

Putting It All Together

Daily Schedule

The posted daily schedule reflects the order in which the day's major activities will take place. The schedule is intended to provide a guiding structure for the day and to offer the comfort of routine to the children in the classroom. Also, the daily schedule helps inform families about their child's day.

The daily schedule should reflect a balance of active and quiet activities, as well as times for child-directed learning and small- and whole-group activities. A daily schedule reflects what the children are doing throughout the day, not what you are doing. Prekindergarten classrooms should have a daily schedule posted at all times.

Develop your daily schedule with the following features in mind:

- The daily schedule should match the capabilities of the children. Prekindergarten schedules may look quite different from preschool or kindergarten schedules.
- Elements within the schedule should also reflect developmentally appropriate practices for the specific age group. For example, a 40-minute group time for four-year-olds is too long and not reflective of young children's capabilities.
- Outdoor time, both structured and unstructured, must be scheduled every day.
- At least two large blocks of time must be scheduled for child-directed learning in learning centers, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Teacher-directed, small-group activities should take place during these time blocks.
- At least two whole-class group times should be scheduled each day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

A typical daily schedule includes:

- Morning and Afternoon Group Time
- Small-Group Activities (these typically take place during child-directed learning in learning centers)
- Morning and afternoon child-directed learning in learning centers
- Outdoor play and activities
- Snack and meals
- Rest time
- Arrival and departure activities

The following is a sample daily schedule you can use as a reference when planning your own daily schedule. When planning your daily schedule, remember to work with your Center Director to ensure your schedule is aligned to state licensing and/or QRIS requirements.

*Note: This schedule is likely to change somewhat during the Summer season.

Sample Prekindergarten Daily Schedule

Open – 9:00 a.m.

Arrival and Breakfast

Children participate in quiet activities and eat breakfast. As children finish breakfast, they can visit learning centers until most children have arrived and are finished eating.

9:00 a.m. – 9:25 a.m.

Whole-Group Time/Read-Aloud

Children come together for the Morning Routine Activities as well as a featured whole-group activity.

9:25 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Learning Centers and Small-Group Activity

Children choose from learning center activities in these learning centers: blocks, creative arts, dramatic play, library, math and manipulatives, science and sensory, and writing. Use this time to implement a small-group activity with a few children at a time, focusing on skill building and observational assessments. The goal is that all children will have participated in the small-group activities by the end of each day.

10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Snack

During snack time, sit with the children and have conversations with them.

11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

Take It Outdoors and Outdoor Play

Children enjoy structured and unstructured play outdoors focused on cognitive development (*Get Thinking* activities) and physical development (*Get Moving* activities).

11:50 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Lunch

Children wash their hands, help set tables, and prepare to eat lunch family-style.

12:30 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Transition

Children clean up from lunch and transition to rest time.

12:45 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Rest Time and Quiet Work Time

Most children nap or rest quietly. As children wake up, they can select from a variety of quiet activities, such as playing with manipulatives, drawing, writing, and looking at books.

2:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Learning Centers and Small-Group Activity

Children choose from learning center activities in these learning centers: blocks, creative arts, dramatic play, library, math and manipulatives, science and sensory, and writing. Use this time to implement a small-group activity with a few children at a time, focusing on skill building and observational assessments. The goal is that all children will have participated in the small-group activities planned by the end of each day.

3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Whole-Group Time/Read-Aloud

Children come together for a featured whole-group activity followed by the Closing Routine Activities.

3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Snack

During snack time, sit with the children and have conversations with them.

3:30 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.

Take It Outdoors and Outdoor Play

Children enjoy structured and unstructured play outdoors focused on cognitive development (*Get Thinking* activities) and physical development (*Get Moving* activities).

4:15 p.m. – Close

Learning Centers

Children select from a variety of activities that are easy to clean up, such as looking at books and playing with manipulatives.

Daily Routine Activities

Daily Routine Activities include morning and afternoon routines that encourage children to reflect on their learning experiences and share information with others. Because these activities are repeated each day, children know what is expected of them and what comes next, thereby gaining familiarity with and comfort in the classroom environment. Repetition is developmentally appropriate and highly encouraged in prekindergarten because it allows children to practice and work toward specific skills in a way that is comfortable for them.

Morning Routine Activities

Each day, begin Morning Group Time with the following routine activities:

- Who's Here Today?
- What Day Is It?
- Daily Weather Forecast
- What We'll Do Today

Here are more detailed descriptions of each of these activities.

