



What is the Project Approach?

- An in depth study of one specific topic over the course of several weeks
- Topics/projects are derived from the children's interests and the Project Approach is a form of emergent curriculum
- Provides a connection between the children and both the local and global communities (through discussion, study, field trips and guest speakers)
- Services the whole child through the implementation of various activities and academic areas
- Project has a beginning, middle, and ending which parallels the children's planning and review process of the knowledge they have obtained

Topic: Gemstones Age: 3 (Preschool)

I chose to make my Project Approach Curriculum topic on gemstones because birthdays play a large role in the life of a three year old. They talk about their birthday frequently and still retain some of the egocentric personality. Therefore a topic that involves a special gemstone for their birthday month is sure to spark their interest. Preschool age children are also exceptionally interested in pirates and consequently treasure. The topic gemstones allows for an in depth study of one topic that encompasses several of the children's interests

Each learning center will be an extension of the main theme/topic and every week the centers will be changed in order to give each child the opportunity to explore all the centers. Each week the centers will provide the children with new aims and goals as well as concept skills to practice and acquire (eg: math will cover measurement 1-to-1 correspondence surveys sorting and graphing)

To keep track of the children's progress with the RIEELS the teachers will document on the back of worksheets or through anecdotal records what the child did at each center and make notes of their strengths and weaknesses. That way the teacher can differentiate the activities to suit each child's individual needs

By providing a centers that utilize a variety of skills the Multiple Intelligence practice will be in use. The children will all have the opportunity to use the intelligence that suits them best while at the same time engaging in the other types of intelligences (eg: logical/mathematical intelligence child will also have the opportunity to partake in bodily/kinesthetic activities). No child will be left to flounder because every area of intelligence is touched upon in the Project Approach to Learning

A home/school connection is established through the use of a "home book bag". Every month a book pertaining to the curriculum being studied will be sent home along with an activity to be completed with the child's family. This month the book is How I Became a Pirate and the accompanying activity is a math one where the children and their parents have to match the treasure box with the number that states how many gold coins are inside. Each child will have a turn with the home book bag and it is a chance for the parents to see what their child is learning as well as participate

At the beginning of each month a newsletter and calendar goes home to the parents so they can keep track of the curriculum and any special show and tell dates.

Circle Time/Music and Listening

After completing the everyday tasks of Circle Time (calendar weather etc..) the topic of birthstones will be introduced

The blank birthstone chart will be displayed and children will be asked to find their birth month (by looking for the matching beginning sound)

Once each child has located their birth month on the chart they will be given a picture of their birthstone to place next to their name

After a discussion about how each month has it's own special gemstone the book Pirates Don't Change Diapers will be read

Following the story the teacher will talk with the children about the pirate treasure and the map they used to find it

At the conclusion of Circle Time the song "Digging for Diamonds" by Red Grammer will be played for the children to sing and dance along to.

Materials Needed

- Birthstone Chart
- Pictures of the 12 different birthstones
- Glue sticks
- Pirates Don't Change Diapers
- Red Grammer CD

Goals

- To introduce the 12 different birthstones
- For each child to identify their birth month and corresponding birthstone
- To introduce the idea that there are many different types of gemstones
- Gross motor movement opportunities while dancing to the song
- To practice sitting and listening to a short story
- Exercise listening comprehension skills by answering two or three questions about the story

Art Center: Making a Treasure Map

Center Set Up
Art table with 4 chairs
Materials in the center so each child can access them
Misc. art materials for children's use after they have completed the initial project (crayons stamps markers etc)

Materials
Construction paper sheets
Glue sticks- 4
Pre-made landmarks (water trees "X" etc)
Child scissors- 3

Goals
For children to make a connection between the treasure map in the story read at Circle Time and the art project
Practice fine motor skills such as pincer grasp when picking up items
Expressing creativity when making their treasure map
Following 2 and 3 step directions
Engaging in social conversation with their classmates
Practice sharing skills in regards to the scissors



Science Center: Compare and Contrast

Center Set Up
Table with 2 chairs
Center activity set up for children
Extra science materials for children to play with and explore once they have completed the prepared activity (magnets color paddles seeds etc)

