PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM CONSUMER REPORT

THE NATIONAL CENTER ON
Quality Teaching
and Learning

The *Preschool Curriculum Consumer Report* was developed before the 2015 release of the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework*. As a result, you will find references in this report to items associated with its predecessor; the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework*, published in 2010. Please know that the domains of the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework* are still applicable for reviewing effective curricula.

SUMMER 2015

THE NATIONAL CENTER ON
Quality Teaching and Learning

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This Curriculum Consumer Report provides information and guidance to help Head Start programs select high-quality, research-based preschool curricula that best fit with the strengths and needs of their participating children and teachers. The curricula reviewed in this report were rated for their implementation in center-based programs. However, portions of the report may be helpful for those offering Head Start preschool services through family child care homes. This report also provides suggestions for how programs may enhance selected curricula for classroom-based instruction.

Target Audience

This report is primarily designed for Head Start grantees, technical assistance providers such as the Early Childhood Education (ECE) specialists, preschool center directors, and others who are making decisions about curriculum.

Overview of the Report

Included in this report are descriptions of 13 components of an effective, comprehensive curriculum; steps to prioritize these components to facilitate the selection process; suggestions to enhance a curriculum to fit the needs of a specific program; and a set of ratings for 14 comprehensive curricula on the 13 components of an effective curriculum. The introductory material provides information that is essential to interpreting the curriculum ratings and using the ratings to help make curricular decisions for your program, so please read this first.

INCLUDED PRESCHOOL CURRICULA

Selection Criteria

A curriculum was considered for inclusion in this report if it addressed multiple learning domains in the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework (HSCDELF) and met the following inclusion criteria:

- Each curriculum meets the definition of a curriculum, as defined by the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*.
- The curriculum is comprehensive, meaning it includes more than two of the following learning domains found in HSCDELF:
    1. Language Development
    2. Literacy Knowledge & Skills
    3. Mathematics Knowledge & Skills
    4. Social & Emotional Development
- The curriculum contains a written plan with a set of sequenced lessons designed for preschool classrooms.
- The curriculum is commercially available. The included curricula were provided to the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (NCQTL) by the publishers.
- Data from the 2010, 2011, and 2012 *Program Information Report (PIR)* indicated that the curriculum had been selected for use in some Head Start programs.

The quality of the curriculum's breadth and depth of coverage of the identified learning domains was also rated as part of this report (components 2 and 3 in Components of an Effective Curriculum).

Definition of Comprehensive Curriculum

All curricula in this report meet the Head Start definition of a curriculum.

In this report, the term 'comprehensive' was defined as a curriculum addressing multiple HSCDELF learning domains. The term 'comprehensive' does not imply that the curriculum covered the identified learning domains in a high-quality manner.

In addition to these requirements, a curriculum also needs to be based on research-based child development principles (National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning, 2010).

BACKGROUND

In 2010, NCQTL outlined nine features that needed to be present in an effective curriculum in the document, *Choosing a Preschool Curriculum*. These include comprehensive domains of learning; specific learning goals; well-designed learning activities; responsive teaching; culturally and linguistically responsive teaching; individualized instruction; ongoing assessment; family involvement; and appropriateness for program staff, children, and families. These features are included in this report. In addition, we have added a component to assess if the early childhood curriculum is grounded in child development principles. We also added two components that address whether the curriculum is evidence-based and has shown effects on child outcomes. Finally, we added a component that examines the depth within the learning domains covered in the curriculum. We describe the 13 components used to rate each curriculum in the following section.

COMPONENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE CURRICULUM

Overview

The following 13 components were identified based on previous work done by NCQTL, as well as an extensive review of literature describing effective preschool curricula. For each component, there are several questions reviewers considered when determining the quality of the curriculum for that specific component.

Component 1: Curriculum is Grounded in Child Development Principles

Grounded in sound, child development principles as defined by Head Start (Wolverton, 2000).

Questions for review:

- Does the curriculum clearly align with the Head Start Child Development principles?
- Do learning activities progress from simple to more complex?

Component 2: Curriculum is Evidence-Based

The highest-quality research studies are completed independently from the curriculum publisher and are published in a peer-reviewed journal or by a major organization (e.g., Department of Education) (Joseph & Strain, 2003). There are studies that show the curriculum can be implemented with a high degree of fidelity. Multiple, diverse samples provide evidence that the curriculum is suited for many programs and children.

Questions for review:

- Has the curriculum been investigated using a rigorous design (e.g. quasi-experimental, randomized control trial)?
- Are there studies that include measures of fidelity of implementation? Fidelity of implementation is the extent to which the curriculum is being implemented in the manner that was intended by the developers. Do the measures of fidelity indicate moderate to high levels of implementation?
- Has the curriculum been studied in more than one sample? If so, do these samples allow the findings to be extended to diverse groups of children in terms of ethnicity/race and socio-economic status (SES)?

Component 3: Curriculum Shows Effects on Child Outcomes

Research provides evidence that a curriculum is effective when implementation of the curriculum is linked to positive child outcomes. Experimental or quasi-experimental studies published in peer-reviewed journals or by major organizations (e.g., Department of Education) show evidence that the curriculum is associated with child outcomes.

Questions for review:

- Does research demonstrate that the curriculum is associated with children's learning?
- What is the size of effects on child outcomes?

Component 4: Comprehensive across Learning Domains

Effective comprehensive curricula include learning activities that integrate multiple learning domains (e.g. Language, Math, and Social Skills; Fantuzzo, et al., 2005; Fantuzzo, Gadsen, & McDermott, 2011). By integrating multiple domains within a learning activity, children experience the way that content connects to different learning domains (see Figure 1). This encourages children to have a deeper understanding of the material. In addition, the most effective curricula provide activities that focus on the whole child (Barnett, 2008; Galinsky, 2006).

Questions for review:

- Does the curriculum cover the majority of learning domains of school readiness identified by the HSCDELF? If so, are major learning domains addressed evenly?
- Are the learning domains clearly articulated in each learning activity?
- Do major learning activities integrate content from (a) Language Development or Literacy Knowledge & Skills, and (b) Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, or Logic & Reasoning, and (c) Approaches to Learning, Social & Emotional Development, Physical Development & Health, or Creative Arts Expression?

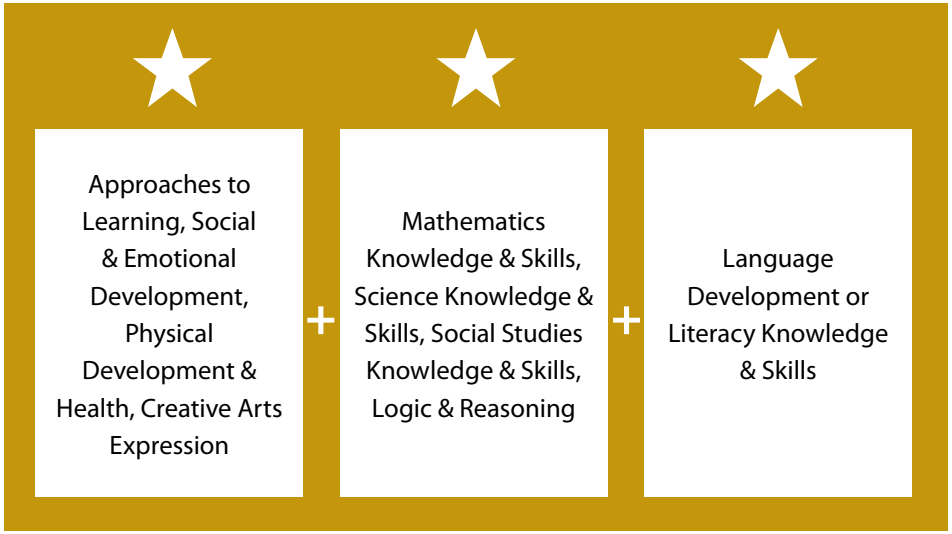

Figure 1

Component 5: Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain

An effective curriculum fully covers the learning domains that it proposes to cover. For example, if the curriculum states that it covers the Language Development learning domain, then it should fully address both Receptive Language and Expressive Language Development. The depth for each learning domain is made clear through an organized scope and sequence, or a curricular map that identifies how the curriculum covers each domain element in a sequenced, progressive manner.

