



SPRING 2014

Collaborations

Please visit our new website at <http://www.laeca.org>

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE LOUISIANA EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION

Having Fun Meeting the Standards



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ELDS Ideas**

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Learning Space**

**LAECA Board
Members Honored**

**Early Conference News
and Keynoters**

1-800-215-9034

Louisiana Early Childhood Association Board Directory

Revised February 25, 2014

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District 5 Chair	OPEN					
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Southern Early Childhood Association
P.O. Box 55930, Little Rock, AR 72215-5930
(501)221-1648 Fax (501)227-5297
Toll Free 1-800-305-7322

SECA Staff:

Executive Director: **Glenda Bean** Director of Research/Prof. Development:
Assistant for Marketing & Communications: **Megan Sullins**
Administrative Assistant: **Maurena Farr**
SECA President (2012-2013): **Nancy Jane Cheshire**,
Early Childhood Professor Emerita,
Pierpont Community & Technical College
Bridgeport, WV

e-mail: www.southernearlychildhood.org

ollaborations

President's Message

Welcome LAECA Members to another "Brilliant" issue of Collaborations!

With great pleasure we once again provide you with outstanding resources. In this issue you will find information regarding "ELDS Standards and Common Core", as well as information on the "Week of the Young Child". Thank you to our editor Martha Garner and all who submitted articles for this issue.

Your LAECA board has been so busy working for you. In January, many of us traveled to attend the SECA Conference in Williamsburg, Va. We had tremendous representation from Louisiana again this year. Jo Carroll, our new SECA representative, kept us up to date and can be commended on a job well done. We will have pictures and articles about the conference so please be on the lookout for them. Next year Louisiana will host the SECA Conference in New Orleans. We will keep you up to date with details as soon as they are provided to us.

With much enthusiasm I bring you news in regard to our 48th Annual Fall Conference. Our theme this year is "*Open the Door to Possibilities!*" The location will once again be in Alexandria at the Sai Convention Center on October 23-25, 2014. We had many, many request to bring back the dynamic **Don Monopoli** of the Learning Station. He is ready to reenergize us in ways only he can provide and is tickled to death that he is returning so soon. We are also in the planning stages of welcoming **Lois Wachtel** as our second keynoter. She presents quality hands-on and fun early childhood workshops. She will provide you with the Make-and-Take preconference session on Thursday evening, so you won't want to miss her either! As more information or changes in regard to the conference becomes available we will post it on our website (LAECA.org). Please check often because it is updated frequently.

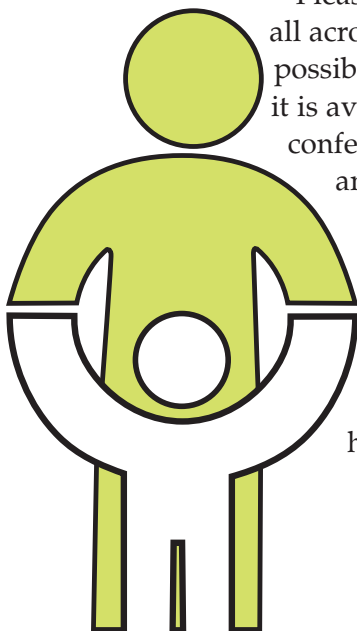
Please remember we are striving to provide you with professional development from all across the spectrum. We are always looking for new and fresh presenters. Could this possibly be you? Take time to fill out a Call for Proposals form and send it in as soon as it is available. Sharing is the best gift educators can give to one another. You will find conference forms and much more information about the conference in issues to follow and on the website.

In closing, this will be my last conference as your LAECA President and I so looking forward to meeting and greeting each and every one of you. I also want to welcome all new members to the Louisiana Early Childhood Association. You have chosen a wonderful organization to become a part of. We have outstanding members and productive people to represent you and Louisiana's Children. Remember, never hesitate to contact me or a board member with needs you may have.

May the Seeds you Plant this Spring Season Blossom in every Child!

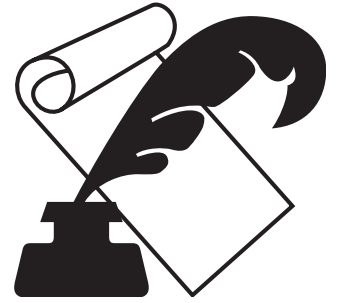
Smiles,

Chris LeJeune
LAECA President





From the Editor



Spring is finally on its way after a crazy, snow-filled winter! It's time to get those children—and yourself—back outside to play, garden, and enjoy the world. There are a lot of changes in spring, and you can expect to see changes in your LAECA organization as well. We just had a very productive two day strategic planning meeting which left us with a vision for the future and the motivation to try new things. There will be more about this in the summer issue.

We have always known we had a strong and accomplished board, and we are very proud of two of our members who have been honored lately: Mary Lou Maples and Emily Williamson have both been recognized for their accomplishments. We are excited for them!

Our conference will be held on October 23-25. The theme is "Open the Door to Possibilities." Expect great sessions, inspiring keynoters, and a fun time for all. We are very busy making plans for this to be the best LAECA Conference ever.

This issue is centered on Common Core and the new Early Learning and Developmental Standards. There are three peer reviewed articles, and a host of other articles to help you understand and meet the standards. LAECA and your LAECA Board Members are always here to help and support you in your efforts to teach developmentally appropriately while incorporating new expectations.

We are always looking for news of outstanding members. Please e-mail or mail me about any you know of. Send the following:

Name _____

School or facility _____

Why this person is an outstanding member _____

Sincerely,

Martha Garner

Editor's Block

Please send us any address changes so we may keep our mailing list current.

We don't want you to miss a single issue!

Also, send any suggestions, articles or ideas.

Your voice matters!

Martha Garner

506 Plaza Village Drive

Lafayette, LA 70506

(337) 804-2482



Louisiana Early Childhood Association

48th Annual Conference
October 23 - 25, 2014
SAI Convention Center
Alexandria, LA

Open the Door to Possibilities



“FANTASTIC!” “EXCITING!” “FABULOUS!” “AWESOME!” “WOW!”
This is what people are saying who attended a Learning Station presentation
Join the Louisiana Early Childhood Association in Welcoming Back Don Monopoli of The Learning Station.

Don's enthusiasm is contagious!!!
LearningStationMusic.com
 Children Love to Sing and Dance.

In the tradition of the finest motivational presentations, The Learning Station shares with participants their experience, passion and dedication to children's music. Their dynamic, interactive style and ability to connect with their audiences has achieved accolades throughout the world of education. Their enthusiasm is contagious, their energy is electrifying and their fun-loving humor will keep the entire audience involved, captivated and engaged.



worldwide. They are recognized by such accredited organizations as the NAEYC, NCCA, Head Start, CCR&R Agencies and their affiliate organizations across the

nation. They support "Healthy Music for a Child's Heart, Body & Mind!" with their presentations designed to inspire, inform and entertain. Everyone will be encouraged to participate and involve themselves first-hand, openly and creatively. Participation will be a blend of small group demonstration, entire audience and as individuals. There will be ample opportunities offered for everyone to share, reflect

and respond. Attention will be given to the audience's special requests, interests and musical needs.

The Learning Station has presented over 500 keynotes and workshops

Meet Miss Lois

Miss Lois has been in the field of early childhood for over 20 years, as director and teacher. After 16 years in the classroom, she decided to share her knowledge with professionals through workshops. Lois formed Creative Beginning Steps for the purpose of bringing quality, interactive, and fun workshops to the early childhood community.

Lois' workshops are tremendously well-received, and she quickly became known for her warmth and creativity. EVERY CBS workshop is hands-on, encouraging participants to experience life through the eyes of young children. Miss Lois was dubbed the Squish-Squash Lady of Early Childhood, a title which she holds near and dear to her heart.

Throughout this unbelievable journey, Lois has presented Keynote presentations and workshops in Florida,

Alaska, California, Arizona, New Jersey, and and within many of the Southern states. She is a proud presenter for NAEYC (5 years in a row)! Her diversity in topics and special sense of humor takes each workshop out of the box (she is proud of this!).



Miss Lois has the knowledge and creativity to design a workshop to fit the needs and topics of a conference or an individual center. Workshops are

designed specifically for directors, teachers, or parents... all all 3!

Join Miss Lois for a voyage "Through the Eyes of a Child!"

CLIMBING THE CREATIVE BEGINNING

STEP'S LADDER, ONE STEP AT A TIME

**Magnuson Hotel
 Alexandria**



2301 N MacArthur
 Alexandria, LA 71303
 318-619-3300

*** Please present your Tax Exempt Form upon arrival. ***

Make reservations early for our official conference hotel!

Enjoy your wonderful stay at the Magnuson Hotel (formerly Baymont Inn & Suites) located within walking distance of the Sai Convention Center. Ask for the Louisiana Early Childhood Association Conference rates. This is the same hotel we have used for previous conferences, only the name has changed. **BOOK EARLY!**

**Please
 visit our
 website at
www.laeca.org**



ALICE TEDDLIE SCHOLARSHIP

The Alice Teddlie Scholarship was established in 1981. This \$600.00 scholarship is awarded to an outstanding undergraduate student in Child Development or Early Childhood Education. This award is based on scholarship, professionalism, character, poise, and leadership.

LAECA Undergraduate/Graduate Scholarship

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

ELIGIBILITY

- Membership in LAECA and SECA or respective student affiliation for at least one full year.
- Overall 3.0 grade point average.
- Major in Child Development or Early Childhood Education
- Full-time undergraduate or full/part-time graduate
- First time recipient

SELECTION

Any student meeting the above criteria may complete an application form. You must submit three (3) copies of your application. This includes letters of recommendations and statements of goals or philosophy. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from consideration.

Obtain a faculty signature that will serve to document full/part time undergraduate/graduate status.

Professionalism, character, purpose and leadership are qualities that will be considered in addition to academic standing.

A committee composed of three (3) LAECA Board Members will score the application. The Awards Committee may interview the top candidates at the annual LAECA Conference.

Judging will be based on professionalism, communicative ability and knowledge of contemporary issues relating to the files of Early Childhood and/or Child Development.

Scholarship recipients must be present at the conference.

Applications must be postmarked by October 1 prior to State Conference

APPLICATION FORM

Applications must be typed. On additional sheet complete application. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name _____

Home Address _____

Home Phone _____

School Address _____

School Phone _____

University _____ Major _____

Number of hours earned _____ Expected graduation date _____

Hometown newspaper and address _____

Contributions to LAECA on the local (20 pts.), state (10 pts.) and/or regional or national (5 pts.) level. List any and all activities in which you have participated in to help promote the objectives of LAECA or the field of early childhood.

Miscellaneous campus activities (10 pts.) _____ Email _____

Overall GPA _____ (5 pts.)

Major GPA _____ (5 pts.)

A statement of your professional goals and philosophy in relation to meeting the needs of young children. The statement should be no more than two pages long and must be signed (15 pts)

Submit two letters of recommendations from individuals who are familiar with your work towards meeting the needs of children and professionalism in the field of early childhood education (10 pts.)

Student signature _____

Faculty signature _____

Faculty address and phone number _____

Address application to:

Mona Frugé

P.O. Box 121

Lacassine, LA 70650



Postmarked October 1 prior to State Conference

ALMANDA ANDERSON SCHOLARSHIP

The Almanda Anderson Scholarship was established in 1975. This \$500.00 scholarship is awarded to an outstanding undergraduate student in Child Development or Early Childhood Education. This award is based on the student's professional involvement contribution and scholarship.

LAECA Undergraduate/Graduate Scholarship

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

ELIGIBILITY

- Membership in LAECA and SECA or respective student affiliation for at least one full year.
- Overall 3.0 grade point average.
- Major in Child Development or Early Childhood Education
- Full-time undergraduate or full/part-time graduate
- First time recipient

SELECTION

Any student meeting the above criteria may complete an application form. You must submit three (3) copies of your application. This includes letters of recommendations and statements of goals or philosophy. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from consideration.

Obtain a faculty signature that will serve to document full/part time undergraduate/graduate status.

Professionalism, character, purpose and leadership are qualities that will be considered in addition to academic standing.

A committee composed of three (3) LAECA Board Members will score the application. The Awards Committee may interview the top candidates at the annual LAECA Conference.

Judging will be based on professionalism, communicative ability and knowledge of contemporary issues relating to the files of Early Childhood and/or Child Development.

Scholarship recipients must be present at the conference.

Applications must be postmarked by October 1 prior to State Conference

APPLICATION FORM

Applications must be typed. On additional sheet complete application. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name _____

Home Address _____

Home Phone _____

School Address _____

School Phone _____

University _____ Major _____

Number of hours earned _____ Expected graduation date _____

Hometown newspaper and address _____

Contributions to LAECA on the local (20 pts.), state (10 pts.) and/or regional or national (5 pts.) level. List any and all activities in which you have participated in to help promote the objectives of LAECA or the field of early childhood.

Miscellaneous campus activities (10 pts.) _____ Email _____

Overall GPA _____ (5 pts.)

Major GPA _____ (5 pts.)

A statement of your professional goals and philosophy in relation to meeting the needs of young children. The statement should be no more than two pages long and must be signed (15 pts)

Submit two letters of recommendations from individuals who are familiar with your work towards meeting the needs of children and professionalism in the field of early childhood education (10 pts.)

Student signature _____

Faculty signature _____

Faculty address and phone number _____

Address application to:

Mona Frugé

P.O. Box 121

Lacassine, LA 70650



Postmarked October 1 prior to State Conference

LIL AND ROY MURPHY SCHOLARSHIP

The Lil and Roy Murphy Scholarship was established in 1994. This \$500.00 scholarship is awarded to an outstanding undergraduate student in Child Development or Early Childhood Education, or a related field. Recipients must have demonstrated scholarship, professionalism, character, purpose, and leadership.

LAECA Undergraduate/Graduate Scholarship

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

ELIGIBILITY

- Membership in LAECA and SECA or respective student affiliation for at least one full year.
- Overall 3.0 grade point average.
- Major in Child Development or Early Childhood Education
- Full-time undergraduate or full/part-time graduate
- First time recipient

SELECTION

Any student meeting the above criteria may complete an application form. You must submit three (3) copies of your application. This includes letters of recommendations and statements of goals or philosophy. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from consideration.

Obtain a faculty signature that will serve to document full/part time undergraduate/graduate status.

Professionalism, character, purpose and leadership are qualities that will be considered in addition to academic standing.

A committee composed of three (3) LAECA Board Members will score the application. The Awards Committee may interview the top candidates at the annual LAECA Conference.

Judging will be based on professionalism, communicative ability and knowledge of contemporary issues relating to the files of Early Childhood and/or Child Development.

Scholarship recipients must be present at the conference.

Applications must be postmarked by October 1 prior to State Conference

APPLICATION FORM

Applications must be typed. On additional sheet complete application. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name _____

Home Address _____

Home Phone _____

School Address _____

School Phone _____

University _____ Major _____

Number of hours earned _____ Expected graduation date _____

Hometown newspaper and address _____

Contributions to LAECA on the local (20 pts.), state (10 pts.) and/or regional or national (5 pts.) level. List any and all activities in which you have participated in to help promote the objectives of LAECA or the field of early childhood.

Miscellaneous campus activities (10 pts.) _____ Email _____

Overall GPA _____ (5 pts.)

Major GPA _____ (5 pts.)

A statement of your professional goals and philosophy in relation to meeting the needs of young children. The statement should be no more than two pages long and must be signed (15 pts)

Submit two letters of recommendations from individuals who are familiar with your work towards meeting the needs of children and professionalism in the field of early childhood education (10 pts.)

