictures made available to them. (invented spellings)
3. Identifies common objects, plants, animals, signs on the boards in the immediate neighbourhood.
4. Identifies directions with the support of adults and makes sketches of places.
5. Remembers and recalls more than 5-6 objects seen at a time.

Material required:

Drawing sheets, pencils, erasers, sharpeners, crayons, wax colour, tape or glue.

How?

Teacher begins with a conversation about the neighbourhood around the school. He/she asks: *Have you noticed the neighbourhood around your school? What do you see in this neighbourhood? In which shop do you see toys/ ice-cream/ juice/ snacks? Do you have friends in this neighbourhood? Do you play with them? What games do you play? How many of you live in this neighbourhood? Do you see any bus stops here? Have you ever taken a tour of this neighbourhood? Let's visit it today.* Teacher takes children to a visit of the area around the school.

After coming back from the visit, teacher has a conversation with children about the neighbourhood visit. Teacher asks children: *Did you like the tour? What did you see? What was the best thing you found on this tour? Do you remember the first thing you saw after getting out of school? What was the last thing you saw before entering the school? What was on the right/ left side of the school? How far is the bus stop from the school? And so on.*

Teacher gives drawing sheets, pencils, eraser and colour to the children. She/he asks children to draw the neighbourhood around the school that they have visited and label their drawing.

After children complete their drawings, they share what they have drawn to the whole class. Teacher hangs all the drawings around the classroom for children to see and appreciate.

Note to the teacher:

- Safety of children needs to be kept in mind while conducting the tour. If possible, parents or other teacher can also be included in the tour.
- After the tour if children do not feel like drawing, you can continue the next day. If children stop in a spot and take their time in observing, they must be given that time. They might want to touch, hold, sit or listen to sounds.
- While showing around, make conversations with children and answer their questions. While having the conversation, deliberately talk about directions, e.g., *let's take a turn to the right and see what is there, which way do we go now to reach our school, do we remember how many turns we have taken till now?* And so on. You can also make them talk to the community members, shopkeepers, tailor, butcher, vendors, etc.
- Left and right can be confusing to children. If they are not able to answer it, you can ask them with reference to a real place/thing. E.g., *What did you see when we walked towards the lake/bakery/playground from the school?*

Class 2

Learning Experience 1: A little neighbourhood!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Shows increased attention span and persistence in tasks.
2. Shows precision in fine motor activities, drawing, colouring, writing, etc.
3. Uses school language to express opinion, ask, question for different purposes.
4. Demonstrates problem solving skills in day-to-day simple situations.

Material required:

Cardboard, shoe box, paint, brush, fevicol, coloured papers, ruler, pen, pencil, scissors, worksheet (T2/C2/LE1)

How?

Teacher conducts a conversation around neighborhood. She/he asks: *Do you like your neighbourhood? What do you like about it? What things do you see around in the neighbourhood? Is there a name of your neighbourhood? Is it a big neighbourhood? And so on...*

Teacher discusses with children on making a model of neighbourhood: *Have you ever tried to make a model of anything or any place? Do you know how a model can be made? What are the things we can put if we create a model of neighbourhood?*

Teacher makes groups of children with 5-6 children in each group. She/he distributes the materials in each group. She/he gives time to each group to think and discuss what they are going to put and how they are going to make the model of a neighbourhood. Once the groups complete their discussion, teacher takes them outside to collect more things that they would need for their model, like twigs, pebbles, leaves, flowers, etc. The groups begin their work after collecting the things and coming back to the classroom.

After the groups complete making their models, children take a tour of the classroom to see each other's work. When the other children gather to see a model, the group who worked on it shares their experience. The other groups also ask questions to the group presenting their work.

Note to the teacher:

- While distributing the materials, you can also orient the groups about the materials like how to use the cardboard to make the base of the model and so on. You can also bring some waste materials and ask children the day before to bring waste materials from their homes for the model, like plastic bottles, packets, paper, paper boxes, fabric, etc.
- You need to keep in mind the safety of children while letting them use scissors or any other sharp objects. After the models are made, you can arrange for a small exhibition of the children's work by calling the other teachers and students to come and observe the work done. Encourage children to ask questions and appreciate each other's work during presentations.
- If children have never seen a model before, they would need some orientation about models. You can discuss with them what is a model, how it can be made and show some pictures and videos before making them create their model of neighbourhood. In that case, you can think of how to divide the time required for the whole learning experience into more than one day.
- The worksheet can be done either in the class or given to children as take-home worksheet (home assignment).

Theme 3: My School

Preschool I

Learning Experience 1: Let's talk and share!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Waits for their turn and follows simple instruction with teachers support.
2. Expresses joy while working and playing with other children.
3. Talks about friends, school, animal, etc.
4. Attempt to engage in conversation/ small talk with known/ unknown children in their own language / home language.

Material required:

Finger or cone puppets of animals



How?

Teacher asks all children to form a circle. She/he gives each child a finger puppet that has the picture of an animal. She/he ensures that two children standing next to one another gets the puppet containing the same picture of the animal.

Teacher demonstrates how to place the puppet on the index finger. Children wear finger puppets. Teacher gives children time to observe, appreciate and play with the puppets they have got. She/he asks children with the same animal puppet to talk to each other about the animal. Teacher asks children to share their name and about the animal puppet that they have got. E.g., *My name is Wanda. This is my dog. He likes to eat biscuits and bone. He likes to play.* Children take turns to complete the game.

This activity continues till all the children get their chance to speak and demonstrate their puppet.

Note to the teacher:

- Make the finger puppets before conducting this learning experience. Ensure that the size of the finger puppets fits the finger of your children.
- If a child does not know the name of the animal, encourage him/her to seek help from the friend standing next who has the similar puppet. Children can speak as much as they want about the puppet. However, it should be kept in mind that everyone gets a chance.
- If a child tells the name of the animal in his/her familiar language, you can share with them the English name. E.g., if a child says *miaw* for cat, you can say: *Do you know it has another name? It is also called cat.*
- Encourage children to pair up with the next child and make sure that no one is left behind. In case of odd number, you can pair up with him/ her.
- Encourage children to keep things like TLM back in the same box after use and not to spoil them, for further uses.
- Provide space for children to speak more and do not abruptly stop them if they have more to say. Moreover, do not force anyone to speak.
- This activity can be done with other sets of pictures also, like fruits, vegetables etc. but take care to use only common, locally seen items. E.g., picture of lady bug, beetle, or dragon fly, pineapple.

Preschool II

Learning Experience 1: An amazing place!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Exhibits fine motor skills performs task that require more complex eye-hand coordination such as free hand drawing and colouring with moderate levels of precision and control.
2. Listens to the picture stories with bilingual text.
3. Recognizes labelled objects, names, etc.
4. Describes common objects, people, pictures, animals, birds, events, etc.

Material required:

Picture story cards, classroom object labels, drawing sheets, pencil, eraser, sharpener, crayons, glue, worksheet (T3/PSII/LE I)

How?

Teacher narrates a story using picture story cards. The story is:

The Amazing Place

Every day, little Banrap sees his elder sister Daphi dressing up nicely and going to an amazing place with her red bag, red sweater, and red water bottle. He always wonders about this place and cannot wait for the day

when he would also go there along with his sister. His sister after coming back tells him stories about the place, its people and all the amazing things they do there. And finally, the day comes when Banrap is accompanying Daphi to the amazing place- that is SCHOOL. Now can you tell me what will he see and do in the school?

Children shares about school. Teacher asks more questions, like: *What do you see in a school? Can you name the objects you see around? What do you call this?* Teacher points to the board, desk, chair, pictures, duster, dustbin, etc. and children keep naming them with the help of teacher.

Teacher gives each child a label of classroom object written in dotted lines, like door, chair, bench, desk, table, wall, book corner, play corner, black board, duster, etc. She/he asks children to trace these words. Once they complete tracing their words, teacher pastes the labels on the object.

Teacher provides drawing sheets to children and asks them to draw the objects they see around in their school.

Teacher gives children a take home worksheet.

Note to the teacher:

- Ensure that all children take part in the conversation, but no one should be forced. For any child, who is not speaking up, take care to make him/her comfortable to take part in the conversation.
- You can also ask children to label their drawing with the help of the labels they have put on the objects. However, the focus should not be handwriting.

Preschool III

Learning Experience 1: A walk around my school

Learning Outcomes:

1. Follows instructions and simple rules at the same time.
2. Focuses attention to complete tasks/topics assigned by others.
3. Compares and classifies objects by two- three factors like shape, colour, and size, etc.
4. Seriates /arranges 4–5 picture cards/ objects in a sequence for example- shape, size, occurrence of events.
5. Compares three objects in terms of their lengths as longest/shortest/ tallest.

Material required:

Paper bags

How?

Teacher makes groups of children. She/he shares the plan to visit the school campus. She/he gives paper bags to each group to collect dry fallen leaves, twigs, small stones, fallen petals, cones, seeds, etc.

During the trip, Teacher helps children observe the campus by asking some probing questions, like: *Do you see this flower? What does it look like? Can you count its petals? Do we get these things in our classroom? Can you hear the chirping of birds? And so on...*

After returning, teacher asks children to keep the collected items on the table or centre of the classroom. Teacher asks children to sort the things they have collected in different groups. children share how they have sorted the things. Next, teacher asks them to arrange the leaves/pebbles/twigs according to size. E.g., big to small or vice versa.

Teacher asks children to recall the names of the things they observed during the trip.

Note to the teacher:

- Time allotted for nature walk need not be too long as it gets tiresome for children. Keep a check on the weather condition. Avoid extreme weather conditions. For children's safety, you can take the help of another teacher or helper. Encourage children to ask questions during the trip.

Class 1

Learning Experience 1: School party!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Displays fine motor skills with accuracy and control, engages in art integrated activities/drawing/colouring, collage making, etc
2. Make a card for their friend, sending a short message.
3. Identifies the names of the days of the week and months of the year.

Material required:

Crayons, sketch pens, pencil, eraser, sharpener, scissors, sand/clay, worksheet (T3/C1/LE1)

How?

Teacher makes pairs of children. She/he distributes the worksheets to children. She/he asks children to make a card from the worksheet for the friend in the pair. Children colour, decorate, write a message, and cut the worksheet to make a card out of it. Teacher helps children in writing on the card.

Teacher takes children outside. She/he asks each pair to make a cake out of sand or clay. Children make their cakes in pairs. Teacher asks them to decorate their cakes with flowers, leaves, twigs, and anything else they find on the ground. All children sing happy birthday song, and each pair cuts their cake.

Children walk around the ground to look at each other's cakes and appreciate.

