



Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Interest Areas: Children Learn From Play

CHILDREN LEARN FROM PLAY	Page
SENSORY MATERIALS, ACTIVE PLAY EQUIPMENT, AND CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL	102
MANIPULATIVE TOYS, DOLL AND DRAMATIC PLAY, BOOK AND RECORDINGS, AND ART MATERIALS	103
ACTIVITIES AND SPECIFIC SKILLS LEARNED	104

Interest Areas: Children Learn From Play

Here are some suggestions for each area. Begin at the youngest age and add items for the age of each child in your group. Remember to change materials regularly to keep areas fresh and interesting. Allow children to play with any item as long as it is safe for his/her age.

Sensory Materials (To stimulate the five senses)	Active Play Equipment (In large, open spaces, and outside)	Construction Materials (In a quiet spot for building)
<p>INFANTS (<i>Birth to 12 months</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sucking toys Rattles Unbreakable mirrors (acrylic) Patterned crib sheets Mobiles Music 	<p>INFANTS (<i>Birth to 12 months</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bounce chairs Mobiles (activated by movement) Things to reach and grab Adults to bounce gently upon (with caution) Bright colored balls 	<p>INFANTS (<i>Birth to 12 months</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nesting toys Large, soft blocks
<p>TODDLERS (<i>12 – 24 months</i>) add</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Music boxes Busy boxes Push toys Large bells, drums Non-toxic play dough and finger paint (with close supervision) Water play with cup & spoon Fruit to taste (cut into small pieces) 	<p>TODDLERS (<i>12 – 24 months</i>) add</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crawling tunnel Riding toys Cardboard boxes 2-3 steps to climb Ramps to walk on Balls Push and pull toys 	<p>TODDLERS (<i>12 – 24 months</i>) add</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cardboard blocks Cups to stack Toy pounding bench
<p>2 – 3 YEARS add</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sand-play with household objects Scarves for dancing Listening games Texture boards Tasting activities 	<p>2 – 3 YEARS add</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low climber Low slide Wagon Homemade obstacle course Sandbox with toys 	<p>2 – 3 YEARS add</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood unit blocks Little people figures Animals Cars and trucks Train and tracks Wooden pegs, mallet, and styrofoam
<p>3 YEARS AND UP add</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More tools for working with sand, water, and play dough Rhythm instruments Wide variety of music Cooking activities (with close supervision) 	<p>3 YEARS AND UP add</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swings Low balancing beam Low basketball hoop Tricycle/big wheels Jump ropes Easy-to-play games such as “Follow the Leader” Parachute 	<p>3 YEARS AND UP add</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More unit block shapes and accessories Props for road, town scenes Woodworking bench and accessories (with careful one-on-one supervision) Construction sets with small pieces (keep away from smaller children)

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Manipulative Toys	Doll & Dramatic Play	Book & Recordings	Art Materials
(On a low table)		(In a soft, cozy spot)	(Near water & low tables/chairs)
INFANTS (<i>Birth – 12 months</i>) Large rings Squeeze toys Textured balls Large measuring spoons	INFANTS (<i>Birth – 12 months</i>) Soft dolls Peek-a-boo games Songs and finger plays	INFANTS (<i>Birth – 12 months</i>) Records of voices, sounds, animal sounds, music Sturdy cloth or cardboard books Lap books with large illustrations, picture of faces, large objects, bright shapes Puppets	INFANTS (<i>Birth – 12 months</i>) Bright socks on hands/feet Textured objects Brightly colored toys Edible finger paint (baby food)
TODDLERS (<i>12– 24 months</i>) add Puzzles: 2 – 6 pieces with knobs Nesting toys Large pegboards Snap-together toys with big pieces	TODDLERS (<i>12– 24 months</i>) add Blankets to wrap dolls Dishes, pans, spoons Broom, sponge Hats Unbreakable mirror (acrylic) Shopping cart Purses Telephones Pretend food	TODDLERS (<i>12– 24 months</i>) add Books with simple stories Songs, finger plays Pictures on wall at eye level (laminated) Flannel board and flannel people	TODDLERS (<i>12– 24 months</i>) add Frequent opportunities to explore messy edible/nontoxic substance (food, water-based finger painting) Non-toxic markers (on boxes) Chalk (on paper, cardboard, sidewalk) Fat crayons (one color at a time) Large paper to draw on (tape down)
2 – 3 YEARS add Puzzles: 4 – 6 pieces Big beads to string Stacking toys Scissors and cards to cut up	2 – 3 YEARS add Doll bed, carriages Doll clothes Realistic dolls Tables and chairs Toy stove, etc. Dress-up clothes (simple) Puppets	2 – 3 YEARS add Books with stories about familiar things Short story records, more songs, finger plays Written and picture labels on objects Flannel board accessories	2 – 3 YEARS add Water-based paint with large brushes Scissors and things to cut Play dough 2-3 crayons at a time Large paper, different textures, colors Stickers and paper
3 YEARS AND UP add Puzzles, pegboards Stringing and snap together toys with smaller pieces according to ability level	3 YEARS AND UP add Boxes with dress-up clothes and realistic accessories to encourage theme Play “restaurant,” “store,” “gas station,” “office,” “airport.” Let the children be your GUIDE!	3 YEARS AND UP add More and more detailed stories Access to record/tape player with instructions on care and use Written and picture labels on objects such as: name on cup, etc., to help associate written word with objects Child’s own words as dictated on artwork and in homemade books to be read back by child/ adults More flannel accessories	3 YEARS AND UP add Water colors Hole punchers Glue/paste and a variety of things to glue onto paper Magazines to cut up Things to lick and stick Crayons and markers of many colors Natural objects (leaves, pine cones, etc.) Collage materials