Who's Here Today?

Materials

Name cards

Preparation

Create a set of name cards by writing each child's first name on a sentence strip or an index card using neat and clear handwriting. Use a capital letter for the first letter and lowercase letters for all other letters in each child's name, except when a second capital letter is used within a name. Next to each child's name, attach a picture of that child. Cover the cards with clear contact paper or laminate to promote durability. Place the name cards where they will be accessible during group time.

Descriptions

During group time, show children the name cards one at a time. As you hold up one of the cards, ask the children if they can identify the name on the card. "Whose name is this?" Allow time for children to guess whose name is on the card. Then say, "The first letter in this name makes the sound /k/. What letter is this?...Right, it's the letter K. Whose name begins with the letter K?...Right, Kyle's name begins with the letter K. /K/-/yle/, Kyle." After a child's name has been identified, that child can take his or her name card and hold it in front of him or her. While the child shows the name card, say the name written on the card clearly, emphasizing its beginning sound. Repeat this process until all of the children's names have been called.

Throughout the year, children should take a more independent approach to this activity, or to signing in.

- In the Fall, have the children sign in by either recognizing their name cards letter by letter or by recognizing their name using the method described above.

- In the Winter, have the children sign in by tracing over the letters in their name. This can be done by writing each child's name on an index card and having each child trace over the letters with a pencil. Or you could write each child's name several times on a piece of paper, laminate it or place it in a plastic sheet protector, and allow the children to trace over their names using wet- or dry-erase markers each day they attend.
- In the Spring and Summer, provide the children with a sheet of paper that has five places for them to write their names independently. Have the children sign in by writing their first name on the paper each day they attend.

What Day Is It?

Materials

Calendar

Preparation

Begin the year by placing the calendar containing the title (month) card where it is clearly visible. Place one set of number cards where they will be easily accessible during morning routines.

Description

During group time, focus children's attention on the calendar. Point out the date of the previous day and ask the children to identify the number. For example, say, "Yesterday was the second day of the week. What number is in the second square of this row?...It's the number that comes after the number 6. Let's count the numbers on the calendar together. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven; it's the number 7. Yesterday was the 7th." Next work with the children to identify today's date. "Today is the third day of the week. What number is in the third square of this row?...It's the number that comes between the numbers 7 and 9. Let's count the numbers on the calendar together. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8; it's the number 8. The number 8 is between the numbers 7 and 9. Let's put the number 8 in the calendar. Today is the 8th day of the month."

Then work with the children to identify the day of the week. "Today is the third day of the week. What is the third day of the week?...Let's say the days of the week together: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday. The third day is Tuesday. Today is Tuesday, September 8th." Then, ask the children, "What day will it be tomorrow?" Help them by pointing to the day on the calendar and saying the days in order. "Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. That's right; tomorrow will be Wednesday."

After children are familiar with the calendar routine, introduce the idea of creating simple patterns on the calendar with red and blue cards. Instead of placing all of the number cards in the calendar at the beginning of the month, work with the children to add additional cards to the calendar each day. To begin, use simple AB patterns, such as red, blue; red, blue. As children identify the days of the week, ask them to name what color card will be next in the patterning sequence. "Today is Thursday. The cards in this row start with red, then blue, then red again. What color will the number card for today be?...Let's look at the pattern again. Red, blue, red. What comes next?...Right, blue is the next color in the pattern." Work with children to identify the day of the week and the date as well as the correct color of number card.

As the year progresses, encourage the children to participate in the calendar activity with less teacher guidance.

- In the Fall, you should lead the calendar activity. Guide the group in learning the days of the week, counting the days of the month, understanding the relationship between spoken and written numbers, identifying the date, and discussing time in terms of *yesterday*, *today*, and *tomorrow*.
- In the Winter, encourage the children to identify the date, day of the week, and month, providing assistance as needed. The children should also be encouraged to talk about the date using the terms *yesterday*, *today*, and *tomorrow*.
- In the Spring and Summer, encourage the children to lead the calendar activity, providing as little assistance as possible. The children should discuss the day, date, month, and other elements of the calendar with minimal assistance from you.