Questions for review:

- Does the curriculum cover almost all domain elements within each learning domain?
- Is there an organized scope and sequence around each of the learning domains that present domain elements, and break them down into progressive steps, and link to individual learning activities?

Component 6: Specific Learning Goals

Clearly defined goals enable teachers and families to focus on what they are trying to accomplish and what skills are being measured. In addition, clear goals help establish alignment between the goals of the program and the goals of the curriculum, which leads to more cohesive and complete instruction.

Questions for review:

- Are there specific, measurable, child-focused, and developmentally appropriate goals for each learning activity?
- Is there alignment between the goals of the learning activity and the content within the learning activity?
- Is there alignment between learning goals for each learning activity and the scope and sequence?

Component 7: Well-Designed Learning Activities

Effective programs and curricula include well-designed, engaging learning experiences that support specific learning goals and objectives (Chambers et al., 2010). Young children learn best with highly interactive, experiential learning activities (Chambers et al., 2010; Galinsky, 2006). Additionally, clear and well-designed activities prompt and encourage teachers to use various strategies and interactive materials to further engage children in learning and development.

Questions for review:

- Are the learning activities easy to follow, and do they follow a similar pattern across different activities?
- Are multiple supports provided to facilitate implementation (e.g. guidelines for success or teacher's tips, list of materials for each activity, instructions for setting up the environment, etc.)?
- Does the curriculum prompt teachers to use multiple strategies and interactive materials?
- Is the purpose of the activity clear and meaningful?

Component 8: Responsive Teaching

The most effective curricula provide support to teachers to intentionally use responsive teaching, where teachers purposefully use a combination of child-focused and direct teaching strategies to make learning more appropriate to children's needs (Galinsky, 2006). Higher quality emotional and instructional teacher-child interactions have been linked to improvements in preschool children's academic and language skills (Mashburn et al., 2008).

Questions for review:

- Do the learning activities include both child-focused and teacher-directed strategies?
- Is there room for differentiating instruction based upon children's learning preferences?
- Is support provided within learning activities for how to engage in high-quality interactions with children?
- Are instructional examples provided for how to respond to different learning preferences that are specific to the learning activity?

Component 9: Supports for Individualized Instruction

Effective curricula address individual differences among children (Ramey & Ramey, 1992). By providing guidance in how to adapt activities, materials, and the learning environment for children with special needs, the curriculum facilitates accessibility to the learning activities for all children.

Questions for review:

- Do learning activities provide activity-specific support for children who are below as well as for children who are above cognitive/academic expectations?
- Are there guidelines on how to adapt learning activities for different levels of physical or social emotional development?
- Are there guidelines for ways to adapt the materials and/or environment to meet different levels of need?

Component 10: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive

The most effective curricula provide support so that teachers can be responsive to the cultural and linguistic needs of children, families, and communities (Galinsky, 2006). Children in preschool programs, in which teachers speak the children's home languages, show better development of social skills (Chang et al., 2007). Programs that support both the development of English and of the children's home languages can help low-income children who are dual-language learners increase their proficiency in both languages (Winsler, Diaz, Espinosa, & Rodriguez, 1999).

Questions for review:

- Does the curriculum provide materials for use inside the classroom and for families in languages other than English?
- Do materials present diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, gender, etc.? Are they incorporated throughout most learning activities?
- Is there guidance provided to teachers in how to assist dual-language learners?
- Is there guidance provided to teachers in how to adapt the learning activities to meet a specific program's cultural and linguistic needs?

Component 11: Ongoing Assessments

The most effective programs and curricula include an ongoing assessment component (Barnett, 2008). Effective curricular assessments link to both the learning goals of the activities and to children's learning outcomes. In order to facilitate use and meaningfulness, assessments should be user-friendly and provide guidance for how teachers and programs analyze and interpret assessment data to help teachers tailor future instruction to increase children's learning and development (Galinsky, 2006). Additionally, evidence of validation provides support that the assessment is linked to child outcomes.

Questions for review:

- Are the assessments based on sound child development principles?
- Are the assessments aligned with learning goals covered in learning activities?
- Do the assessments measure children's skills on outcomes that are aligned with the HSCDELF?
- Are the assessments easily accessible, user-friendly, and efficient to implement?
- Does the curriculum provide support for how teachers should analyze and interpret assessment results, in order to adapt future learning activities?
- Is there research evidence that the assessments are linked to child outcomes?

Component 12: Professional Development Opportunities

Individualized consultation and regular feedback are most effective in improving preschool teachers' use of instructional strategies (Pianta et al., 2008). By offering professional development in a variety of ways, the curriculum can facilitate teachers and staff with both initial and ongoing training.

Questions for review:

- Does the curriculum provide comprehensive initial as well as ongoing training?
- Are there a variety of levels of individualization provided?
- Is professional development (PD) available for staff members other than teachers?
- Are there multiple modes (e.g. initial group, supplemental webinars) of PD that are available at different entry points (e.g. initial, ongoing, mastery)?
- Is there evidence that the PD supports have a positive change on a teacher's implementation practices?

Component 13: Family Involvement Materials

The most effective programs and curricula include strong family education and/or support components (Galinsky, 2006; Barnard, 2004). Incorporating families into the classroom is an essential part of engaging them in their children's learning. Materials provided to families suggest ways to extend the learning across a variety of domains (e.g. Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Social & Emotional Development, etc.).

Questions for review:

- Are materials provided for teachers to distribute to caregivers that review what children are learning in the classroom?
- Are strategies provided for families to review and extend learning outside of the classroom?
- Is guidance provided on how teachers can link learning goals to home?
- Are there suggestions for how to incorporate parent and family volunteers in the classroom?
- Are there suggestions for how to establish and maintain a positive family-teacher relationship?
- Do materials for families provide support across learning domains?

PRIORITIZING COMPONENTS

No Curriculum Is Perfect

Every curriculum has strengths and weaknesses both across learning domains and across the 13 components identified for the purposes of this report. Since this is the case, no one curriculum will be the best fit for all programs. Prior to selecting a curriculum, individuals from the program need to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their program resources, including staff, curriculum, etc.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Your Program

Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of your program is an important step to take in order to choose a curriculum that best fits your classroom needs. One suggestion is to create a curriculum-focused self-assessment team which may include staff, families, policy group members, and community members. This team can assist in identifying areas which need improvement using your child outcome data. Component 2 (Curriculum is Evidence Based) and Component 3 (Curriculum Shows Effects on Child Outcomes) address whether rigorous research has been conducted on the curriculum, and whether there is evidence of impact of the curriculum on children's outcomes. Using this information, you might select a curriculum where there is evidence of positive child outcomes in the domain or domains where you would like to see growth in your own program.

Another suggestion is to explore the resources available on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) website that may help assess your current curriculum or curricula. See Figure 2 for some suggestions and Appendix C for a complete list of resources.

Process of Prioritizing

Out of the 13 components of an effective curriculum, a program must prioritize which ones are most important to them according to the needs of the program. Here are a few scenarios to consider.

- If your program has many teachers with little experience teaching preschool, you may consider choosing a curriculum that has a strong evidence base for supporting child outcomes (component 3), clear organization of goals (component 6), activities (component 7), assessments (component 11), and guided, prompted support for implementation. Extensive initial training and professional development opportunities should be available as well (component 12).
- If your program has many experienced teachers, you might consider choosing a curriculum that is comprehensive across learning domains (component 4), covers learning domains in depth (component 5), and provides opportunities for individualizing activities based on children's learning preferences (responsive teaching, component 8).
- If a majority of the children in your program are dual-language learners, then you may want to choose a curriculum that provides a high level of scaffolding for adapting the curriculum to be culturally and linguistically responsive (component 10).