Student signature _____

Faculty signature _____

Faculty address and phone number _____

Address application to:

Mona Frugé

P.O. Box 121

Lacassine, LA 70650



Postmarked October 1 prior to State Conference

JEANNE GILLEY GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

The Graduate Scholarship was established in 1994. This award was renamed the Jeanne Gilley Graduate Scholarship in 1997. This \$500.00 scholarship is presented to a full-time or part-time graduate student majoring in Child Development or Early Childhood Education, or related field. Recipients must have demonstrated scholarship, professionalism, character, and leadership.

LAECA Undergraduate/Graduate Scholarship

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

ELIGIBILITY

- Membership in LAECA and SECA or respective student affiliation for at least one full year.
- Overall 3.0 grade point average.
- Major in Child Development or Early Childhood Education
- Full-time undergraduate or full/part-time graduate
- First time recipient

SELECTION

Any student meeting the above criteria may complete an application form. You must submit three (3) copies of your application. This includes letters of recommendations and statements of goals or philosophy. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from consideration.

Obtain a faculty signature that will serve to document full/part time undergraduate/graduate status.

Professionalism, character, purpose and leadership are qualities that will be considered in addition to academic standing.

A committee composed of three (3) LAECA Board Members will score the application. The Awards Committee may interview the top candidates at the annual LAECA Conference.

Judging will be based on professionalism, communicative ability and knowledge of contemporary issues relating to the files of Early Childhood and/or Child Development.

Scholarship recipients must be present at the conference.

Applications must be postmarked by October 1 prior to State Conference

APPLICATION FORM

Applications must be typed. On additional sheet complete application. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name _____

Home Address _____

Home Phone _____

School Address _____

School Phone _____

University _____ Major _____

Number of hours earned _____ Expected graduation date _____

Hometown newspaper and address _____

Contributions to LAECA on the local (20 pts.), state (10 pts.) and/or regional or national (5 pts.) level. List any and all activities in which you have participated in to help promote the objectives of LAECA or the field of early childhood.

Miscellaneous campus activities (10 pts.) _____ Email _____

Overall GPA _____ (5 pts.)

Major GPA _____ (5 pts.)

A statement of your professional goals and philosophy in relation to meeting the needs of young children. The statement should be no more than two pages long and must be signed (15 pts)

Submit two letters of recommendations from individuals who are familiar with your work towards meeting the needs of children and professionalism in the field of early childhood education (10 pts.)

Student signature _____

Faculty signature _____

Faculty address and phone number _____

Address application to:

Mona Frugé

P.O. Box 121

Lacassine, LA 70650



Postmarked October 1 prior to State Conference

APPLY NOW!! APPLY NOW!! APPLY NOW!! APPLY NOW!!

JANE HERRIN MINI GRANT

GUIDELINES

- Mini grant proposals are submitted to the awards chairperson. All identifying names are removed.
- Proposals must address at least one of these goal areas:
 - Facility or playground enhancement
 - Staff development and training
 - Special needs items
 - Creative educational projects
- Proposals are forwarded to three readers for evaluation. Readers evaluate each proposal using a rating scale.
- Each reader will return the grant proposal evaluation to the awards chairperson. The chairperson notifies by mail.
- The board determines the number of mini grants awards each year. Previous winners may apply but preference will be given to first time applicants. The mini grant award(s) is/are presented at the annual LAECA State Conference.

Return applications to
Mona Frugé
P. O. Box 121 • Lacassine, LA 70650

APPLICATION FORM

Applicant must be a member of LAECA for one full year. Previous recipients may apply. Consideration will be given to first time applicants. Three (3) copies of your application must be submitted.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Membership # _____

Name of school _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Goal area of grant _____ Title _____

Dates of Project: _____ Funds requested (\$500.00 maximum) \$ _____

Address the following and attach to this form:

Purpose of the project

Goal of the project (0-25 pts.)

Statement of need/justification (0-10pts.)

Outline of the project (include timeline)

Expected benefits (0-29 pts.)

Implementation (0-20 pts.)

Dissemination (0-10 pts.)

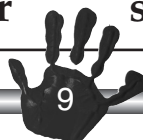
Project itemized budget (0-5 pts.)

Evaluation plan for the project (0-10 pts.)

Plan for reporting to LAECA on the project by either a presentation at the annual conference
or an article in the publication.

Applications must be postmarked by October 1 prior to State Conference

**New toll free number for LAECA 1-800-215-9034.
Please feel free to give us a call with membership
questions, changes of address, or suggestions!**



LAECA Undergraduate/Graduate Scholarship

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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Contributions to LAECA on the local (20 pts.), state (10 pts.) and/or regional or national (5 pts.) level. List any and all activities in which you have participated in to help promote the objectives of LAECA or the field of early childhood.

Miscellaneous campus activities (10 pts.) _____ Email _____

Overall GPA _____ (5 pts.)

Major GPA _____ (5 pts.)

A statement of your professional goals and philosophy in relation to meeting the needs of young children. The statement should be no more than two pages long and must be signed (15 pts)

Submit two letters of recommendations from individuals who are familiar with your work towards meeting the needs of children and professionalism in the field of early childhood education (10 pts.)

Student signature _____

Faculty signature _____

Faculty address and phone number _____

Address application to:

Mona Frugé

P.O. Box 121

Lacassine, LA 70650

Postmarked October 1 prior to State Conference





SECA Report

By Jo Carroll, our new SECA Representative

The 2014 SECA conference was held in Williamsburg, Virginia in January. It is a privilege to serve as the Louisiana representative to the SECA board. The board met prior to the conference to discuss the business of the organization. It was a joy to meet so many people from each of our membership states that are passionate about Early Childhood. There are great things in store for our professional organization and Early Childhood in the years to come.

Please be aware that as members of the Louisiana organization we have two opportunities next year to participate in premier professional growth. We will hold our annual state conference in Alexandria October 23-25th with what promises to be a rich conference with many excellent sessions. During the month of January 2015 the Louisiana organization is honored to host SECA in New Orleans. As members we are privileged to get discounted prices to both of these conferences. Please look within this publication for additional information about both of these opportunities. Mark your calendars, save your pennies and plan to attend.

There are so many exciting, new opportunities for people in the field of Early Childhood. The President of the United States has brought the field of Early Childhood

to the focus of the people by proposing additional funding. In Louisiana we now have common standards for children birth through five. These standards are developmentally appropriate and build on each other. They are available to use with all children whether the child is being served in a child care center, public/private school, home, or any other setting.

Finally, I would like to encourage each of you to become more active in this organization. We are made up of members who donate their time to make this an organization that rich in history and have the potential to become a great organization with the dedication of its membership. Please look and determine who is currently serving as your district chairperson and offer to help them organize some sort of function for members within your district. This can start out as a simple sharing time or even something like eating out as a group of professionals. Be creative but work together to grow with your organization.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your representative. I look forward to serving you as we go forward on this exciting adventure known as the field of Early Childhood.

Submitted by Jo Carroll

Meet Our 2014 Candidates for SECA President



Carole Coleman Montealegre
of Florida



Linda Novak
of North Carolina



Beth Parr
of Georgia

It's election time again and during our 65th annual conference this month in Williamsburg, Virginia the SECA Nominating Committee met to determine the slate for the 2014 election.

We are pleased to announce that these individuals have been certified as candidates for SECA President.

During the next few months, we'll provide information about the candidates and their vision for SECA in various publications. Look for the first of those articles in the first 2014 issue of *Dimensions of Early Childhood*. You will also find a video session with the candidates on our website after February 15, 2014. Take time to get to know the candidates and to vote....the Association is only as strong as its leadership. Voting will open in the fall of 2014.

Southern Early Childhood Association



ULM Child Development Center Nationally Recognized at SECA Conference

The Southern Early Childhood Association held their 65th annual conference in Williamsburg, Virginia, last week and the ULM Child Development Center was recognized at the conference for their Exemplary Outdoor Classroom. This year's theme was "Creating a Nature-Inspired Outdoor Learning Environment on a Shoestring Budget." Playgrounds

were evaluated from 13 southern states and ULM's music and weaving boards caught the eyes of the judges. They were looking for creative, innovative and developmentally appropriate outdoor spaces. ULM Director Emily Williamson was presented a certificate of recognition from SECA President, Kathy Attaway. The ULM program will also be featured in the

first 2014 edition of Dimensions of Early Childhood, SECA's professional journal. Emily also presented a workshop at the conference titled "Inside/Outside" that took participants through the creation of ULM's preschool playground.



Board Members Receive Marian B. Hamilton Award

LAECA Board Members Cindy Rushing and Mary Lou Maples received the Marian B. Hamilton Award at the SECA Conference in Williamsburg, VA. in January. The award is given annually to recognize a person or event that has had a continuous impact on the lives of young children. Cindy and Mary Lou, who are both Past Presidents of LAECA, organized the event called "Celebration of Children" in 1998 and have been spearheading it every year in April at Kees Park in Pineville, LA. They plan the event to publicize Louisiana Month of the Young Child.

The event has grown every year and now serves over 400 families from Rapides Parish and surrounding areas. Teachers and paraprofessionals from the Rapides Parish schools set up activities that children ages 3-10 years and their families can enjoy together. These include bubbles, Play-Doh modeling, paper plate painting, sidewalk chalk drawing, parachute play, hat making, face painting,



Left to right: Jo Carroll, presenting; Mary Lou Maples, Cindy Rushing

basket weaving, snack center, and community helper demonstrations. Parents are also provided with an assortment of educational materials and ideas for interacting with their children to encourage school success.

Volunteers from the Title I office and the Special Educational office also set up tables to help parents become familiar with services available for qualifying students. The Rapides Parish Library provides reading activities.

Volunteers from Pineville High School cheerleaders, child development classes, Student Council and Four-H clubs also help facilitate the activities making this truly a community event. Notices announcing the event are sent home with each student in grades PreK through 2nd grade and notices are printed in local newspapers and announced on televisions. Anyone wanting to replicate this activity in their communities is encouraged to contact Cindy Rushing or Mary Lou Maples: maplesml@suddenlink.net.

ULM Employee on National Exam Committee

We are very proud of Emily! She is a long time LAECA Board member. We know her input will be invaluable. What an honor for her.

MONROE, La. (KNOE 8 News) - A ULM employee will serve on a national committee that creates the SAT and other exams.

Emily Williamson, director of the University of Louisiana at Monroe Child Development Center, was recently appointed to serve on the Praxis Education of Young Children assessment study committee, being conducted by Educational Testing Service (ETS). ETS is the organization that creates the SAT, GRE, Praxis, TOFEL and other exams.

Williamson was nominated by Louisiana's educator licensing agency.

"I am very honored to serve on this ETS national study and represent the state of Louisiana," she said.

Williamson will travel to Princeton, N.J. to participate in this study, which will recommend a passing score for the PRAXIS test.

According to Williamson, the purpose of the Multi state Standard-Setting Studies (MSSS) is to keep the test content fresh, relevant, and current with changing requirements for prospective teachers.

The *Praxis Series*™ tests are taken by individuals entering the teaching profession as part of the certification process required by many states and professional licensing organizations.

(<http://www.knoe.com/story/24680934/ulm-employee-on-national-exam-committee>)



Common Core State Standards

By Cindy Ramagos

Prior to the implementation of the Common Core State Standards in May, 2010, each state had their own set of standards for students in grades K-12. Many states had also developed standards for their PreKindergarten children as well as those ages birth through three. Louisiana was one of the states that had standards for all these ages.

The Common Core State Standards Initiative was a state-led effort that established a single set of clear educational standards for kindergarten through 12th grade in English language arts and mathematics. States across the country collaborated with teachers, researchers, and leading experts to design and develop the Common Core State Standards. Each state was allowed to voluntarily adopt these standards. Forty-five states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity have adopted the Common Core State Standards. The federal government was NOT involved in the development of the standards. Local teachers, principals, and superintendents lead the implementation of the Common Core.

The standards are designed to ensure that students graduating from high school are prepared to enter credit bearing entry courses in two or four year college programs or enter the workforce. The standards are clear and concise to ensure that parents, teachers, and students have a clear understanding of the expectations in reading, writing, speaking and listening, language and mathematics in school. The standards establish what students need to learn, but they do not dictate how teachers should teach. Teachers will continue to devise lesson plans and tailor instruction to the individual needs of the students in their classrooms.

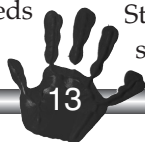
Once the Common Core State Standards for Kindergarten through 12th grade were established in English language arts and mathematics, Louisiana began to look at their Birth to Three, Three-Year-Old and Four-Year-Old standards in order to align them with the new K-12 standards. However, Louisiana did not develop just English language arts and mathematics standards for Birth to Five, it went further and developed standards for all domains of child development.

These new Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards can be found in the Early Childhood Library on the Louisiana Department of Education website at the following weblink along with individual age level standards documents: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/early-childhood>

The Department of Education has also developed sample Unit Lesson Plans and Weekly Lesson Plans for PreKindergarten teachers that align with the Kindergarten English language arts and mathematic Common Core State Standards. These can also be found in the Early Childhood Library at the weblink listed above.

Next steps:

- The Louisiana Department of Education is developing an Implementation Guide to accompany the Birth to Five Standards which should be available by Summer, 2014.
- The Department also plans to develop Unit Lesson Plans and Weekly Lesson Plans for Birth to Three-year-olds sometime in the near future.
- Common Core State Standards for Science and Social Studies are also being developed for K-12th grade and should be out within the next year.



SECA CONFERENCE MEMORIES

LAECA Board Members ▶



◀ Board Members with new friends

LAECA President
Chris LeJeune ▶



Month Of The Young Child Update



We are waiting for the official proclamation from Gov. Bobby Jindal which will designate the whole month of April as “Month of the Young Child”. We will publish a copy of the proclamation on the LAECA.org website as soon as we receive it. We hope you found the article of suggested activities in the last issue of Collaborations. If not, check it out. We hope you will make the effort to do something special to create awareness of the importance of early childhood---it doesn't have to be elaborate.

Please personally take a Press Release to your local media outlets so that people will know about the activities of LAECA and become more interested in our organization. Those of us who belong to LAECA need to be recruiting our friends and colleagues to join. The bigger our voice, the more good we can do for young children. Save any news articles and mail them to our LAECA Historian, Teri Knouse, 101 Aron Drive, Lafayette, LA 70503, or email it: tlknouse@gmail.

TV and radio stations are required to air Public Service Announcements. You can contact them with a copy of the following PSA:

“April has been designated by Gov. B. Jindal as” Month of the Young Child” in recognition of the importance of the early years of a child’s life. The Louisiana Early Childhood Association encourages you to read to child every day and spend time playing and talking together.”

An example of a Press Release follows:

PRESS RELEASE: At the request of the Louisiana Early Childhood Association, LAECA, Governor Bobby Jindal has proclaimed April, 2014 as “Month of the Young Child” in recognition of the importance of the early years of a child’s life. The teachers and students at (put your school or center’s name) are observing “Month of the Young Child” by participating in this activity. (write a brief description of what you are going to do with date, time, place and participants).

Contact Person: (Put your phone number and name)





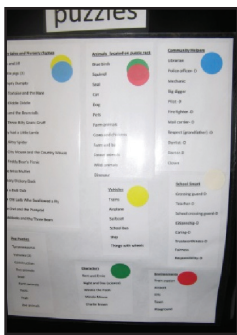
Consider This *Organizing Tips from Teri Knouse*

Puzzled About Puzzles?