Daily Weather Forecast

Materials

Calendar

Preparation

Prior to the first day of class, select a method for tracking the weather. For example, you might create a list of dates and write the weather next to each date or you might create a graph and track how many times a specific type of weather occurs in a month by writing the date in the appropriate weather column.

Description

During group time, discuss the day's weather with the children. Children can look out the window or open a door that leads outdoors to check the weather firsthand. Encourage the children to make observations about each day's weather conditions. Ask questions such as the following to prompt children's thinking about the weather:

- How does the air feel?
- What do you see in the sky?
- What color is the sky?
- What type of clothing would you wear in this type of weather?

Have children share their observations about the weather. After everyone agrees on the current weather conditions, record the children's observations using your tracking method.

The Daily Weather Forecast activity should progress throughout the year from a teacher-led discussion to a child-led discussion.

- In the Fall, introduce the concept of weather and provide children with weather vocabulary. Lead the children in a discussion about the day's weather and help them understand what predictors are used to determine the day's weather.

- In the Winter, provide children with assistance as they begin to make independent observations and decisions about the day's weather. Help the children discuss logical predictors and use appropriate vocabulary to support their decisions about the day's weather. Encourage the children to begin thinking about the weather in terms of *yesterday*, *today*, and *tomorrow*.
- In the Spring and Summer, encourage children to determine and discuss the day's weather using logical predictors and weather-related vocabulary with minimal teacher interaction. Have the children discuss the weather in terms of *yesterday*, *today*, and *tomorrow* and discuss how weather affects what the children will wear each day.

What We'll Do Today

Materials

A few items from the classroom's learning centers

Preparation

Bring a few items from two or three learning centers to group time. Show children the items and explain how children might use them in the learning centers. For example, if children will be sorting geometric shapes, have some of the shapes available to show the children.

Description

Begin by telling children about the learning centers and some of the activities they will find in the centers. Share any specific instructions children may need to explore the centers on their own. Then encourage the children to share what they will do today. For example, ask, "What activities are you looking forward to?" This is also a good time to remind children of any special rules or to discuss any special safety precautions. For example, if children are encouraged to use sand and glue on paper to create sand pictures in the creative arts center, talk about how to create pictures by placing the glue on paper where children want the sand to stick. Or tell children to let you know when they are finished building in the blocks center so that you can take photos of their structures.

Closing Routine Activities

Each day during Afternoon Group Time, you will implement a routine activity followed by the creation of the What We Learned Today in Prekindergarten Note. Below is a description of those routine activities and the days on which they occur.

Investigation Jar (Mondays and Tuesdays)

Each Monday and Tuesday afternoon, implement the activity Investigation Jar. During this activity, children will investigate and explore various items and materials related to the theme of the unit, and participate in experiments based on a variety of science and math concepts. For example, children might make predictions about how something feels or smells, or they might estimate the number of items in the jar. Each Investigation Jar activity is unique and is described in the manuals on the day it occurs.

Classroom Helpers (Wednesdays)

At the beginning of the school year, work with children to create a list of jobs they can perform in the classroom. Examples include watering plants, and helping set up and clean up after snacks or meals. Keep the list of helper jobs to a manageable number. Be sure to include jobs that are in keeping with the ability levels of the children in your group and that all children can complete with some independence. Then, each Wednesday afternoon, work with the children to select new classroom helpers for the week. By extending the helper roles over a week's time, all children will eventually have opportunities to be classroom helpers and practice and master some of the skills involved in performing the jobs.

"Days of the Week" Song and Sight-Word Sentences (Thursdays)

Each Thursday afternoon, sing the "Days of the Week" song with the children. As the children sing, point to the days of the week on the calendar and emphasize the current day. After children are familiar with the song, allow children to point to the words while the group sings.

Sight-word sentences will also be introduced on Thursdays. Sight words are the most frequently occurring words in children's literature, excluding nouns. The majority of sight words do not follow typical decoding patterns; therefore, sight words are not intended to be sounded out. Examples of sight words are *the*, *them*, *was*, and *you*. When introducing children to new sight words, it is helpful for them to see the printed word in a sentence. On a sheet of chart paper, create a few simple sentences that contain the sight words, then read the sentences aloud with the children. Point out the sight words and help children to identify the words in the sentences.

Through frequent exposure, repetition of letter sequences, and learning to recognize sight words in print, children will eventually learn these words. As children learn more sight words, they increase their sight-word vocabulary and are better prepared to begin learning to read and produce sight-word sentences.