Figure 2

Curriculum, Assessment and the Head Start Framework: An Alignment Review Tool
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/docs/alignment-guide.pdf

For an overall program self-assessment:
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/operations/mgmt-admin/assess-monitor/self-assess/manage_pub_00806a_093005.html

Self-assessment booklet on curriculum and assessment:
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/operations/mgmt-admin/assess-monitor/self-assess/St-2-Book-12.pdf

ENHANCING A CURRICULUM

Suggestions for Ways to Enhance a Curriculum to Meet the Needs of Your Program

After your program has decided on a curriculum or a set of curricula, the work is not yet complete. In order to meet the unique needs of the teachers, children, and families in your program, a curriculum needs to be enhanced to best fit these needs both at the beginning of the year and on an ongoing basis throughout the year. By enhancing a curriculum, you are not significantly altering the content or scope and sequence of a curriculum, rather meeting the specific needs of the program. If a significant change is made, it may influence the outcomes a program is expecting. Training and technical assistance providers with whom we have worked suggest the following ways that a curriculum can be enhanced to meet the needs of a specific program:

- Supplement the curriculum's set of picture books with books that reflect the diversity and languages spoken in your classroom.
- Partner with local early intervention programs for additional professional development opportunities.
- Provide time for teachers and early intervention staff to receive training on common topic areas.
- Incorporate opportunities for teachers, teacher aides, and early intervention staff to plan together.
- Encourage teachers to plan together both within the same age level and across different age levels.
- Supplement a curriculum to respond to the needs of children learning more than one language.

CURRICULA RATINGS

How to Read Tables

The curricula ratings are presented in two ways. The first is in an overall table, which includes ratings for all curricula across all components. The second is in individual curriculum tables, which include information about the curriculum, as well as ratings and a brief rationale for each rating.

Overall Table—Ratings for All Curricula for All Components

The overall table is set up with the 13 components of an effective curriculum listed in columns, and the curricula that have been reviewed listed (in alphabetical order) in rows.

Individual Curriculum Tables—Description and Ratings

For each individual curriculum, there are two tables. The first table provides a general description of the curriculum, including covered learning domains, target population, cost, etc. The second table includes the ratings for the curriculum across the 13 components of an effective curriculum, as well as a brief rationale for each rating. For a more detailed description about the sections of each table, see Appendix B.

LIMITATIONS

This document contains a set of 13 components of an effective curriculum, as identified by a careful review of literature and consultation with child development and early education specialists from NCQTL. Although we believe these components to fully address what is necessary for inclusion in a high-quality, effective comprehensive curriculum, we make no claims that these are the only components of an effective curriculum. Specialists in particular learning areas may identify additional criteria for content-specific curricula.

Systematic reviews of preschool curricula may use other criteria, sometimes more rigorous or more restricted. In our review, we sought to balance the need for a research-based curriculum with supporting evidence with other programmatic concerns, such as meeting the needs of enrolled children.

A diligent effort was made to ensure that all available and published curricula that met the inclusion requirements and were used by at least some Head Start programs were included in the report. Although a stringent and extensive review occurred for each curriculum (see Appendix A), ratings should be considered as only one factor in making a decision about a curriculum. Other factors included in the decision process may be cost, available materials, specific program needs, familiarity with a curriculum, etc.

This document was prepared under Grant #90HC0002 for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, by the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning.

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM CONSUMER REPORT

Name of Curriculum	Grounded in Child Development Principles	Evidence-Based	Effects on Child Outcomes	Comprehensive across Learning Domains	Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	Specific Learning Goals	Well-Designed Learning Activities	Responsive Teaching	Supports for Individualized Instruction	Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	Ongoing Assessments	Professional Development Opportunities	Family Involvement Materials
Core Knowledge® Preschool Sequence	★	☆	☆	★	★	½	½	★	½	½	★	★	★
The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool	★	½	☆	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Curiosity Corner	★	½	☆	½	½	½	★	½	☆	½	½	★	★
DLM Early Childhood Express®	★	½	½	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	½	★
Frog Street Pre-K	★	☆	☆	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Galileo Pre-K Online	★	½	☆	★	★	★	★	½	½	½	★	★	½
Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP)®	☆	☆	☆	½	½	½	★	½	★	½	★	½	½

☆	½	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

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Name of Curriculum	Grounded in Child Development Principles	Evidence-Based	Effects on Child Outcomes	Comprehensive across Learning Domains	Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	Specific Learning Goals	Well-Designed Learning Activities	Responsive Teaching	Supports for Individualized Instruction	Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	Ongoing Assessments	Professional Development Opportunities	Family Involvement Materials
HighReach Learning®	★	☆	☆	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
HighScope®	★	½	½	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Innovations: The Comprehensive Preschool Curriculum	★	☆	☆	½	½	☆	½	½	☆	½	½	½	★
The InvestiGator Club®	★	☆	☆	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Let's Begin with the Letter People®	★	☆	☆	★	★	★	★	★	½	★	★	★	★
Opening the World of Learning (OWL)	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	½	½
PreschoolFirst	★	☆	☆	★	★	★	★	★	★	½	★	★	★
Scholastic Big Day for PreK™	★	½	☆	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	½	★
Tools of the Mind	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★

☆	½	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

NCQTL

For more information, contact us at: **NCQTL@UW.EDU** or **877-731-0764**

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Core Knowledge® Preschool Sequence

Curriculum Description

Core Knowledge® Preschool Sequence is a guide for planning activities in multiple areas, including physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, language, etc. Guiding principles throughout the curriculum are as follows: specific goals and skills are necessary, children are always ready to learn, and assessment and instruction are intertwined.

The Core Knowledge Foundation. (2012). *The Preschool Sequence*. Retrieved from: http://www.coreknowledge.org/the-preschool-sequence

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–5

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction

Cost per Classroom

Preschool Sequence Starter Kit Option A: $339; Preschool Sequence Starter Kit Option B: $179

Manual can be purchased separately.

Retrieved from: http://books.coreknowledge.org/home.php

Training

1st year of implementation: Customized professional development plan free of charge; workshops and institutes ranging in price from $375 to $800; on-site workshop prices vary depending on amount of participants and days; follow-up visit costs vary depending on the type of follow-up (school, workshop, or analysis of curriculum and practices) and the number of classrooms

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

The Core Knowledge Sequence: Content and Skill Guidelines for Preschool; CK Preschool Assessment Tool; What Your Preschooler Needs to Know: Activity Books 1–2; What Your Preschooler Needs to Know: Read Alouds; CK Preschool Sequence and Teacher Handbook; CK catalog

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

CORE KNOWLEDGE® PRESCHOOL SEQUENCE		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles:** *Core Knowledge* is based on developmentally appropriate standards that are somewhat consistent with research literature and the Head Start (HS) child development principles. The content within the Core Knowledge curriculum is consistent with the HS child development principle that learning activities occur in a sequential and ordered pattern. Three guiding principles drive the curricular sequence: explicitly stated goals and skills are necessary, children are always ready to learn, and assessment and instruction are intertwined. However, the curriculum does not fully address the HS child development principle that a child's social and cultural context influences a child's learning and development. Thus, the curriculum aligns with only some of the HS child development principles.
Evidence-Based	☆	At the time of this review, there are no research studies on the *Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence* available in peer-reviewed journals. The Core Knowledge company includes two studies on their website that have been conducted with the Preschool Sequence. These studies both use a pre-test, post-test design with no control group. Positive outcomes were found in literacy, social-emotional, language, and math reasoning. • **Research Rigor:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Curriculum Implementation:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Replication/Generalizability:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies.
Effects on Child Outcomes	☆	**Child Outcomes:** At the time of this review, there are no available research studies that report child outcomes in published, peer-reviewed journals.
Comprehensive across Learning Domains	★	• **Breadth:** For the majority of the example learning activities, the curriculum covers Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, and Social & Emotional Development. • **Clarity and Coherence:** Domains are clearly articulated, but they do not include prescribed learning activities for the majority of domain elements. The part of the activity that is specific to each domain is not labeled. • **Integration:** Within the example activities, there is a mix of those that integrate across more than one learning domain and those that focus on only one learning domain.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements:** *Core Knowledge* covers almost all of the domain elements in its sequence, but does not include prescribed learning activities to cover the majority of domain elements. Since it is up to the teacher to create the majority of activities to meet objective guidelines, the curriculum gets less weight in covering the domain elements. • **Scope and Sequence:** A scope and sequence is provided, which covers the domain elements and breaks them down into objectives, but it is not connected directly to individual learning activities.
Specific Learning Goals	⯪	• **Goals or Objectives:** *Core Knowledge* presents specific, measurable, and child-focused goals for each learning domain. However, because this curriculum does not have a comprehensive set of learning activities, goals are not tied to actual activities. • **Alignment to Activity Content:** The example activities fit into the labeled learning domains, but are not linked to specific goals or skills. Furthermore, it is not articulated which parts of the activities meet which goals. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** There is a lack of alignment between the goals and the scope and sequence since a sequence of learning activities is not provided.