Note to the teacher:

- For children who have not picked up writing, you can help them in copying names of their friends. You can give drawing sheets and ask them to design more cards for their family members and other friends.
- The task of making birthday cake might get messy, but it is okay as that will contribute to the learning of children.
- You can prepare a birthday theme calendar with pictures of children pasted on the date of their birth.

Class 2

Learning Experience 1: Let's explore our school garden!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Identifies the locally available plants.
2. Use word related to size, colour, shape, etc.
3. Compares given objects/pictures and identifies similarities and differences.
4. Shows curiosity and interest in the experimentation and exploration and takes initiative in drawing inferences and reasoning.

Material required:

pots, seeds, soil, watering containers

How?

Teacher takes children out to the garden. Teacher asks children to clean the weed around. She/he demonstrates first, and children follow. Teacher shows children the difference between a weed and a plant which is not a weed.

Teacher asks children to observe different parts of a plant growing inside and outside of the ground. Teacher uses a weed removed from the ground to conduct a conversation: what do you call this plant? Do you notice the leaves? Are they of same sizes? What colours are the leaves and the roots? Can you see the roots without removing the plant from the soil? Can you name the different parts that you can see in a plant? And so on...

As children move around in the garden, the conversation continues. Teacher asks: are all the plants of same size? Can you show the tallest plant? Can you show the shortest plant? Which plants have flowers of the same colour? Which plant has the highest number of flowers? And so on...

Teacher makes small groups of children. Each group gets a pot and a seed. Teacher asks children to put soil in the pot and put the seed in the soil. She/he asks children to water their pots and put the pots in a place where they get proper sunlight. Teacher demonstrates the process.

Children keep their pots in a place that teacher shows.

Note to the teacher:

- Before conducting the learning experience, find out if any child has allergies from any plant. Avoid plants which are thorny and poisonous.
- After children get their pots, you can ask them to write their names on it. Give proper instructions of watering the seeds and taking care of it.
- Encourage children to keep observing the growth of their plants.

Theme 4: Market

Preschool I

Learning Experience 1: My favorite vegetable

Material required:

Chart paper, cut vegetables (French beans, lady finger, carrot, potato, etc.), paint, brushes

Learning Outcomes:

1. Waits for their turn and follows simple instruction with teachers support.
2. Expresses joy while working and playing with other children.
3. Exhibits fine motor skills and simple eye-hand coordination in various activities like printing, colouring etc.
4. Participates in singing rhymes, poems.
5. Identifies and name common objects etc.
6. Compares two objects based on one observable property.

How?

Teacher introduces the topic to children with the help of an action rhyme. She/he sings and children follow.

*Carrots, peas, and broccoli
Vegetables are good for me,
For my snack and in my lunch,
Veggies sticks are great to munch.
Carrots, peas, and broccoli
Vegetables are good for me!*

Teacher conducts a conversation after the rhyme. She/he asks: *Do you like vegetables? What are your favourite vegetables? What is the colour of your favourite vegetable? How many vegetables are mentioned in the rhyme? Can you name them? Have you seen these vegetables? Which one is the biggest? Which one is the smallest? Which vegetable is bigger in size- potato or pumpkin? Have you seen anyone cooking vegetables at home? How is it cooked? And so on...*

Teacher makes groups of 5 children in one group. She/he distributes chart paper containing pictures and the names of vegetables to the groups. She/he distributes the materials in groups- cut pieces of different vegetables like french bean, lady's finger, carrot, cauli-flower, brushes, and paints. Children put paint on the cut pieces of vegetables and print it within the outline of the vegetables drawn as given in the chart paper. Children in the groups take turn in printing.

Note to the teacher:

During the vegetable printing activity, you can carry samples of vegetable printing. It will give children an idea of how to do it on their own. After the activity, display children's work in the classroom. Displaying a child work helps in boosting their confidence and gives them a sense of completion and satisfaction.

Working with colours can be fun for children. You can keep a piece of cloth and water in handy to clean up the space and wipe children's hands after they are done playing with colours.

Preschool II

Learning Experience 1: Fruita-licious!

Material required:

Seasonal and locally available fruits (apple, banana, mango, pineapple etc.), bowl, spoon, domino cards of various fruit, worksheet (T4/PSII/LE)

Learning Outcomes:

1. Waits for their turn and follows two-line simple instructions.
2. Attends, participates, and listens to others during conversation.
3. Describes common objects etc.
4. Remembers and recalls 3-4 objects seen at a time.

How?

Step 1: Domino cards game

Teacher demonstrates the domino cards game. She/he makes groups of 4-5 children for the activity. Each group gets one set of domino cards.

To play the game, teacher and children sit in a circle. Then teacher distributes one domino card to each child and place a domino card on the centre. Children having a card with the identical picture as that of the domino placed in the centre come forward and place their cards alongside to form a pattern. The remaining children come forward and match their dominos in a similar manner as given in the picture below.

After each group completes their domino arrangement, teacher conducts a conversation with children. She/he asks: *Did you have fun playing the game? How did you play the game? Who helped you? Have you eaten the type of fruits that you see in the domino cards? Can you name these fruits? Where do we get these fruits? What is the colour of these fruits? And so on...*



Step 2: Rhyme

Teacher conducts an action rhyme. She/he along with children sing and do actions about fruits.

Mango, apple
Banana, pineapple
Mix them all together!
Mix them all together!
What do we have now, children?
Fruit salad! Fruit salad!

Step 3: Fruit salad

Teacher asks children to take out the fruits they have brought from home and put all the fruits on the table. Teacher conducts a conversation first. She/he picks a fruit and asks: *What is the colour of this fruit? What does it taste like? What is it called? What fruit do they like most? Which fruit is bigger? Which fruit is smaller? How many fruits are there? From where do they get the fruits? And so on...*

Teacher asks children to sort the fruits based on size, i.e., to arrange the fruits from bigger to smaller. She/he asks children to sort fruits based on colour. Teacher then washes all the fruits along with the children and cut them into smaller pieces. After cutting, teacher asks children to mix all the fruits in a bowl. She/he distributes the fruit salad among children. Everybody enjoys eating.

Note to the teacher:

- The rhyme should be conducted in a fun way with a catchy tune and fun movement to attract children's attention and build their curiosity. You can use the tune of your choice.
- During the fruits salad making activity, you can use seasonal and locally available fruits which are familiar to children.
- Instructions to make the domino card:
Use a sturdy paper like chart paper or ivory sheet. Cut it into smaller pieces measuring 2X4 inches. Paste a picture of a fruit on one half of the card and a picture of another fruit on the other half. Each card should have a different fruit on either half. Each domino card set should contain 8-15 cards. Domino cards can be made using low-cost/no-cost materials. You can make multiple sets of domino cards with different fruits. These cards can be used to conduct many other activities apart from dominos such as- matching game, find the odd one out, find the missing card, etc.
- While doing the activity it is important to inculcate in children a habit of washing hands and washing fruits before eating. You may tell children about the benefits of eating fruits depending on the group and situation.
- During the fruit salad making activity, you can verbally say the steps that you are doing (e.g., *I am cutting banana now, let me cut the apple next, which fruit should I pick now? And so on...*), as they are making the fruit salad. It would help to keep children engaged in the process.
- This is a long learning experience which can take more than one period. You can plan accordingly.

Preschool III

Learning Experience 1: Jewellery shop

Material required:

Necklaces, bracelets, colourful beads of different sizes, threads/strings, play money, drawing sheets, crayons, pencil, eraser, sharpener , worksheet (T4/PSIII/LE1)

Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrates independence in activities.
2. Expresses emotions through verbal and non-verbal modes (gestures, drawings)
3. Reads with the understanding of print awareness.
4. Predicts about the written text with help of pictures and print, previous experiences and information, letter-sound association etc.
5. Identify Indian currency notes.
6. Draw inferences from situations that surround him/her.
7. Compares and classifies objects by three factors like shape, color and size etc. correctly uses position words (besides, inside, under) to describe objects.

How?

Teacher brings various necklaces and bracelets in the class. She/he shows the bracelets and talks briefly with children: *Do you like my necklaces and bracelets? Do you want to learn how to make these bracelets?*

Then, teacher introduces all materials required to make the item like beads, threads/strings, etc. Teacher demonstrates the process at first and asks children to make one necklace or bracelet on their own. Teacher helps whoever needs assistant.

After they finish making necklaces, children are asked to get ready for role play of jewellery-shop. Teacher helps children to put price tags to the necklaces and bracelets. She/he collects all the items together and creates a set-up of a jewellery shop. Children help teacher to decorate the jewellery shop by displaying the necklaces and bracelets. Then roles are assigned to each child. Two children act as shopkeeper while the rest act as customers. Children take turns to play different roles. During the role play, play money is distributed. Children use this money to negotiate the rate and buy the items.

Post activity, teacher keeps all the bracelets and necklaces in the centre and each child picks out the necklace or bracelet that they have created.

Note to the teacher:

- Arrange the materials prior to the activity. There should be enough materials required to make necklaces and bracelets by all children. They might want to make more than one. Adequate time should be given to children to complete their task.
- During the role play activity, you can play a passive role. Children might exaggerate their role or use dialogues which are not realistic, but you can play along and ask questions which supports their imagination. You can select few children for observation and document their interactions, dialogues, and behaviour during the role play activity.
- You can use multiple periods to complete the learning experience.

Class 1

Learning Experience 1: *Ka jingwad jingtip na u Bah ba die dukan*

Learning Outcomes:

1. Plays or works cooperatively and enjoys playing/ working with others, involves all and takes initiative in framing rules for games or play activities.

2. Extends help, cares and shares play and learning material.
3. Uses own language/school language to express their needs and ask questions to gain information.
4. Labels the self-drawn pictures and the pictures made available to them. (invented spellings)

Material required:

Big picture of grocery shop, worksheet (T4/CI/LEI)

How?**Step 1: Picture conversation**

Teacher begins by showing a picture of a grocery shop and starting a conversation. She/he points to different elements of the picture and asks: *What is this? What items can you see in the shop? Identify items in the picture that you use in your house. Which of these can we eat? Who are there in this picture? Do you also visit grocery store? Who takes you to the grocery store? And so on...*

**Step 2: Interviewing the shopkeeper (Community visit)**

Teacher shares a detailed description of the plan with children. Teacher and children create few ground rules for the community visit together such as-

- No running
- No pushing
- Listening to friends and teacher
- Waiting for our turn

Teacher probes children to think about some questions that they want to the shopkeeper when they visit the store. E.g.: *What would you like to know about the shopkeeper and the shop? How can we know more about his work?*

Teacher and children collectively create a set of questions for the shopkeeper. Some sample questions are: *From where do you get all the materials? How many customers come to your store? Who helps you with your work? How many chocolates do you have in your store?*

Teacher encourages children to make their own questions. Then he/she gives one question to each child. Teacher also asks children to take a good look at the grocery store.