Board puzzles, peg puzzles, knob puzzles, floor puzzles – How do you keep them organized? How do insure that you are not using the same ones over and over. Here are some ideas to consider.

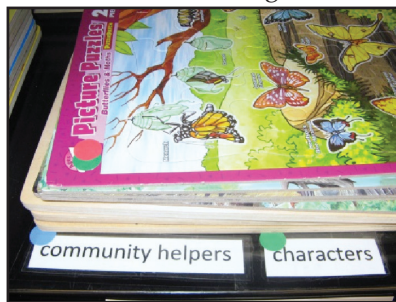
Tools: marker, clear packing tape, sticker dots in assorted colors, large, plastic storage bins, gallon size plastic bags, scissors, computer paper, laminating film, basket to display floor puzzles, puzzle storage rack - helpful but not necessary (we have only one)

Board, Peg and Knob Puzzles



- Sort them into categories
 - Community helpers
 - Environments
 - School
 - Fantasy
 - Animals
 - Habitats
 - math
- Assign each category a sticky dot color or colors

- Community helpers – red
 - Environments – yellow/blue, etc.
- Apply sticky dots to the front of each puzzle & cover the dots with clear packing tape
 - Stack puzzles by their category
 - Ours are stacked 2 categories deep
 - Larger stacks at the back of the shelf
 - Place a label in front of each stack with the name of the category on it



- Laminate the labels and tape them to the shelf with clear packing tape
- Type a list of the puzzles by category and color. Laminate it and display it by the puzzle area. This will make it easier to locate the exact puzzle that you are looking for
 - As you use each puzzle mark it off on the list and then return the puzzle to the bottom of the stack. This will insure that you will be putting out a variety of puzzles.

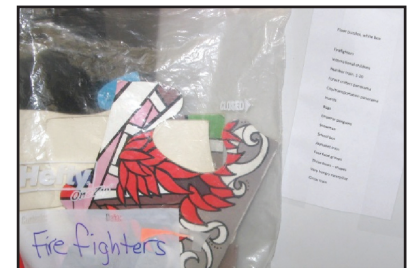
- Extra tips
 - Label each piece of each puzzle:
 - Cat – each puzzle piece labeled with a C – helpful when puzzle pieces get mixed up
 - Trace each puzzle shape onto the puzzle board frame – helps the children figure out where each piece belongs

Floor puzzles

- Remove the floor puzzles from their boxes. This cuts down on storage space.
- Cut out the picture of the puzzle from the box
- Put the puzzle pieces and the puzzle picture into a gallon plastic bag
- With a marker, label the bag with the puzzle name
- Sort them into categories (see above)



- Assign each category a sticky dot color or colors (see above)
- Apply sticky dots by the puzzle name & cover the dots with clear packing tape
- Type a list of the puzzles by category and color.
- Laminate the list and apply the list to the side and top of a large plastic bin or bins
- Place the puzzle bags into the bin/bins.
- Refer to step 7 & 8 above
- When using the floor puzzles remove the pieces and the puzzle picture from the bag and put them into a basket or similar container.



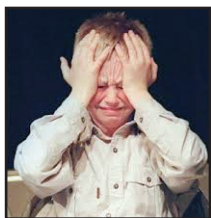
Toll free number for LAECA 1-800-215-9034.

Please feel free to give us a call with membership questions, changes of address, or suggestions!



Partnering with Parents to Help Young Children Meet the Early Learning and Development Standards

by Dr. Debra Jo Hailey, Pat Alexander, M.Ed., and Dr. Michelle Fazio-Brunson



With the newly implemented *Early Learning and Development Standards* (ELDS) (Louisiana Department of Education, 2013), both teachers and parents are searching for ways to help young children master skills that are more rigorous than Louisiana has required in the past. Most, if not all, teachers have voiced concerns about curriculum accountability, and many parents are witnessing their children exhibit stress over school when they have never experienced academic stress before. While teacher and parent concerns may differ, both ultimately want the same thing for children: school success. Thus, this article aims to share how teachers can use parent packs to encourage parents to take an active role in their children's learning and development. In the sections below, the authors describe parent packs, how to make them, and how to collect family feedback to make further instructional decisions.



Description of Parent Pack

The parent pack itself should be a zippered bag that will hold contents in place even if the bag is turned upside down. Durable zippered backpacks and lunchboxes are ideal because they can be wiped clean or washed when they get dirty. Everything that parents need to complete the activity should be placed in the pack—ideally in plastic baggies that “zip” or “slide” closed. Anything that is printed on paper should be laminated or placed in a folder in the pack to help keep it neat and make it last longer. Send the parent pack home with each child and indicate how long families can keep the pack. When the pack is returned, carefully read the parent feedback/documentation, and use that information to drive future instruction with that child.

Procedures for Making Parent Pack

After selecting the type of bag you want to use for your parent packs, decide on the ELDS you want the child to practice at home and design an activity that meets the standard. Type directions for completing the activity, print on cardstock, laminate to increase durability, and place in a durable folder in the pack. Be sure to include high level thinking questions that parents can ask their children as they play and work together. Next, decide how parents can best document the child's performance in relation to the standard. For example, you could create a checklist, survey, or journal prompt that would engage the parents in communicating how the



children completed the task. Place this in the durable folder along with the directions. Finally, place all the materials that families need to complete the activity in zip-top bags (e.g., books, manipulatives, paper, art and craft materials, etc.). See below for a sample parent pack with activities that are aligned with ELDS for four-year-old children.

Clothespins Parent Pack

Description. The Clothespins Parent Pack involves families in playing and working with various types of clothespins. Some of the skills practiced in this parent pack include sorting, exploring quantities, making and extending patterns, seriating, counting, and measuring.

Early Learning and Development Standards

The Clothespins Parent Pack meets the following Early Learning and Development Standards:

Domain: Cognitive Development and General Knowledge

Subdomain: Mathematics

Standard CM 1: Understand numbers, ways of representing numbers, and relationships between numbers and quantities

CM 1 Indicators:

- Understand that the last number named tells the number of objects counted for a set of 10 or fewer objects. (4.3)
- Compare sets of objects using same/different and more/less/fewer. (4.7).

Standard CM 2: Understand basic patterns, concepts, and operations.

CM 2 Indicators:

- Recognize, copy, and extend patterns. (4.1)
- Sort objects by more than one attribute (e.g., red circles or blue triangles) and explain the criteria used to sort objects. (4.2)

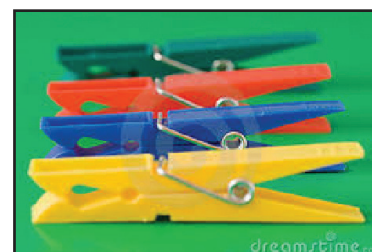
Standard CM 3: Understand attributes and relative properties of objects as related to size, capacity, and area.

CM 3 Indicators:

- Describe measurable attributes (length and weight) of objects and materials, using comparative words. (4.1)

Materials

Purchase some inexpensive clothespins and small craft sticks at your local craft or discount store, or ask parents to send extras they have from home. Vary the clothespins in size, color, and makeup, and place them in a zip-top bag labeled “clothespins”. Place the craft sticks in a zip-top



continued on next page >>>

Partnering with Parents *continued*

bag labeled “craft sticks”, and place both bags in the parent pack. Next, modify the instructions on the activity card below to meet your children’s individual needs. Print the activities on card stock, laminate them, and tuck them

in the parent pack. Finally, modify the documentation sheet for parents to provide feedback about the experience, print it, and place it in the folder in the parent pack.

Activity Card:

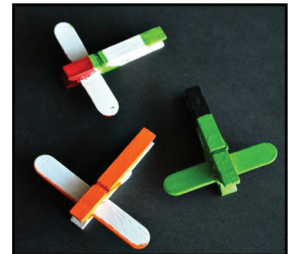


Home Activity Card #20

Clothespins

Please set aside the zip-top bag for the ending activity

1. Sort the clothespins by color. Name the groups. Which group has the most? Least?
2. Begin a pattern on the table such as pink, pink, green, pink, pink, green, pink, pink, green. Say or sing the pattern as you do it. Ask your child to continue the pattern.
3. Switch roles. Let your child begin a pattern, say or sing it, and you continue the pattern.
4. Sort the clothespins another way. Name the groups you’ve made by their common attribute. (For example big green, little green, wooden with a round head, etc.) Make long, straight lines of each group. Which line is the longest? Which line is the shortest? Are there any lines that are the same length?
5. Count the clothespins in each group. Which has the most? Which has the least? Did the longer lines have more clothespins or the shorter lines? Why do you think that is so?
6. Connect the clothespins. How many can you clip together before they fall apart? What is longer, you or the connected clothespins? Are there other things that you would like to measure with the connected clothespins?
7. Choose one clothespin and one craft stick from the zip-top bag. Pinch open the wooden clothespin and slip a craft stick into the opening cross wise. Close the clothespin. It should look like a tiny airplane. Your child can keep this and play with it! Color with markers, if desired. Help your child to write a short story about his/her airplane adventures.



Enclosed materials:

- Assortment of clothespins
- Zip-top bag containing wooden clothespins and miniature craft sticks



Another Bright Idea by Debra Jo Hailey & Pat Alexander

Clothespins Parent Pack Documentation Form

Please return this form in the parent pack.

Parent’s Name: _____

Child’s Name: _____

Name of Activity: _____

Date: _____

How long did you spend on this activity? _____

Would you recommend this activity to other parents? ____

Write about anything your child seemed to love about this activity: _____

What did your child easily accomplish with this activity? _____

List any steps your child had trouble completing. _____

Summary

When teachers facilitate positive family/school connections, there are significant benefits for the schools, parents, and most importantly, the children. During this crucial time of curriculum and assessment overhaul, teachers need parents’ aid in helping young children achieve newly implemented standards. If parents are encouraged to play with their children in meaningful ways, engage in thoughtful conversations with their children, and then document their experiences, teachers can capitalize on this by individualizing instruction and providing needed support. All of these will help teachers bridge home and school environments while simultaneously meeting accountability measures.

References

Louisiana Department of Education. (2013). *Louisiana’s birth to five early learning and development standards*. Baton Rouge, LA: Author.



Connect: Standards, Instruction and Assessment

Supplied by Ivy Starns

To ensure that more children are ready for kindergarten, the Early Childhood Care and Education Act of 2012 (Act 3) charged the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) with unifying programs serving “at-risk” publicly-funded children age birth to five. One of the key strategies of implementing this piece of legislation is to provide support for teachers and providers. Part of this support comes in the form of training for early childhood educators. The Department of Education has developed an on-line training course on the new *Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards*. The course is called: *CONNECT: Standards, Instruction and Assessment*, and it can be accessed through this link: <https://www.udemy.com/early-childhood-foundations-course/>.

This course was first made available to the thirteen Community Network Pilot programs that began implementing the activities required by the Act 3 legislation, but it is available (at no cost) to all other early childhood programs throughout the state.

NOTE: The Department of Children and Family Services Licensing (DCFS) Division will accept training certificates from this course toward mandatory hours only for providers *participating in a Community Network Pilot*. This course may not be used as a substitute for Early Learning Guidelines/Standards training required for child care center staff participating in the Quality Rating System.

Course Description:

What children learn during the first few years of life provides a foundation for their future growth and development. In order for children to reach their full potential, it is important that adults provide an environment and experiences that promote healthy growth and development. Early childhood educators should be knowledgeable about what children should know and be able to do at certain milestones in their development and how to measure their progress.

Outcome:

Early childhood educators will use the Standards to plan and guide instruction, activities and interactions. They will systematically collect and reflect on assessment information in order to support children’s growth and development.

This training will guide participants through an overview about the connection between what children are expected to know and do and ways to measure their progress. A summary is provided of recommended practices for quality programs and how implementing the *Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards* is vital to ensuring children are prepared for kindergarten and beyond. The course presents background information on the development of the *Standards*, how they are

organized, and how to interpret or de-code the Standards document. Through individual or group activities, participants will delve into the *Standards* document and test their skill at recognizing those standards during play activities and interactions.

The training will also outline the importance of documenting children’s progress through appropriate assessment measures. Descriptions of methods of assessment will be provided as well as practice using various information-gathering strategies. Participants will be provided with information on how to use assessment results in their planning for children’s learning. An overview of screening is included in this training outlining the importance of monitoring children’s growth and development. This training will encourage early childhood educators to reflect on information from screenings and other assessments and consider whether children may need further evaluation and how to share assessment information with families.

Objectives:

As a result of participating in this training, early childhood teachers/administrators will:

- ◆ Be familiar with the *Louisiana Early Learning and Development Standards* and understand their role in planning, instruction, activities, interactions, and assessment:
 - Why the *Standards* are important
 - How the *Standards* are organized and how they can be used to support children’s development
 - How to use the *Standards* for planning, instruction, activities and interactions
 - Where to access the *Standards*:
<http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/early-childhood>
- ◆ Be familiar with assessment of young children:
 - The importance of assessment, including screening
 - The processes/methods of documenting or recording children’s learning and development
 - How to use assessment information to support children’s learning
 - How to share screening and assessment information with families and others

Materials/Preparation:

- ◆ Copy of the *Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards*
- ◆ Copy of the *Standards At-a-Glance*
- ◆ Computer or other device with internet access

Time Frame:

- ◆ The course is available 24/7 to meet the needs and schedules of early childhood staff
- ◆ The course is divided into short “lectures” which

continued on next page >>>



Connect *continued*

can be done at one time or over a period of several days

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

Reflective thinking about this course will help early childhood educators as they work with children and families. When teachers reflect on what they have learned, it allows them to consider:

- What are you doing in your classroom?
- Why are you doing it?
- How effective is it?
- How are children responding and learning?
- What can you do better?

Reflective thinking is a process that can be done on your own or as part of a collaborative effort with you and your coworkers. As a result of reflective thinking, teachers can become better at making decisions about what changes they might make in their practice, their programs, and their attitudes, resulting in greater child outcomes. Use these questions below to help guide you in your reflections.

- What steps will you take to become more familiar with the *Early Learning and Development Standards* for the age group you work with?
- How will you use the standards as you plan activities and interactions?

- What steps do you need to take to make certain **all** of the standards are being addressed?
- How well does your curriculum line up with the *Standards*?
- In order to help children meet the standards, are there any changes to your classroom that need to be made with respect to room arrangement, materials, the schedule, activities/interactions, etc.?
- What strategies will you use to implement the standards for children with disabilities or who are learning English?
- What additional resources, materials, or assistance will you need to provide children with activities and experiences to help them meet the standards?
- How will you document children's learning (work samples, anecdotal notes, photographs, observations, etc.)? Which will be the easiest for you to use, and which will be the hardest?
- What strategies will you use if you find that a child is not developing in a typical manner? Who will you need to work with, and what resources will you need to help you ensure that children's development is supported?
- How will you use child assessment information (data) to plan collaboratively with your coworkers?
- How will you share information on how children are progressing with families and others?



Free webinars for every educator



EdWeb.net is a FREE.....Yes a FREE online professional community for educators. It is a social network and professional learning community that makes it easy for teachers and all educators to connect and collaborate with peers, share information and best practices, and spread innovative ideas to improve teaching and learning. All you have to do is register and login. Once that is completed, browse through the many communities and webinars that are available and register. An email will be sent to you as well as a reminder for the webinar that you register for. Once you view and participate in the webinar, a CE certificate will be sent to you 24 hours later. This online professional community is amazing! If for some reason you cannot view the webinar, you can watch the recordings and/or power points then take a quiz to receive a CE certificate. Within the networks, many resources can be viewed and downloaded for use by each individual.