CORE KNOWLEDGE® PRESCHOOL SEQUENCE		
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★½	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** For the example activities that are provided, there is a mix of clarity since some follow a similar pattern, while others do not. • **Ease of Implementation:** Although the curriculum provides teachers with suggestions for activities and "teaching ideas," the teacher must create the majority of the learning activities. Additionally, there is no list of materials or guidelines for how to implement activities. • **Variety:** The curriculum prompts teachers to choose learning activities that use a variety of teaching modalities, strategies, and materials, but in a general manner it does not meet a wide variety of learning styles. • **Purpose:** The purpose of each example activity is not always evident, since it is not always linked to children's development or a learning domain element.
Responsive Teaching	★	• **Variety of Strategies:** *Core Knowledge* encourages teachers to use both teacher-directed and child-focused activities when creating learning activities, but this encouragement occurs in a general manner and is not linked to specific activities. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** General guidance is provided for how to engage in effective teacher-child interactions specific to the learning domain, but not to individual learning activities. • **Instructional Examples:** Some instructional examples are provided, but these are not linked to specific learning activities.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	★½	• **Support for Children below Cognitive Expectations:** *Core Knowledge* provides a scaffolding section for each domain with general suggestions for how to provide both high and low support to children struggling with specific skills (e.g., for the skill of identifying money: provide high support by sorting coins and dollar bills; provide low support by sorting types of coins). This support is linked to specific skills, rather than learning activities. • **Support for Children above Cognitive Expectations:** There is a scaffolding section for each domain with general suggestions that are not linked to specific activities for children performing above cognitive expectations. (See above for more information regarding the scaffolding section). • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** Our review found no evidence for ways teachers could adapt the instruction for children with emotional and/or physical needs. • **Material Adaptation:** Our review found no evidence for how to adapt materials to meet different levels of need. • **Environment Adaptation:** Our review found no evidence for support for teachers to adapt the classroom environment for different levels of need.

CORE KNOWLEDGE® PRESCHOOL SEQUENCE		
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	★	• **Materials Represent Diversity:** *Core Knowledge* provides multiple materials for use inside the classroom and for families. The materials are provided in English only and do not speak to the importance of finding materials to include in the classroom that reflect languages spoken by children. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Language and Culture:** The materials that are provided do not represent diverse cultures, ethnicities, gender, etc. There is no guidance in how to select classroom materials that are responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** *Core Knowledge* offers a separate section for how to meet the needs of children who speak English as a second language (including evidence-based strategies, example activities, and example teacher-child interactions). Guidance is not infused throughout the curriculum, and there is no guidance for teachers who speak the home languages of the children. Additionally, there is no information for ways to encourage development of the home languages. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center:** Our review found no evidence of guidance for teachers in how to adapt the curriculum for cultures specific to their classroom. The curriculum does not provide guidance for how to gather information from families regarding their home cultures in order to develop meaningful environments and activities for children. The curriculum does not provide guidance to actively engage families in order to adapt and adopt activities from the families' home cultures.
Ongoing Assessments	★	The Core Knowledge Preschool Assessment Tool is a software-based system that is included with the curriculum at no additional cost. The system is based on observations, and there are various data sheets to record observations for each child under each domain. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** The *Core Knowledge Preschool Assessment* is directly aligned with the Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence. However, the assessment does not link to individual activities (because teachers choose their own learning activities that align to Core Knowledge goals). • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** The assessment measures skills in the following *Core Knowledge* learning domains: Autonomy & Social Skills, Oral Language, Early Literacy Skills in Reading and Writing, Mathematics, Science, Art, Music, and Movement. These domains cover most of the learning domains identified by the HSCDELF. • **Using Assessment Information:** There is detailed information about what to look for in regards to child development, and when this progress should be evident for the assessment. However, there are few guidelines as to how to adapt future instruction based on the assessment information. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** Assessments seem to be time-consuming and complex since there are numerous portions of the assessment and not all of it provides sufficient guidance, although there are parts that are scripted. • **Validated Assessments:** There is evidence that assessments are based on sound child development principles. However, there is no evidence that the assessments are linked with children's learning outcomes.

CORE KNOWLEDGE® PRESCHOOL SEQUENCE		
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** A 6-day initial training is provided for teachers regarding how to get started with *Core Knowledge*. Additionally, the training covers assessment and how to help children develop autonomy, social skills, and work habits. • **Continued Professional Development:** Ongoing training is available through institutes, workshops, and web-based resources. The professional development covers a range of possible supports that programs may need. • **Level of Individualization:** Core Knowledge Foundation offers a customized professional development plan for the program, but it does not provide supports at a variety of different levels, such as the individual teacher level. • **Other Program Staff:** The 6-day initial training is inclusive of other staff. Additionally, a Core Knowledge Coordinator and Leadership Institute is offered for administrators to attend. • **Multiple Modes:** There is evidence of workshops, handbooks, webinars, consultations, and other online sources. They are offered at different entry points (e.g., beginning teacher, experienced teacher). • **Evidence of Validation:** There is little evidence of validation of the professional development program.
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** Materials are provided for teachers to distribute to caregivers at an additional cost, including monthly newsletters, a DVD, a brochure detailing the curriculum, and the book series, *What Your Preschooler Needs to Know*. These materials review what children are learning. The curriculum does not offer supports for ways to adapt the materials to best meet the specific needs of the classroom. • **Teacher Guidance:** There is some guidance provided for teachers to work with parents and extend learning to the home environment, but it is not specific to activities. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** *Core Knowledge* encourages teachers to welcome and incorporate families into the classroom, and there is a separate section that provides information for how to involve parents in the classroom. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** *Core Knowledge* provides general guidance for establishing a parent-teacher relationship, including meeting and greeting parents daily, sending out monthly newsletters, setting up parent meetings, etc. However, there are no specific guidelines that detail how to carry out these interactions. • **Comprehensive:** There are comprehensive activity books that cover multiple learning domains, including literacy, language, mathematics, science, etc. The materials do not discuss the general importance of the parent-child relationship or child development.

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The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool

Curriculum Description

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool is a set of classroom resources that includes two types of tools: the Foundation volumes that provide the knowledge base of the curriculum and the Daily Resources, which offer step-by-step guidance for how to incorporate learning experiences that address 38 objectives for development and learning.

Teaching Strategies, LLC (2002–2012). *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool*. Retrieved from: http://www.teachingstrategies.com/curriculum

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, English Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–5

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction
- Child-Directed Learning

Cost per Classroom

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool: $2,149. The Foundation and the Daily Resources can be purchased separately, depending on program needs, at a cost of $1,999 for the Daily Resources and $189.95 for the Foundation. Mighty Minutes can also be purchased separately at a cost of $149.95. Manual can be purchased separately.

Teaching Strategies GOLD®, a closely linked preschool assessment instrument, is also available; pricing varies according to program size. *The Creative Curriculum®* does not require any special materials or manipulative kits other than those likely to be found in most preschool classrooms; however, preassembled kits that support implementation of each activity are available for purchase (pricing ranges from $83.95 to $187.95).

Retrieved from: https://www.teachingstrategies.com/page/73756-creative-curriculum-system-preschool.cfm

Training

1- to 4-day on-site workshops; free online training, webinars, a blog, YouTube videos, and a professional development center. Training is embedded in the curriculum and the assessment system.