Materials
Two gemstones
Two magnifying glasses
Two pencils
Two worksheets

Goals
Provide children with the opportunity to use magnifying glasses
Practice writing skills
Practice letter/sound identification
Describe what the gemstone looks like and feels like
Introduction to comparing and contrasting
With teacher assistance children will find similarities and differences between the two gemstones



Math Center: Treasure Land Board Game

Center Set Up
Table with 2 chairs
Game set up for children to play Math manipulatives for children's use when they are finished with playing the game (tangrams number cards number puzzles etc)

Materials
Two gemstone playing pieces
Set of number cards (1-5)
Game board

Goals
Practice taking turns
Practice following the set rules of a game
Number identification and 1-to-1 correspondence
Practice good winning skills (eg: not making your other friend feel bad)
Practice good losing skills (eg: being happy for your friend's hard work)
Utilizing teamwork skills



Writing Center: Gemstone Identification

Center Set Up
Table with 3 chairs
Prepared writing activity set up for children
Misc. writing/language manipulatives for children's use after completing the prepared activity (dry erase boards dry erase markers chalk chalk boards pencils erasers alphabet flashcards etc)

Materials
Worksheet
Pencils
Birthstone pictures with labels
Glue sticks- 3

Goals
Children will look through and select 6 birthstone pictures
Children will count out 6 birthstones
Children will glue their selected birthstones onto their worksheet
Children will write the name of each stone underneath the picture
Based on skill level children with either write the letters on their own or trace the letters with the teacher's assistance
With teacher assistance children at a high skill level will practice writing the word using letter/sound identification rather than looking at the label provided



Sensory Table/Manipulative Center: Panning for Gemstones

Center Set Up
Drop cloth laid underneath the sensory table
Sensory table is positioned so the children have plenty of room to move around it
Center based materials have been placed in the sensory table

Materials
Sand sifters (2)
Paint brushes (4)
Gemstones-variety
Magnifying glasses (4)
Sand
Shovels (4)

Goals
Children will have the opportunity to dig through the sand looking for gemstones
Children will examine the stones with magnifying glasses
Children will use the paintbrushes to dust off their findings
Children will practice and utilize their sharing skills with the two sand sifters
Children will engage in conversation about what they are doing and finding
Children will work together to find the hidden gemstones in the sand



Block Center: Build a Gemstone Cavern

Center Set Up
On the block rug wooded blocks and other building materials will be available on the shelf next to the block rug

Materials
Wooden blocks
Play people
Colored tangram shapes

Goals
Children will use the story of Snow White and the 7 Dwarfs as inspiration for their gemstone cavern
Children will use symbolic play when pretending the colored tangram shapes are gemstones
Children will build various structures with the blocks
If it falls down the teacher will ask probing questions/statements such as "How can we build this so it won't fall down?" "I wonder if the structure was too heavy on top. How can we change that?"
Children will engage in imaginative play with their peers in the center or solitary play if they are alone



Dramatic Play: The Jewelry Store

Center Set Up
 The dramatic play center is geared for 3-4 children at a time. Center based materials are available for use. The center is located in a section of the room where the play will not interrupt children in the library.

Materials
 Play jewelry
 Jewelry Brochures
 Cash register with play money
 Paper/pencils

Goals
 Children will pretend to be jewelry salespeople and customers in a story.
 Children will use the sight words introduced throughout the curriculum to describe and name the different items in the store.
 Children will write down "purchases" made.
 Children will utilize the cash register and count out money.
 Children will identify the different numbers on the various bills (\$1 \$5 \$10 \$20).
 Children will share the different roles created and include new peers into the game.



Classroom Lay-Out

- I designed my classroom by incorporating the layouts of other classrooms I have worked in and liked. I tweaked and altered them to create what I feel would be my ideal classroom.

http://www.lakeshorelearning.com/classroom_designer/cd_launch.jsp?popup=yes



Adult's Role in Children's Play



- I feel this picture demonstrates how the teacher is engaging the children in some form of dance activity. They are exercising their gross motor skills.
- It is the teacher's job to encourage children to play, dance, and move and to make sure all the children are happy and participating.
- I think this picture shows an important time of day: Group Time/Circle Time. This is when the teacher has the opportunity to provide the children important lessons on letter and word identification, number identification, weather, calendar, etc... It is also a chance for the children to learn about taking turns in speaking/starting, sitting and listening to the teacher, and participating as a member of a group.