Here are a few examples of the webinars that were available this month: Personalizing Learning with the iPad to Empower Interactivity and Student Thinking;

Time, Travel and Transition: Using Visual Strategies to Support Successful Participation for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder; Digital Decisions: Choosing the Right Technology for Early Childhood Education; and Flipping Your Classroom Without Internet.

Recently, my Pre-K class and I took part in a Webinar from edWeb via Time for Kids and viewed scientists "LIVE from Antarctica". The scientists specifically spoke about the penguins they were studying. My students were so excited! How often do you actually get to hear and see live from actual scientists from their geological site. The students were also engaged in polls and answering questions from them. We learned many new facts about penguins and about Antarctica.

In 2013, edWeb hosted 230 webinars on many different topics in education. Educators from all over the world joined in on edWebinars. Let's join this great professional learning network and make it a great 2014 while continuing professional development at your convenience from great professionals and educational peers.

Christi Gonzales



Growing with Nature Connecting the Outdoors with Birth to Five Standards

Jenna Wainwright, MEd.

Calcasieu Parish School System Head Start

Early Childhood Programs have always promoted specific developmental needs of children ages 0-5.

However with the growing concern of obesity in young children and the influence of technology, many early childhood professionals are now realizing the importance of outdoor play. While some preschool center directors are encouraging the staff to take the students outdoors on a regular basis, the value of outdoor play has not fully been realized.



As adults, we can remember our early experiences outdoors - running through leaves, climbing hills, digging in the dirt, and playing games were just part of our everyday lives. Today we are observing children as young as 15 months to 2 years of age, playing on I Phones and I Pads. If given a choice, most children today would prefer playing games on the computer over choosing to go play outdoors. I think we all agree that children have little to no contact with the natural world in their daily lives.

As the Site Facilitator of Jake Drost Head Start, I was passionate about providing play opportunities that encouraged social interaction, emotional and creative expression and nature play. As an Early Childhood Professional I was convinced that the outdoor environment would offer not only healthy development of the children but traditional educational value.

In collaboration with local industry (Lyondellbasell), local businesses, Calcasieu Parish School Board, parents and staff a nature playground was designed and created. The Learning Park was chosen as the name for the project because it was designed to extend and support early childhood learning goals in addition to opportunities for children to explore, be creative and deeply connect to nature.

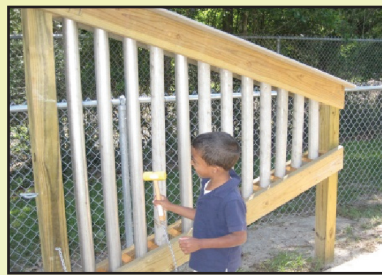
All play areas were hand built by the employees of lyondellbasell. Each piece offers experiences that can be directly connected to the birth to five standards.

An 8' Musical Fence is part of the music area. The students walk or run along the fence while dragging a stick along the pipes making percussive musical sounds. The students can also strike individual tubes to create individual tones. This is a simple construction that teaches lessons about rhythm, movement, and sound. (Standard CC1 Creative Thinking and Expression; develop an appreciation for music and participate in music and movement activities))

The Washbin Drums were built using 3 various

size washbins. The students make creative music that sounds like they are playing drums. It requires concentration, hand-eye coordination and energy! (Standard PM2: Develop small muscle control and coordination; Standard AL2: Demonstrate attention, engagement and persistence in learning)

The sound tubes help the students hear natural sounds in the environment. The tubes mimic a sea shell being held to the ear.



Different tube lengths isolate different types of sounds. The tubes are a great way for children to learn how to isolate and

identify the different sounds in their environment. (Standard CS1: Develop the ability to carry out the scientific inquiry process; Standard AL1: Engage in play-based learning to explore, investigate, and acquire knowledge about themselves and their world.)

The sand table is a natural attraction to the children. The table is wheel chair accessible. It promotes problem solving skills, encourages creativity, teaches students how to play cooperatively and improves coordination skills.

The outdoor classroom allows students to pretend they are teachers, doctors, engineers, etc. as they draw and make designs on the chalkboard. Outdoor easels are also provided for creative solutions and expression.

(Standard AL4: Demonstrate creative thinking when using materials, solving problems, and learning new information; Standard CC2: Develop an appreciation for visual arts from different culture and create various forms of visual arts. Standard PM2: Develop small muscle control and coordination. Standard SE1: Develop healthy relationships and interactions with peers.)

Resting hammocks were a unique and fun addition to the playground as it afforded an opportunity for the children to relax. Children were required to practice

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Growing with Nature *continued*

balance skills as they learned to get on and off the hammocks.



Other areas for students to relax and read a book include the resting stumps and the arbor swing.

(Standard LL3: Develop an interest in books and their characteristics. Standard LL4: Comprehend stories and information from books and other printed materials.)



Gross motor activities are always a part of the

outdoors.

The playground offers a King of the Mountain dirt mound that children can run up and down chasing one another and a bike trail where



students can experience the opportunity to ride wheeled toys. A Stepping Stone Path cuts off from the bike trail



designed for the children to skip from one stone to another. An Obstacle Course was constructed that includes various size concrete pillars, balance beams and a monkey bridge. These structures

allow for gross motor, balance, eye/muscle coordination, pretend play and exploration of the concept of shifting weight.

(Standard PM1: Develop large muscle control and coordinate movements

In their upper and/or lower body. Standard PM3: Participate in a variety

of physical activities to enhance strength and stamina.)

Science experiences are included in the Butterfly Garden that was created for the students to learn about living things and how to care for them.

(Standard CS 3: Acquire scientific knowledge related to life science (properties of living things

Many child care centers have limited space for large equipment and a bike trail. Additional materials can be brought outdoors to maximize benefits and support the standards. Examples of nature activities we used to enhance our outdoor learning included making leaf necklaces, leaf sorting, natural block play, nature bracelets, sensory table, leaf sorting, worm habitat and simply going on a nature walk to collect leaves, acorns, etc.

Standard AL2: Demonstrate attention, engagement, and persistence in learning.

Standard AL3: Recognize, understand, and analyze a problem and draw on knowledge or experience to seek solutions.

Standard AL4: Demonstrate creative thinking when using materials.

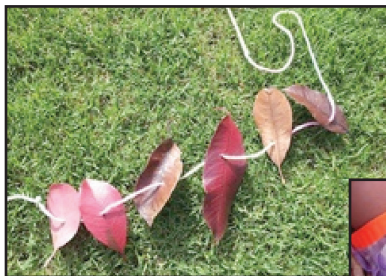
Standard CM3: Understand attributes and relative properties of objects as related to size, capacity and area.

The benefits of nature play for children are endless. Nature play is intrinsically motivating. It stimulates natural curiosity in children allowing them to feel comfortable exploring, experimenting

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Growing with Nature *continued*

and expressing themselves. It encourages social interaction and enhances self-esteem. Nature play can improve attention and cognitive functioning as well as physical development. The benefits go on and on.



I encourage center directors to partner with



local businesses, industry, and the greater community to support the growing need of healthy active children. Start

small by simply creating a garden, planning nature



activities that are inexpensive to do, and build from there. By working together we can influence the importance of healthy lifestyles and the value of learning through play.

"Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for The Learning Park Calcasieu Parish School Board Members Wayne Savoy, School Superintendent; Deloris Hicks, Director of Elementary Schools; Sheryl Piper, Director of Early Childhood; Joe David, Principal; Felicia Coleman, Administrator Jenna Wainwright, Jake Drost Head Start; Lyondell Basell Industry (Sponsors of Global Care Day Project); Century Steps; Lowes; McManus Construction; Parents and Community Leaders

Resources

- Louv, R (2008) *Last Child in the Woods; Saving our children from nature deficit-disorder* (2nd Ed) Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books. (Original work published 2005)
- Moore, R & Wong, H (1997) *Natural Learning: Rediscovering nature's way of teaching*. Berkley, CA: MIG Communications.

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UPCOMING ISSUES

July 15, 2014 Using formative assessments; developmentally appropriate assessment

November 15, 2014 (tentative) Infants and toddlers

Meeting Early Learning and Development Standards through Interactive Preschool Activities

A PEER REVIEWED ARTICLE

by Dr. Michelle Fazio-Brunson and Donna Barbe, M.A.T., M.Ed. Candidate

With the recent release of *Louisiana's Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards* (2013), preschool teachers are tasked with updating their curriculum, resources, and assessments to ensure their students are meeting the new standards. Implementing Developmentally Appropriate Practices (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009) while meeting rigorous standards is no small feat. Preschool teachers must plan experiences that are child-centered, individually appropriate, and meaningful for their students. Activities should address various learning styles and facilitate growth in all domains, and then, ideally, teachers are able to document that the children have mastered the standards. To that end, this article illustrates how preschool teachers can plan activities that address the standards, assess the students' learning, and document that the standards have been met.

Two activities are described below. Each activity correlates with the *Early Learning and Development Standards* and addresses various Learning Styles (Dunn & Dunn, 1978) and Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 2006). Explanations also include materials and procedures for completing the activities, ways to provide differentiation, and strategies for assessing and documenting the children's learning.

Activity One: Letter Vest

Connections to Early Learning and Development Standards:

Domain: Approaches to Learning

Subdomain: Attention, Engagement, and Persistence

Standard AL 2: Demonstrate attention, engagement, and persistence in learning.

AL 2 Indicators:

- Stay engaged with others, objects, and activities despite interruptions or disruption. (4.1)
- Maintain attention in child-initiated and adult - directed activities despite distractions and interruptions. (4.2)

Domain: Language and Literacy Development

Subdomain: Speaking and Listening

Standard LL 1: Comprehend or understand and use language.

LL 1 Indicators:

- Listen and respond to questions about print read aloud or information presented orally or through other media, including music and videos (4.1)
- Listen and respond attentively to conversations. (4.2)
- With guidance and support from adults, follow agreed upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others, and taking turns speaking about topics and print under discussion). (4.3)
- Speak audibly and use words, phrases, and/or sentences to express a complete thought that can be clearly understood by most people. (4.5)

Domain: Language and Literacy Development

Subdomain: Reading: Foundational Skills

Standard LL 5: Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.

LL 5 Indicators:

- With prompting and support, identify various features in print (e.g., words, spaces, punctuation, and some upper- and lower-case letters. (4.4)
- Name at least 26 of the 52 upper- and/or lower-case letters of the alphabet. (4.5)

Domain: Social-Emotional Development

Subdomain: Social Relationships

Standard SE 1: Develop healthy relationships and interactions with peers and adults.

SE 1 Indicator:

- Demonstrate cooperation with peers by sharing, taking turns, etc. (4.6).

Domain: Social-Emotional Development

Subdomain: Self-Concept and Self-Efficacy

Standard SE 3: Express feelings and beliefs that he/she is capable of successfully making decisions, accomplishing tasks, and meeting goals.

SE 3 Indicators:

- Demonstrate confidence in range of abilities and express pride in accomplishments. (4.1)
- Attempt new experiences with confidence. (4.2)
- Make choices or decisions from a range of options. (4.3)

Domain: Social-Development

Subdomain: Self-Regulation

Standard SE 5: Regulate attention, impulses, and behavior.

SE 5 Indicators:

- Follow rules and routines and adapt to changes in rules and routines. (4.1)
- Demonstrate control over impulsive behaviors and focus attention in various settings but sometimes require adult support and guidance. (4.2)
- With adult support and guidance, wait for short periods of time to get something he/she wants (e.g., waits turn to play with a toy, etc.). (4.3)

Learning Styles: Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, and Tactile

Multiple Intelligences: Bodily-Kinesthetic, Interpersonal, and Linguistic

Materials:

- Letter Vests: you can make your own, or you can purchase vests such as Roylco's Interactive Alphabet Letter Vests (www.roylco.com)
- Alphabet Cards
- Promethean Board or Whiteboard

Grouping: Whole group



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Meeting Early Learning *continued*

Procedure:

- Remind the children of rules for appropriate behavior for this experience.
- Before attempting to use letter vests as teaching tools, children should have an opportunity to play with and explore them.
- Point out the capital and lowercase letters on the vests.
- Begin with the capital letters. Place the capital letter vests on a low table or on the floor.
- Have the children pick a letter, put the vest on, and sit at their circle time spots. Offer prompting and support as needed.
- Have alphabet letter cards ready for students to visualize the letters.
- Call out the name of the letter, point to the card to show letter, write the letter in large print on the board, and ask the student wearing the matching vest to stand.
- Model words that start with that letter.
- Repeat the process until each child has a turn. Offer prompting and support when needed.

Differentiation:

- Show a card without saying the letter name, and have the child wearing the matching vest stand and identify the letter. Have the remaining children repeat. Repeat for remaining cards.
- Show a card, and have the child with the matching letter vest stand and say a word that begins with that sound/letter. Have the remaining children repeat. Repeat so that each child gets a turn.
- Show a card and have children with a first, middle, or last name that begins with that letter stand and say their names. Repeat so that each child gets a turn.
- Integrate music by singing the following tune: "If you have the letter S, the letter S, the letter S, Stand up if you have the letter S, which makes the /s/ sound." Repeat for each letter.
- Have children pair up to match capital letter vests and lowercase letter vests (e.g., A and a).
- Have children wear vests to model simple word families (e.g., bat, cat, hat, etc.).

Documentation and Assessment:

Observe the children during the activity to determine persistence, engagement, comprehension, letter knowledge, cooperation, self-efficacy, and self-regulation. Document the children's accomplishments through anecdotal notes, checklists, photographs with narratives, or rubrics. Then place the documentation in each child's portfolio.

Activity Two: Pete the Cat Number Recognition

Connections to Early Learning and Development

Standards:

Domain: Approaches to Learning

Subdomain: Attention, Engagement, and Persistence

Standard AL 2: Demonstrate attention, engagement, and persistence in learning.

AL 2 Indicators:

- Stay engaged with others, objects, and activities despite interruptions or disruption. (4.1)
- Maintain attention in child-initiated and adult - directed activities despite distractions and interruptions. (4.2)

Domain: Cognitive Development and General Knowledge

Subdomain: Mathematics

Standard CM 1: Understand numbers, ways of representing numbers, and relationships between numbers and quantities

CM 1 Indicators:

- Count forward from a given number between 1 and 10, and count backward from 5. (4.2)
- Understand that the last number named tells the number of objects counted for a set of 10 or fewer objects. (4.3)
- Count out a set of specified objects from a set of 10 or fewer objects when asked. (4.4)

Domain: Cognitive Development and General Knowledge

Subdomain: Mathematics

Standard CM 2: Understand basic patterns, concepts, and operations

CM 2 Indicator:

- Use concrete objects to model simple addition and subtraction problems that total 6 or fewer. (4.3)

Domain: Language and Literacy Development

Subdomain: Speaking and Listening

Standard LL 1: Comprehend or understand and use language.

LL 1 Indicators:

- Listen and respond to questions about print read aloud or information presented orally or through other media, including music and videos (4.1)
- Listen and respond attentively to conversations. (4.2)
- With guidance and support from adults, follow agreed upon rules for discussions, (e.g., listening to others, and taking turns speaking about topics and print under discussion). (4.3)
- Speak audibly and use words, phrases, and/or sentences to express a complete thought that can be clearly understood by most people. (4.5)

Domain: Language and Literacy Development

Subdomain: Reading: Literature and Information in Print

Standard LL 3: Develop an interest in books and their characteristics.