Teacher takes children to a nearby grocery store. All children get to observe the things kept in the store and ask questions. Then, one by one children ask the questions that they have prepared for the shopkeeper. Teacher takes a note of the questions being asked and the responses given by the shopkeeper. The group spends 15-20 minutes in the store, and they come back to their classroom.

Teacher asks children to share their experiences of visiting the store: *Did you like going to the store? What did you observe on our way to the store? Did you have fun? What did you ask the shopkeeper and what did she/he reply? Can you name 5 things that you saw in the store?*

Teacher makes a list of the things on the white/black board. She/he provides drawing sheets and other stationary materials to children. She/he asks children to draw the things and write the name of the things which they saw during their visit.

Note to the teacher:

- During picture conversation, each child should get the opportunity to look and hold the picture. They should get the chance to observe the details on the picture. You can ask children to sit in a semi-circle surrounding you and rotate the picture so that each child gets to express their views on it.
- Children's safety and wellbeing is our utmost priority during community visits. You can get some additional assistance during the community visit by taking help from your colleague or asking a parent to support you to look after children during visits.
- You can inform the shopkeeper prior to your visit. You can share the objective of your visit so that they are aligned with your plan.
- Setting ground rules is the first step, but children often forget the rules once they are in a different setting. Therefore, repeatedly reminding them about the rules can help you to manage the class.
- This learning experience can go beyond one period. You can plan accordingly.

Class 2

Learning Experience 1: Balloon race

Material required:

Some balloons, thread/string, glue tape, straw , worksheet (T4/C2/LE1)

Learning Outcomes:

1. Shows increased attention span and persistence in tasks.
2. Participates in class/school activities programmes etc.
3. Sings songs or rhymes with action.

How?

Teacher conducts a picture conversation activity by showing a picture of a balloon seller. Each child spends some time observing the picture. Teacher asks a few questions to probe the conversation, such as: *What can you see in the picture? Where is the picture based on? Who is selling the balloons? Who is buying the balloons? Have you seen a balloon seller? And so on...*



Teacher conducts an action rhyme on balloon. Children follows teacher in singing and doing the actions.

*I'm off to the shop,
With a skip and a hop.
For a pretty balloon,
That won't go pop.
A red or a blue,
Or a yellow will do.
Or the finest green,
That ever was seen.
I'll blow and I'll blow,
Till I'm sure it'll go.
Right up to the moon,
With my pretty balloon.*

After the rhyme, teacher conducts an action game. When she/he says an action mentioned in the rhyme, children do the action e.g., hop, blow, go, skip. Teacher writes down the rhyme on a chart paper and hangs on the wall.

Teacher distributes balloons in the class. Each child gets one balloon. Teacher gives children to play with it freely. Teacher conducts a balloon race. In this game, each child gets one balloon. All children stand in a straight line. To play the game, they continuously toss the balloon in the air and move in a straight line. They move from point A to point B without dropping the balloon on the ground.

Note to the teacher:

- During picture conversation, you can give each child adequate time to look at the picture and express their feelings. You can also ask children to frame questions based on the picture which other children can answer.
- You can extend the action game played after the rhyme by writing the action word on sheets and holding up the word for children to read and do the action.
- Give clear instructions so that each child understands the rules of the balloon race game.

Theme 5: Festivals

Preschool I

Learning Experience 1: Colourful Christmas

Learning Outcomes:

1. Participates in the activities and takes initiative.
2. Waits for their turn and follow simple instructions with teacher's support.
3. Exhibits fine motor skills and simple eye-hand coordination in various activities like colouring.
4. Recites repeatedly interesting poem/song with action participates in rhythmic activities.
5. Identifies basic shapes like balls, stars, bells etc.

Material required:

Cut out pictures of bells, balls, stars, Christmas trees, etc., crayons, glue, carton boxes, sweet/cookies.

How?

Teacher talks to children about how they celebrate Christmas at home. She/he asks questions to guide the conversation, such as: *Hello children! Holiday is coming up with lots of decorations, lights, and presents? It starts with the letter 'C'. Can you tell me what it is? How do you celebrate Christmas at home? What is your favourite Christmas song? Do you do anything special on Christmas?* After a brief interaction with children, teacher plays a common Christmas song and ask everyone to stand up and clap their hands while singing the song 'We wish you a Merry Christmas'.

*We wish you a Merry Christmas!
We wish you a Merry Christmas!
We wish you a Merry Christmas!
And a Happy New Year!*

Teacher then shows children cut out pictures of bells, balls, stars, Christmas trees, etc. Teacher asks questions such as: *Which colour do you like most? What is the shape of the ball?*

She/he places the cut-out pictures in a box and colour pencils/crayons in another box. Teacher asks children to pick up any cut out picture from the box, crayons, and colour it.

After children are done colouring, teacher calls out each child and give them a plain card made from chart paper by cutting it in small size and folding it in half. Each card contains the name from any one child from that class.

Teacher helps children to paste the coloured cut out picture on the cover of the plain card to make it into a Christmas card. Teacher asks children to write their names next to the one that is already written in the card.

After children complete making their Christmas cards, teacher help each child to find the friend whose name is written in it. Each child gives one card and receives another. At the end, teacher distributes sweets/cookies to all children.

Note to the Teacher:

- Since this learning experience requires many materials that you have to bring to the classroom prepared, you can start working on it a few days before conducting it.
- You can ask children about their feelings after making and exchanging Christmas cards with their friends.
- You can also ask parents to prepare home-made cookies and snacks and bring it to school. You can invite parents/ guardians during the programme and involve them in the activity.
- Ensure that all children are included in celebration of any festival irrespective of belonging to different faiths and religions.
- You can collect locally available material/low-cost material from community that can be pasted on a Christmas card.

Preschool II

Learning Experience 1: All around the Christmas tree

Learning Outcomes:

1. Exhibit fine motor skills and perform tasks that requires eye-hand coordination such as tearing, pasting etc.
2. Attempts to engage in conversation in school and home with unfamiliar teacher, new friends, school staff, other adults etc.

Material required:

Sample collage, glue, colour paper stripes, worksheet (T5/PSII/LEI)

How?

Teacher welcomes children to the class and help them sit in semi-circle. Teacher asks questions such as: *Do you celebrate Christmas? What do you think Santa Claus does on the Christmas eve? Have you seen a Christmas tree? Where have you seen it? Do you take part in decorating Christmas tree at home? Do you want to decorate your Christmas tree in the classroom?*

Teacher shows a Christmas collage to children that she/he had made at home so that children know what a Christmas collage looks like. She/he asks children to take a closer look and touch the collage to feel the texture. She/he encourages children to ask her questions about the collage.

Teacher distributes worksheets to children with outline pictures of different objects related to Christmas. She/he provides colourful paper strips and glue to children. She/he asks children to tear the paper stripes and paste on the outline pictures. Teacher demonstrates first by doing one.

After everyone completes their work, teacher hangs children's work on the classroom wall or on a Christmas tree. At the end, everyone sings a Christmas carol 'Jingle Bells'.

*Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way
Oh, what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh
Jingle bells, jingle bells*

*Jingle all the way
Oh, what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh*

*Dashing through the snow
In a one-horse open sleigh
Over the field we go,
Laughing all the way*

*Bells on bob tails ring
Making spirit bright
Oh! What fun it is to sing
A sleighing song to night.*

Note to the teacher:

- You can ask questions related to festivals such as: *Name other festivals you celebrate? Which is your favourite festival? How do you celebrate? Do you like wearing new clothes? How do you feel celebrating these festivals?*
- You can use different materials like newspapers, old magazines, old textbooks and so on for the collage task. Help children when needed while pasting pieces of paper.
- You can begin the class by singing Christmas carols or reciting simple poems also. You can also think of different ways to celebrate Christmas, such as making Christmas cards, fancy dress, telling stories, games on Christmas and so on.

Preschool III

Learning Experience 1: Fun with Santa

Learning Outcomes:

1. Exhibits fine motor skills with precision and control.
2. Uses coordinated movements to complete complex tasks like cutting along a line.
3. Sings songs or rhymes with action.
4. Explores a variety of grasps and grips while using art materials, tools, and instruments (e.g., sticks, seeds, pebbles, stones, chalk, thread, pencils, brushes, crayons, powder, scissors).

Material required:

Safety scissors, crayons, strings/ribbons/threads, cut out of a huge Christmas tree, paper of different colour, texture and thickness, thread, leaves of different shape, twigs, seeds, glue, crayons, worksheet (T5/PSIII/LEI)

How?

Teacher dresses up as Santa by wearing Santa face mask and red pointed cap. She/he enters the classroom and wishes children Merry Christmas. Teacher engages children in a conversation by asking questions such as: *Do you know who I am? Have you seen me before? Do you want to wear my face mask?* And so on...

After the conversation, teacher distributes mask making worksheets to all children. Teacher gives them crayons and safety scissors. She/he asks children to colour the mask and cut it out. After

completing, she/he helps children tie two ribbons/threads/strings to both ears of the Santa mask. Then, she/he helps children to wear the masks.

Teacher displays and hang a written Christmas song on the wall of the classroom. She sings the song in the tune of *London Bridge is Falling Down* and children follow.

*Santa Claus is coming to town.
Coming to town, coming to town,
Santa Claus is coming to town.
With tons of gifts for all of us.*

Teacher makes groups of children. She/he gives worksheet to all children. She/he asks children to decorate the pictures of the object. Teacher keeps different things like safety scissors, paper of different colour, texture, and thickness, leaves of different shape, seeds, twigs, glue, etc. on a table or centre of the room. Children pick the things they need in their group from the collection of materials.

When they complete decorating the objects and cutting them out, teacher gives a cut out of a huge Christmas tree. Children paste their objects on the tree to decorate it. Teacher hangs the Christmas tree cut-out in the classroom. Teacher and children sing the song together at the end.

Note to the teacher:

- The learning experience described above is of a Christmas celebration. You can celebrate any other festival that is of relevance and interest to children in your classroom. Ensure that all children are included in celebration of any festivals irrespective of belonging to different faiths and religions.
- You can arrange with parents who would voluntarily help in preparing local food adding flavour to the day where children can enjoy having snacks together. Such celebration can include and enhance parent/ community participation. You can ask parents to prepare red Christmas cap for children to wear during this celebration.
- You can ask children to come in their home wear or best dress of their choice for the day.