This picture depicts the teacher's role in small group time. It shows how she is working with the children but allowing them to take the lead. She is on the side encouraging them and perhaps providing some scaffolding to help them reach the next level of thinking.



- I feel this picture is important because it shows how the teacher is engaging in 1-on-1 time with a child by reading them a story. The teacher is also providing the child a sense of security and comfort by allowing the child to sit in her lap.



References

Photographs
<http://www.childlifepreschool.com/?cat=12>
<http://mage.shutterstock.com/>
<http://www.pacificpreschool.com/>
<http://blog.mentimeter.com/archive/2008/07>

Sources
<http://www.lakeshorelearning.com>
<http://www.projectapproach.org>
 Driscoll A and Nagel N.G. Early Childhood Education Birth-8 (2008) 164-165



Creative Curriculum

In this final project, you will develop a creative curriculum, for a specific age group, incorporating each learning center in a classroom based upon a curriculum model or hybrid of your own design. Examples of curriculum models include Reggio Emilia, Constructivist (Piaget), High Scope, Waldorf, Creative Curriculum, Developmental-Interactionist (Bank St. Model), Multiple Intelligences (Gardner), and, Sociocultural (Vygotsky). Provide a theoretical framework for your creative curriculum. Within your curriculum, articulate connections with children and families, developmentally effective approaches, an understanding of content knowledge in early education, and the building of meaningful curriculum. Design, a meaningful challenging curriculum that promotes developmental and learning outcomes for all young children.

Examine and explicate the academic focus of each area including the creative socio-dramatic play center, art area, manipulative, music, math/science, blocks, and language arts learning centers. Plan, implement, and reflect on creativity, play and inquiry within each learning center utilizing the PAR model. Plan a creative activity for each learning center using developmentally effective approaches and content knowledge. Design the learning centers and provide the lay out of the classroom. Be specific about the learning materials, equipment, and supplies in each learning center.

Provide a rationale for the curriculum and each learning center. Be prepared to present your creative curriculum using a multiple intelligence approach. Present at least one creative activity at the final meeting. Include an academically focused educational game that is appropriate for young children. Provide at least two pictures that illustrate adults' roles in children's play. These can be from a variety of different commercial sources such as advertisements, newspaper articles, the media, etc. Be prepared to discuss how these pictures can serve as role models.

According to the NAEYC Position Statement on Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation, "curriculum that is thoughtfully planned, challenging, engaging, developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, comprehensive, and likely to promote positive outcomes for all young children.

Indicators of Effectiveness:

- **Children are active and engaged.** Children from babyhood through primary grades—and beyond—need to be cognitively, physically, socially, and artistically active. In their own ways, children of all ages and abilities can become interested and engaged, develop positive attitudes toward learning, and have their feelings of security, emotional competence, and linkages to family and community supported.
- **Goals are clear and shared by all.** Curriculum goals are clearly defined, shared, and understood by all "stakeholders" (for example, program administrators, teachers, and families). The curriculum and related activities and teaching strategies are designed to help achieve these goals in a unified, coherent way.
- **Curriculum is evidence-based.** The curriculum is based on evidence that is developmentally, culturally, and linguistically relevant for the children who will experience the curriculum. It is organized around principles of child development and learning.

• **Valued content is learned through investigation, play, and focused, intentional teaching.** Children learn by exploring, thinking about, and inquiring about all sorts of phenomena. These experiences help children investigate “big ideas,” those that are important at any age and are connected to later learning. Pedagogy or teaching strategies are tailored to children’s ages, developmental capacities, language and culture, and abilities or disabilities.

• **Curriculum builds on prior learning and experiences.** The content and implementation of the curriculum builds on children’s prior individual, age-related, and cultural learning, is inclusive of children with disabilities, and is supportive of background knowledge gained at home and in the community. The curriculum supports children whose home language is not English in building a solid base for later learning.

• **Curriculum is comprehensive.** The curriculum encompasses critical areas of development including children’s physical well-being and motor development; social and emotional development; approaches to learning; language development; and cognition and general knowledge; and subject matter areas such as science, mathematics, language, literacy, social studies, and the arts (more fully and explicitly for older children).