LL 3 Indicators:

- Demonstrates how books are read, such as front-to-back and one page at a time. (4.1)
- With prompting and support, describe the role of the author and illustrator of a text. (4.2)

Domain: Language and Literacy Development

Subdomain: Reading: Literature and Information in Print

Standard LL 4: Comprehend stories and information from books and other print materials.

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Meeting Early Learning *continued*

LL 4 Indicators:

- With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about print that is read aloud. (4.1)
- With prompting and support, retell parts of a favorite story in sequence (first, next, and last). (4.2)
- With prompting and support, identify characters and some events from a story and several pieces of information from a text read aloud. (4.3)
- Recognize that text can be stories (make-believe) or real (give information). (4.6)
- Based on the title and/or pictures/illustrations, predict what might happen in a story before it is read. (4.9)

Domain: Physical Well-Being and Motor Development

Subdomain: Motor Skills and Physical Fitness

PM 2 Indicators:

- Use hands, fingers, and wrists to manipulate large and small objects with strength and good control of small muscles (4.1)
- Coordinate eye and hand movements to perform complex tasks (dressing and undressing) or to use everyday tools (e.g., pitchers for pouring or scissors for cutting along a line). (4.2)

Learning Styles: Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, and Tactile

Multiple Intelligences: Bodily-Kinesthetic, Interpersonal, Linguistic, and Logical-Mathematical

Materials:

- *Pete the Cat and his Four Groovy Buttons* by Eric Litwin
- Optional: Pete the Cat and his Four Groovy Buttons mp3 song and video (available from http://www.mp3ye.eu/eric-litwin-pete-the-cat-and-his-four-groovy-buttons-mp3-download_942211.html)
- Laminated Pete the Cat workmats (available from <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0ByBagqIM6QQHS1dMMGpKLXF4bFk/edit?pli=1>, or you can make your own)
- Button manipulatives

Grouping: Whole group to read the book, Small group for activity

Procedure:

(Whole Group)

- Introduce the book to the students.
- Identify the author/illustrator and ask the children to identify the author's and illustrator's purpose.
- Ask questions to build prior knowledge (e.g., Which books have we already read about Pete the Cat? What do you think this story will be about? Why do you think that? What do you think groovy means?).

- Prompt the children to tell you how to read a book (front to back, left to right, and top to bottom).
- Read the book.
- After reading the book, have children identify the main character and the sequence of events.
- Have the children describe what they liked about the story or what they might change about the story if they could re-write it.
- Ask the children if the story could really happen and why.
- Tell the children that later in centers, they will be doing an activity with Pete the Cat and four of his groovy buttons!

(Small Group)

- Remind children of rules when working with buttons. For example, you might ask, "Who can tell me our rules for working with buttons?" "How do we handle our buttons?" "Where is it ok to place our buttons?" "Are buttons for throwing?"
- Give each child a laminated Pete the Cat workmat and four buttons.
- Ask the children to recall how many groovy buttons Pete has at the beginning of the story (four).
- Ask the children to place four buttons on Pete the Cat.
- Re-read the text, stressing the number sentences in the

story. As each button pops off in the story, ask children to remove one button from Pete the Cat and tell how many buttons are left.

- Have children practice counting forward to specific numbers 1-10 and placing the appropriate number of buttons on Pete the Cat.
- Then have them practice counting backward from 5, removing a button each time the number decreases.

Differentiation

- Hold up the book and turn the pages while the children listen to the mp3 file.

- Have the children watch the video on the Internet.
- Invite the children act out the story.

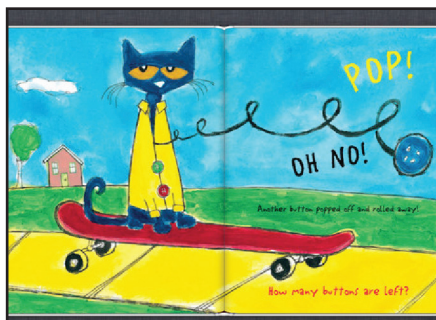
Documentation and Assessment:

Observe the children during the activity to determine persistence; engagement; ability to count and subtract; comprehension; knowledge of concepts about print, story grammar, and text features; small motor control; and eye-hand coordination. Document the children's accomplishments through anecdotal notes, checklists, photographs with narratives, or rubrics. Then place the documentation in each child's portfolio.

Summary

This article illustrated how to design developmentally appropriate preschool experiences that address *Louisiana's Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards*.

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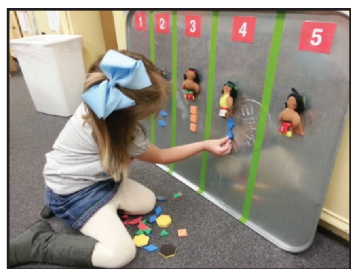


Drip Pan Math

By Christi Gonzales

Math is such an integral part of preschool. Look for items that can be utilized with very little money and using manipulatives that you already have in your classroom. I gathered 2 oil drip pans.....yes a trip to the neighborhood auto parts store will save you MAJOR bucks. For under \$10.00, you can utilize the pans, which are magnetic, and explore your student's math skills employing a hands-on approach.

Here is one of my students using the "oil drip pan" as a sorting tray, whereby, students can sort shapes. I used regular green painters tape to section off the areas.



I turned another tray into a 5 Frame. When observing at another school, we noticed that in kindergarten they were utilizing the 5 and 10 frames and I said 'Why not start in PreK?' This would be a great way to do number identification, number sequencing, object to number ratio, and so much more. Below, one of my students identified her numbers, matched the Native American manipulatives to the correct number, matched the number to object ratio using shapes and identified each shape except for the hexagon; she identified it as an octagon.

This student utilized her fine motor skills with these number clips. She had to pinch them open and tell me the number before she could match it to the 10 frame board. She then counted from 1 to 10 and then backwards from 10-1.

During another lab time, one of my students, decided to add alphabet letters to the 10 frame. He mentioned that he placed letter "D" first because that's what his name starts with and he only has one of them in his name. He went on to correctly



identify the numbers then match the correct amount of letters to each box in the 10 frame. When he was done, we worked together to name the letters in each square. This is a great way to do alphabet assessment.

Remember that math skills can be completed with little or no money and with the items that you have in your classroom. Utilize what you have, get your students involved, and most of all HAVE FUN!

Christi teaches at the Chitimacha Tribal Preschool in Charenton, Louisiana

Meeting Early Learning *continued*

When teachers implement activities such as these, young children are able to use multiple ways of learning to make sense of ideas and express what they know. Further, teachers can assess and document the children's performance through anecdotal notes, checklists, and photographs with narratives. It is crucial that preschool teachers continue to nurture and teach the whole child, facilitating development in all developmental domains, all while facing stronger accountability measures than have ever been in place before.

Donna Barbe has taught Pre-Kindergarten for 13 years and Kindergarten for 1 year. She has an MAT in Grades Pre-K-3 and is currently pursuing an M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education. She is married to a wonderful husband, Jeff, and has four amazing daughters, Tyler age 19, Alex age 17, Victoria age 16,

and Grayson age 13 who keep her super busy.

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Preparing Early Childhood Pre-service Teachers to Teach Social Studies: The Common Core Movement

A PEER REVIEWED ARTICLE

By Dr. Susan Davis and Dr. Dianne Lawler

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to examine trends in preparing pre-service teachers, Pre-K through fourth grade, to teach Social Studies. As of publication, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) have only identified strands in English Language Arts and Mathematics; however, each state has curriculum frameworks for Social Studies and the national trend is to move in the direction of Common Core State Standards. As Fry (2009, p. 40) concluded, "The unacceptable alternative is reactive: Wait to see the long term ramifications (CCSS) of having a generation of teachers with no experience teaching social studies and then respond."

What Research Says About Early Childhood Teacher Education and Social Studies

So, how do we prepare pre-service teachers to teach Social Studies content in the classroom? Darling-Hammond's (2006) research suggested that effective teacher education programs enable pre-service teachers to practice in or during field placement experiences. Pre-service teachers are in settings that deliberately provide opportunities for them to construct integrated studies of content. Pre-service teachers can make connections between their studies of content, teaching, and theory and practice. They engage in coursework while also practicing pedagogical skills in classroom settings. These opportunities afford them practice, feedback from practitioners and university supervisors, as well as time to reflect upon their teaching. Pre-service teachers learn how to implement teaching the content while learning the content knowledge. Integrated field experiences offered in conjunction with methods courses provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to practice, learn, reflect, plan, and integrate the curriculum. Pre-service teachers have opportunities on the college campus to discuss their ideas for teaching, then a place in their field placements to implement them with real children in real classrooms. These structured settings provide the opportunity for the pre-service teachers to implement content knowledge and pedagogy prior to Internships. This is what intentional, integrated, powerful teacher education can provide to pre-service teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Ohn (2013) examined pre-service elementary teachers' views about history. He purported that: Because historical thinking does not always lead to an enhanced understanding of how to teach history, to help pre-service teacher apply those components of historical inquiry to their future classrooms, teacher educators should be able to model this approach to learning about the past, not simply

to reproduce the myth that both the teaching and learning about history rely on rote memorization of events and people (p. 15).

Ohn's results indicated that the pre-service teachers' perceptions about history changed following participation in a historical inquiry project. Their pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge were increased, as well as their confidence level in teaching social studies concepts to children in the elementary classrooms (Ohn, 2013). Ohn pointed out that previous research (Brophy, 2001; Levstik and Barton, 2001; Stodolsky, 1988) has emphasized historical inquiry as an effective method to make history appropriate for younger students; however, Ohn's work not only emphasized the historical content, but pedagogical content, as well as the contextual content learning for children.

Fry (2009) examined how pre-service teachers learned to teach Social Studies in the No Child Left Behind era. She discovered that after teaching an interdisciplinary unit, the children were joyful, appeared to be more motivated to learn, and the Intern (pre-service teacher) was very satisfied with her teaching following the instruction of this interdisciplinary unit. Each of the Interns interviewed in this study reported that the students in their classrooms "learned better" during this type of instruction. The Interns concluded, unfortunately, that "without opportunities to teach the subject, knowledge about meaningful Social Studies instruction seems particularly susceptible to 'wash out' for elementary teachers prepared during the NCLB era" (p. 33). Fry (2009, p. 39) concluded, "We need to provide more proactive opportunities like the interdisciplinary instruction."

Campbell and Henning (2010) conducted a study to examine the pedagogical impact of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary instruction by comparing performance of pre-service teachers in traditional versus integrated coursework when designing, implementing, and assessing interdisciplinary curriculum in their kindergarten through grade eight field placements. Twenty-six students participated in traditional instruction, separate social studies and assessment methods courses. The remaining 33 participated in the combined Social Studies and assessment methods course. The pre-service teachers in this study utilized integrated instruction during their field placements. Campbell and Henning (2010) found no significant difference in the achievement of the classroom students; however, "From an instructional point of view, it was encouraging to find that pre-service teachers whose Social Studies and assessment methods courses were integrated created significantly better interdisciplinary

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The Common Core Movement *continued*

units and assessments than pre-service teachers without such instruction” (p. 183). Findings also supported the model of the integrated Social Studies and assessment coursework for pre-service teachers in developing, assessing, and reflecting on interdisciplinary content. “Based on the study’s findings, interdisciplinary teaching appeared to improve our pre-service teachers’ abilities to develop and reflect on curriculum, instruction, and assessment” (Campbell & Henning, 2010, p. 184).

In Kinniburg and Byrd’s (2008) research, an integrated lesson was developed that included Social Studies, Math, and Reading. After teaching the lesson, “The teacher affirmed our belief that activities such as this make the content areas meaningful to students and show them that all subject areas have connections to their real lives” (p. 36). In other words, pre-service teachers learning to integrate the curriculum can make learning meaningful and relevant while also emphasizing content standards. Kinniburg and Byrd (2008) further concluded that classroom teachers should develop creative ways to include social studies in the curriculum. They should integrate Social Studies with Reading and Mathematics through the use of children’s literature.

Preparing Pre-service Teachers to Teach Social Studies Content

For Social Studies teacher educators interested in facilitating the goals of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), this means increased attention should be placed on building the social understanding and civic efficacy of students through modeling the promotion of a view of social studies as meaningful, integrative, value-based, challenging, and active (National Council for the Social Studies, 2008).

Curriculum Standards for the Social Studies for Early Grades can be explained as follows:

- Culture- The behaviors, beliefs, values, traditions, institutions, and ways of living together of a group of people;
- Time, Continuity, and Change- The study of the past, present, future, similarity, difference, and change;
- People, Places, and Environments- The study of location, place, and the interactions of people with their surroundings;
- Individual Development and Identity- This helps us know who we are and how we change;
- Individual Groups and Institutions- This helps us know that people belong to groups and institutions that influence them and by which they are influenced;
- Global Connections- - Cultural exchange, trade, political, economic, or travel;
- Civic Ideals and Practices- This helps us know how we can have influence on how people live and act together (Farris, 2012).

When working toward a curriculum in Social

Studies for young children, a teacher must first begin by teaching young children to become good citizens (Farris, 2012). Even our youngest children can learn: 1) to care for themselves; 2) others; 3) the classroom materials; 4) playground; and 5) to be respectful of one another. These are the premises upon which citizenship is based.

Children learn early about words such as “fairness”, “friendship”, “what is right”, and “kindness”. While these may sound simplistic, they are the roots of our teachings regarding civility in the classroom. The foundation of teaching Social Studies for young children is the eight circles of awareness (Farris, 2012), beginning with: 1) Self; 2) Family; 3) Neighborhood; 4) Community; 5) State; 6) Nation; 7) World; and 8) Universe.

When planning for young children, we must remember that they learn what is real, meaningful, and relevant to them. They can relate to their immediate, egocentric, world- the world of themselves. They can then branch out to study and learn about their families and neighborhoods. It is only at this point that they can relate to their state, the nation, the world, and the universe. These concepts and terms are so broad, so general, and so abstract for children that they must be examined and studied in a context that helps keep children (self) in the center.

Preparing Young Children for a Civil Society

Early childhood educator and author Dan Gartrell (2012) wrote about helping children develop civility, mutual respect, and positive communication among peers through classroom guidance. He encouraged teachers to assist children in finding acceptance as a part of the classroom “group.” While most might consider these “social” skills, Gartrell (2012) considered these aspects of teaching not only ethical, moral, and responsible on the part of the teacher, but also important “content” in terms of teaching Social Studies curriculum. He further advocated that children learn about society, democratic life skills, and “accepting unique human qualities in others” (diversity) (Gartrell, 2012, p. 5) through classroom interactions carefully planned by the teacher.

Because young children, even primary grade children, are still egocentric, it is sometimes difficult to help them think of others, teach them to be empathetic, and to help them think about things from a variety of perspectives. Gallinsky (2010), in *Mind in the Making*, used the term “Perspective Taking.” She explained that children must learn to understand how others think and feel. Perspective taking goes beyond empathy, in that, the child or adult must try to realize how others feel even though he/she has not lived through the same experiences as the other person. Gallinsky (2010) further purported that perspective taking requires executive functions of the brain. It means that one must view a situation from another’s perspective, view a situation in a different

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way, and think about someone else's ideas or words as well as their own. While this may be difficult for adults, it is very, very difficult for young children who are very egocentric in their development.