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, Teaching Strategies GOLD® assessment kit

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM® FOR PRESCHOOL		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles:** *The Creative Curriculum* is fully aligned with the Head Start child development principles, as well as research literature. The curriculum presents learning activities that follow a sequential and ordered pattern. The curriculum is based on five foundational principles: positive interactions and relationships with adults are critical for learning; social-emotional competence is a significant factor in success at school; constructive and purposeful play supports learning; the physical environment affects the type and quality of learning interactions; and teacher-family partnerships promote learning and development. These principles align with HS child development principles fully.
Evidence-Based	⯪	At the time of this review, there are two primary research studies that have been published; both are part of the Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research Consortium (PCER) (Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research Consortium, 2008). Additional studies have been conducted using quasi-experimental and pre-test, post-test design, but these are not available in a peer-reviewed journal. Furthermore, at the time of this review, there is a randomized controlled trial that explores the use of *The Creative Curriculum* in classrooms, how the curriculum affects children's and teachers' expectations, and how well it promotes positive child outcomes. • **Research Rigor:** In the PCER study, *The Creative Curriculum* was evaluated using high-quality methodology. A randomized control design was used, and outcome measures collected were standardized and independent from the curriculum. • **Curriculum Implementation:** Fidelity of implementation was collected for the control and treatment groups using a measure created by the research team and a global implementation scale used throughout the PCER study. Fidelity was rated to be medium (roughly a 2 on a scale of 0 to 3). • **Replication/Generalizability:** The majority of samples used were from Head Start programs, which included low-income, minority students.
Effects on Child Outcomes	☆	The PCER studies found no discernible effects on oral language, print knowledge, phonological processing, or math skills.
Comprehensive across Learning Domains	★	• **Breadth:** *The Creative Curriculum* covers all HSCDELF domains, with a focus on Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, and Social & Emotional Development. • **Clarity and Coherence:** The majority of the learning activities list the covered learning domains. However, they do not consistently point out the parts of the activity that match each domain. • **Integration:** *The Creative Curriculum* includes several types of learning activities, which integrate across domains, for example, Intentional Teaching Cards, Teaching Guides, and Mighty Minutes.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements:** The curriculum fully covers the majority of the HSCDELF domains. However, coverage of some domains was less comprehensive than others. For example, in each of the following domains, there was one domain element missing coverage: Physical Development & Health, Logic & Reasoning, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, and Social & Emotional Development. Individual activities clearly indicate which learning domains are covered. • **Scope and Sequence:** There is an identifiable scope and sequence that is organized around individual learning domains. For some activities ("Intentional Teaching Cards" and "Mighty Minutes"), the scope and sequence is linked to the individual learning activities.

THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM® FOR PRESCHOOL		
Specific Learning Goals	★	• **Goals or Objectives:** *The Creative Curriculum* specifically provides learning objectives for some activities, such as the Intentional Teaching Cards and Mighty Minutes, but not for others, such as the Teaching Guides. Additionally, learning objectives are somewhat broad, e.g., Demonstrates gross motor manipulative skills and Demonstrates knowledge about self. • **Alignment to Activity Content:** For activities that provide specific learning goals, there is evidence of alignment between the goals and activity. However, when there are multiple goals listed, it is not indicated which pieces of the activity meet which goals. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** There is evidence of alignment between the scope and sequence and the provided learning goals.
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** The learning activities within *The Creative Curriculum* contain clear directions, are easy to follow, and for the most part, contain a similar pattern across activities. • **Ease of Implementation:** The "At a Glance" pages presented for each Teaching Guide show the materials and daily resources needed for the week. Intentional Teaching Cards provide a list of materials and preparation tips. • **Variety:** The curriculum encourages teachers to use a variety of strategies and interactive materials. Structured activities are primarily teacher-directed (e.g., large group, read-aloud, small group). The activities that children engage in during "Interest Areas" appear to be primarily child-directed. • **Purpose**: The curriculum identifies objectives, which have a stated purpose. Individual learning activities are linked to objectives, but do not have a purpose directly tied to them.
Responsive Teaching	★	• **Variety of Strategies:** The activities within *The Creative Curriculum* encourage teachers to use both teacher-directed and child-focused strategies. Room is provided for differentiating based on learning preferences in the "Including All Children" section, which provides strategies for addressing a variety of learning styles. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** For each activity, the curriculum provides suggested ways to support high-quality interactions with children, as well as a separate section on how to develop and maintain these types of interactions. • **Instructional Examples:** Within the Intentional Teaching Cards, the curriculum provides a section called "Including All Children", which addresses multiple learning styles and preferences and includes instructional examples for how to do so.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	★	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive Expectations:** Some learning activities, i.e., Intentional Teaching Cards, provide support for children who are performing below cognitive/academic expectations, while other activities, i.e., Mighty Minutes, do not do so. • **Support for Children Above Cognitive Expectations:** Some learning activities, i.e., Intentional Teaching Cards, Volumes 3 and 4, provide support for children who are performing above cognitive/academic expectations, while other activities, i.e., Mighty Minutes, do not do so. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs**: Some materials, i.e., Intentional Teaching Cards, Volumes 3 and 4, provide support for children who have emotional and/or physical needs, particularly activities that address the Physical Development & Health and Social & Emotional Development HSCDELF learning domains. • **Material Adaptation:** Some guidance is provided for how to adapt materials for children with different needs specific to activities found on Intentional Teaching Cards. Some units in the Teaching Guide include additional information about how to respond to the specific needs of individual children. • **Environment Adaptation:** *The Creative Curriculum* provides suggestions on how to set up the learning environment to support the needs of all learners.

THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM® FOR PRESCHOOL		
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	★	• **Materials Represent Diversity:** *The Creative Curriculum* includes materials for use in the classroom (learning activities, vocabulary) and for families (family connection resources) in both English and Spanish, but not in other languages. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Language and Culture:** Some materials reflect diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity, and culture (e.g., supplemental story books). The foundational volumes provide guidance to teachers in selecting materials, which reflect cultures and languages spoken by children. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** Some guidance is provided to address the needs of children with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds; however, this guidance is primarily found in the foundational volumes. Some tips are provided in the Teaching Guides and Intentional Teaching Cards. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Program:** *The Creative Curriculum* includes information within "Volume 1: The Foundation" that addresses the importance of adapting the curriculum to meet specific cultural needs of the childcare center and family diversity. The curriculum encourages teachers to gather information about home languages from families. However, guidance is not infused throughout the curriculum; it is limited to a separate section and listed in general terms. There are not specific guidelines for working with people from different cultures.
Ongoing Assessments	★	The assessment, Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment Toolkit, is available at an additional cost. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** The assessment aligns with the learning goals covered in individual learning activities. At the bottom of each activity card is information linking it to assessment criteria. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes**: The assessment is fully aligned to HSCDELF domains and outcomes. • **Using Assessment Information:** Assessment data are gathered through observation. The curriculum provides general guidelines and strategies for adapting future learning activities based on assessment data. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** Assessments appear easy and efficient to implement. There are multiple training opportunities to assist teachers in the implementation of the assessment toolkit, including webinars, in-person professional development sessions, etc. • **Validated Assessments**: There is evidence that assessments are based on sound child development principles. A study conducted by the Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation provides evidence that Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment Toolkit is a valid and reliable instrument for assessing developmental progress; however, at the time of this review, this study has not been published in a peer-reviewed journal.

THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM® FOR PRESCHOOL		
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** *The Creative Curriculum* provides comprehensive initial training that provides in-depth content related to implementing the curriculum. • **Continued Professional Development:** Ongoing professional development is available for a wide range of topics, including supporting English language learners, observation, classroom management, language and literacy, etc. • **Level of Individualization:** The curriculum provides a variety of support for individualization (menu of topics for teachers to choose from, webinars, on-site live training, and group training sessions at a professional development center). *The Creative Curriculum* provides individualized professional development support embedded in the Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment Toolkit. • **Other Program Staff:** There is a moderate amount of professional development available for program staff members other than teachers (workshop and webinar for administrators who support the implementation of *The Creative Curriculum*). • **Multiple Modes**: Professional development is available in multiple modes of delivery (online, video, on-site live training, live training at a professional development center). • **Evidence of Validation**: Our review found no evidence of validation that professional development materials were related to improved teacher practices.
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** The curriculum provides some materials (e.g., Letters to Families, weekly plans) to distribute to caregivers that review what children are learning in the classroom. At times, these materials provide strategies for families to review and extend learning outside the classroom. Other materials (that were not included in this review) can be purchased at an additional cost from *The Creative Curriculum* website. • **Teacher Guidance:** There is guidance provided to the teacher on how to link learning goals to home in a meaningful way. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** There is guidance provided to the teacher for how to welcome and involve family members in the classroom. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** There are suggestions for how to establish and maintain a positive parent-teacher relationship within the Foundation books. • **Comprehensive:** The parent materials that are included in the review are comprehensive and provide support across a variety of learning and developmental domains. Additionally, materials establish the general importance of the parent-child relationship.