• **Professional standards validate the curriculum’s subject-matter content.** When subject-specific curricula are adopted, they meet the standards of relevant professional organizations (for example, the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance [AAHPERD], the National Association for Music Education [MENC]; the National Council of Teachers of English [NCTE]; the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics [NCTM]; the National Dance Education Organization [NDEO]; the National Science Teachers Association [NSTA]) and are reviewed and implemented so that they fit together coherently.

• **The curriculum is likely to benefit children.** Research and other evidence indicates that the curriculum, if implemented as intended, will likely have beneficial effects. These benefits include a wide range of outcomes. When evidence is not yet available, plans are developed to obtain this evidence.”

(Downloaded from www.naeyc.org) NAEYC Position Statement on Early Childhood Curriculum)

NAME _____ Score 26.5

**ECED 502
Creative Curriculum Rubric**

Exceeds Expectations 28 - 30 Points	Meets Expectations 22 - 27.5 Points	Does Not Meet Expectations 0 - 21 Points
<p>Design and develop a very creative curriculum model, for a specific age group, incorporating each learning center in a classroom using developmental knowledge to create a healthy, respectful, supportive and challenging learning environment ___ 1c.</p> <p>Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and thoughtful application of young children's developmental characteristics and needs within the creative curriculum design ___ 1a.</p> <p>Standards 1a, 1c Tools 4, 5, 6 6.5-7.5 Points</p>	<p>Design and develop a creative curriculum model, for a specific age group, incorporating each learning center in a classroom using developmental knowledge to create a healthy, respectful, supportive and challenging learning environment <u>x</u> 1c.</p> <p>Demonstrate knowledge and thoughtful application of young children's developmental characteristics and needs in a creative curriculum design <u>x</u> 1a.</p> <p>Standards 1a, 1c Tools 4, 5, 6 5.5- <u>6.5</u> PTS.7 Points</p>	<p>Design and develop a creative curriculum model, for a specific age group, incorporating learning centers in a classroom uses limited developmental knowledge based to create a learning environment ___ 1c.</p> <p>Demonstrates limited knowledge and application of young children's developmental characteristics and needs in curriculum design ___ 1a.</p> <p>Standards 1a, 1c Tools 4, 5, 6 0-5 Points</p>

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
<p>Thoroughly examines and explicates the academic focus of each area including the creative socio-dramatic play center, art area, manipulative, music, math/science, blocks, and language arts learning centers describing developmentally effective approaches ___ 4b.</p> <p>An understanding of content knowledge in early education is demonstrated <u>x</u> 4c.</p> <p>The building of a meaningful curriculum is strongly demonstrated ___ 4d.</p> <p>Well developed plan, implementation, and reflection on creativity, play and inquiry within each learning center utilizing the PAR model and developmental knowledge <u>x</u> 1c.</p> <p>Standards 1c, 4b,c,d Tool 4</p> <p>6.5 - 7.5 Points</p>	<p>Examines and explicates the academic focus of each area including the creative socio-dramatic play center, art area, manipulative, music, math/science, blocks, and language arts learning centers describing some developmentally effective approaches <u>x</u> 4b.</p> <p>Some understanding of content knowledge in early education ___ 4c.</p> <p>The building of meaningful curriculum is demonstrated <u>x</u> 4d. .</p> <p>Developed plan, implementation, and reflection on creativity, play and inquiry within each learning center utilizing the PAR model and some developmental knowledge ___ 1c.</p> <p>Standards 1c, 4b,c,d Tool 4</p> <p>5.5 - <u>7</u> Points</p>	<p>The academic focus of each area including the creative socio-dramatic play center, art area, manipulative, music, math/science, blocks, and language arts learning centers is not examined and explicated and does not describe developmentally effective approaches ___ 4b.</p> <p>An understanding of content knowledge in early education is not demonstrated ___ 4c.</p> <p>The building of meaningful curriculum is not demonstrated ___ 4d .</p> <p>Plan does not include implementation, and reflection on creativity, play and inquiry within each learning center utilizing the PAR model, but lacks developmental knowledge ___ 1c.</p> <p>Standards 1c, 4b,c,d Tool 4</p> <p>0 - 5 Points</p>