When considering Social Studies, both Gartrell (2012) and Gallinsky (2009) make excellent suggestions in terms of helping pre-service teachers grasp important concepts for teaching young children:

- 1) Pre-service teachers must address the classroom as a learning environment (Gartrell).
- 2) Pre-service teachers can use classroom meetings and guidance techniques to teach young children about living in a civil society (Gartrell).
- 3) Pre-service teachers can help children develop perspective taking techniques in the classroom through the use of children's literature, discussion, interactions with peers, and classroom problem-solving activities (Gallinsky).

Integrating the Curriculum: Social Studies and Language Arts Using CCSS

Social Studies, for young children, is a content area that lends itself to "integration" with other subject areas. Themes emerge, and content teaching can be integrated through Common Core State Standards, Curriculum Frameworks, and Objectives. Thematic teaching or integrated instruction is an excellent way to address Social Studies content knowledge for young children. Pratt, Laney, and Couper (2002) found that teachers of Social Studies could pair aging adults with elementary children and teach life-span education. They were able to develop a guide for "intergenerational learning" using Social Studies as a theme. They infused each of the ten themes of Social Studies (Farris, 2010) in order to address change, economics, history, etc. They also assisted young children in alleviating stereotypes regarding older adults and developing respect for their contributions to society and the classroom.

Ohn (2013) examined pre-service teachers' perceptions about history, teaching history, and their pedagogical knowledge about teaching history. This researcher found that pre-service teachers did change their views regarding History. Once the pre-service teachers had real-life experience in presenting the content of history to young students, they perceived it differently, themselves. They were more likely to want to teach the subject and to express a positive attitude toward the subject "content" of History. As taken from Gallinsky (2009), Ohn (2013) also examined perspective taking. He found that pre-service teachers who were involved in historical investigation seemed to agree that historians must analyze and consider authors' motives as well as the perspectives taken when writing what happened in the past. Historical empathy was addressed, in that, students revealed that it helped them better understand historical events by putting

themselves into the historical setting instead of making judgments about the past from present-day viewpoints; thus "perspective taking." One excellent way to address perspective taking is through children's literature. "Curriculum integration through the use of children's literature is one instructional strategy that teachers can use to cover content that might otherwise never be taught" (Kinniburgh & Byrd, 2008, p. 36).

"By incorporating stories of real and fictitious children in Social Studies lessons, students will comprehend the suggested concepts in a meaningful context—that of other children's experiences" (Wasta, 2010, p. 190). When planning lessons or integrating the curriculum, pre-service teachers can use literature selections to plan Social Studies lessons to emphasize important concepts, make learning meaningful to students, and help students relate content to their own lives and experiences. Wasta (2010) further purported that "Through these books, young children can identify with individuals in the stories and recognize that culture, physical environment, family and even social economic status play in one's identification with place" (p. 183). Children can identify with individuals in these books recognizing the Social Studies concepts, as well as other subject areas. They learn meaningful concepts through the context of the books through learning about other children's experiences. Books, like *Freedom Summer* by Deborah Wiles; *Grampa's Face* by Eloise Greenfield; *Miz Berlin Walks* by Jane Yolen; and *A Chair for My Mother* by Vera B. Williams; help children not only relate to present or past, economic issues, social justice, but perspective taking, as well. However, pre-service and in-service teachers must be able to:

- 1) Link the major story concepts/themes to the Common Core State Standards or Curriculum Frameworks (Social Studies) content;
- 2) Emphasize the content while reading the story;
- 3) Plan carefully, before reading the story aloud to the class;
- 4) Ask higher order questions prior to, during, and following the story to address the important content and issues relevant within the story theme;
- 5) Follow-up the selected literature with relevant activities that reinforce the learning and provide students with opportunities to develop deeper learning regarding the content (learning goals/objectives); and
- 6) Plan assessments to measure student learning and to ascertain if goals were met and reflect upon practice.

One additional example of using children's literature to teach social studies concepts is provided in Appendix A. "Using Biographies of Famous Americans" is a lesson taught during a Materials and Methods of Language Arts/Social Studies class by one of the authors. The

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lesson plan was developed using cooperative learning and its purpose was to integrate the curriculum, using Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks, as well as biographies (See Appendix A). Group response guides were created for the cooperative learning activity (See Appendix B), so that each “Expert Group” could learn in-depth information about one of the Famous Americans and bring back the relevant information to the “Home group.” Following the “Expert Group” activity, the “Home groups” each discussed all six of the Famous Americans (one representative within each Home Group participated in an Expert Group) and were asked to determine which two they would most like to compare and contrast. The final product was an analysis, using a Venn diagram of the chosen famous Americans so that the students could analyze how they were alike and different, identifying their accomplishments, contributions, similarities, and differences (See Appendix C). This lesson was taught in the college methods class (by the University Professor), as a classroom teacher would teach the lesson with 3rd grade students in a real classroom. The author concluded the following after having planned and taught the lesson:

- 1) Planning and teaching lessons for pre-service teachers is an effective way to analyze and discuss planning and teaching of social studies.
- 2) Pre-service teachers appear to enjoy actively participating in the lessons as students would in the classroom (as opposed to sitting inactively listening to lectures).
- 3) Pre-service teachers are better prepared to develop their own lesson plans and teaching episodes when they have been exposed to lesson plans and “model teaching” in the university setting.
- 4) Reflecting upon, discussing, and analyzing teaching in a group setting assists everyone in improving their planning and teaching skills. That includes the university professor!

These authors truly believe that they are better teachers each time they prepare, teach, and reflect upon the lessons they teach for pre-service teachers. It is a “process” just as we teach our pre-service teachers that it is: Planning, gathering materials, teaching, reflecting, working to improve, and then beginning again!

Conclusion

In this era of Common Core State Standards, pre-service teachers must be prepared to teach “content” to young children in a meaningful, efficient way and to provide depth of learning when addressing the standards. While this may be similar to the NCLB era, one major difference is that teachers are required to bring in greater thinking skills for children, address depth of learning, and create activities with higher order thinking and problem solving. Writing skills are developed earlier in the

primary grades and children are expected to create cohesive sentences, paragraphs, and then essays (third and fourth grades). Although Social Studies Common Core State Standards have not yet been developed, they are soon to be in the mix with Language Arts and Mathematics. Teaching the integration of subjects, particularly using Social Studies, provides both pre-service and in-service teachers opportunities to develop meaningful learning, depth of content for children under the umbrella of a theme, and to create learning activities that involve the learners in an engaging manner so that they are motivated and inspired to learn. For teacher educators who teach Social Studies, this means increased attention should be placed on building social understanding and civic efficacy of students. It means modeling a “perspective” of social studies as meaningful, integrative, value-based, challenging, and active (Ritter, 2012). When teacher educators model teaching for pre-service teachers, they help pre-service teachers experience the complexity of teaching as well as provide them with opportunities to experience teaching and learning aligned with NCSS standards (Ritter, 2012). University professors, in turn, become better teachers, as they “model” best practices for future teachers!

Dr. Susan Davis is an assistant professor in the School of Education and Child Development at Drury University. She teaches Elementary Education Reading Methods, Advanced Educational Psychology and Assessment. She earned both undergraduate and graduate degrees from Arkansas State University and a Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in English as a Second Language from the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville.

Dr. Dianne Lawler is a professor of Early Childhood Education in the School of Teacher Education and Leadership at Arkansas State University. She teaches Language Arts/Social Studies Methods, Classroom Management, and Graduate Early Childhood Research courses. She earned both undergraduate and graduate degrees from Arkansas State University, and a Doctor of Education in Early Childhood Education at Peabody College of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. Dianne has served as President of the Arkansas Early Childhood Association and the Southern Early Childhood Association.

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Children's Literature Selections

A Chair for my Mother. (1982). Vera B. Williams. Greenwillow Books, New York, NY.

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Grampa's Face. (1988). Eloise Greenfield. Putnam and Grossel, New York, NY. ISBN 059013504X.

Miz Berlin Walks. (2000). Jane Yolen. Penguin, New York, NY. ISBN 0-698-11845-6.

Appendix A

Lesson Plan

Teacher candidate: Dr. Dianne Lawler

Grade: 3

Subject(s): Social Studies

Topic(s): Famous Americans

Circle the Bloom's Domains that apply:

Cognitive **Affective** **Psychomotor**

Common Core State Standards or **AR Frameworks**:

AR Social Studies Curriculum Frameworks

H.6.3.6 Recognize individuals who contributed to the common good of society.

AR CCSS for Language Arts

SL.3.1.

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on

grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

W.3.1.

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

W.3.1(a)

Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons.

Length of lesson (specify beginning and ending time)
date to be taught: 50 min.

The learners will:

- 1) Analyze famous Americans, their contributions to society, and draw conclusions regarding their commonalities and differences.
- 2) Write opinion pieces supporting their rationale for why they chose two famous Americans as most noteworthy.
- 3) (within their home groups) Construct a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting two selected Famous Americans.
- 4) Work collaboratively and cooperatively within their groups, completing the assigned writing project, discussing the Famous Americans.

Student Groupings:

Students (24 students in the class) will be assigned, based on achievement, to Home Groups for this Jigsaw Cooperative Learning activity lesson. There will be 6 students in each Home Group, with at least 2 High Achievers, 2 middle achievers, and 2 low achievers, assigned per group. There will also be a mixture of race, ethnicity, males/females, special needs, and English Language Learners within each group. Students' personalities will also be taken into consideration when assigning the Home Groups.

Teaching the Lesson:

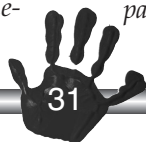
1. Introduction:

Students will be introduced to a Biography by the introduction of a biography about George Washington. Students will learn that Biographies are stories written about a person. They will also see that we are going to be learning about Famous Americans today. The teacher will state the objectives and ask students why we might be learning about Famous Americans. The teacher will ask: What Famous Americans do you know? What makes someone famous? When student name someone, I will ask, "What did the person do that made him/her famous?"

2. Lesson Content:

The teacher will provide students with the opportunity to move into their groups. Home groups are purposely divided according to achievement levels (See Student Groupings). The Home groups will be seated together and the guidelines for participation will be shared: 1) Listen to each other

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respectfully. 2) Take turns speaking. 3) Write down ideas/information. 4) Share information and take notes for future use! 5) Each person must be responsible for his/her information from the Expert group! 6) Each person will have an opportunity to share information back with the Home group. 7) The Home group will be responsible for developing a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting two of the famous Americans. The group must determine, by consensus, which two Americans will be used in the Venn diagram. 8) Each student will then be responsible for a well-written paragraph, comparing and contrasting the two famous Americans who were on the Venn diagram, at the end of the lesson.

Home groups will draw from a hat to see which "expert" group they will participate in during the Jigsaw activity. Once they know which group to go to, they will move to that marked area of the room and sit in a designated area. There will be a taped chair (underneath) and the teacher will share that the person sitting in the taped chair will read the Biography to the rest of the Expert group. Others will listen and take notes. After the reading of the Biographies, the group will discuss and review the important information to take back to the Home groups. Students will have approximately 20 minutes for this activity. The teacher will monitor this activity very closely.

Once Expert groups have completed their discussions and note taking, the Experts will return to their Home groups. The teacher will signal when it is time for all group members to return to the Home groups. Once all Home groups are in place, group members will take turns sharing their "expert information" with Home group members. Group members will learn about all of the Famous Americans.

The next phase of the activity is for each group to select 2 of the Famous Americans to discuss and complete the Venn diagram for comparing and contrasting. The Home group must decide which two Famous Americans to choose from the group of 6 Famous Americans. The Home group will determine how the choices will be made, but each Home group will rule the choice.

Once the Venn diagram is completed, each student is responsible for writing a paragraph including the following information:

- 1) How did these two Famous Americans contribute to our country?
- 2) How are they alike?
- 3) How are they different?
- 4) How have they influenced our lives today?

Students will write the paragraph, review it, and then revise it. Again, the teacher will monitor carefully.

When students have finished their work, they may read a book, or work on assignments not finished.

3. Closure:

Once all groups have finished, the paragraphs will be shared with the class. Groups will share which two Famous Americans were chosen and why.

Appendix B

Expert Group Discussion Guides

Benjamin Franklin

- Who was Benjamin Franklin?
- What did he do when he was young?
- What was his most famous experiment?
- What did Benjamin Franklin invent?
- What did he help create in Philadelphia?
- What did Benjamin Franklin help write?
- After the Revolutionary war, what did Benjamin Franklin help to write?
- What is he recognized for as a Famous American?

Paul Revere

- Who was Paul Revere?
- What was his work?
- For what did he become famous?
- What did Revere join? What was it?
- What did he do when he found out the general was sending redcoats after the patriots?
- What did Paul Revere do after the war?
- What is he recognized for as a Famous American?

Thomas Alva Edison

- Who was Thomas Alva Edison?
- What was Thomas's egg experiment?
- What did he study?
- How did he save someone's life? What did the father do to repay him?
- What was his very first original invention?
- How many different things did he invent?
- What was his nickname?
- What else did he invent?

George Washington Carver

- Who was George Washington Carver?
- Where did George Washington Carver go to school?
- What did he study?
- What did he learn to do after he left school?
- How many different products did he make from peanuts?
- What were three of them?
- His picture is on what?
- He died in 1943 and his birthplace is a national monument. He was buried where?

Laura Ingalls Wilder

- Who was Laura Ingalls Wilder?
- Where did she live?
- Why did their family move a lot? Where did they travel?
- What type of work did Laura Ingalls Wilder do?
- What did her daughter Rose ask her to do? What did she write? Was it successful?
- How many more books did she write?
- What was made from one of her books?
- How are our lives influenced by her today?

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Jackie Robinson

Who was Jackie Robinson?

What was Jackie Robinson the “First” on? When?

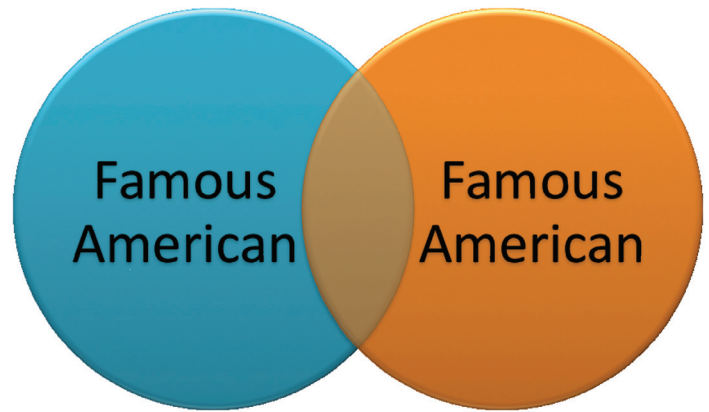
What award did he win his first year in baseball?

What were some bad things that happened while he was playing baseball?

What was the great thing that he did?

How did he make a difference in our lives?

Appendix C
Writing Assignment



Common Core and Early Childhood Education

A Personal Opinion

**Janie H. Humphries, EdD*

I recently read an opinion article by an out-of-state preschool teacher who expressed some of the same concerns I have about Common Core Standards and how they will effect early childhood education. The committee that first developed the Common Core Standards had no trained early childhood experts on it. Ms. Levine questioned if push-down policies, career and college readiness, or achieving benchmark would begin to change preschool programs, even quality ones. Will we begin to see the need for children to sit at tables writing sentences, taking one time only tests, or progress tests because the curriculum has been written by those not in the early childhood field and is not based on early childhood development research? Will we soon see inappropriate Pre-K programming because the kindergarten expectations are set so high — which is alarming in itself?

