

Summary and Objectives

This lesson provides an overview of how to effectively use activity plans offered in the Early Learning Matters (ELM) Curriculum developed by Purdue University for programs serving children from birth to five years of age.¹ It reviews the content and organization of plans for developmentally appropriate learning activities with children. It also summarizes ELM's resources for adapting activities to meet the needs of children, and guidelines for meeting ELM's benchmarks of effective use of activity plans. Attention is given to plans for different ages of children.

At the conclusion of this lesson, you will have a stronger understanding of:

- the general content and organization of activity plans;
- types of ELM resources available for adapting activities; and
- guidelines for helping classroom staff make the most of ELM activity plans.

This lesson is to be pursued **after** becoming familiar with the ELM Curriculum's *User Guide* that pertains to the ages of children in your room. There is a *User Guide* for children from birth to 36 months and a *User Guide* for children 3–5 years. This lesson builds on essential information offered in the *Guides*. It is not a *User Guide* substitute. This lesson is to be used with the active involvement of a trainer who is familiar with the ELM Curriculum.

REVIEW

Practices for promoting young children's learning and development are offered in three different ELM resources: activity plans that span a 50-week period, descriptions of areas promoted by ELM in the two *User Guides*,² and follow-up learning plans included in guides for observing and assessing children's progress.³

The activity plans are extensive and at the heart of ELM. Each activity description includes a detailed written plan that identifies a desired goal(s) for children's learning and development, and specifies learning experiences designed to achieve the desired goal(s). These provisions are consistent with the accreditation standard for a high-quality curriculum set forth by the [National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\)](#).⁴

The developmentally sequenced activity plans focus on skills that provide a foundation for success in school and in life. The 14 foundation skills promoted by ELM in the first three years of

life are building blocks of the 27 foundation skills emphasized when children are 3–5 years of age.

For example, activities that engage toddlers in sorting and matching objects (cognitive) support an early awareness that things can be different or the same. The concepts of same and different, in turn, are important to preschool-age skills related to counting (math), inquiry (science), appreciation of individual and family differences (social studies), concentration (self-regulation), letter knowledge (language/literacy), motor development (physical/health), and skills that support creative expression, among others.

Content

Activity plans give clear attention to one foundation skill while often including significant support for the development of one or more other skills. Activities focused on motor development, for example, generally also support a child's skill in

controlling a behavior (self-regulation). A shared book reading experience with a group of children also supports children's skills in paying attention, self-control, and interacting with others, among others.

An activity plan generally incorporates both staff-guided and child-initiated contributions. In a one-to-one activity focused on social interaction skills of children 12–24 months of age, for example, the toddler selects a toy(s) to play with from a small assortment preselected by the staff member based on the toddler's interests. One of the options in the activity encourages the toddler to decide what toy animal to sing about. Staff are consistently encouraged to follow the child's lead in the open-ended play.⁵

The three key characteristics of the ELM Curriculum—intentional, meaningful, plentiful—are evident in the overall sequence of attention to foundation skills promoted in ELM. The three characteristics also are found in the ways each activity plan supports learning.

Activity plans help staff be **intentional** in their work with young children. Each plan offers a coordinated mix of [developmentally appropriate teaching strategies](#) that offer integrated supports to children in understanding a new concept or practicing a new behavior. Teaching strategies are summarized in a box in Lesson 1 for direct care staff entitled, *Developmentally Appropriate Teaching Practices in ELM Activity Plans*.

In the area of self-regulation, for example, plans for infants and toddlers include specific staff actions and words for helping a child to calm down.⁶ Plans for preschool-age children that offer circle time games provide explicit staff guidance for helping children learn and practice paying attention, remembering information, shifting their behaviors, and inhibiting thoughts and behaviors that are inappropriate to the situation. A common strategy in circle time games is to change a rule, such as doing the opposite of a previous rule (example:

dance slowly to a quick drum beat).⁷ The two *User Guides* offer examples of ELM's intentional use of [developmentally appropriate teaching practices](#).⁸

Learning is **meaningful** for children when it connects to their current skills and interests and contributes to a solid foundation for future growth and development. Activity plans and guidance in the two *User Guides* consistently encourage staff to follow and build on a child's lead within the context of learning goals. Activity plans commonly include suggestions for helping children connect the content of an activity to their own experiences. ELM also offers practical supports to classroom staff in their important role of adapting learning experiences to meet the needs of children. These supports are described in each *User Guide* and summarized in a later section of this lesson.