Pre-School III

Learning Experience 2: Wangala – The 100 drums festival

Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate independence in activity.
2. Follow simple instructions and simple rules
3. Take responsibility and make choices based on own preferences and interest.
4. Demonstrate gross motor skills with greater coordination, control, and strength, for e.g., hopping, jumping, etc.
5. Exhibits fine motor skills with precision and control.

Material required:

Video of *Wangala* dance, audio-visual aid, paint, plate, chart papers, liquid glue, rice grains, lentils, glitters, pictures, and posters of Wangala festival, ornaments of garo tribe (*Rigitok*, *Do'me*, *Natapsi*, etc.), magazine paper stripes

How?

Teacher greets children in the class. Children come dressed in their traditional attire from home. Teacher asks questions to begin a conversation: *Hello children! Wow, look at you, you all are looking wonderful today! What are you wearing today? What is it called? Did someone help you wear it? Who? And so on...*

Teacher introduces the game of hopscotch to children. Teacher demonstrates first and children begins to play. Teacher asks: *Are you having fun?*

Teacher then shows some videos on *Wangala* festival, which involves dances, songs, food, rituals and games. Teacher asks children to recall the game of hopscotch and observe if the *Wangala* dance is somewhat like the game. Teacher helps children recollect the game and asks children to show how they hop in the game. Simultaneously, with the video, teacher conducts conversations while playing and pausing the video. She/he asks questions like: *Do you want to know the name of this festival? Are you excited to make necklace/wrist band?*

Teacher then distributes chart papers to the class and pour paint on a plate. She/he asks children to dip their hands and make handprints on the chart paper. After the handprint is completed, teacher pours liquid glue on the handprints. She/he asks children to spread rice grains, lentils on the handprints, followed by children sprinkling glitters on it.

As the chart papers dry out, children wash their hands. Teacher shows pictures and posters of *Wangala* festival. She/he brings the ornaments of the Garo tribes, like *Rikgitok* (necklace), *Do'me* (feathered head gear), *Natapsi* (earring) and other traditional ornaments and show it to the class. Teacher asks children to take a close look and touch the ornaments.

Teacher begins the next activity, where children make necklaces and wrist bands. Teacher demonstrates rolling a magazine sheet into a small cylindrical shape and children follow. Teacher applies glue at the edge of the roll to stick it together and children follow. Teacher helps children do it and asks them to help each other. Teacher shows how to insert a thread or string inside the rolls to make necklaces and wrist bands.

Towards the end of the class, teacher asks children to exchange their necklaces and wrist bands with their friends.

Note to the teacher:

- Compliment all children about their dresses. Before children come to the classroom, draw the lines for hopscotch.
- Ensure that children write their names on the handprint art. Show the basic *Wangala* dance step. Cut the magazines in strips before beginning the learning experience, so that during the activity, children only have to roll the strips and make the beads.

Class 1

Learning Experience 1: Fingerprinting a Christmas card

Learning Outcomes:

1. Follows three to four instructions rules at a given time.
2. Extend help, cares, and shares learning material.
3. Displays fine motor skills with accuracy and control, engages in art integrated activities/drawing, colouring, cutting, pasting, etc.
4. Copies simple geometric shapes and design.
5. Makes a card for their friend, draws/paints, and adds simple words/sentences/to the drawing/painting.

Material required:

Plain paper, chart paper, paints, crayons, sketch pens, scissors, tray/plate/bowl

How?

Teacher asks children: *Do you all celebrate Christmas? When do you celebrate it? Do you know any Christmas Song? Let's sing a few lines.*

*Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells,
Jingle all the way.
Oh, what fun it is
To ride in a one-horse open sleigh!*

Teacher asks children: *Do you receive cards and gifts during Christmas? Who gives you cards and presents? Let's make cards today.*

Teacher provides the materials to children for making card. Teacher demonstrates the process and children follow. Teacher folds the paper in half and draws half of Christmas tree along the crease. Teacher then cuts one half of the tree out of the paper. Unfolds it to get a whole Christmas tree. He/she puts the cut-out tree on the cover of the plain card made out of chart paper. Holds the tree with one hand and dips the finger of the other in paint. Makes fingerprints along the boundary of the Christmas tree. Teacher then removes the cut-out Christmas tree, dips the fingers in different paints and makes fingerprints in the space around the tree.



Teacher asks children to write *Merry Christmas and Happy New Year* on the greeting card. She/he asks children to write the name of the friend or family to whom they are giving the card. She/he also asks them to write their own name on the card.

Note to the teacher:

- Ask children to decorate the card as they want. If any child finds it difficult you can help him/her, ask other children to help or ask him/her to make it simply by drawing or pasting pictures.
- You can use any other materials to make the card.
- You may sing Christmas songs in local/regional dialects.

Class 1

Learning Experience 2: Let us dance together!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Follows three to four instructions and simple rules at the same time.
2. Works collectively and enjoys working with others.
3. Shows cooperation in group activity.
4. Participates actively in music, dance, and movement.
5. Responds orally to questions related to story bilingually.
6. Compares and classifies pictures based on multiple factors.
7. Seriates/ arranges more than 5 objects based on criteria.

Material required:

Pictures of Shad Suk Mynsiem, pictures of traditional jewelries (Paila, Pangngiat, Khadu, Khaila), dresses and items used by dancers, scrap book, glue, music system

How?

Teacher shows pictures related to a local festival: Shad Suk Mynsiem. She/he distributes some pictures to children and asks them to read the pictures carefully.

To support them in reading the picture, teacher asks children questions such as: *What do you see in this picture? What are they doing? Have you ever seen or taken part in this kind of dance? Where have you seen it? Do you know the name of this dance? Do you know of any other local festival? And so on...*

After the picture reading, teacher narrates a short story about Shad Suk Mynsiem and she/he shows them a video about the dance performed during the festival.

Teacher takes children to the school playing ground. She/he plays an instrumental traditional music used during the festival and demonstrates some of the dance move and rhythm as per the instrumental music. Children are engaged and follow the steps accordingly.

After the dance, teacher asks children to gather at the classroom for a project activity. She divides children into groups of 3-4 members each. Teacher provides pictures of traditional jewelries, dresses and items used by dancers, scrap book, and glue.

Teacher asks children to identify jewelries, dresses and items wore by male and female dancers. Children sort the traditional jewelries, dresses and items used by male and female dancers,

respectively. Children pastes all the dresses, jewelries, and items used by men on one page of the scrap book and all the dresses, jewelries, and items used by women on another page. Children present their work to the whole class.

Note to the teacher:

- Ensure that every child dances to the music as a musical moment. In case it rains, you can think of an alternative, such as using a classroom/hall to conduct the dancing activity.
- You can give children pictures of reference for the dress and jewelry sorting activity. However, it should be kept in mind that the pictures are clear and big. You can collect relevant pictures related to Shad Suk Mynsiem from magazines, newspaper, calendars, etc.
- You can download a video from YouTube to show children how Shad Suk Mynsiem is being celebrated in Meghalaya.
- You need not to be strict about conducting the learning experience on this festival only.

Class 2

Learning Experience 1: I am Santa Claus

Learning Outcome:

1. Enjoys being in the company of peers.
2. Takes initiative to conduct an activity.
3. Like to share their joy with other children through play, music, and dance.
4. Composes and writes simple, short sentences with space between words to express themselves.

Material required:

Santa Claus Costumes like (Red Santa hat, Red Jacket, Black belt, Red Pant, Black boot, Santa Mask and long white beard), worksheet (T5/C2/LE1)

How?

Teacher begins the class with a guided conversation by asking questions such as: *Children, did you enjoy your Christmas last year? Did you go Christmas shopping with your parent? Did you participate in Christmas Carol?* Children are given time to share their stories on their previous Christmas Celebration. Teacher then asks: *Do you know Santa? Did you see Santa anywhere? Where did you see him? What was he doing? Children do you want to be dressed like Santa Claus?*

Teacher first makes groups of children with of 4-5 children in one group. Teacher asks the group to pick the Santa Claus costume. The group decides and make one member as their Santa Claus. The other children may help the child in dressing up as Santa Claus. After dressing up as Santa Claus the group goes a round in the class from one table to another table distributing sweets and singing Christmas song.

Teacher distributes worksheet to all children where they write their message to Santa Claus.

Note to the teacher:

- If possible, try to manage to get a set of Santa Claus costume or else the teacher can ask children to bring if they have any parts of the costume.
- You can plan an activity in the classroom by engaging children in making a simple parts of the costume like red Santa hat, white beard, Santa mask, etc. with chart paper and paint.

Theme 6: Hills & Forests

Preschool I

Learning Experience 1: Let us explore and count things around us

Learning Outcomes:

1. Collects Objects from their immediate environment e.g., leaves, twigs, pebbles, feather etc. and talks about them bilingually.
2. Uses all senses to observe and explore the environment.
3. Counts to three objects.
4. Seriates/arranges 3-4 objects/picture cards in a sequence e.g., shapes, size, occurrence of events.
5. Exhibits fine motor skills and simple eye-hand coordination in various activities like colouring etc.

Material required:

Leaves from the surrounding, worksheet (T6/PSI/LEI)

How?

Teacher takes children to the nearby open place and let them have fun playing games. Children enjoy the fun and games, like hoping, jumping, talking, running, rolling, hiding behind the trees, collecting, and playing with twigs, etc.

Teacher encourages children to explore and observe the environment by asking questions like: *What do you see? What do you hear? Do you see trees and plants around you? And so on...*

Teacher asks children what objects they want to collect, and all agree to collect different types of leaves. Teacher asks children to collect leaves.

Teacher asks children to put all the collected leaves together on the ground. She/he asks children: *Which tree or plant do you think this leave came from? Do you see any other leaves like this one on other trees? Do you see this kind of leave near your house? Which shape of leaf do you like the most? Why? And so on...*

After this, she/he asks children to sort the leaves and classify them based on their shape, size, or colour.

Teacher distributes worksheet with pictures of leaves and asks children to count and write the number of leaves they see on each picture.

Note to the teacher:

Ensure that the activity for this age group is easy and simple to be carried out at their level. Also plan a fun activity for children to make it more enjoyable. The worksheet can also have a section for children to draw or paste the leaves they collected during the nature walk.

Preschool I

Learning Experience 2: Old McDonald!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Express fondness/liking for animals and birds in their surroundings; plays and talks to them.
2. Identifies the various familiar sounds in the surroundings, e.g., sound of the falling rain, chirping of the birds, etc.
3. Identifies and names common objects, sounds, people, pictures, animals, birds, events, etc.

Material required:

Animal flash cards, drawing sheets, crayons, pencils, eraser, sharpener, worksheet (T6/PSI/LE2)

How?