What should or can early childhood professionals do? Through the hard work of many, we now see the possibility of early childhood being funded better than it has been funded since back in the late 1960s or early 1970s. Federal and state agencies seeing more money than many agencies have seen on the horizon in ages may cause federal and state officials to make decisions in the future not based on children’s best interests. Federal and state agencies may soon be seeking advice, help, and grant proposal responses in relation to the money they receive.

Early childhood education could become Big Business. Business enterprises are investing in education to have a bigger say about the process than they currently have. For example some businesses want to make sure job training is a part of early education. They think they know what is the best method and process for educating young children. While they may provide some great ideas, let’s make sure the education process and methods chosen are what are best for young children.

How do we do that? I encourage those who have studied and worked in the field of early care and

education to speak up. Make arrangements to talk to legislators, secretaries of state agencies, state and parish superintendents, local principals, local business leaders, parents, to service clubs, etc. What do we say?

Children need consistency in the day. They need consistent routines to provide them with security. Children need time for open-ended play, (yes, play) and activities of interest to them that will expand and enrich their creative minds and help them become problem solvers. They need assessments that are ongoing and based on continuing observations, not a one day event. The assessments must be done by high quality; early childhoods trained teachers who have built and are building relationships with the children in their classrooms.

Children need time to grow, develop and work in language rich classrooms full of age appropriate materials; classrooms where language abounds and is plentiful. Children need classrooms where they can move about and experience social interactions, where they can learn to make appropriate decisions about social interactions. Teachers need time to help children develop to become competent individuals not time to teach children to be ready for the next grade. When toddlers are helped to become competent two year olds, they will be ready for three-year-old preschool. When four year olds are helped to become competent four year olds, they will be ready for kindergarten. If Louisiana is going to adopt the Common Core Standards, let’s work to ensure that the methods and curriculum used are based on solid early childhood research and are appropriate for young children.

**Dr. Humphries is retired Early Childhood Coordinator and a Professor Emerita of Louisiana Tech University. She is past president of the Louisiana Early Childhood Association and the Southern Early Childhood Association. She has taught early childhood in three southern states and served on numerous state, regional and national early childhood committees.*

Pete the Cat Visits Pre-K, Kindergarten, and 1st Grade Math and Literacy Standards Building on One Another through the Early Childhood Grade Levels

Dr. Debra Jo Hailey, Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education
Dr. Stacy Garcia, Instructor, Early Childhood Education

"If we teach today's students as we taught yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow" - John Dewey

Introduction

Integrating literacy and math is recognized as an effective early childhood curricular strategy (Burns, 2004; Schatzer, 2008). High quality story books can be used as a springboard to teach a variety of other curriculum areas. This strategy not only "supports, extends, and solidifies" learning (Carter, 2009), but also helps to tie together concepts and content so that learning is more memorable. As an added bonus, integrating two or more curriculum areas also acts as a time-saver that allows instructional time to be used more effectively.

The purpose of this article is to give the teachers in young children's lives ideas, activities, and questioning strategies for capitalizing on children's interests as each child develops positive dispositions toward math and literacy. In addition to being aligned with the Louisiana Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) and Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the ideas bridge research and practice for active engagement and enriching learning opportunities. To show how these standards build on one another conceptually, we have taken the same basic lessons and shown how the lessons would evolve as children grow, become more sophisticated learners who are ready for increasingly complex skills, and travel up the grade levels. We have chosen to use the popular book *Pete the Cat, I Love My White Shoes* as a springboard for the activity suggestions.

Getting Started

As children walk into the classroom to begin their day, they are handed an index card and instructed to draw and accurately color a picture of one of the shoes that they are currently wearing. This sparks their curiosity and they wonder what the purpose of this exercise might be. It is always a good idea to begin a lesson in such a way that the topic is subtly introduced and the children anticipate that something exciting is about to happen (Ostroff, 2012).

The children might be able to guess that their lesson is going to have something to do with shoes, and indeed, they would be correct. Story time ensues wherein the children meet a rocking and rolling Pete the Cat and his positive attitude. The teacher introduces the book, *Pete the Cat, I Love My White Shoes* and plays the internet version of the book being read aloud on an interactive electronic board such as Promethean Board ®. The children are

encouraged to sing along with the catchy song, "I love my white shoes..." as Pete continues on his journey, despite his shoes' colorful encounters. The teacher guides the children through the progression of the story by conducting a whole group book talk which allows the sharing of the book's main concepts and encourages discussions about the literature (Vacca et al., 2012). The information gained from the book talk is recorded on a classroom organization chart.

A lively discussion about Pete's shoes easily leads to a discussion about the children's shoes. The children are gathered into a circle to explore their shoes. Everyone is instructed to take off one shoe and put it in the center of the circle. Thought-provoking questions follow that encourage children to engage with literature and use math skills such as number sense, comparison of groups, and data analysis. Each of these skills can be taught at different grade levels building from simple to more complex and from concrete to more symbolic (Sousa, 2011).

Building on the Standards

Pre-Kindergarten: Literature Connection

Early Learning and Development Standard: LL4.4.9

Procedures: The teacher reads the text aloud

stopping before turning the pages to predict the color Pete's shoes will become after stepping in the strawberries, blueberries, and mud. The teacher prompts the children to look at the pictures, colors, and text on each page before predicting their answers. Children are also prompted to justify their answers by referring to the text and showing how they determined their answers. In addition, the teacher will have the children refer to the shoe that they colored on their index cards. The teacher will have each child glue his/her colored shoe on chart paper, beside "*(Student's name)'s shoe is (color)*", which will be written through teacher/student dictation.

Questions: *What color do you think Pete's shoes will be after he steps in strawberries, blueberries, or mud? How do you know? What parts in the story lead you to believe that Pete's shoes will turn red, blue, and brown? Can you show me? What color do you think Pete's shoes would be if he stepped in bananas? Can you give me an example of something Pete would step in that would make his shoes turn purple?* The teacher encourages the children to make predictions based on

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Pete the Cat *continued*

various colored items suggested by the teacher.

Pre-Kindergarten: Math

Early Learning and Development Standards:

CM1:4.3; CM1:4.4; CM1:4.5; CM1:4.7; CM2:4.2; CM1:4.7

Procedures: The teacher models counting out 5 shoes and labels the set with the numeral 5. A child is asked to try to do the same. Once the child is convinced that he has created a set of 5, the group counts the shoes and determines that the last number stated in sequence identifies it as a set of 5. Now there are two sets of 5 shoes. The teacher shows the children three different numerals and asks them to choose the numeral that best identifies the set. The teacher encourages children to compare sets through one-to-one correspondence, counting, or lining up and comparing length of lines. Next, children are encouraged to find shoes that have similarities, verbally identify the similar feature, and find other shoes that fit the same description, thus creating groups of like shoes and a basis for comparison. After assisting children in sorting, re-sorting, and classifying shoes by similar attributes, encourage them to make a concrete bar graph using their real shoes. Use a camera to take a picture of the graph so that the children can refer to it again later.

Questions: *Are these two sets the same? How do you know? I'm just not sure. Can you convince me that both sets are the same?* Encourage children to match shoes in one-to-one correspondence either by pairing them or creating a visual line connecting each with string, chopsticks, or chalk lines.

We made two sets of 5. Are there enough shoes left in the center to make another set of 5? How can we find out? Is the set of shoes left in the center of the circle more than 5 or less than 5? Let's find some ways to compare the sets.

Graphing Questions: *When Pete the Cat stepped in mud, what color did his shoes turn? Do you see any brown shoes here? Let's put those together. Now we have the brown shoe set and the not brown shoe set. Which set has more? Can you tell without counting? How did you know? How can we find out if we are right?*

Let's make a graph. Make a line of brown shoes. Ask the children to help line up the not brown shoes, beginning at the same base point. Make comparisons of the two sets. *Which group has more? Which group has less?* At this developmental stage it is recommended to maintain only two sets at a time for comparison. By keeping the number of categories represented in the graph to a minimum, the focus is on representing data so that it is organized and easy to read. Make and actively engage children in creating word and picture labels for the sets represented in the real graph.

We've sorted by color. What is another way that we could sort our shoes? (Velcro® closure/not Velcro® closure,

tennis shoe/not tennis shoe, shoes with picture/shoes without pictures, etc.). Use the design of the class rug, hoola hoops, or string to clearly distinguish each of the sorted sets and, after some class discussion to determine what the children think that set should be named, give the set a written word label.

Kindergarten: Literacy Connection

Common Core State Standards: CCSS-ELA.Literacy.L.K.1f; CCSS-ELA-Literacy.L.K.2a; CCSS-ELA-Literacy.L.K.2d; CCSS-ELA-Literacy.L.K.5c; CCSS-ELA-Literacy.W.K.3

Procedures: After a shared reading of the text, the teacher guides the children through a discussion of what colors their shoes might change if they stepped in various items. Through modeling, the teacher writes the sentence, *If I stepped in (blank), my shoes would be (color)*. In small groups, the teacher guides each child using interactive writing to complete the sentence by filling in the blanks on his/her own piece of paper. During this process, the teacher provides support and guidance. The children complete their sentences accompanied by an illustration. The teacher compiles the children's pages into a class book.

Questions: *In the story, Pete steps in strawberries and his shoes change to red. What color do you think his shoes might be if he stepped in blackberries? Can you tell me how you got that answer? Let's see, if I stepped in oranges, my shoes would be... What color? Why did you pick orange? Can you give me an example of something that might change the color of your shoes?* The teacher guides the children's writing to complete the sentences.

Kindergarten: Math

Common Core State Standards: K.CC.A.3; K.CC.B.4a; K.CC.B.4b; K.CC.B.5; K.CC.C.6; K.CC.C.7; K.NBT.A.1; K.CC.C.6; K.MD.B.3

Procedures: Using similar procedures as described in pre-kindergarten, the children are encouraged to count and compare numbers and amounts. The skills involved become more complex as children interact with larger amounts up to 20. As sets are labeled, kindergarteners are encouraged to write the numerals and simple words independently. In moving from concrete to more abstract, the children in this grade could extend their real shoe graph by representing their shoe data on a picture graph. Using the shoe pictures that each child drew as they entered class, the teacher guides children in creating a bar graph complete with title, category labels, and numerals. A picture graph focuses attention on comparing amounts between and among sets of real objects, therefore makes an excellent reference chart to display in the classroom. Van deWalle et al. states that "These comparison concepts add considerably to children's understanding of number," (2014).

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Pete the Cat *continued*

Questions: *We have 19 children at school today and each person took off one shoe and put it in the center. How many shoes do you think there are? How can we find out? After children have counted and determined that the last number stated tells the amount in the set, rearrange the shoes and ask the children if the amount has changed or stayed the same.*

If we line them up neatly they will be easier to see and count. Wow! It would be hard to arrange them all in one line because it goes beyond our circle. Let's try another way. Let's put them in groups of ten. How many groups of ten did we make? So we have one set of ten and how many more?

Demonstrate writing the numeral 19, explaining that the one tells us there is one set of 10 while the 9 tells us that there are 9 ones.

Encourage children to re-sort the shoes by different attributes and compare amounts. *Which group has more? Which group has less? What if we put two of these sets together? Does the amount change?* Encourage use of numerals to label sets.

In addition to comparing amounts of real sets of objects, compare amounts as represented by only numerals. *Which tells more 3 or 2? If we have 3 here and 2 here, how many is that altogether? Can you draw a picture that shows what happens when these two sets are put together?*

Graphing Questions: *We made a graph that shows the different colored shoes being worn in our class today. Which set has more? Which set has less? What would you have to take away from the brown set to make it equal to the red set?*

Pete stepped in blueberries and turned his shoes blue. We do not have any blue shoes in our class today. How can we show that on our graph?

If Pete the Cat walked into our classroom after he'd stepped in strawberries, what color would his shoes be? How many red shoes would we add to our graph to show Pete's red shoes? We had 2 red shoes on our graph. Pete the Cat came to our classroom and added his 4 red shoes to our graph. How many red shoes are on the graph now? Ask children to create an addition equation and a picture to show what happened when Pete came in wearing his red shoes.

First Grade: Literacy Connection

Common Core State Standards: RL.1.1; RL.1.2; RL.1.3; RL.1.7; W.1.3

Procedures: After a shared reading of the story, the teacher engages the children in a group discussion about the book. The teacher guides the children in identifying the characters, setting, and the main events of the story. The children refer to the text to determine elements such as the setting and main events. The teacher leads the children into a discussion in which the main events are summarized, including the use of transitional words. With teacher guidance, the children write three to five sentences summarizing the main events of the story.

Questions: *Who or what is the story about? Where and when does the story take place? How do you know? Can you show me in the story where you found that answer? Can anyone tell me some things that happen to Pete during his journey? What happens first...second...third? What words can you use when you write your sentences to put the things that happened to Pete in order?*

1st Grade: Math

Common Core State Standards: 1.OA.A.1; 1.OA.C.5; 1.OA.B.3; 1.OA.C.6; 1.NBT.B.2b; 1.MD.B.3

Procedures: First graders are ready to handle more symbols in their math world. So, when sets are added together, the teacher should encourage use of the "+" sign. Likewise, when some are taken away from a set, the teacher should encourage use of the "-" sign. Other symbols to incorporate into the first grader's repertoire include greater than, less than, and equal signs. Sheets of art foam can be used to create alligator mouths that incorporate these symbols into their design. They are large, colorful, easily manipulated, and give a visual representation of the meaning of the symbols as children think about the alligator being hungry and always headed toward the largest amount.

Using similar procedures as outlined in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, encourage first graders to sort, classify, and re-sort the shoes. Although this age group's attention to detail can lead to proposed graphs with many categories, encourage graphs with 5 or less categories. Similarly, the attention to detail can lead to many questions about overlapping categories. Such discussions could lead to other organizational strategies for comparing data such as Venn Diagrams.

Questions: *The boys put their shoes over here and say that they have 13 shoes in their set. The girls put their shoes over here and say that they have 7 shoes in their set. Which of those numbers are larger? Let's put the alligator mouth headed toward the largest number. Let's read it together, "13 is greater than 7."*

Let's begin with the largest number and count on to see how many we have altogether. Ask children to write an equation and draw a picture that represents the girls and boys shoes added together.

We are kind of like Pete the Cat because we went out to play and when we came back, we realized that some of the shoes are kind of muddy. Let's take out the muddy shoes so that we don't get our rug dirty. Which shoes are too muddy? We started with 20 shoes. We took away 7 muddy shoes. How many clean shoes are left? Model writing down the numbers involved in the problem and ask the children to write an equation that represents what happened.

There is something similar about the two equations we've written today--- $13+7=20$ and $20-7=13$. Use opportune

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Pete the Cat *continued*

moments like this to discuss the relationship between addition and subtraction.