*Note: There are no sight-word activities during the Summer season.

Community-Building Discussion (Fridays)

Each Friday afternoon, engage the children in a community-building discussion about highlights from the week, including activities. Emphasize that the day of the week is Friday and that tomorrow will be the weekend so they will not come to the center. Also use this time to invite children to share any plans they may have for Saturday and Sunday.

What We Learned Today in Prekindergarten Note (every day)

Each day at the end of Afternoon Group Time, bring the children together and involve them in creating the What We Learned Today in Prekindergarten Note. The goal of the note is to involve the children in communicating to families and other visitors some of the activities they have participated in throughout the day.

As children share their ideas about the day, craft their thoughts into simple sentences and paragraphs complete with punctuation, and write them on the What We Learned Today pad. Keep the information positive. Be sure to print neatly and carefully. Remember, your writing serves as a model for the children, and families also form impressions about your teaching style or quality from the writing they see. Be sure that spelling and grammar are correct before displaying the note. Written communication should always be error-free. Most importantly, the information on the chart should communicate what the children have experienced that day.

Here's an example of this activity:

Begin by asking the children about the day's activities. "What are some things we learned today?" Capture a few of the ideas and craft them into sentences, for example,

This morning, we created a graph that represents how many people live in each of our homes. Later, we cut up different kinds of fruit to make half pieces. We also wrote stories about our families in our journals. This afternoon, we cut pieces of yarn to be the same length as our bodies and then arranged them in order from shortest to longest. Many of our yarn pieces were the same length, which means that a lot of us are the same size.

Be sure to use the children's ideas. If the children struggle to pinpoint activities, try prompting them with questions, for example, "What did we discover by measuring and cutting yarn pieces to represent how tall we are?"

Read the completed note to the group, pointing to each word as you read it. Then hang the note near your Family Communication Board.

Implementation Methods and Strategies

Classroom Environment

A well-defined room arrangement demonstrates purposeful planning with regards to traffic patterns; access to sinks, bathrooms, and exits; location of loud and quiet activity areas; and a group meeting area. In addition, the arrangement provides children with visual clues about what they will be learning and supports their independence in navigating the classroom as well as exploring and discovering at their own pace.

For further information about classroom environments, refer to the document "Sustaining a Quality Classroom" on KLCentral.

Whole-Group Activities

The Prekindergarten daily schedule features two whole-group activities, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Group time provides an opportunity for children to build social skills while also learning to share ideas and listen to others. With frequent opportunities for group experiences, prekindergarten children gain an awareness of others and a sense of group identity.

Featured Activities (Morning and Afternoon)

Featured activities during Morning and Afternoon Group Time promote learning in a variety of domains. Activities include vocabulary and language development, cognitive development, executive-function skills, and social skills. Typical activities include discussions, read-alouds, storytelling, songs, rhymes, and games.

Use your knowledge of the skill levels and attention spans of the children in your group to determine how much of an activity is appropriate. You are encouraged to implement all parts of the activity described, yet be flexible and prepared if the experience becomes too challenging or too easy for the group.

Whole-group experiences are most successful when the amount of time allotted considers the children's attention spans, interests, and abilities, and the activities planned are age-appropriate. Group activities in which children can participate directly, such as shared reading experiences, discussions, fingerplays, music and movement activities, and games, are typically the most successful. Children's behavior during group time is a good indicator of its success. If children seem restless, the activity may be too long. If several children are not paying attention or are distracting other children, the activity may not be holding their interest. Change or end an activity if children exhibit these signs.

To plan an effective whole-group time, consider the following suggestions:

- The time allotted should be appropriate to the children's interests and attention spans. Begin by scheduling each group time for 25-minute periods. If an activity is highly successful, it can always be continued or repeated later in the day. Carefully assess the group activities provided in the Prekindergarten program and alter any activities to accommodate the needs of the children in your group.
- Provide a variety of activities for children to participate in.
- Implement specific activities to help the children transition in and out of group time. For instance, begin singing a song children are familiar with to bring them together.
- Be flexible and prepared to change or shorten a group activity that isn't working or to extend an activity that is highly successful.
- Children look for clues from you, so be sure to show enthusiasm when implementing an activity. If you appear uninterested or bored, children may become uninterested and bored as well.