ELM activity plans are **plentiful** in supports for children's learning. Following are two examples. A plan for a shared book reading session with toddlers 24–36 months of age includes eight different examples of specific ways to help children engage with the story.⁹ For preschool-age children, plans focused on the life cycles of living things include opportunities for children to act out stages of a plant's growth, look at and sort picture cards that show specific stages of a life cycle, and help plant a bean seed and care for and observe its growth.¹⁰

ELM works best for young children when classroom staff follow the six benchmarks (standards) for using ELM activity plans described in each *User Guide*.¹¹ One of the benchmarks for using ELM activity plans, for example, is to implement plans in the order in which they are offered in the curriculum. The developmental sequencing of learning activities is a key characteristic of ELM. Young children develop skills in a predictable pattern that moves from simple to more complex skills across time.

Another benchmark is to maintain the goal and content of an activity plan while also accommodating children's interests. Consistently

drifting from the purpose of an activity runs the risk of watering down the impact of learning experiences designed to promote early skills that matter long term.

Organization

The plans for infants and toddlers are organized into three age groups: birth to 12 months, 12 to 24 months, and 24 to 36 months.

Activity plans for preschool-age children are designed for **mixed-age** classrooms of children three to five years of age. Effective mixed-age rooms actively support children learning from one another. Younger children’s experiences are shaped in part by watching and interacting with slightly more advanced peers. Older children can serve as advanced peers for younger children and potential informal leaders of a classroom’s community. Effective mixed-age rooms are not geared to one of the ages represented in the room.¹²

Each activity plan follows an easy-to-use format. On the left side of a plan’s opening page is basic information about the activity, such as the foundation skill(s) promoted by the activity and materials needed. Users of activity plans are urged to review this information first.

Many activity plans are described as a **model** of high-quality implementation, including suggested phrases to use in engaging children in the activity. The model includes action words for staff, such as Begin, Explain, Ask, Act, and Recap. The actions are connected to developmentally appropriate teaching practices. The Act designation, for example, refers to the staff member engaging children in an activity and/or offering a demonstration of how something works.

The model offers less experienced staff a rich set of practical examples of how to effectively use the activity. For experienced staff, the model provides benchmarks for ensuring current approaches represent best practice. The model is not intended to be used as a script that is read aloud or memorized. Staff who use the ELM Curriculum often prepare note cards with key points they want to remember from the model. Staff are strongly encouraged to use their own words and style.

At the end of each activity plan is a brief recommendation for a center or interest area related to the content of the activity plan. There also is a short suggestion of how the activity plan might be enhanced in family child care homes.

Organization of ELM Activity Plans	
Birth to 36 Months	3 to 5 Years
Promote 14 foundation skills in 5 areas	Promote 27 foundation skills in 8 areas
Organized by blocks in 3 age groups	Organized by days/weeks
25 blocks (1 block = 2 weeks) for 50 weeks of activities	50 weeks of activities
5 activity plans per block with 2–3 activity options in each plan	4 activity plans per day
Length of activity determined by child engagement	Each activity plan is designed for approximately 15 minutes
One-to-one and informal gathering configurations	Mostly small or large group configurations
Each activity plan provides a model of high-quality use, guidance on possible child responses (What To Look For), scaffolding tips, related interest area suggestion, and adaptations for family child care.	Each activity plan provides a model of high-quality use, scaffolding tips, related center activity suggestion, and adaptations for family child care.

Activity plans include other components aimed at helping staff adapt an activity in response to children's needs. These components are described in a later section of this lesson.

There are some differences in activity plans by age group, as summarized below.

Birth–36 Months Activity plans are organized in a series of blocks for infants and toddlers. One block offers two weeks of activity plans in each of the five areas promoted by ELM for children 36 months and younger. There are 25 blocks in each age grouping, together covering a 50-week period.

Each activity plan offers 2–3 options aimed at different skill levels. Activity plans focused on the motor development of children from birth to 12 months of age, for example, are designed for infants who are not mobile (Option 1), infants who can sit with support (Option 2), and infants who can sit independently (Option 3).

Options also differ in the level of activity challenge. For example, options for shared book reading experiences with children from birth to 12 months emphasize the staff member's voice and responsiveness to the infant's cues plus engaging the infant in looking at book illustrations for very young infants (Option 1). For older infants, the options add support for the infant to turn pages and communicate about a picture (Option 2) and eventually greater participation in managing the book and pointing to and communicating about pictures (Option 3).

