
UNIT: Decisions That Affect Children

LESSON: Setting the Stage for Learning--Play

TIME: 1-2 days

COMPETENCIES:

1. Discuss the social patterns and stages of play as seen in children. (Options 2, 3, and 5)
 2. Evaluate various toys for concepts and skills learned, age-appropriateness, safety, etc., according to the guidelines established in class. (Options 7, 8, and 9)
 3. Play increases children's ability to get along with others and to solve problems.
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OVERVIEW/SUMMARY: Play is a child's work. It is vital that we provide children with quality play time. There are many types of play. Each type has a useful purpose. Toys should be selected with a purpose in mind. Toys should be evaluated to ensure their safety and usefulness.

MOTIVATOR:

Have four or five color-coded stations set up around the room. As students come to class, give them a colored name tag that corresponds to one of the stations in the room. Direct them to go to that station. At each station, the teacher should have a different game, toy or activity for students in the group to play with. Have each group analyze what age levels are appropriate to this particular toy, game, or activity and all of the skills and behaviors that can be developed by using this item. Have each group report their findings to the class.

LESSON OPTIONS/SUPPLIES:

OPTION 1

BOOK: I Spy

OPTION 2--Competency 1

SOCIAL PATTERNS: Discuss the social patterns seen in young children (see teacher information).

OPTION 3--Competency 1

TYPES OF PLAY: Discuss the four areas in which play helps children grow (see teacher information) and complete the accompanying worksheet, "PLAY IS A CHILD'S WORK."

OPTION 4--Competency 3

CHILDRENS' PLAY: Have students read an article dealing with the importance of play from a text or other reference book or use the article "Children's Play" included with this lesson. They should then write a one-page paper about what they learned and how they can apply it in a home/preschool. Discuss their conclusions as a class.

OPTION 5--Competency 1

OBSERVATIONS: After discussing social patterns, have the students complete the observations concerning social patterns ("Social Patterns Observation" worksheet for each student). You may wish to make the example into a transparency to use as a guide as the assignment is explained.

OPTION 6--Competency 3

VIDEO: Show the class "About Play," from the "Human Development Series," Concept Media, P.O. Box 19542, Irvine, California 92713-9849.

OPTION 7--Competency 2

CHILDREN AND THEIR PLAY: Have students complete the worksheet in groups or individually (Copy of "Children and Their Play" for each group or each class member).

OPTION 8--Competency 2

TEACHER PRESENTATION: Selection of toys.

OPTION 9--Competency 2

TOY LAB: Gather various toys, number them, and display them around the room. Have students evaluate each toy using the "TOY LAB" sheet.