Graphing Questions: *Does anyone have a shoe that is similar to mine? How is it the same? Are there other shoes that belong in this set? What is another category of shoes that we can create? Does everyone agree that all of these shoes belong together because they all have _____? Uh! Oh! We have two shoes that our friend thinks belongs in both groups because they are brown like these and have shoelaces like these. What should we do? Show the children how to use hoola hoops to create a Venn diagram that allows for some items to belong in two categories.*

The children will re-sort shoes and, using the pictures that they drew of their shoes earlier, create a picture graph of the data represented. *Which type of shoe do we have the most of? Least of? How much more is _____ than _____? How much difference is there between _____ and _____? Which two bars together are the same as _____? Explain to the children that the graph is going to be displayed in the hall for others to see. Ask them to help viewers understand the graph by writing some questions for them to think about. Can you think of a question that can be answered by our graph? Can you write that question on a sentence strip to post under our graph?*

Summary

Regardless of where you teach or the grade level or ability levels of children that you are working with, you will always have some type of standards or framework to guide your teaching. The Common Core State Standards are what we are currently working with in our state, as are most states across the nation (available at <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>). Additionally, for children 5 years of age and younger, we are using Louisiana's Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards (Louisiana Department of Education, 2013). If history is any indicator, then it is likely that someday the CCSS and ELDS will be replaced with different frameworks. Why? Because our frameworks will change as our knowledge changes. Teachers and researchers continue to learn about brain development, human learning, and best teaching strategies, therefore our standards evolve to reflect what we've learned. The big idea to remember as early childhood practitioners is to utilize the current standards and other research-based guidelines in a way that uses our knowledge of child development to apply those standards in a developmentally appropriate way.

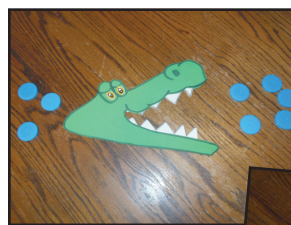
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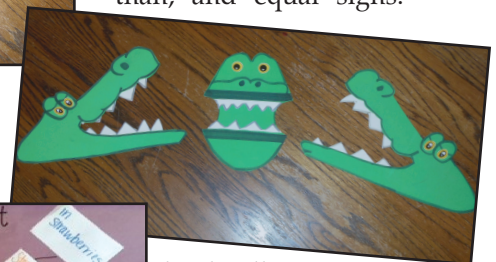
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Sheets of art foam can be used to create alligator mouths that help teach "greater than," "less than," and "equal" signs.



Information gained from the



book talk is recorded on a classroom organization chart.

Science Opens Doors — and Young Minds

Martha L. Garner

Young children are all about making sense of the world. As anyone who spends time with them can testify, they ask over and over, “Why?” “How does it work?” They are fascinated with the new and unfamiliar, and will spend hours exploring a new toy or an unfamiliar natural object, trying to figure out what it is, how it works, and how many purposes it can serve. Young children are natural born scientists.

As teachers of young children, it is our job to provide them with:

- materials to explore,
- opportunities to explore them alone and with friends,
- and guidance in exploring them so that they experience learning and growth.



The Louisiana Department of Education website states that the new Early Learning and Developmental Standards are “a common vision...provid(ing) age-appropriate goals” and that the Standards “should be integrated into all experiences and activities.”

Because young children delight in exploration, science activities are a good “attention grabber.” They also are rich in opportunities for integration.

- Good quality children’s fiction and non-fiction can be found for every science topic (for example, fall: <http://www.notimeforflashcards.com/2013/08/books-for-fall-with-crafts.html>)
- Natural objects like seeds and leaves can be used for patterning (see leaf pattern crowns <http://www.prekpages.com/fall/>), sorting and counting in the math center (seed sorting at <http://www.prekinders.com/science-portfolios/>)
- The block center lends itself to scientific explorations such as ramps (ramp making in preschool at <http://www.teachpreschool.org/2012/08/engineering-with-ramp-making-materials-in-preschool/>)
- Natural objects and science principles can be incorporated into art (leaf people at



<http://www.fantasticfunandlearning.com/leaf-people-fall-craft.html>), Epsom salt crystal paint at <http://www.funathomewithkids.com/2014/01/homemade-paint-recipe-crystallizing.html>). The Internet, and your fellow teachers, are your best resources for ideas.

In the ELDS, Science standard CS 1 incorporates the scientific method, which, as we all recall from middle school days, requires observing, hypothesizing, predicting, then testing the predictions and drawing conclusions. Children will engage in this process pretty naturally. You can work with them the first few times, making sure they don’t leave out a step. We recently did a sink and float activity and I was proud to hear my students predicting what would happen, observing the results, and discussing why the objects floated or sank.



Standard CS 2 covers physical science such as simple chemistry (color mixing, freezing and melting), simple machines (ramps, levers, pulleys), and sources of light and sound. There are many ways to integrate these into art, the block center, and the music center, just to name a few possibilities.

Life Science is covered by Standard CS 3. Pets and plants in the classroom are fascinating to young children, and can be used as the basis for many lessons and activities. Nature study, growing plants, and watching caterpillars change into butterflies provide learning about life cycles.



You will find that science explorations are very motivating and a natural partner to the Approaches to Learning Standards, which involve curiosity, engagement, problem solving and creative thinking.

(<http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/academic-standards/early-childhood---birth-to-five-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=7> p 8, accessed 2/10/2014)

A Review of 5 Things Every Teacher Should be Doing to Meet the Common Core Standards: Implications for Early Childhood Teachers

A PEER REVIEWED ARTICLE

by Dr. Michelle Fazio-Brunson, Northwestern State University,

Dr. Debra Jo Hailey, Southeastern Louisiana University, and

Dr. Mary Beth Van Sickle, Northwestern State University Elementary Laboratory School

Introduction

At the current time, 45 states in the U.S. have adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) (available at <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>). With most of the country now using the standards, there has been an explosion in resources to help teachers make this transition. For example, Lauren Davis, who is the Senior Editor at Eye on Education, published the article *5 Things Every Teacher Should be Doing to Meet the Common Core Standards* to describe changes teachers should make to update their practices.

While many have welcomed the Common Core State Standards, there is a growing body of early childhood stakeholders who have concerns about the impact of the CCSS on young children. Some fear that the curriculum has been compacted beyond repair, while others express concern with the seeming disappearance of play in early childhood programs. Even with warranted concerns, early childhood teachers are making significant changes in their teaching in order to document that their students are meeting the standards. At the current time, the CCSS are being used beginning in Kindergarten. The Louisiana Department of Education recently released the Early Learning and Development Standards for children in birth to five programs. The standards for four-year-old children in this document are aligned with the Math and English Language Arts Kindergarten CCSS. Thus, all preschool teachers must begin the process of modifying their practices so that their students enter kindergarten prepared for the types of thinking skills and communication strategies that will be expected of them. Mindful of this, the following review of Davis' article provides implications for teachers working with preschool children.

Call for Change in Teaching

Davis calls for teachers to reflect on how the standards are changing their teaching practices and how the standards have impacted what it means to be an effective teacher. She then lists five ways that teachers should alter their practices as a result of the CCSS.

Teachers should:

- Lead High-Level, Text-Based Discussions
- Focus on Process, Not Just Content
- Create Assignments for Real Audiences and with Real Purpose
- Teach Argument, Not Persuasion
- Increase Text Complexity

While her suggestions focus on K-12 classrooms,

strategies for making these adaptations in preschool classrooms are discussed in the sections that follow, with the exception of *Teach Argument, Not Persuasion*.

Lead High-Level, Text-Based Discussions

In preschool, many opportunities exist for reading and discussing children's literature. Typical questions teachers ask after reading books include, "Did you like the story? Why or why not?" However, Davis advocates beginning with text-dependent questions. She states, "When you ask students to discuss a text as a whole class or in small groups, make sure that your questions are grounded in the text, and that students refer to the text in their responses" (p. 3). To accomplish this, the preschool teacher might ask a question that requires the children to cite a specific part of the text or refer to a picture in the text to answer the question. For example, after reading *The Little Red Hen Makes a Pizza*, the teacher could say, "You are telling me that the hen's friends were not being good helpers. What did they say or do that makes you think that? Let's look for those words in our story." Once the teacher is certain that the children have a firm understanding of the text read, she should then ask children for their personal reactions to the story.

Davis also urges teachers to engage in explicit instruction regarding how to participate in a conversation (e.g., rules for talking, taking turns, not dominating the conversation, etc.). Following a conversation protocol allows students to become active participants in the learning experience and encourages students to practice asking questions and taking turns talking about an age-appropriate topic. Further, this protocol prepares children to meet the CCSS for speaking and listening in Kindergarten.

Focus on Process, Not Just Content

Historically, early childhood advocates have called for child-centered learning opportunities that allow children to construct their own knowledge and communicate that knowledge to others. Likewise, Davis suggests minimizing activities that require memorization and instead focusing on having children engage in critical and creative thinking to gather information that will allow children to construct their own ideas. This "gathering of information" is evident as an emphasis in the CCSS by repeated calls for learners to engage in the research process, thus becoming "self-directed learners, effectively seeking out and using resources to assist them, including teachers, peers, and print and digital reference

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materials" (*The Common Core State Standards*, Introduction, p. 7). A developmentally appropriate technique for teaching young children to use research skills to explore and learn about topics of interest is stressed by curriculum strategies such as the Project Approach (Helm & Katz, 2010). The emphasis that the Project Approach places on in-depth investigation into a child-centered topic not only encourages intentional play, but it also emphasizes the types of research skills that the children will later need to meet the Common Core State Standards.

Create Assignments for Real Audiences and with Real Purpose

Preschool children love to scribble, draw, and write, and preschool teachers capitalize on this love by encouraging children to write and illustrate their thoughts and interests. The CCSS call for students to "write routinely over extended time frames...for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences" (p. 41). Children can easily accomplish this by publishing class books, making classroom labels, creating graphs, and drawing their strategies for solving math problems. For example, after sharing the story *Ten Black Dots*, the children could use dot stickers to create individual pages of a classroom book that use the same word pattern as the original book and document their understanding of number symbols and numerical amounts. An individual page might read like this, "Sadie says that 4 blue dots make 4 wheels on her wagon." Likewise, graphs that show data that can be used by the class for real information has true purpose. For instance, before a planned trip to buy groceries for the school, a child-created graph of types of juices preferred by the children could inform the shopper of juice types that are most likely to be consumed enthusiastically. As children interact with people and objects in the classroom, they have ample opportunities to solve real problems, as well as communicate orally with others. Teacher-led discussions, examples, and planned experiences can lead to teaching children to communicate effectively with others through written words and pictures also. The more children are exposed to and encouraged to share information with others through a variety of means, the more likely they are to begin using a variety of both oral and written communication strategies independently. These opportunities will, in turn, lead to what Davis describes as developing authentic goals and the skills to accomplish those goals.

Teach Argument, Not Persuasion

This strategy is not applicable to preschool.

Increase Text Complexity

Effective preschool teachers share books that are age-appropriate, individually appropriate, and culturally appropriate for the children in their classes. Davis suggests that exposing children to variety of texts is a simple way of increasing complexity; for preschool

teachers, this can be interpreted as exposing children to written information in addition to the typical storybooks found in preschool classrooms. For example, if the preschool teacher is facilitating a science unit on the topic of weather, children can be exposed to a wide variety of texts that inform the public about the weather. In this classroom, one might expect to see children listening to books about weather and simple non-fiction books about weather, looking at and "reading" weather forecasts in the newspaper and online, watching weather-related clips on the Internet, looking for pictures that depict different types of weather in magazines and catalogues, and even looking at pictures and charts in non-fiction books that are written above preschool level. These practices are often implemented during science units or project work, as children learn to utilize a wide range of resources to answer their research questions.

Summary

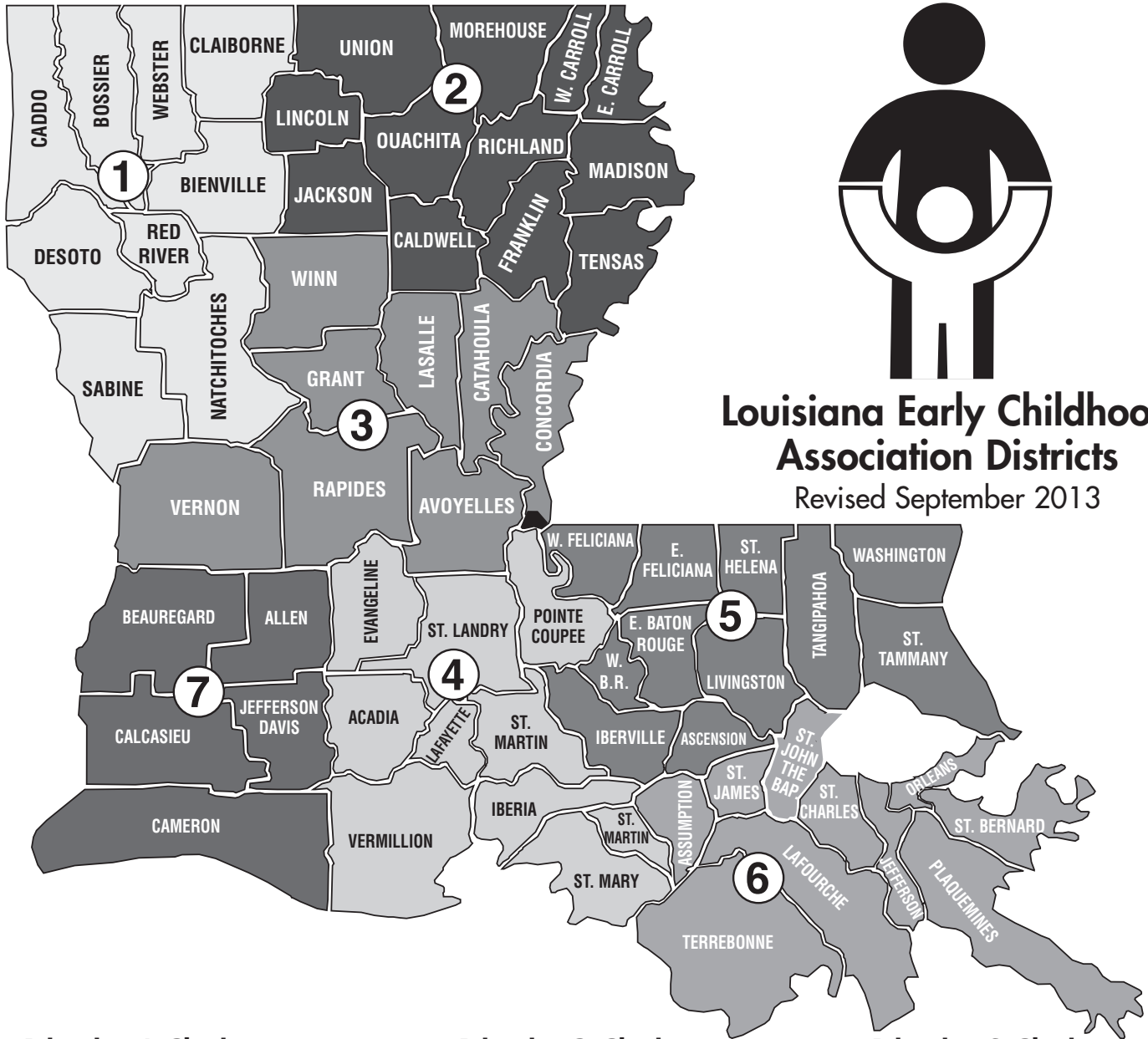
Davis closes the article by asking readers to consider their teaching practices and to answer the following questions:

- How are these five shifts happening in your classroom?
- What have you already been doing well?
- What would you like to change? (p. 5)

She admits that altering teaching practices to address the new standards takes time, and she encourages teachers to stop often and reflect on their practices in order to successfully make this transition. These are certainly behaviors preschool teachers know well, as they plan, teach, reflect, and then make necessary adjustments to their curriculum and instruction while balancing rigor with extensive opportunities for meaningful learning and intentional play opportunities.

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