The *ELM Curriculum User Guide: Birth–36 Months* offers examples of how to select activity options that are geared to a child's interests and skills.

ELM activity plans are to be used when a child is ready to pursue the content of a plan. Some children may not be ready to participate in an activity during the period it is included in a block but will eagerly engage the activity at a later point. This means that during a two-week period covered by a

block of activities, some children may be engaged in activities offered in a prior block. Children enjoy and benefit from repeating actions related to an emerging skill. It is often developmentally appropriate to repeat an activity option beyond the period in which it is offered in a block.

Plans for infants and toddlers use the concept of an **informal gathering** to recognize the fluid nature of a developmentally appropriate gathering with very young children (they come and go!) and avoid images of a group activity as a circle time common in preschool-age rooms. Plans for children from birth to 36 months also include many activities for a one-to-one setting. The *ELM Curriculum User Guide: Birth–36 Months* offers practical guidance on ways to facilitate informal gatherings and one-to-one settings.

3–5 Years Activity plans for rooms serving preschool-age children are organized by days within a week. Four large/small activities of approximately 15 minutes each are offered each day. ELM's benchmarks for planning the daily schedule call for the four group activities to be interspersed across the day, and not combined with another organized group activity. Offering approximately 60 minutes a day of staff-guided group activities (spread across four sessions) is generally consistent with national patterns in preschool schedules.¹³

Activities that promote language/literacy and mathematics are offered five days a week. These areas are among the strongest predictors of school readiness and life success. Activity plans that promote the remaining six areas included in the preschool-age section of the ELM Curriculum are offered regularly.

Some special topics are offered in activity plans. The topics include moving from one home or community to another, transportation, dinosaurs, and how authors create books.

Day numbers are used on the activity plans to provide some flexibility in when plans are used. The

first page of each week's set of activity plans provides a brief summary of content emphasized during the week.

Most plans for preschool-age children are designed for large and small groups, although ELM offers many suggestions for individualized work with children.¹⁴

Adaptations

In the ELM Curriculum, classroom staff are experts in adapting activities to meet the needs of children in their care. Staff who work daily with children are in the best position to ensure learning experiences are responsive to children's current understandings and abilities. This staff role is at the core of ELM's emphasis on meaningful activities for children and is essential to the idea of pursuing **challenging and achievable** goals for children as reflected in [NAEYC's developmentally appropriate practice statement](#).¹⁵

Adaptation of learning activities generally involves one or more of the following five factors:

- **Teaching strategies**, such as offering a demonstration when a verbal description is not sufficiently helpful.
- **Materials** that are of interest to a child(ren) and appropriately challenging to use.
- **Configuration**, such as offering an activity in a one-to-one arrangement if a group setting offers too many distractions or constrains staff ability to provide individualized feedback and help.
- **Amount of time**, such as spending a little more time on an activity if a child(ren) is interested or bringing an activity to a close if a child(ren) loses interest.
- **Repetition** of an activity or segment of an activity to provide more practice in using an emerging skill.

ELM offers guidance for tailoring children's learning experiences. Each activity plan includes **scaffolding tips** aimed at helping staff connect the activity to children's responses or skills. Two types of tips are offered: ways to provide extra support to a child or children, and ways to offer enrichment that slightly increase the challenge of the activity. Many activity plans also offer adaptation guidance within the activity plan description, including preparations suggested in a section called **Be Prepared**.

Staff decisions about adaptations can be made prior to offering the activity, based on staff understanding of children and their likely responses to an activity. This decision is integral to use of the ELM Curriculum with children from birth to 36 months of age, because each activity plan offers options that need to be matched to young children's interests and skill level.

Adaptation decisions also can be made during the activity, based on children's participation. Puzzled looks may mean extra support is needed. Responses that indirectly say "I've got it, what's next?" might mean use of an enrichment tip may be well received.

Plans for infants and toddlers include a section entitled **What to Look For** that describes ways a young child might participate in an activity and how to accommodate different forms of participation.

In addition to the sources of help summarized here, ELM offers suggestions for individualizing learning experiences for children in response to information secured through observations and, for preschool-age children, assessments. These resources are described in each *User Guide* and summarized in Lesson 3 for direct care staff.