Teacher takes children to a nearby park or an open space. She/he asks children to look around to see if there are animals around, like cows, dogs, cats, squirrels, goats, etc. After coming back from the open space or park teacher encourages them to share their experiences and observations of animals. She/he asks: *What did you notice about the dog we saw in the park? How do you think the squirrel felt when it saw us? Do you like animals? Do you have pets at home or any animals that live in your home/farm? Do you have some toys of animals at home? Do you play with those toys? What is your favorite animal? What sound does it make? And so on...*

Teacher shows pictures of different animals and asks children to make the sound of the animal they see in the picture. Teacher introduces the Old MacDonald rhyme to children. Everyone sings together.

*Old Mac Donald had a farm,
Eee, Ai, Eee, Ai, O
And on that farm he had some cows,
Eee, Ai, Eee, Ai, O
With a mow, mow here,
With a mow, mow there,
Here a mow, there a mow,
Everywhere mow, mow
Old Mac Donald had a farm,
Eee, Ai, Eee, Ai, O*

*Old Mac Donald had a farm,
Eee, Ai, Eee, Ai, O
And on that farm he had some pigs,
Eee, Ai, Eee, Ai, O
With a oink, oink here,
With a oink, oink there,
Here a oink, there a oink,
Everywhere oink, oink,
Old Mac Donald had a farm,
Eee, Ai, Eee, Ai, O*

Old Mac Donald had a farm,
Eee, Ai, Eee, Ai, O
And on that farm he had some ducks,
Eee, Ai, Eee, Ai, O
With a quack, quack here,
With a quack, quack there,
Here a quack, there a quack,
Everywhere quack, quack
Old Mac Donald had a farm,
Eee, Ai, Eee, Ai, O

After this, teacher provides drawing materials like drawing sheets, crayons, pencil, eraser, etc. to children and asks them to draw pictures of animals and their habitat.

Teacher distributes worksheet to children where they match the animal picture with its sound.

Note to the teacher:

You can use some other alternative in the form of video/audio of the rhyme or toy and puppets to do rhyme. You can expand the rhyme by asking children to suggest names of animals and their sounds, e.g., sheep, goat, bird, etc. You can make them sing with different animal sounds.

Encourage children to make connections between the animals they observe and their habitats, and to discuss how they can help take care of the environment by protecting the animals' homes.

You can modify the worksheet *Animal Sound* for children at a higher level by giving blank space beside the picture of animal and asking them to write the sound of the animal. The worksheet can also have a section for children to draw or colour their favourite animal. You can incorporate local rhymes, songs about animals.

Preschool II

Learning Experience 1: Leaf impressions

Learning Outcomes:

1. Collects objects from her/his surroundings based on simple instruction.
2. Uses all senses to observe and explore the environment.
3. Counts and perceives objects up to five
4. Seriates/arranges 3-4 objects/picture cards in a sequence e.g. shapes, size, occurrence of events.

Material required:

Leaves from the surrounding, paper, crayons

How?

Teacher takes children to a nearby open space or school garden/ park and asks children to walk around, explore independently or play around and have fun. After some time, teacher asks children to collect at least 5 different types of leaves available there. Each child collects at least five leaves. Teacher takes them inside the classroom.

Teacher asks each of them to count the leaves up to five. Teachers then asks children to arrange the leaves according to their shapes and sizes. After this, teacher engages children in conversation by asking a few questions: *Do you have a tree/plant near your house? Do you see this kind of leaves near your*

house? Are there any of these plants in your house compound? Which of these leaves you have seen before? Are there any fruit bearing trees like mango tree, banana tree, etc. in your compound? And so on...

Teacher distributes paper and crayons to children. She/he demonstrates the activity and children follow. She/he lays down a leaf on the table/floor, spreads a paper over the leaf and rubs a crayon colour on the paper. As children rub, they see the outline of the leaf appearing on the paper. Children then carefully remove the paper to reveal their artwork. They do this for 3 leaves and write the number beside the picture.

Note to the teacher:

- One should ensure that the activity for this age group is easy and simple to be carried out at their level.
- Get the appropriate questions ready for interaction.
- Also plan a fun activity for children to make it more enjoyable.
- After the tracing activity, you can paste the artworks on the wall.

Preschool II

Learning Experience 2: Ka ĩing ki Mrad!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Expresses thoughts and ideas in a bilingual conversation and listen to others.
2. Listens to bilingual stories and takes interest in talking about them.
3. Develops fine motor skills through drawing, colouring, pasting, etc.
4. Engages in emergent writing tasks like scribbling, tracing, inventing spelling, etc.
5. Reads familiar words and recognizes familiar letters.
6. Uses vocabulary related to shape, size, colour, etc.
7. Enjoys singing rhymes and songs on familiar topics.

Material required:

'Animal Homes' (English- Khasi bilingual story by story weaver), pencils, eraser, sharpener, crayons, glue, worksheet (T6/PSII/LE2)

How?

Teacher asks children questions to conduct a conversation: *Why do we live in a house? Do animals live in houses too? Where do they live? What do their houses look like? Where would we live if we did not have a house?* Children share their thoughts about where they would like to live e.g., on top of a tree.

Teacher then reads aloud the story 'Animal Homes' bilingually by showing the pictures one by one. Children keenly observe each picture and talk about what they see, e.g., bird, bees, spider, web, snails, tortoise, river, frogs, pond, rabbit, carrots, monkeys, trees, bears, crocodiles, deer, tigers, etc. After reading the story, teacher asks: *Did you like the story? Which part did you like best? Which animal's home do you like the most? Do you want to visit any animal's home?*

Teacher distributes worksheets to children where they draw an animal and its home. With teacher's help, children paste their drawings on the display board/wall.

Note to the teacher:

Children are fascinated by animals and their homes. While reading aloud the story, make sure that children get the opportunity to keenly observe each picture and share their observations about the different animals they see and the homes where they live. After displaying children's hornbill worksheets for a few days, you can take them down and keep them in children's portfolio files. Keenly observe children's progress regarding recognizing letters, words ('hornbill'), and scribbling/writing their names. You can download the bilingual storybook 'Animal Homes' story from the following link:

<https://storyweaver.org.in/stories/192052-ka-iing-ki-mrad?mode=read>



You can create a worksheet with pictures of different animals and their sounds. Children can be asked to match the animal with its corresponding sound by drawing a line connecting the two. For older children, the worksheet can have blank spaces for them to write the name of the animal or the sound it makes. The worksheet can also have a section for children to draw or colour their favourite animal.

Preschool III

Learning Experience 1: Leaf crown!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Creates new patterns with leaf printing, thumb printing etc.
2. Exhibits fine motor skills with precision and control
3. Participates in shared reading of the story.

Material required:

Chart paper, colors, scissors, glue, collection of different kinds of leaves

How?

Teacher takes children for nature walk nearby the school and asks them to collect any kind of leave. He initiates a guided conversation on leaves that they have collected by asking questions like: *Do you see any plant near your house? How many plants do you see in your compound? Are the plants of different types? Do you observe that different trees/plants have different leaves? Do you notice that leaves of plants/trees are of different size and shape?* Then he/she reads out a story about a princess wearing a crown and shows the picture or image of a crown. The story goes like this:

The Leaf Crown!

Once upon a time in a kingdom far away lived a King named Tirot. He had a daughter whose name was Rikynti. The king and his daughter loved to wonder around the forest. As time went by, the king could no longer join his daughter during their walks in the forest she loved most. As she loved nature, she would often go for a walk all alone on many occasions. The King then realized that he no longer got the strength and time to spend quality time with his daughter.

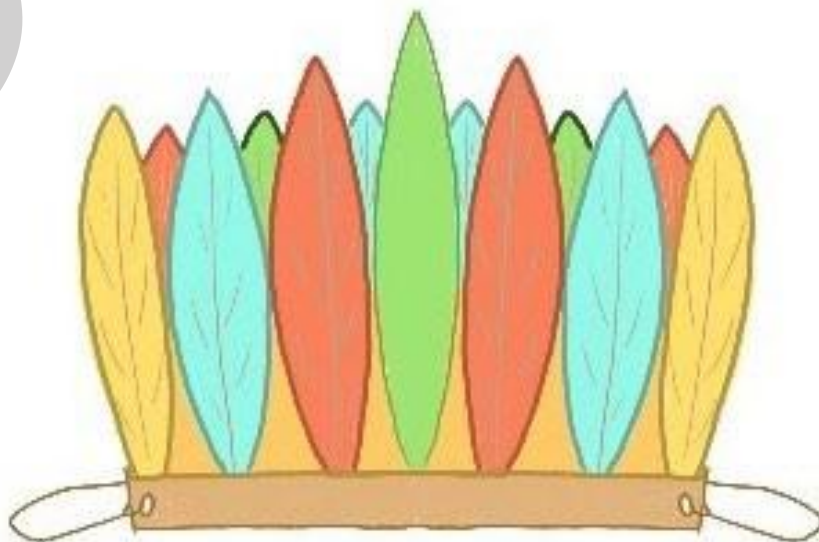
So, one day he decided to take a carriage and visit his daughter who was spending her time in the forest. When the daughter saw her father's carriage, she was filled with joy to see her father joining her. Happily, both of them walked inside the beautiful forest. When they reached a particular open grassy spot, they stopped and that is when the father told her that time has come for her to be crowned as Princess. On hearing her father's words, the daughter was filled with joy because she had always been waiting for this moment for a very long time. On the way back to the castle she kept on imagining what she would look like with the crown on her head.

Later that night the King's daughter could not sleep due to the excitement of the news she got from her father. Then out of curiosity she went to a secret room where the crown was placed and tried it wearing on her head. While she was admiring herself in the mirror with the crown on her head, she heard a sound and got scared because she was not allowed to touch the crown until the ceremony. She then hurriedly placed the crown back in the place from where she got it before someone could see her with the crown, but she accidentally dropped it on the ground, which led to one of the jewels broken.

On the morning of the ceremony the King noticed that one of the jewels was missing and asked the daughter if she knew what had happened. The daughter cried on hearing this and then she confessed to the king about what had happened the other night. The king consoled his daughter who was crying hard at that moment and decided to call the goldsmith to fix the crown before the ceremony. The goldsmith came and fixed the crown.

So, with the kind and forgiving King, the Crowning ceremony was held with joy and fun across the kingdom.

Teacher and children bring the collection of leaves inside the classroom. Teacher guides them how to use the paint. Accordingly, children dip the leaves in the bowl of paint and paste it on the chart paper. After letting the paint to dry, teacher cuts out the different types of leaves from the chart. Teacher makes a simple band out of the chart. She/he cuts out a strip, measures each child's head and fastens the crown to the right size using staples or tape.



Note to the teacher:

- As a teacher, you must ensure that all children are provided with safe materials/tools for the activity.
- In case real leaves are not available, you can also draw an outline of the leaf crown on chart paper.
- Give ample time to children to carry out the activity.