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Curiosity Corner

Curriculum Description

Curiosity Corner contains 38 integrated weekly thematic units. The *Curiosity Corner Teacher's Manual* provides general outcomes, philosophy, description of curriculum components, teaching strategies, Home Links, teacher support, and assessment tools.

Success for All Foundation (2012). *Curiosity Corner.* Retrieved from: http://www.successforall.org/Early-Childhoood/Powerful-Instruction/Curiosity-Corner/

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–5

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction

Cost per Classroom

$3,495; 5-day school wide professional development training, limited to 40 teachers per day: $12,500. Manual can be purchased separately.

Cost of implementation obtained by emailing sfainfo@successforall.org.

Training

Success for All Foundation coach will provide two days of initial workshops as well as ongoing coaching through site visits, telephone consultations, regularly scheduled webinars, and embedded professional development. Phone and email support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

Curiosity Corner Teacher's Manual, Curiosity Corner Program Overview, Units 1-38

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

CURIOSITY CORNER		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles:** *Curiosity Corner* is based on sound child development principles that are somewhat consistent with Head Start child development principles and research literature. The learning activities follow Head Start child development principles by organizing activities so that learning and development occur in sequential and orderly patterns. Although the curriculum emphasizes the development of the whole child, *Curiosity Corner* does not fully address the Head Start child development principle that a child's social and cultural context influences a child's learning and development. Thus, the curriculum aligns with only some of the Head Start child development principles.
Evidence-Based	½	At the time of this review, there is one research study that has been published; this study is part of the Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research Consortium (PCER) (Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research Consortium, 2008). An additional study has been conducted using a quasi-experimental design, but this study has not been published in a peer-reviewed journal. • **Research Rigor**: The research study included in the PCER study uses a randomized control design. The curriculum that the comparison group was exposed to varied and included some teacher-developed and some published curricula. Outcome measures were standardized and independent from the curriculum. • **Curriculum Implementation:** Fidelity of implementation was collected for the control and treatment groups using a measure created by the research team and a global implementation scale used throughout the PCER study. Fidelity was rated to be medium (roughly a 2 on a scale of 0 to 3). • **Replication/ Generalizability:** The sample included 211 children in 31 classrooms. Roughly half of the children were male, half were African-American, and 14% were reported to have a disability. This sample can be generalized to Head Start populations, but only one study was conducted (to date, there has been no replication).
Effects on Child Outcomes	☆	• The PCER study found no statistically significant differences between the control group and the group receiving *Curiosity Corner* for oral language, print knowledge, phonological processing, or mathematics; thus there were no findings of child outcomes.
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	½	• **Breadth**: The curriculum covers multiple HSCDELF learning domains, including Social & Emotional Development, Language Development, and Literacy Knowledge & Skills, on a daily basis. It also covers other domains (Creative Arts Expression, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, and Physical Development & Health) on a less regular basis through learning labs, which children can choose to explore. The curriculum has a strong focus on Language Development and Literacy Knowledge & Skills. • **Clarity and Coherence**: The learning domains are covered in different activities throughout the day, but they are not clearly labeled. • **Integration:** The majority of learning activities focus on only one learning domain, rather than integrating across multiple domains. There is little evidence of cross-curricular strategies that are linked to individual learning activities.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	½	• **Domain Elements**: *Curiosity Corner* covers most domain elements as identified by the HSCDELF. However, individual learning activities do not specify which domain elements are covered in each. Additionally, many of the domains are covered in Learning Labs, which children choose to attend from a variety of options. Thus, a child may choose to not attend Learning Labs that target a specific domain and so will not be exposed to instruction in that domain. • **Scope and Sequence:** The curriculum includes a scope and sequence for Language Development and Literacy Knowledge & Skills, but not for other HSCDELF learning domains. Additionally, this scope and sequence is linked to units, rather than to individual learning activities.

CURIOSITY CORNER		
Specific Learning Goals	★½	• **Goals or Objectives**: *Curiosity Corner* identifies learning goals for the week and the day, but not for individual learning activities. These goals are primarily broad, rather than specific and measurable. • **Alignment to Activity Content:** Objectives are identified for each day, but not for individual learning activities. The content of the daily activities aligns with the daily learning objectives, but it is unclear which parts align with which objectives. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** A scope and sequence is provided for the Language Development and Literacy Knowledge & Skills domains, and it is aligned to learning objectives at the unit level, but not for each individual learning activity. No scope and sequence is provided for the other learning domains.
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** The learning activities are logical and easy to follow. The activities, daily schedule, and units follow a similar pattern throughout the curriculum. • **Ease of Implementation:** Multiple supports are provided for each weekly theme in the theme guide to help facilitate implementation. Information is provided about setting up the environment, learning objectives, vocabulary, and necessary materials. An appendix is also included for each guide that includes a sample letter to families and additional resources. Teacher tips are incorporated throughout the learning activities in the outside margins. • **Variety:** The curriculum prompts teachers to use multiple strategies (whole group, small group, Learning Labs, and pairs) and interactive materials (art materials, games, buttons, etc.) • **Purpose:** The learning goals provided at the beginning of each day, "How will children grow today?" offer a fairly broad purpose for the learning activities included in the day. There is little evidence that these goals are linked to specific child outcomes.
Responsive Teaching	★½	• **Variety of Strategies:** Within the curriculum, there is a mix of teacher-directed and child-focused activities. The majority of whole group learning activities are primarily teacher-directed. The curriculum encourages teachers to adapt learning activities creatively in order to meet needs within their own classrooms, but the daily plan of learning activities is so structured that there is little time for this to occur. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** *Curiosity Corner* provides prompts for teachers with regards to greeting children and families at the beginning of the day, as well as suggested scripted language to use during learning activities. There is minimal evidence of support provided to teachers in the importance of high-quality interactions and how to engage in feedback and scaffolding with children. • **Instructional Examples:** Few instructional examples are provided for ways to differentiate the learning activities to meet different learning styles.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	☆	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive Expectations**: Our review found no evidence for ways to support children who are performing below academic or cognitive expectations. • **Support for Children Above Cognitive Expectations:** Our review found no evidence for ways to support children who are performing above academic or cognitive expectations. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** Our review found no evidence for ways to support children with physical and/or emotional needs. • **Material Adaptation:** Our review found no evidence for ways to adapt materials to meet different levels of need. • **Environment Adaptation:** Our review found no evidence for ways to adapt the environment to meet different levels of need.

CURIOSITY CORNER		
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive		• **Materials Represent Diversity:** The curriculum provides materials for families (weekly newsletter, story sharing sheets) in both English and Spanish. Provided materials for use inside the classroom are available in English only. The curriculum does not provide materials in multiple languages. It does not speak to the importance of finding materials to include in the classroom that reflect languages spoken by the children. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Language and Culture:** Most classroom materials represent a single culture, and there are a few materials (books, manipulative materials) that represent diversity in terms of ethnicity and gender. Prompts are not provided to the teacher for selecting materials that are responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity of children within the center. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** *Curiosity Corner* provides a section in the teacher's manual that describes broad tips and strategies for how English-speaking teachers can communicate with children who speak languages other than English. Guidance is not infused throughout the curriculum. Additionally, the curriculum provides no guidance for teachers who speak the home languages of the children. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center:** The curriculum briefly mentions the importance of a teacher being informed about the home cultures of his/her students, but it does not provide guidance in how to adapt the curriculum to develop a meaningful environment and activities for the children. The curriculum does not discuss the active engagement of families in adapting and adopting activities from the families' home cultures.
Ongoing Assessments		*Curiosity Corner*'s assessment is included with the curriculum at no additional cost. The assessment is based on observation and includes anecdotal records, checklists, rating scales, and work samples. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** The curriculum encourages teachers to use two types of assessment: an observational language assessment and a record-keeping sheet for curriculum goals. The assessments are broadly linked to the goals addressed across the curriculum, but are not tied to individual learning activities. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** The curriculum's provided assessments appear minimally aligned with HSCDELF domains, particularly Language Development and Literacy Knowledge & Skills. • **Using Assessment Information:** The majority of assessments are conducted through work samples, anecdotal records, and individual child portfolios. Curiosity Corner provides minimal instruction on how to use assessment information to modify future instruction. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** Recording sheets are provided for teachers to track progress of children in curriculum goals, but information is not provided as to when or how often to administer assessments. Observational assessments, anecdotal notes, and child portfolios may be somewhat time consuming to implement. • **Validated Assessments:** There is evidence that assessments are based on sound child development principles. There is no evidence that the assessments are linked with children's learning outcomes.