Guidelines

An efficient way to make the most of ELM activity plans is to use the guidelines offered in the **How to Use Activity Plans** section of each *User*

Guide. The four guidelines are summarized in this lesson's box entitled, Guidelines for Using Activity Plans. Specific ways to follow the guidelines are provided in each *User Guide*.

Within the second guideline focused on determining a basic approach to using the activity plan, for example, one planning consideration is whether an activity might be better offered in a different configuration, such as with a small group rather than a large group. A skill that is particularly challenging for some children may be best supported in a small group that gives the staff member greater opportunity to focus on individual children's responses.

Another planning decision related to the second guideline is to determine a natural stopping point in an activity if time or child interest runs short. In a shared book reading with preschool-age children, for example, knowing in advance where you might stop midway through a book is helpful

For classroom staff, the ELM Curriculum eliminates the often overwhelming task of developing or finding activities that represent best practices in supporting early learning and development. At the same time, ELM elevates the role of classroom staff as experts in adapting planned activities so they meaningfully meet the needs of children in their room. What does this arrangement mean for how you spend your planning time?

[NAEYC's developmentally appropriate practice statement](#) indicates that classroom staff need flexibility in carrying out planned experiences for children in their room. The statement also says that use of a curriculum should enable each child to attain individualized goals across all domains and subject areas.¹⁶ What steps might you take to

Guidelines for Using Activity Plans

1. Be familiar with the "big picture" and the details of the activity plan.
2. Determine your basic approach to using the activity plan.
3. Determine ways to adapt the activity.
4. Reinforce and extend the activity.

for maintaining children's understanding of the plot. It also is beneficial to have a bookmark handy so children can be assured the book sharing will continue at a later point. Example: "We have run out of time to finish our book. We will read more of our book this afternoon. I am putting a bookmark on the page with this picture so we can remember where to start again."

The four guidelines can help users of ELM meet benchmarks for effective use of ELM activity plans.

REFLECT

strengthen your expertise in adapting learning experiences for young children?

Most activity plans in the ELM Curriculum offer a model of high-quality implementation. The ELM developers urge classroom staff to use their own words and style in implementing an activity, and to not use the model as a script. How might a model of a well-implemented activity be helpful to you? What do you intend to do with ELM's models of best practices in working with young children?

A research-informed curriculum is an efficient way to move scientific findings into practice, so children benefit from results of studies on early childhood. How important is it for you to use a curriculum that is based in part on studies of the outcomes of early learning and development, including program practices that work?

EXTEND

Some suggestions for becoming more familiar with the content and use of ELM activity plans are offered below. You are encouraged to consider these suggestions with the active involvement of a trainer who is familiar with the ELM Curriculum.

Content and Organization

- Look closely at how an activity plan of your choice promotes the foundation skill targeted by the plan (listed on the left side of the plan's first page). Examples: How does the Self-Regulation activity in Block 1 for infants (birth–12 months) help a child develop beginning skill in calming himself/herself? What specific experiences in the preschool-age Science activity for Week 8, Day 3 help children learn inquiry skills?
- Select an activity plan offered within the first 10 weeks of the ELM Curriculum (up to Block 5 for rooms serving infants and toddlers). Where does the foundation skill(s) emphasized in the plan fit in the larger picture of the area as described in the respective *User Guide* (see Areas Promoted by ELM)? How does the activity reinforce or build on ELM's earlier attention to the skill? How does the activity offer support for further development of the skill in later plans?
- In what ways does an activity plan of your choice include ways to make the activity meaningful to children (connect to their understandings, abilities, interests)? In what ways does the activity offer intentional support of children's skills emphasized in the plan?
- Effective support of children's learning involves a range of [developmentally appropriate teaching strategies](#). A one-size-fits-all approach to promoting young children's learning is not helpful to most children. Look closely at several activity plans of your choice to identify different teaching strategies and how they work together.¹⁷
- Questions are a valuable teaching tool, especially when they are authentic (not directives in disguise) and children are given time to respond. Studies suggest that many teachers do not pause for a child to respond with words, a babble, or a facial expression. ELM includes many questions in activity plans. What steps might you take to ensure there is a true pause (with an inviting look) after asking a question so a child(ren) has time to respond, and that you acknowledge or build on a child's response as appropriate?
- Research is clear that children benefit from a predictable, regular schedule. How does the Recap component of the models of high-quality implementation of an activity plan help signal to children that an activity has come to an end?
- Develop a note card summary of an ELM activity you would like to use in your room. What reminders about the activity would be important to include on the card?
- Identify an activity plan that includes content and/or teaching strategies that, in your experience, represent a new or enhanced way of supporting young children's learning. How might this new or enhanced way of supporting young children contribute to your own professional development?