Class 1

Learning Experience 1: Magical bridge!

Learning Outcomes:

1. Displays fine motor skills with accuracy and control, engages in art integrated activities/drawing/coloring, collage making, etc.
2. Connects personal experiences with the read/familiar stories in their own language and talks about them.

Material required:

3 jute rope of 3 meters in length, worksheet (T6/CI/LEI)

How?

Teacher talks about various objects/ things found around the natural surroundings and asks children about the plants at their homes or natural things they have seen somewhere else like parks or nearby surroundings, etc. Then teacher initiates a discussion on the uses of trees by asking questions like: *What do we get from the trees? What do trees give us? Do you know where do the papers we are using come from? Have you seen the wooden bridges anyway?*

Teacher then talks about the bridges they see in and around their surroundings by asking them questions like: *Have you seen any bridges around your locality? How many have you seen? Do you like bridges?* Teacher narrates a story about a 'Living Root Bridge'.

The Magical Living Bridge!

Once upon a time in a village named Sohra lived two families, where Khrawbok and Rika lived on one side of the stream and Meban and Lana lived on the other side of the stream. During winters the four of them meet and play together by crossing the stream, but in monsoon season they would have difficulty in playing together because the water flows strongly.

So the four of them decided to seek help and Meban being the eldest suggested that the four of them should pray to God the creator and share their problem of not being able to meet and play together.

Few days after, God answered their prayers by giving them an idea to plant trees on both sides of the streams and asked them to weave the roots together to form a bridge. So, they planted the trees as suggested by God. As they were busy working, one winter morning, Khrawbok's grandmother saw them getting busy with something. She asked them what they were busy with, and so Khrawbok told the grandmother what God has guided them to do. The grandmother, on hearing this quickly went inside the house and after some time came out with a pla-iarong, a small sling pouch for keeping things. She took out some small brown little round things from inside the pouch and showed it to the children. The children were surprised and asked grandmother what it was. Grandmother, then told them to just help her with digging a hole on the ground. The children took some broken sticks lying on the ground and started digging a hole on the ground near the stream, and

after that, granny put some of the little brown things inside the hole and asked them to cover the hole with the same mud that they dug out.

After this, they crossed to the other side and did the same thing. Then the children dug a hole and grandmother put some more of the little brown things inside the second hole and again asked them to cover the hole. Then, grandmother told the children to wash their hands and feet in the stream and come back home for some meal she has prepared for them. During the meal, grandmother told the children a little story about the brown little things she had buried earlier in the ground. She told them that they are magical seeds of a Rubber fig tree which she got from a fairy when she was still young. She told them, that after the rainy season, some magical trees will grow out of it.

Soon, the rainy season came and ended quickly. One sunny morning, Rika woke up early and went out to wash when she suddenly saw a huge tree just near to the stream. She woke up her brother and the both of them went running to the tree. On reaching the tree, they saw that a bridge was formed by the woven roots of the magical rubber fig tree, and were very excited. Quickly they went across the bridge and called their friends Khrawbok and his sister. All of them were very happy to see the bridge, which means they could now cross from one side to the other every day even during the rainy season.

Grandmother also advised them to take good care of the trees and surrounding so that it can last for year and years and that they can always stay connected with each other.

Even now, after many years, children of the village play on the magical root bridge and are great friends!

Teacher carries out an activity of making bridge using ropes. She/he brings three jute rope of about 3 meters and asks five children to volunteer to make a bridge. She/he asks two children to stand holding one rope from each end and asks the other two children to do the same. The four children hold the two ropes parallelly. Then teacher asks another child to go crisscross with the third rope making all the three ropes intersect and connect to make it look like a root bridge.

Teacher hands out a take home worksheet which is about observing the growth of a plant from a seed. First, children have to fill a pot with soil and plant a seed. They have to water it and place it in a sunny spot. Every day, they should observe and draw what the plant looks like. They must record the date and write down any changes they notice, such as a sprout, leaves, and stem growth. They should continue to water and care for the plant and make observations for a few weeks until it grows into a full-grown plant. By the end of the worksheet, children learn how to care for a plant and understand the process of growth from a seed to a plant.

Note to the teacher:

- Besides the story you can bring rhymes on Living Root Bridge in the tune of 'London Bridge is falling down...' and make children sing in unison.

*Living bridge is here with us,
Here with us, here with us.
Living bridge is here with us,
We are so happy!*

- You can make children participate in planting trees, plants and flowers to create a sense of affection towards environment. You can compose your own rhyme in your own mother tongue and create your own worksheets. You should make sure that proper instruction of the entire activity is given in a simple language so that children can enjoy doing the activity.
- With regard to the Jacob's ladder activity, you should be well versed on how to carry out this activity before you demonstrate it. Children should be allowed to handle this activity on their own to create a string loop step by step. Idea for forming a string loop is available on this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8BN_AwC9gQ



Class 2

Learning Experience 1: Through my magnifying glass

Learning Outcomes:

1. Compares the given objects/pictures and identifies similarities and differences.
2. Show curiosity and interest in experimentation and exploration and takes initiative in drawing inferences and reasoning.

Material required:

Magnifying glass, worksheet (T6/C2/LE1)

How?

Children are taken to the nearby jungle/park. Teacher takes the magnifying glass to the place being visited. Once they reach the spot, she/he asks children to look for different types of trees, plants, and grasses. Accordingly, children identify different types of trees, plants, and grasses. They also try to find out similar trees, plants, and grasses. Teacher explains about trees, shrubs, creepers and grasses and shows them the examples from the surrounding. Children get engaged in discussion and conversation about types of plants, trees, and shrubs, e.g., pine tree, areca nut tree, cashew nut, rose, tomato, pumpkin, bamboo and more. Teacher talks about types and names of trees and plants. Teacher further asks children to explore trees and plants by touching and feeling their textures, smelling the scent of flowers, tasting fruits available in the garden/ park, or crushing dry leaves or breaking twigs to listen to the sound of crushing and breaking. Teacher tells them to observe the leaves or ants with the help of magnifying glass. This is how she/he encourages children to see the minute things closely and get an understanding about the natural objects/things.

Teacher tells children to take the magnifying glass and go outdoors, observe and study different types of trees, plants, and grasses. They write down what they saw and draw pictures of the things that interest them. Alternatively, after children look at various things with their magnifying glass, they choose any one object and look at it closely e.g., a leaf, a flower, a bug. They draw it in their worksheet and write a short description of what they observed, using words related to colour, shape, texture, size, etc.

Note to the teacher:

- While carrying out a nature walk and study activity, ensure that children are not taken deep into the jungle. Choose the place near the location of the school. Find out if there is any Botanical Garden in the area. It is advisable to use the park for nature walk activity provide there is safety issue for children.

Exemplar worksheets for the learning experiences

The following pages contain worksheets for the exemplar learning experiences. Like the learning experiences, the worksheets are suggested only. Please use them as references and make modifications for your classroom. The worksheets by design are not standalone and must be used in coordination with the learning experience of the day.

Each worksheet is coded for easy referencing. Here is how you can read the code.

T1/PSII/LE2

T1 is the theme number

PSII is the class

LE2 is the Learning Experience number

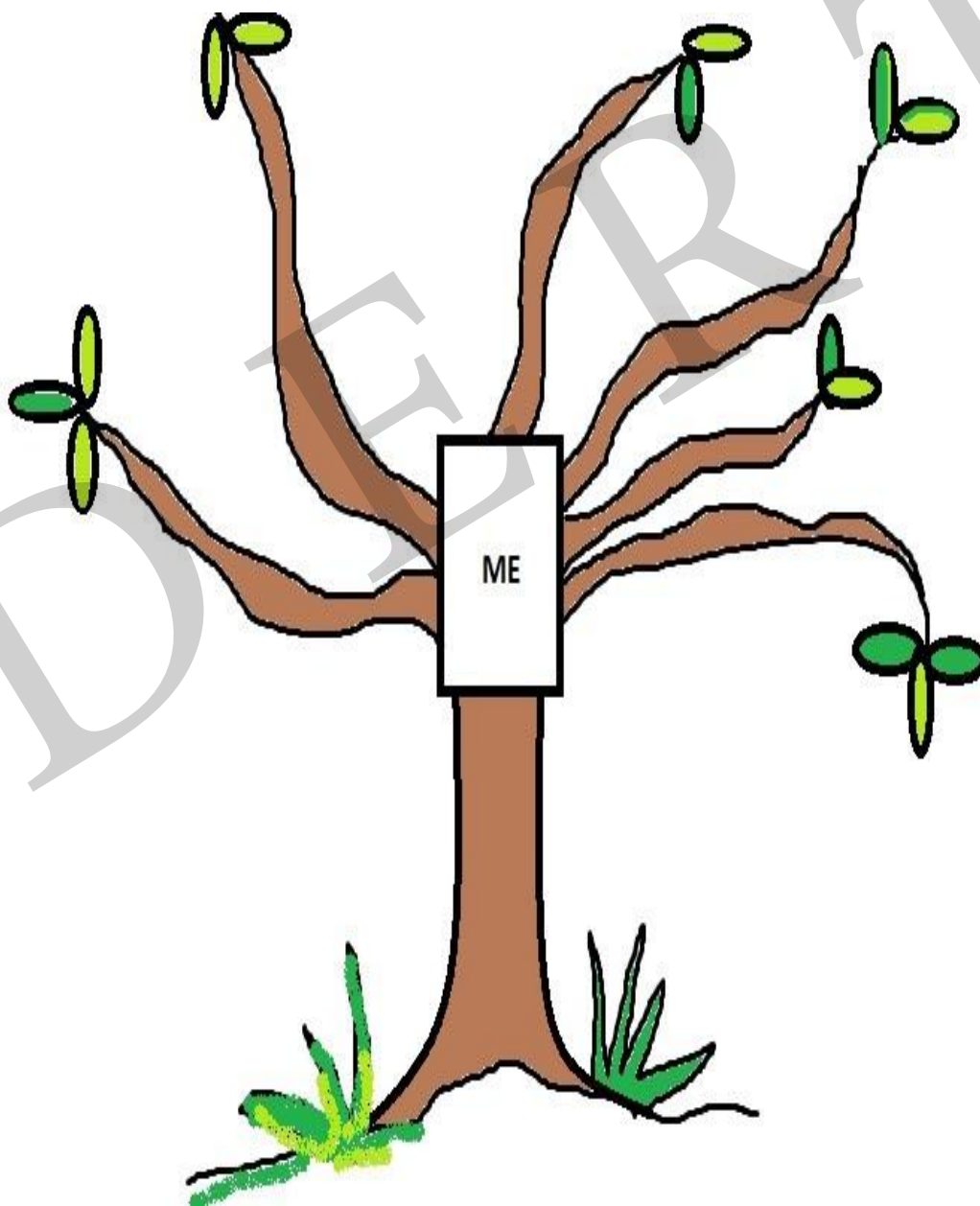
Your name: _____

Theme: Me & My Family

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Paste passport size photos of your family members on the branches of the tree. Write their names under their photos.