CURIOSITY CORNER		
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** The curriculum provides a comprehensive, two-day initial training for teachers and assistants, which includes in-depth content related to implementing the curriculum, such as an introduction to cooperative-learning strategies and specific program components. • **Continued Professional Development:** Throughout the first year of implementation, teachers are provided with additional training sessions and site visits based on the specific needs of the group of teachers. Additional training is offered at an annual conference. In year two, there is a day-long refresher training and four additional training sessions and implementation visits. The additional training provided is comprehensive. • **Level of Individualization:** *Curiosity Corner* offers support through coaches provided by the publishing company, Success for All, at a variety of levels based upon the needs of the teachers within a program. The model used is the GREATER (Goal, Reality, Exploration, Actions, Timeline, Evaluate, Renegotiation) coaching model, which is a problem-solving approach guided by student data. • **Other Program Staff:** The majority of professional development is directed at teachers and assistants. A New Leaders Conference targets administrators and facilitators. • **Multiple Modes:** Professional development is available in multiple modes, including live initial training sessions, implementation visits, additional training sessions, webinars, etc. • **Evidence of Validation:** The professional development, particularly the GREATER coaching model (described above), is aligned with professional development research. However, there is no evidence that the professional development improves teacher practices.
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** *Curiosity Corner* provides weekly newsletters to distribute to families, which introduce the unit and offer families ways to extend learning outside of the classroom. However, the curriculum offers little to no support in how to adapt materials to meet needs specific to the families of children in a particular classroom. • **Teacher Guidance:** The curriculum offers some suggestions for assignments that teachers can give to children, which provide opportunities to continue learning at home. Additionally, activities are included in the weekly newsletters for how caregivers can extend learning at home, but these are in a more general format. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** Our review found no evidence for guidance in how to welcome and incorporate family volunteers into the classroom. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** The curriculum provides some support materials for how to establish and maintain a positive parent-teacher relationship, including a reminder to greet parents at the door each day, strategies for parent-teacher conferences, and how to conduct home visits. • **Comprehensive:** The weekly newsletters cover most learning domains addressed in the weekly unit.

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DLM Early Childhood Express®

Curriculum Description

The *DLM Early Childhood Express®* is based on the idea that children learn best by connecting what they know with what they learn. The curriculum uses eight themed units to incorporate this philosophy into daily instruction.

McGraw-Hill Education (2012). *DLM Early Childhood Express 2011*. Retrieved from: https://www.mheonline.com/program/view/1/7/2180/DLM2011/

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–5

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction

Cost per Classroom

DLM Complete English/Spanish Package: $4,107.12

Manual can be purchased separately.

Retrieved from: https://www.mheonline.com/program/view/1/7/2180/DLM2011/

Training

Online teacher course that includes these module videos: Key Components in the DLM Early Childhood Express, Walk through a Day in the DLM Early Childhood Express, Math-time Instruction, Classroom Management, and more.

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

My Library Book (Units 1–8), ABC Kit, Manipulative Kit, The DLM Childhood Express® English Package, Big Book Package English, DLM Early Childhood Express® online teacher content

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

DLM EARLY CHILDHOOD EXPRESS®		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles:** The *DLM* curriculum is based on principles that are mostly consistent with Head Start CD principles. Learning activities progress from simple to complex and build upon each other throughout the year. However, the social, emotional, and cultural context of the classroom is not fully incorporated into learning activities.
Evidence-Based	½	At the time of this review, there are two research studies conducted with the *DLM* curriculum, both of which are included as part of the Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research Consortium (Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research Consortium, 2008). However, both of these studies evaluated *DLM* in combination with another curriculum (Open Court Reading Pre-K and Pre-K Mathematics). Therefore, the results must be interpreted with caution because it is impossible to disentangle the effects of *DLM* from the supplemental curricula included in the evaluation. Additionally, the study of *DLM* + Pre-K Mathematics only used the DLM Early Childhood Express Math software, not the entire comprehensive curriculum. • **Research Rigor:** Both research studies used a randomized control trial in which classrooms were randomly assigned to a treatment (DLM + Open Court Reading, DLM + Pre-K Mathematics) or a control group. The control group for the DLM + Open Court Reading study primarily used the *HighScope*® curriculum. The control group for the DLM + Pre-K Mathematics trial used a variety of other curricula, including Creative Curriculum and Montessori. • **Curriculum Implementation:** Both conducted studies used a global fidelity rating scale, measured from 0 to 3. For DLM + Open Court Reading, teachers implemented with a high to medium level of fidelity (2.3); however, specific information related to implementation of DLM alone was not reported. For DLM + Pre-K Mathematics, teachers implemented with a high to medium level of fidelity (2.65 and 2.25); however, specific information related to implementation of DLM alone was not reported. • **Replication/Generalizability:** Both studies used samples that were diverse in terms of gender and ethnicity. There is no information available on the socio-economic status of children in either sample.
Effects on Child Outcomes	½	For the study that evaluated DLM + Open Court Reading, there were positive outcomes for early reading skills (letter-word identification, alphabet knowledge, conventions), phonological awareness, and language development. There were no statistically significant findings for mathematics or children's social and learning behaviors. For the study that evaluated DLM Early Childhood Express Math software + Pre-K mathematics, positive child outcomes were found in early mathematics skills at the end of the pre-kindergarten year, but these effects were not maintained in the kindergarten year. There were no statistical findings for early reading skills, phonological awareness, language development, or social and learning behaviors.
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	★	• **Breadth:** *DLM* covers all of the following HSCDELF learning domains evenly: Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development. • **Clarity and Coherence:** Learning activities clearly articulate which learning domains are covered in which activities. • **Integration:** Although the majority of HSCDELF learning domains are covered thoroughly throughout the curriculum, the domains are not well-integrated within learning activities. Activities are primarily domain-specific, with only some covering more than one domain.

DLM EARLY CHILDHOOD EXPRESS®		
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements:** *DLM* fully covers the majority of domain elements for HSCDELF learning domains, but the learning activities do not explicitly identify which domain elements are covered. • **Scope and Sequence:** A scope and sequence are not provided for the entire curriculum. However, there are a scope and sequence that link individual activities to domains for each week.
Specific Learning Goals	★	• **Goals or Objectives:** Goals are provided for learning activities that are child-focused and developmentally appropriate. However, sometimes the goals are broad rather than specific, so it would be difficult for teachers to assess whether the goals have been achieved. • **Alignment to Activity Content:** There is a match between the activity content and the goals, but the curriculum does not specifically mark which parts of the activities align with each goal. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** There is a match between the weekly scope and sequence and the daily learning goals, but this alignment is not specific to particular activities. There are no overall scope and sequence for the curriculum.
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** Learning activities are logical and follow a similar pattern from one to another. • **Ease of Implementation:** *DLM* provides multiple supports for implementation, including teacher tips, daily planners, and weekly supports. • **Variety:** *DLM* prompts teachers to use multiple strategies (e.g., small group, large group, learning centers) and interactive materials throughout. • **Purpose**: Each activity provides learning objectives, but there is not a clearly articulated purpose. It does appear that each activity fits with the daily learning objective in a meaningful way.
Responsive Teaching	★	• **Variety of Strategies:** Within *DLM*, there is a presence of both child-focused and teacher-directed strategies. Additionally, there are strategies for differentiation provided for each learning activity. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** Prompts are provided for teacher-child interactions (e.g., questions to ask). However, activity-specific guidance for how to scaffold, provide feedback, and engage in high-quality interactions is not provided. • **Instructional Examples:** Activity-specific examples are provided for differentiating instruction, but these tend to be broad.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	★	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive Expectations:** Most learning activities provide activity-specific support for children who are below cognitive or academic expectations. • **Support for Children Above Cognitive Expectations:** Most learning activities provide activity-specific support through enrichment ideas to students who perform above cognitive or academic expectations. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** Some learning activities provide support for children who have emotional and/or physical needs. • **Material Adaptation:** Minimal guidance is provided for teachers to adapt materials to meet different levels of student need. • **Environment Adaptation:** Our review found no evidence of guidance provided for teachers to adapt the environment to meet different levels of student need.