Adaptations

- Select any activity plan of interest (any age) and three children in your room. How might each of the children respond to the activity? What adaptations might you make to the plan in advance of offering it so the activity works well with all children in your room? What scaffolding tips would you keep in the back of your mind while doing the activity, in case one might be needed in response to child engagement of the activity? Why? Consider doing this exercise independently with another staff member (who

is in your room or another room) and compare notes on your adaptation ideas.

- Review three activity plans of your choice (any age) and give special attention to the scaffolding tips suggested in each. In plans for children birth–36 months, also review What to Look For suggestions. How do the various adaptation suggestions help an activity realize the goal of offering challenging and achievable learning experiences for children? What other adaptations should be considered?
- **Birth–36 months:** Select several plans for any of the three age groups. Look at the 2–3 options within each plan. How do the options differ in the challenge of the activity? Would you likely use all options in your room? In what ways? Are there activity options you probably would repeat with a child(ren) in your room? Why?
- **24–36 months:** Look closely at the Block 1 activity plan for promoting toddlers’ awareness of different sounds (Communication/Language). Each of the three options is designed for an informal gathering. What changes would you make to the plan options so each could be

offered in one-to-one settings? What might be the advantages for the toddlers?

- **3–5 years:** Review the Week 8, Day 3 plan focused on being friendly (Social-Emotional). The plan includes scenarios for children to consider. Are there scenarios based on experiences in your room that might be more appealing to children in your room? What scenarios would you develop as alternatives to those offered in the plan?
- **3–5 years:** ELM uses a repeated book reading strategy to promote children’s word knowledge, comprehension skills, and critical thinking focused on why things happened in a story. Staff members select the books to be shared with children, based on ELM suggestions. Review the repeated book plan in the Language/Literacy section of the *ELM Curriculum User Guide: 3–5 Years* (pp. 17–19). Select a book, novel words in the book and how you would define each word for children, and the types of book-specific questions that would be helpful to ask during the second and third reading of the book.

PRACTICE

The following scenarios describe common situations in early childhood classrooms. Select a scenario(s) that represents the ages of children in your room. Talk with a trainer about your responses to the question in the scenario. Also in this section are suggested responses to questions in the scenarios. Talk with a trainer about your reactions to the suggested scenario response.

Scenario #1: Several children in your room serving toddlers 12–24 months of age easily do many, but not all, of the ELM activities focused on cognitive development. What can you do to make sure these toddlers do not get bored in your room?

Scenario #2: For two weeks you have offered a 15-month-old child in your room a motor development activity from Block 3 and activities in all other areas from Block 6. You are scheduled for a regular conference with the child’s parents later this week. You are concerned the parents may think your use of a Block 3 activity means the child is “behind” in motor development. What should you say to the parents?

Scenario #3: For many years you led a room for four-year-old children. Enrollment patterns in your center are changing and now three-year-old children are being placed in your room along with four-year-old children. At the same time, your

center recently adopted the ELM Curriculum. Do you need to simply forget about the many activities you liked to do with four-year-old children?

Suggested Responses to Scenarios

Scenario #1: More challenge can be added to any activity plan. Look for ideas in the following places: the What to Look For section of each plan; enrichment suggestions in each plan's More Scaffolding Tips; and the Building on the Activity Plans section of the *User Guide's* description of how ELM promotes cognitive development.

Option 2 (and Option 3 when offered) is consistently more challenging than Option 1 in any activity plan for children birth–36 months of age. But Option 2 (or Option 3) should not be automatically offered to the several children of interest here. For some skills, Option 1 may be more appropriate. Cognitive development involves many different skills. Strengths in one skill do not necessarily mean there are strengths in all other cognitive skills. The scenario description shows awareness of this fact by noting that the several toddlers “easily do many, but not all” of the activities focused on cognitive development.

Scenario #2: Remind the parents there are big differences among children in the ages at which they develop new skills. Children may begin taking their first steps anywhere between 9–12 and 15–16 months of age, for example. The activities offered in ELM's blocks are sequenced according to children's developmental pathways but are not geared to a specific age. Classroom staff decide what ELM activities are appropriate for each child. This means children are often offered activities from a prior block.

