

Curriculum and Learning Environments

Classroom Interest Areas (Centers)

The materials listed in the chart below are in no way a complete or required list of materials for every early learning environment.

Center	In play in this center, children learn	Materials that should be available
Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-shapes and sizes-problem solving-cooperation-imaginative play-basic number concepts-creativity-how to lift and carry blocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-wooden unit blocks stored in open low shelves by size and shape-play props such as play figures representing diverse populations-farm, forest, and jungle animals-cars, trucks, and boats-raw building materials such as branches, canvas, corn husks, etc
Creative art	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-to express their ideas and feelings-develop fine motor skills-learn creativity-learn exploration-discover that we all have different ideas and different ways of working	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-easels-paint containers-a wide variety of different sized and shaped brushes-people color and regular color crayons-scissors-markers-glue-modeling clay-hand mirrors-play-doh-collage materials-a wide variety of size and types of paper-a paint drying rack or area
Dramatic play	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-learn to act out familiar adult roles-learn to conquer fears such as going to the doctor-develop social skills such as sharing, cooperation, compromise, and negotiation-develop fine motor skills-learn respect for differences in people and cultures-role play people of other cultures, abilities and genders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-child-size furniture and equipment such as table and chairs, stove, refrigerator, and sink-male and female work and play clothes-cooking and eating utensils like those found in children's homes-male and female dolls representing a diversity of races, cultures, and abilities-play food representing different

Curriculum and Learning Environments

		cultures
Sensory exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -size, shape and volume -creativity -releasing tension -control -discovery -exploration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -a low to the floor dry sensory table to use with various materials -a waist high wet sensory table to use with water, bubbles, cornstarch and water, ice/snow, shaving cream, whipped soap flakes -tools and objects to sink and float
Library/quiet area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the “mechanics” of holding and enjoying books -reading with others -awareness of print -how to spend quiet time alone -listening to books on tape -develop fine motor skills -pictures have meaning -tell stories using puppets or flannel boards -develop pre-reading skills -learn about diversity and other cultures -learn facts and information outside of their personal experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -book display -rug -soft pillows, cushions or upholstered chairs/couch -tape recorder -homemade books featuring the children and families in your center -wide variety of books that depict cultural diversity -puppets
Literacy/writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -awareness of letters -develop fine motor skills -learn new words and meanings -practice holding smaller writing instruments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -clipboards -writing instruments including markers, chalk, crayons, pencils -pencil grips -small white boards with erasers -small chalk boards -mailboxes -paper/stationery -stickers/stamps
Table toys/manipulatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -pre-reading and pre-math concepts -eye hand coordination -fine motor skills -problem solving -categorization, grouping, patterns -develop creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -items on low shelves -puzzles and toys that represent cultural diversity -table with chairs -pegs and pegboards -beads and laces -parquetry blocks -collections of items for sorting, classifying and counting -nesting rings/cups

Curriculum and Learning Environments

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -bristle blocks -sewing cards -matching games
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -discovery of natural objects -magnetic forces -bigger/smaller through magnifying objects -cause and effect in the environment -life cycles of butterflies, frogs -colors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -magnifying glass -scale -droppers and tweezers -specimen jars -natural objects such as shells, rocks, nests, beehives, cocoons, leaves -bug catchers -bottles with colored waters -color paddles -light box
Computer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -basic computer skills like power, mouse manipulation -one/two step directions -fine motor skills -simple keyboarding skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -computer -mouse -paper -approved educational software -keyboard
Woodworking area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -how items fit together -how to make simple structures -problem solving -durability of materials and objects -handling of tools safely -safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -wood -nails -different types of hammers -eye glasses -gloves -screws -pegboards -work lights held up with clips
Outdoor/large muscle areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -large and small motor skills -eye hand coordination -confidence -sharing, taking turns, and cooperative play -sensory experiences -dramatic play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -safe climbing toy -area for digging -shovels -pails -trucks -riding toys with helmets -wagons -balls -hoops -tunnels -parachute -games -natural materials such as rocks, leaves, sticks