Teacher's remarks:	Signature of the parent(s) and remarks (if any):
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Note to the teacher:

It is a take home worksheet. Before distributing the worksheet, explain the task to all children. Children need to paste passport sized photos of all family members and themselves. You can display these worksheets in your classroom and ask children to talk about their family members the next day.

Your name: _____

Theme: Me & My Family

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Look in the mirror, draw yourself and label your body parts.



Teacher's remarks:

Signature of the parent(s) and
remarks (if any):**Note to the teacher:**

Place a big mirror in your class so that children can look at themselves. You can support children during labeling. Children can keep coming to the mirror to see themselves while drawing, let them do so.

Worksheet: *House of Many Colours (Ing Bun Rong)*

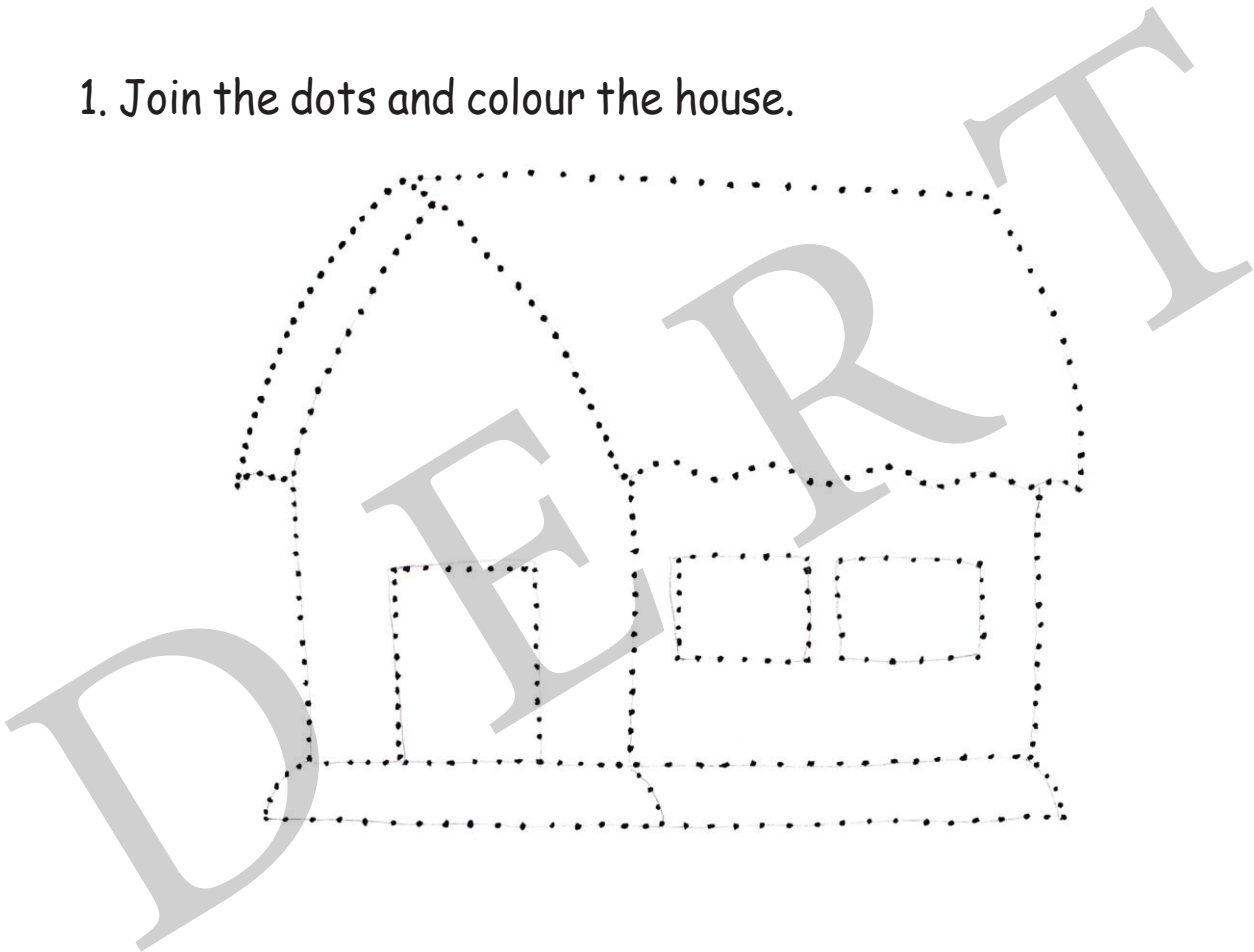
Your name: _____

Theme: My Neighbourhood

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Join the dots and colour the house.



Teacher's remarks:

Signature of the parent(s) and
remarks (if any):

Note to the teacher:

Guide the child in joining the dots and colour the picture according to his/her choice. Ask the child to extend the picture based on the story or imagination.

T2/PSIII/LE1 **Worksheet: *My Neighbourhood Animal***

Your name: _____

Theme: My Neighbourhood

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Draw a picture of your neighbourhood animal or your pet.
Colour it. Complete the sentence given below.



This is _____ .

Teacher's remarks:

**Signature of the parent(s) and
remarks (if any):**

Note to the teacher:

Let the child use invented spellings and words from other languages.

T2/C2/LE1 Worksheet: *The Neighbourhood of My Dreams*

Your name: _____

Theme: My Neighbourhood

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Complete the following sentences and write about your neighbourhood and dream neighbourhood.

Hello! My name is _____. I live in _____.

I have a beautiful neighbourhood. My neighbourhood has the following places:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I love my neighbourhood but my dream neighbourhood would have:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Teacher's remarks:	Signature of the parent(s) and remarks (if any):
---------------------------	---

Note to the teacher:

This worksheet should be done the next day after making the model. You can guide and recapitulate about the model making activity before introducing this.

Worksheet: Things I See In My Classroom

Your name: _____

Theme: My School

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Fill in the blanks with the help of the pictures and complete the sentences.

My classroom is very beautiful. I see so many interesting things

in my classroom. I see a 

I see a . I also see so many

..... . But the best thing to see is

the  of my friends.

Teacher's remarks:

Signature of the parent(s) and
remarks (if any):

Note to the teacher:

This is a take home worksheet. You can show children how to do it by discussing the first one. You can ask children to take help of adults at home if they require.

Your name: _____

Theme: My School

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Make a birthday card for your friend.



Teacher's remarks:

Signature of the parent(s) and
remarks (if any):**Note to the teacher:**

In this worksheet, the child is expected to colour the cake, decorate the card and write a message for their friend. After completing the worksheet, the child can cut the outline of the card and gift it to their friend.

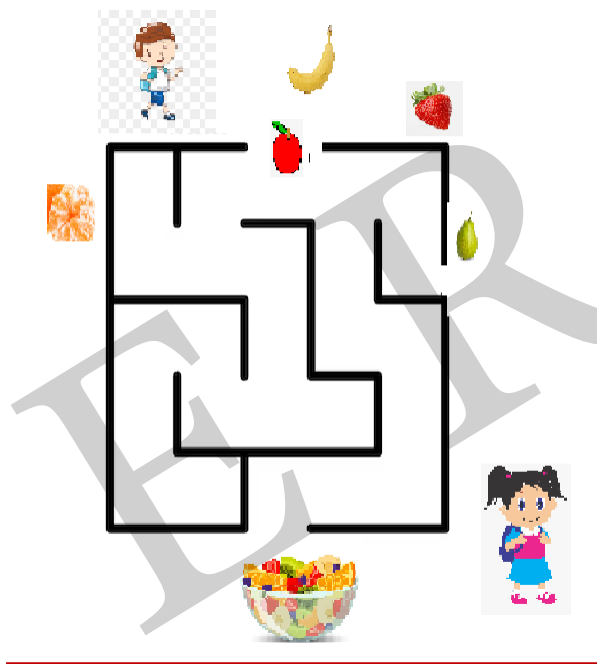
Your name: _____

Theme: Market

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Help the children find the fruit bowl.



Teacher's remarks:

Signature of the parent(s) and
remarks (if any):**Note to the teacher:**

Guide the child to complete the worksheet. Ask them to find the way first and then to mark it with a pencil.

Your name: _____

Theme: Market

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Interview your elders at home based on the questions given below. Write down the responses in the given space.

a. Name any 5 traditional ornaments.

b. Where to wear these ornaments?

c. Can you show me these ornaments (Or a picture)?

d.

(Ask what you want and write it down here.)

Responses:

a.

.....

b.

.....

c.

d.

.....

Teacher's remarks:	Signature of the parent(s) and remarks (if any):
--------------------	--

Note to the teacher:

It is a take home worksheet. After giving the worksheet, ask the child to go through it and clear his/her doubts. The child has to interview the elders in the family to respond to the questions. The first 3 are given and the 4th question is blank for the child to ask whatever he/she is curious about. You can ask the child to share his/her experience of taking the interview during the time of submission.

Worksheet: Let Us Read the Labels!**Your name:** _____**Theme:** Market**Your class:** _____**Date:** _____

1. Collect the manufacture date, date of expiry and price of 5 grocery items of your choice. Write it down in the table below. Ask an elder to help you with the task.

Item's name	Manufacture date	Expiry date	Price

Teacher's remarks:**Signature of the parent(s) and remarks (if any):****Note to the teacher:**

It is a take home worksheet. After giving the worksheet, ask the child to go through it and clear his/her doubts. Conduct a conversation regarding manufacture date, expiry date and price. Bring a few grocery items and demonstrate how to read the required information.