Children enjoy repeating activities that promote emerging skills. They also may temporarily move backward (regress) when developing a new ability or understanding. ELM provides flexibility for following a child's lead in interests and development.

Scenario #3: The many years of offering curriculum activities designed for four-year-old children undoubtedly enriched your understanding of learning and development. It is unlikely you offered the same activity the same way across the years and across children. Reflect on the meaningful differences you found among four-year-old children in their skills and developmental pathways. Broaden your understanding of skill and learning differences among four-year-olds to include three-year-old children.

The three-year-olds joining your room will excel when activities accommodate their needs. They are less likely to be engaged and benefit from your efforts when activities are mostly geared to an older age. Maximize your use of scaffolding tips offered in each ELM activity plan and suggestions in the Building on the Activity Plans section in each description of Areas Promoted by ELM in the *ELM Curriculum User Guide: 3–5 Years*. Think of the enrollment shift in your room as an opportunity to expand your expertise in working effectively with preschool-age children.

This lesson was written by Douglas R. Powell, with contributions from Kathy Broniarczyk and Chanele Robinson-Rucker. The current version is the first revision of the lesson. For information about the ELM Curriculum, contact: elmcurriculum@purdue.edu.

Endnotes

- 1 Development of the Early Learning Matters (ELM) Curriculum was supported by the U.S. Department of Defense Child Development Competitive Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), grant number 2013-48762-21537 to Purdue University as part of the DoD-USDA Partnership for Military Families. The ELM Curriculum is based in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907-2055. Douglas Powell, Principal Investigator. Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, Co-Principal Investigator.
- 2 Within each *Guide's* description of Areas Promoted by ELM, see the More Practices information included in Building on the Activity Plans.
- 3 There are *Guides for Observing and Individualizing* focused on foundation skills promoted by the ELM Curriculum for infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children. In addition, for children 3–5 years of age, there are assessments of important language/ literacy and mathematics skills. These resources are reviewed in Lesson 3 for direct care staff.
- 4 [National Association for the Education of Young Children. \(2019\). *NAEYC early learning program accreditation standards and assessment items*. Washington, DC: Author.](#)
- 5 ELM Curriculum, 12–24 Months, Block 1, Social-Emotional.
- 6 ELM Curriculum, Birth–12 Months, Block 2, Self-Regulation.
- 7 ELM Curriculum, 3–5 Years, Week 36, Self-Regulation, Day 2.
- 8 See pp. 5–6 in the *ELM Curriculum User Guide: Birth–36 Months* and p. 5 in the *ELM Curriculum User Guide: 3–5 Years* (boxed Example of Intentionality in Developmentally Appropriate Teaching).
- 9 ELM Curriculum, 24–36 Months, Block 4, Communication/Language, Option 1.
- 10 ELM Curriculum, 3–5 Years, Weeks 19–23, Science activity plans.
- 11 See p. 67 of the *ELM Curriculum User Guide: Birth–36 Months* and p. 94 of the *ELM Curriculum User Guide: 3–5 Years*.
- 12 See Children Who Participate for More than a Year (p. 99) in the *ELM Curriculum User Guide: 3–5 Years*.
- 13 Chien, N.C., Howes, C., Burchinal, M., Pianta, R. C., Ritchie, S., Bryant, D. M., ... Barbarin, O. A. (2010). Children's classroom engagement and school readiness gains in prekindergarten. *Child Development, 81*. 1534–1549. See also: Early, D. M., Iruka, I. U., Ritchie, S., Barbarin, O. A., Winn, D-M. C., Crawford, G. M., ...Pianta, R. C. (2010). How do pre-kindergarteners spend their time? Gender, ethnicity, and income as predictors of experiences in pre-kindergarten classrooms. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 25*, 177–193.
- 14 Individualized work with preschool-age children is included in follow-up plan suggestions for observing and assessing children's progress and in some scaffolding tips offered in activity plans. See pp. 100–106 in the *ELM Curriculum User Guide: 3–5 Years*.
- 15 [National Association for the Education of Young Children. \(2020\). *Developmentally Appropriate Practice: A Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children*. Washington, DC: Author.](#)
- 16 [National Association for the Education of Young Children \(2020\).](#)
- 17 Developmentally appropriate teaching strategies recommended by NAEYC early childhood experts are described in both *User Guides* and summarized in Lesson 1 for direct care staff.