Morning Group Time

Each day's Morning Group Time begins with the routine activities identified in the Daily Routine Activities section, followed the day's featured activity. You should also feel free to choose songs, books, fingerplays, or other activities your group enjoys and that reflect the current theme, and to implement these activities as time allows. To ensure that you are prepared for group time, always read the entire description of Morning Group Time in advance. For example, you may need to make some decisions in advance regarding how to implement a particular activity in keeping with the children's needs, ability levels, and interests.

Afternoon Group Time

Each day's Afternoon Group time begins with a featured activity, followed by a routine activity, and ends with the activity What We Learned Today in Prekindergarten Note. The afternoon activity often involves mathematics, letter-awareness games, and discussions. The afternoon is also a great time to introduce games and songs that can be repeated the following day and throughout the season and year. Be sure to read the entire description of Afternoon Group Time in advance to ensure you have any specific materials that may be required.

As with the Morning Group Time activities, it is okay to repeat activities or experiences the children enjoy, such as fingerplays, rhymes, or songs. Repeating activities has the added benefit of encouraging otherwise hesitant children to participate.

Small-Group Activities

By working with a small number of children in a teacher-led activity, you are able to introduce new concepts and observe specific skills. Most small-group activities will start and finish in one day. Small-group activities should be implemented during child-directed learning, while children are playing independently in learning centers. Some children will work with you in the small-group activity while the remaining children will be in learning centers. Invite children who are finishing an activity or have not yet started a new activity to participate with you in the small-group activity. The program manuals provide descriptions of each day's small-group activities. The focus of these activities vary, in order to provide you with different opportunities for observation and assessment, as well as to provide children with new and interesting content each day.

By working with children in small groups, you will have opportunities to observe all of the children for specific skills, such as using scissors, making a detailed drawing, writing letters and words, and counting. It is a good idea to have a small notepad or clipboard available to take short notes about your observations. Place your notes in the children's portfolios for reference when completing their developmental assessments and conferencing with families. Be aware that assessment information is confidential; therefore, observation notes should not be shared with anyone other than KCE staff and an individual child's family.

Literacy Small-Group Activities

The purpose of the literacy small-group activity is to provide children opportunities to work on developing literacy skills that focus on their abilities to identify the sounds of different letters and words, and to identify sight words. The activities also provide literacy experiences that support phonemic awareness and developing writing skills. Over the course of the year, the standards focused on in small-group activities will allow you to enhance, observe, and document children's progress over time.

*Note: There are no literacy small-group activities during the Summer season.

Math Small-Group Activities

Math small-group activities provide children with opportunities to work on developing math skills through a variety of activities using specially selected manipulatives. The math small-group activities focus on the subdomains identified in the Mathematics strand of the Prekindergarten scope and sequence, such as Number and Operations, Geometry, Measurement, and Data Analysis. The activities also provide you with many opportunities for observation and assessment of foundational math skills.

*Note: There are no math small-group activities during the Summer season.

Child-Directed Learning

Child-directed learning activities are a large part of the children's day and take place in the learning centers you have set up in your classroom. Offer these activities in the morning and in the afternoon, and allow children at least 45 minutes in the morning and afternoon to explore and play in the learning centers. Through child-directed play, children make important choices and discoveries about their world. One of your most important responsibilities as a prekindergarten teacher is to ensure children's development through play. You can support each child's development when the play experiences you provide are thoughtfully designed and supported and enhanced by adult interactions.

Learning Centers

Learning centers help organize the classroom in a way that supports the children's learning and experiences with the program and curriculum. Learning centers should be clearly labeled using the signs provided in the Year-Round Kit. The toys and equipment should match the intended focus of the learning center and should be selected according to age and developmental level of the children in your classroom. For more information on setting up learning centers, refer to the document "Sustaining a Quality Classroom" on KLCentral.

Each thematic unit in the Prekindergarten program contains specific guidelines for enriching learning centers. Add additional materials so the classroom is rich with opportunities for children to grow and explore as their interests indicate.

To make the most of children's play in learning centers, the following guidelines are helpful:

- Provide enough space for the play activities.
- Make sure all materials are safe and clean.
- Observe each child as he or she plays, in order to gain important information about the child's needs and abilities. Your observations will help inform your teaching and provide valuable assessment information.
- Whenever possible, actively participate in children's play to help facilitate learning, for example, by offering suggestions, asking questions, and encouraging new ideas or approaches.
- Help children feel safe and secure by providing guidance, limits, and redirection as needed.
- Encourage children's independence by asking them to do for themselves all that they can.