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Activity	Specific Skills Learned
Finding toys or learning materials to work with alone or with others.	<p>Cognitive: Makes decisions about interests and abilities.</p> <p>Self-help: Find toys by him/herself or sets up environment for play.</p> <p>Social/Language: Learns to share, barter, manage conflict, and ask for help.</p> <p>Emotional: Learns about acceptance and rejection. Expresses needs.</p>
Block play	<p>Physical: Learns to balance blocks and line them up (small motor coordination). Matches blocks that look alike.</p> <p>Cognitive: May count blocks, sees pattern and design. Learns to build and plan structure.</p> <p>Social: Learns to share and cooperate.</p>
Dramatic play	<p>Social: Plays adult roles. Develops self-image and coordinates with others.</p> <p>Language: Learns to express self in another role.</p> <p>Cognitive: Decides appropriate dress and appearance for role; uses visual perceptions to assess self, others, and play environment. Learns and remembers behaviors to imitate. Develops abstract thinking abilities.</p> <p>Self-help: Dresses self. Sets up play environment and finds props.</p>
Setting the table	<p>Cognitive: Counts silverware, glasses, and napkins, or places one object by each setting. Follows pattern of place settings.</p> <p>Social: Cooperates with other children. May teach younger children to help.</p> <p>Physical: Picks up and places objects (small motor coordination).</p>
Sitting down to eat	<p>Physical: Pours milk, passes the dish (small motor coordination).</p> <p>Cognitive: Measures to pour. Understands directions.</p> <p>Social/Language: Learns appropriate table conversation and manners.</p>
Story time or listening to music	<p>Cognitive: Listens and retains information. Follows story line (sequencing) with eyes and/or ears. Recognizes words, pictures, instruments, and rhythms.</p>
Finger plays and songs	<p>Cognitive/Language: Learns words, gestures, and melody (sequencing, repetition, speech, and listening skills). Follows directions.</p> <p>Physical: Coordination (small and large motor) for gestures and finger plays.</p>
Dance	<p>Cognitive/Language: Listens to music and rhythms. Learns to understand simple movement, directions, and their relationship to music.</p> <p>Physical: Coordinates movements (large motor).</p>
Climbing/riding	<p>Cognitive: May count the rungs to the top of a climbing structure; plans the climb. Maps out direction and distance to ride; watches for others in path.</p> <p>Physical: Large motor coordination, balance.</p> <p>Social: Takes turns, interacts.</p>
Sand play	<p>Cognitive: Measures sand and maps out roads (spatial relationships).</p> <p>Physical: Pours, dumps, pushes, gathers, scoops, packs (small and large motor).</p> <p>Social: Shares, interacts, and cooperates.</p>
Putting away toys	<p>Cognitive: Sorts toys, follows directions.</p> <p>Physical: Places objects on the shelf, replaces lids, opens and shuts doors.</p> <p>Social: Takes turns, learns to handle toy carefully.</p>

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