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
28 - 30 Points	22 - 27.5 Points	0 - 21 Points
<p>Well developed and designed learning centers and lay out of the classroom encourage creativity, development and learning demonstrating developmental knowledge <u>x</u> 1c.</p> <p>Builds meaningful curriculum <u>x</u> 4d.</p> <p>Specific details about learning materials, equipment, and supplies provided for each learning center demonstrate an advanced understanding of young children's characteristics and needs <u>x</u> 1a.</p> <p>They consider and are highly responsive to the multiple influences on development and learning including needs of diverse cultures and linguistics of students ___ 1b.</p> <p>A deep understanding of content knowledge in early education is demonstrated ___ 4c.</p> <p>Standards 1a,b,c, & 4 c, d Tools 1, 4, 5, 6 6.5 - 7.5 Points</p>	<p>Developed learning centers and lay out of the classroom encourage creativity, development, and learning demonstrates some developmental knowledge ___ 1c</p> <p>Builds meaningful curriculum ___ 4d.</p> <p>Details provided about learning materials, equipment, and supplies for each learning center demonstrate some understanding of young children's characteristics and needs ___ 1a.</p> <p>The curriculum considers and is responsive to multiple influences on development and learning including the needs of diverse cultures and linguistics of students <u>x</u> 1b.</p> <p>An understanding of content knowledge in early education is demonstrated <u>x</u> 4c</p> <p>Standards 1a,b,c, & 4 c, d Tools 1, 4, 5, 6 5.5 - 7 Points</p>	<p>Learning centers and lay out of the classroom do not encourage creativity, development, and learning ___ 1c.</p> <p>Does not build meaningful curriculum ___ 4d.</p> <p>Some details about learning materials, equipment, and supplies provided for some learning centers but do not demonstrate an understanding of young children's characteristics and needs ___ 1a.</p> <p>The curriculum is not responsive to multiple influences on development and learning does not consider the diverse cultures and linguistics of students ___ 1b.</p> <p>Understanding of content knowledge in early education is not demonstrated ___ 4c</p> <p>Standards 1a,b,c, & 4 c, d Tools 1, 4, 5, 6 0 - 5 Points</p>

<p>Provides a detailed rationale for the curriculum and each learning center demonstrating a clear understanding of content knowledge including essential concepts, inquiry tools, and content areas including academic subjects and resources to deepen understanding ___ 4c.</p> <p>At least one creative activity is presented in class that uses developmentally effective approaches ___4b.</p> <p>An academically focused educational game that uses effective approaches, strategies, and tools to positively influence young children's development and learning is presented___4b.</p> <p>Two pictures or more illustrate adults' roles in children's play. The curriculum strongly demonstrates and connects with children and families using positive relationships and supportive interactions with young children ___4a.</p> <p>Standards 1a,b,c & 4b, c,d Tools 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 6.5- 7.5 Points</p>	<p>Provides a rationale for the curriculum and each learning center demonstrating an understanding of content knowledge including essential concepts, inquiry tools, and content areas including academic subjects and resources to deepen understanding <u> x </u> 4c.</p> <p>At least one creative activity is presented in class using developmentally effective approaches and content knowledge <u> x </u> 4b.</p> <p>An educational game that is appropriate for young children is presented <u> x </u> 4b.</p> <p>Two pictures illustrate adults' roles in children's play.</p> <p>The curriculum demonstrates and connects with children and families using positive relationships and supportive interactions with young children <u> x </u> 4a.</p> <p>Standards 1a,b,c, & 4 b, c Tools 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 5.5 <u>6</u> PTS.- 7 Points</p>	<p>Provides some rationale for the curriculum and each learning center. Creative curriculum presentation uses an approach that does not demonstrate an understanding of content knowledge in early education ___4c.</p> <p>One activity is presented at the final meeting but is not appropriate for young children ___4b .</p> <p>A game that is appropriate for young children is presented. The curriculum does not demonstrate or connect with children and families ___4a.</p> <p>The curriculum does not demonstrate or connect with children and families and does not demonstrate positive relationships or supportive interactions with young children ___4a.</p> <p>Standards 1a,b,c,& 4 b, c Tools 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 0- 5 Points</p>
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Signed _____

Date 12/28/10