- Include the children in setting up the learning centers to ensure the learning centers also reflect their experiences and interests. Discuss the theme of the unit and the activities at each learning center with the children. Encourage them to suggest items or materials to place in the learning centers. Also consider having children collect items from around the classroom or create artwork, signs, or labels to add to the learning centers.

The following learning centers should always be a part of your classroom setup:

Blocks

Unit blocks are standard equipment in early childhood classrooms. Building with blocks integrates concepts important to children's cognitive development. For example, constructing with blocks allows children to explore two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, spatial relationships, patterning, classification, and more. In addition, because blocks are designed in mathematical units, children who play with blocks begin to acquire concrete understanding of concepts essential to logical thinking. Building with blocks also encourages social skills such as sharing, working cooperatively with others, and taking turns.

Creative Arts

Working with art materials offers children opportunities to experiment with color, shape, design, and texture. Engaging with a variety of art materials allows children to develop a wide range of skills, such as demonstrating persistence in completing a task, exploring cause-and-effect relationships, and expressing abstract thoughts and ideas. *For young children, it is the process of creating, not the end product, that is most important.* Other materials that are appropriate for this learning center include musical instruments and props for dancing such as streamers and scarves.

Dramatic Play

The dramatic play center provides many opportunities for social and emotional development, as well as a context for literacy and cognitive development. Dramatic play fosters children's cognitive development as they experiment with spatial relationships, exchange play money for goods and services, and even introduce concepts of time into their role-playing. Through dramatic play, children take on pretend roles and practice skills such as expressing emotions, interacting with peers, and developing interpersonal relationships.

Library

The library is a place in the classroom where children can get away from the more active learning centers by relaxing in a soft and comfortable environment and enjoying the wonderful world of books. When children are given opportunities to look through books on their own, to listen to stories on tapes, and to make up their own stories, they develop the motivation and foundational skills needed to read and write. There should always be books in your classroom library for children to explore. Books representing a variety of cultures and languages are essential to creating a library that is inclusive of all cultures and communities in which children live.

Math and Manipulatives

In the math center, children have many opportunities to construct, classify, sort, match, and manipulate various toys and equipment. These experiences allow a child to test problem solving, to see that certain things go together, and to develop eye-hand coordination. The math center provides a place for children to practice the skills and concepts introduced during teacher-led activities. In addition, children also have opportunities to experiment and follow their own mathematical inquiries.

Science and Sensory

Experiences in the science and sensory center allow children to make discoveries with various tools and natural materials. Children make predictions, explore cause-and-effect relationships, develop sensory awareness, test ideas, and draw conclusions through hands-on and “minds-on” experiences. Active exploration helps children learn concepts about objects, events, and changes in their environment. Science and sensory play fosters children’s development across multiple domains, such as cognitive, language and literacy, and physical development.

Writing

Writing provides children with a vehicle to express themselves and convey meaning to others. Through opportunities to compose text, children learn how language works and come to understand that letters are symbols that, when combined, convey meaning. The writing young children create may not conform to our writing rules, but it demonstrates the children’s growing understanding of how language works. Writing allows children to connect letters with sounds, a foundational component of learning to read.

Suggested Materials Lists for Learning Centers

To provide children with diverse learning opportunities, learning centers must include a variety of materials. The following is a list of items that may be included in each learning center in addition to the materials listed for each unit.