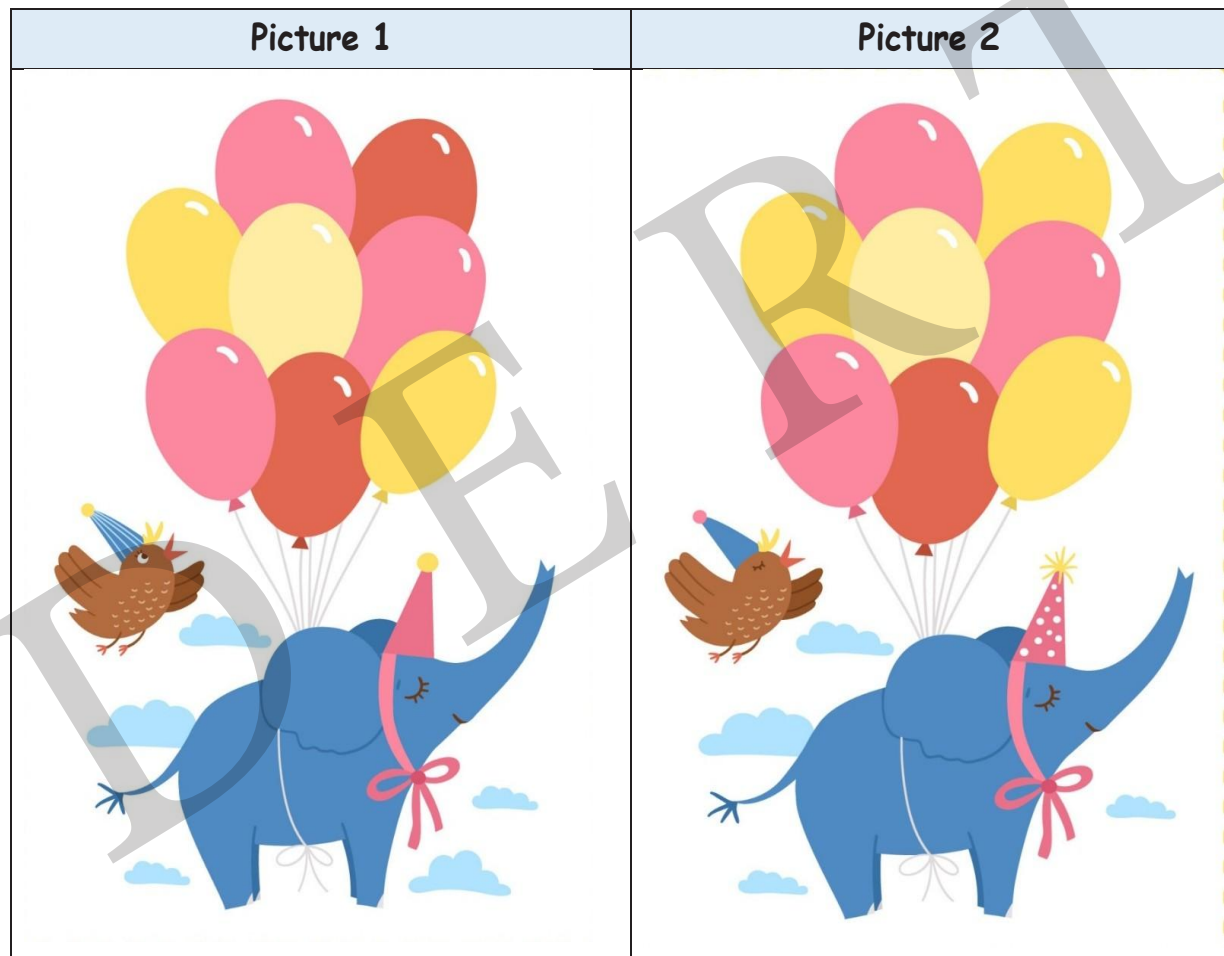
Your name: _____

Theme: Market

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Look at Picture 1 and Picture 2 carefully. Circle the differences in Picture 2. There are 7 of them.



Teacher's remarks:

Signature of the parent(s) and
remarks (if any):

Note to the teacher:

You can demonstrate the task by circling one difference.

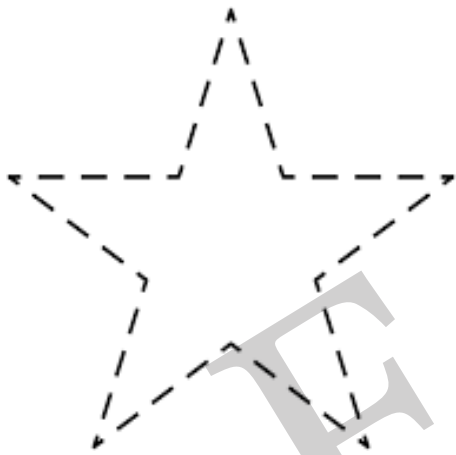
Your name: _____

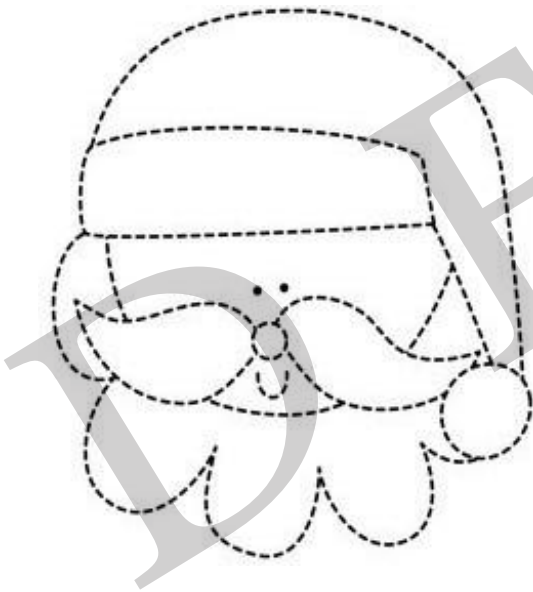
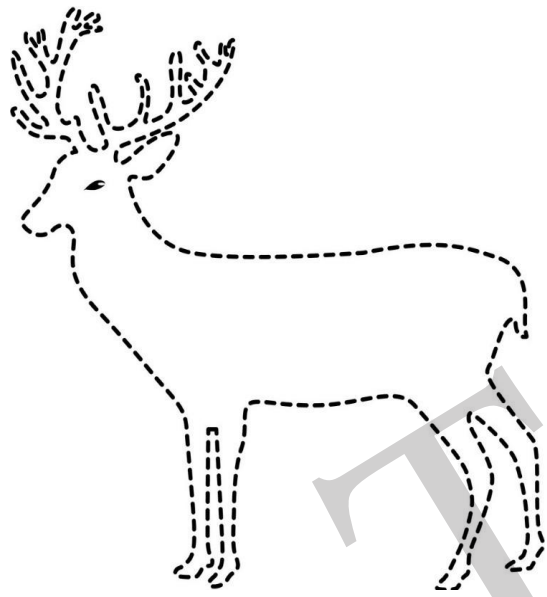
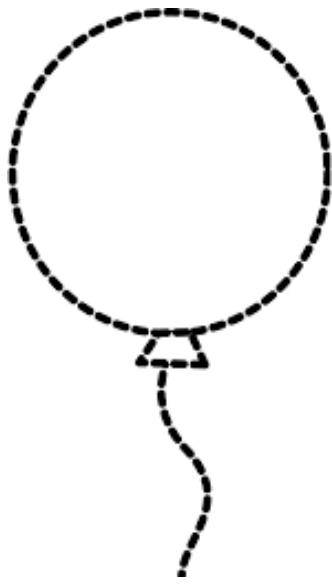
Theme: Festivals

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Tear colourful stripes of paper and paste them on the pictures given below.





Teacher's remarks:

Signature of the parent(s) and
remarks (if any):

Note to the teacher:

Guide the child in tearing and pasting the paper stripes. Remind them to keep in mind the colour of the objects while pasting the paper.

T5/PSIII/LE1 **Worksheet: Making a Santa Face Mask**

Your name: _____

Theme: Festivals

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Colour the picture and cut it out to make a face mask.



Teacher's remarks:

Signature of the parent(s) and
remarks (if any):

Note to the teacher:

Guide the child in cutting the picture. Help them tie a ribbon at the back of the picture. Make them wear the mask.

Your name: _____

Theme: Festivals

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Write a message to Santa.

Dear Santa,

With Love,

Teacher's remarks:

Signature of the parent(s) and
remarks (if any):**Note to the teacher:**

Children may use invented spellings. You can support children while writing the message. If the child is not able to write by himself/herself, you can ask the child to say the message verbally and you can write on behalf of him/her.

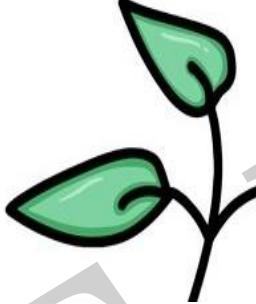
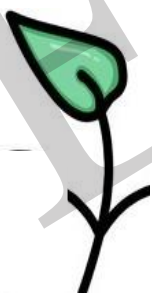
Your name: _____

Theme: Hills & Forests

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Count the leaves of plants and write the number in the box:

Teacher's remarks:	Signature of the parent(s) and remarks (if any):
---------------------------	---

Note to the teacher: Guide the child in counting the leaves and writing the number.

DERT

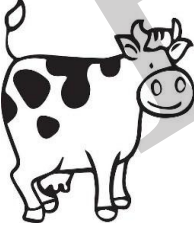
Your name: _____

Theme: Hills & Forests

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Match the animal sound.

	A. Baa baa
	B. Oink oink
	C. Bow bow
	D. Quack quack
	E. Mow mow

Teacher's remarks:

**Signature of the parent(s) and
remarks (if any):**

Note to the teacher:

Guide the child to match the animal with its sound. You can sing the rhyme with children before giving the worksheet.

DEERT

Your name: _____

Theme: Hills & Forests

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Draw an animal home for an animal of your choice. Colour it beautifully and give a name for your animal home:



Teacher's remarks:	Signature of the parent(s) and remarks (if any):
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Note to the teacher:
Let the child draw as they have seen animal homes around him/her. For example, the child does not have to draw a kennel for a dog. He/she can even draw a dog under the bed.

DERT

Worksheet: *Growth of a Plant*

Your name: _____

Theme: Hills & Forests

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Plant a seed in a pot.
2. Observe and draw what the plant looks like.
3. Record the date and write down any changes, such as sprouts, leaves and stem growth.

Week	Draw	Write about any changes noticed
Week 1:		
Week 2:		
Week 3:		

Teacher's remarks:	Signature of the parent(s) and remarks (if any):
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Note to the teacher:
This worksheet will be completed in the duration of three weeks. At the start of each week, children will observe, draw, and write the changes that they have noticed on their plant. You can support children while they write their observations.

DERT

T6/C2/LE1 **Worksheet: *Through my Magnifying Glass***

Your name: _____

Theme: Hills & Forests

Your class: _____

Date: _____

1. Draw the object that you have observed through your magnifying glass. Write a short description of that object.

A large empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a student to draw an object and write a description. A large, light gray watermark with the word 'DRAFT' is diagonally across the box.

Teacher's remarks:	Signature of the parent(s) and remarks (if any):
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Note to the teacher: Guide the child in writing the description of the object.
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