Blocks	Creative Arts	Dramatic Play	Library
<p>Materials to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Unit blocks in various shapes and sizes <input type="checkbox"/> Lego® pieces or similar building pieces <input type="checkbox"/> Boxes <input type="checkbox"/> Alphabet, foam, hollow, and bristle blocks <input type="checkbox"/> Wooden dollhouse and furniture <input type="checkbox"/> Toy people, animals, vehicles, trees, and street signs <input type="checkbox"/> Paper and writing tools for making labels <input type="checkbox"/> Cardboard tubes in various sizes <input type="checkbox"/> Photos of houses and buildings, construction projects, and bridges <input type="checkbox"/> Photo tray <input type="checkbox"/> Books on building or construction <input type="checkbox"/> Rulers <input type="checkbox"/> Measuring tape <p>Set up this learning center on a carpeted area, out of traffic patterns, but near other areas that tend to be noisy. Provide plenty of room for children to build and define the space on three sides such as by using walls and shelving units.</p>	<p>Materials to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Paintbrushes <input type="checkbox"/> Easels <input type="checkbox"/> Crayons, markers, pencils, and chalk <input type="checkbox"/> Paper (writing, construction, newspaper) <input type="checkbox"/> Child-size scissors <input type="checkbox"/> Glue or paste <input type="checkbox"/> Play dough or clay <input type="checkbox"/> Smocks <input type="checkbox"/> Collage materials <p>Additional art materials can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Beads (at least 1¾ inches in diameter) <input type="checkbox"/> Cotton balls <input type="checkbox"/> Tissue paper <input type="checkbox"/> Thread, yarn, ribbon, and string <input type="checkbox"/> Fabric scraps and felt <input type="checkbox"/> Tiles <input type="checkbox"/> Wallpaper samples <input type="checkbox"/> Paper bags, cups, plates, and towels <input type="checkbox"/> Stamp pads and stamps <input type="checkbox"/> Feathers <input type="checkbox"/> Containers in various shapes and sizes <p>Set up this learning center on an uncarpeted floor surface near a water source, if possible.</p>	<p>Materials to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Toy stove, refrigerator, and kitchen cabinets <input type="checkbox"/> Child-size table and chairs <input type="checkbox"/> Pots, pans, dishes, and plates <input type="checkbox"/> Child-size broom, mop, and sponges <input type="checkbox"/> Toy animals <input type="checkbox"/> Plants <input type="checkbox"/> Dolls <input type="checkbox"/> Doll furniture <input type="checkbox"/> Blankets <input type="checkbox"/> Clock <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone <input type="checkbox"/> Dress-up clothes and accessories <input type="checkbox"/> Cash register and play money <input type="checkbox"/> Assorted baskets <p>Set up this learning center on a carpeted area and near other noisy areas. This center should be warm and inviting to children and near a window, if possible. If there is not a window nearby, consider creating a pretend window on a wall in this learning center.</p>	<p>Materials to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable seating such as soft chairs and/or pillows <input type="checkbox"/> Bookshelf or rack <input type="checkbox"/> Wide variety of age-appropriate books in good condition; books in languages other than English and that are spoken by the children in your classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Child-made or class-made books <input type="checkbox"/> Children's magazines <input type="checkbox"/> Photographs and posters <input type="checkbox"/> Listening center with headphones <input type="checkbox"/> Books on tape <input type="checkbox"/> Flannel board and flannel pieces <input type="checkbox"/> Puppets <input type="checkbox"/> Class photo albums <input type="checkbox"/> Props for telling stories or fingerplays <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy games and puzzles <p>Set up this learning center near other quiet areas such as creative arts, math and manipulatives, or writing.</p>

Suggested Materials Lists for Learning Centers, cont.

Math and Manipulatives	Science and Sensory	Writing
<p>Materials to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Counting cubes <input type="checkbox"/> Rulers <input type="checkbox"/> Play money <input type="checkbox"/> Geoboards <input type="checkbox"/> Blocks <input type="checkbox"/> Paper and pencils <input type="checkbox"/> Balance scales <input type="checkbox"/> Measuring cups and spoons <input type="checkbox"/> Dominoes <input type="checkbox"/> Patterning or sequencing materials <input type="checkbox"/> Counters <input type="checkbox"/> Puzzles <input type="checkbox"/> Number cards <input type="checkbox"/> Time-, number-, and shape-related games <input type="checkbox"/> Bingo games <input type="checkbox"/> Calculators <p>Set up this learning center on a carpeted area, possibly near the library, away from noisier centers.</p>	<p>Materials to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Magnifying glasses <input type="checkbox"/> Real plants <input type="checkbox"/> Prisms <input type="checkbox"/> Aquarium <input type="checkbox"/> Terrarium <input type="checkbox"/> Eyedroppers <input type="checkbox"/> Sensory table or tub <input type="checkbox"/> Science-related books <input type="checkbox"/> Science-related pictures <input type="checkbox"/> Measuring cups and funnels <input type="checkbox"/> Cups, jars, and containers <input type="checkbox"/> Sink-or-float objects <input type="checkbox"/> Simple machines with pulleys and levers <input type="checkbox"/> Objects to weigh and balance <input type="checkbox"/> Colander <input type="checkbox"/> Rake, shovel, sieves, sifters, and strainers <input type="checkbox"/> Bowls <input type="checkbox"/> Buckets <input type="checkbox"/> Cookie cutters <p>Set up this learning center near the blocks or dramatic play centers, on an uncarpeted floor surface, and near a water source and natural light.</p>	<p>Materials to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Alphabet charts <input type="checkbox"/> Alphabet stamps <input type="checkbox"/> Word Wall <input type="checkbox"/> Paper in different colors, shapes, and sizes <input type="checkbox"/> Writing tools including pencils, crayons, and markers <input type="checkbox"/> Stencils <input type="checkbox"/> Child-size scissors <input type="checkbox"/> Staplers <input type="checkbox"/> Hole punches <input type="checkbox"/> Envelopes <input type="checkbox"/> Chalkboards and chalk <input type="checkbox"/> Magnetic letters and boards <input type="checkbox"/> Graph paper <input type="checkbox"/> Premade blank books <input type="checkbox"/> Writing journals <input type="checkbox"/> Index cards <p>Set up this learning center near other quiet centers such as creative arts, library, or math and manipulatives.</p>

Outdoor Play

Schedule time for children to explore and play outdoors twice every day. Outdoor play is not simply fun for children; it is critical for their growth and development. Children build skills in all developmental domains when you set up an outdoor environment rich in learning opportunities. When you bring indoor activities outdoors, children experience things and see materials in new ways. Indoor activities such as drawing, painting, listening to and creating music, dancing, sand and water exploration, and read-alouds are all enhanced in an outdoor environment. As important, the natural items and features in your outdoor play area should be incorporated into children's play and learning experiences each day as well.

Take It Outdoors

In addition to scheduling play time outdoors, the Prekindergarten program offers daily opportunities to "take it outdoors." The activities in this new program component are designed to get children thinking and moving outdoors through fun and active games and activities related to the curriculum and unit themes. Activities are identified as either "Get Thinking" or "Get Moving" activities.

- *Get Thinking* activities encourage children to consider theme-related or curriculum-related concepts in the context of the outdoor environment, or outdoor classroom.
- *Get Moving* activities provide children with opportunities to move in ways they may not be able to indoors, such as running, hopping, and jumping. Gross-motor activities such as these are important for children's physical growth and development, and help reinforce the importance of lifelong exercise.

Family-Style Eating, Meals, and Snacks

The children will have meal and snack times throughout the day. It is your responsibility to provide a healthy and pleasant environment for children's meals and snacks.

In planning for meals and snacks, consider the following:

- Encourage children to help prepare for meals and snacks. For example, children can help pass out napkins, plates, and utensils, or they may help by pouring drinks or carrying bowls to and from the table. Be sure children wash their hands before helping with any meal and snack preparation.
- Eat "family style" with the children by allowing children to serve themselves. Join the children at the table and talk with them while they eat. If possible, eat with the children too. Do not stand or move around the eating area while the children are eating.
- Encourage pleasant mealtime conversation about the day's events or what the children may be feeling or thinking.
- Model healthy eating habits and proper manners.
- After a meal or snack, encourage children to participate in cleaning up as best they can. For example, all children should be encouraged to throw away their own trash, stack plates, and gather utensils. Be sure children wash their hands after all meals and snacks.

Mealtimes also provide valuable learning opportunities for children. For example, children gain important social skills through casual discussions with each other and with adults. Math skills can be reinforced by asking children to take a specific number of scoops of a particular item. Discussions about food and nutrition help teach children about healthy lifestyles and habits.

Rest Time

Children attending the Prekindergarten program for a full day may need an afternoon nap or time to rest. This allows children time to relax and prepare themselves physically for the afternoon program. Keep in mind that all children have different sleep patterns and relaxation habits. Each child in your group may need something slightly different to help him or her rest or fall asleep. Be sure to have a plan for children who wake up first or who no longer sleep or take long rests. For example, children can look at books, play quiet games, or write and draw.

Always ensure there is enough light in the room to see all of the children clearly during nap and rest times. Children do not need total darkness in order to sleep.

Children must be supervised during rest times. Children cannot be left alone, even if all of them are sleeping.

Depending on your state's licensing expectations and requirements, a rest time or quiet period may be mandatory for this age group. Check with your Center Director regarding licensing requirements for both time duration and age of children needing rest periods.