DLM EARLY CHILDHOOD EXPRESS®		
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	★	• **Materials Represent Diversity of Language:** The curriculum includes materials in both English and Spanish for use in the classroom and for families. However, there is no support for other languages spoken, and the curriculum does not address the importance of finding materials to include in the classroom that reflect other languages spoken by the children. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Culture and Gender:** Multiple materials represent diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, gender, etc., and are incorporated throughout most learning activities. The curriculum does not provide guidance or encouragement for the selection of classroom materials that are responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity of children served by the center. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** Most activities provide quality guidance and specific strategies for how English-speaking teachers can communicate with children who speak languages other than English. Guidance is infused throughout the curriculum. However, the curriculum does not provide guidance for teachers who speak the home languages of the children, and information is not included for ways to encourage development of the home languages. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Program:** Minimal guidance is provided for how to adapt the learning activities to meet a specific program or center's cultural and linguistic needs. The curriculum does not discuss actively engaging families in order to adapt and adopt activities from their home cultures.
Ongoing Assessments	★	*DLM*'s assessment is included with the curriculum at no additional cost. The assessment is primarily observation-based and includes Anecdotal Observation Record Forms and Weekly Assessment Rubrics. Assessment forms can be found online. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** Assessments are aligned with each week of the curriculum, but not to individual learning activities. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes**: There is an alignment between the assessment and some of the HSCDELF learning domains (Social & Emotional Development, Language Development, and Literacy Knowledge & Skills). • **Using Assessment Information**: *DLM* provides minimal instruction on how to use assessment information to modify future instruction. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** Assessments would be relatively easy to learn how to use and are straight-forward; however, they could be time consuming (i.e., completing a weekly assessment checklist for each child for each week). • **Validated Assessments**: There is evidence that assessments are based on sound child development principles. There is no evidence that the assessments are linked with children's learning outcomes.

DLM EARLY CHILDHOOD EXPRESS®		
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** There is a moderate amount of initial training provided to teachers. *DLM* provides access to an online course with multiple modules, including topics such as an introduction to components of *DLM*, instruction for several HSCDELF learning domains, instruction for English-language learners, etc. • **Continued Professional Development:** There is no evidence of ongoing professional development other than the initial course provided for teachers. • **Level of Individualization:** The online course offers multiple modules in how to implement different aspects of the curriculum using only one modality (video). • **Other Program Staff:** Our review found no evidence of professional development designed specifically for other program staff. • **Multiple Modes**: Professional development is available in text and online only. • **Evidence of Validation**: There is no evidence that accessing the online professional development materials has positive impacts on teaching practices.
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** Materials are provided for teachers to distribute to caregivers (i.e., weekly newsletters and take-home books). DLM does not provide strategies for families to review and extend learning outside the classroom. • **Teacher Guidance:** For each day of learning activities, there is a home-school connection provided in the teacher manual. However, it is general and not specific to extending the learning at home in a meaningful way. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** General guidance is provided for how to use family volunteers in the classroom. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** General guidance is provided for setting up and maintaining parent-teacher communication. • **Comprehensive:** Family-involvement materials cover weekly learning topics and some of the HSCDELF learning domains, but the materials primarily focus on Language Development and Literacy Knowledge & Skills. Other topics are included to some extent, e.g., the general importance of the parent-child relationship is discussed.

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SUMMER 2015

Frog Street Pre-K

Curriculum Description

Frog Street Pre-K is an early education curriculum containing 36 weekly lessons within nine themed units. Activities cover eight learning domains, and Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline® classroom management and social emotional program is integrated daily.

Frog Street Press (2015). Frog Street Pre-K. Retrieved from: http://www.frogstreet.com/curriculum/pre-k/

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–4

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction
- Learning Centers

Cost per Classroom

Frog Street Pre-K (National) Bilingual Curriculum: $3,799.99; Frog Street Pre-K (National) English or Spanish Curriculum: $3,199.99

Training

One-day on-site implementation training, half-day on-site follow-up training, and additional half-day trainings on select topics

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

Frog Street Pre-K (National) Curriculum (English): Welcome to Frog Street Pre-K Guide, Teacher Guides for Themes 1–9, Adaptations for Young Learners Teacher Guide, Strategies for English Language Learners Resource Guide, Assessment: A Portfolio Approach Resource Guide, Family Connections Resource Guide, Literacy Library books, Frog Town Elementary activity cards, Lilypad Theatre materials, Big Frog Bookstore materials, City Bank materials, Science Museum materials, Frog Street Café materials, and Kid's Castle materials

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

FROG STREET PRE-K		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles**: *Frog Street Pre-K* is aligned with Head Start child development principles and research literature. The curriculum is organized around orderly and sequential growth of children's skills, and guidance for considering cultural context is included at the beginning of each theme.
Evidence-Based	☆	At the time of this review, there are no research studies on *Frog Street Pre-K* available in peer-reviewed journals. • **Research Rigor**: At the time of this review, there are no available research studies published in peer-reviewed journals. • **Curriculum Implementation:** At the time of this review, there are no available research studies published in peer-reviewed journals. • **Replication/ Generalizability:** At the time of this review, there are no available research studies published in peer-reviewed journals.
Effects on Child Outcomes	☆	At the time of this review, there are no available research studies published in peer-reviewed journals.
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	★	• **Breadth**: *Frog Street Pre-K* covers a majority of Head Start learning domains, which are: Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Social & Emotional Development, Creative Arts Expression, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, and Physical Development & Health. • **Clarity and Coherence**: The curriculum clearly indicates which learning domains are covered throughout individual learning activities. • **Integration:** There is a mix of integration across activities; some focus on only one (small groups), while others integrate across two or three learning domains.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements**: *Frog Street Pre-K* covers almost all of the domain elements within the HSCDELF. • **Scope and Sequence:** A scope and sequence are provided for each learning domain covered.
Specific Learning Goals	★	• **Goals or Objectives**: While the curriculum provides learning goals for each activity that are child-focused and developmentally appropriate, these goals are typically broad and difficult to measure (e.g., "Shows understanding by responding appropriately"). • **Alignment to Activity Content:** There is evidence of alignment between the learning goals and the activity, but individual pieces of the activity are not labeled to match components of the goals. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** There is clear alignment between learning goals and the scope and sequence provided for each learning domain.

FROG STREET PRE-K		
Well-designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** Learning activities are logical and follow a similar pattern across different activities. • **Ease of Implementation:** The curriculum provides multiple supports to facilitate implementation (lists of materials, things to do prior to lessons, and books to use). • **Variety:** The curriculum prompts teachers to use multiple strategies and interactive materials to meet a wide variety of learning styles. • **Purpose of Activity Is Clear and Meaningful:** While the curriculum is generally well designed, it does not provide a purpose for individual activities.
Responsive Teaching	★	• **Variety of Strategies:** Teaching strategies are primarily teacher directed. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** Strong support for how to provide high-quality interactions is embedded within activities (language to use for prompts and scaffolding). • **Instructional Examples:** Activities are varied in modality, but there are no instructional examples to guide teachers in adapting individual activities for different learning styles.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	★	• **Support for Children below Cognitive/Academic Expectations:** The curriculum provides activity-specific guidelines for providing extra support to children who are below cognitive or academic expectations in the *Adaptations for Young Learners* book. • **Support for Children above Cognitive/Academic Expectations:** The curriculum provides some guidelines for providing additional support to children performing above cognitive or academic expectations, but guidance is only provided in supplemental resources and not integrated into daily activities. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** The curriculum provides some guidelines for providing support to children who have emotional and/or physical needs (e.g., how to adapt materials for a child with limited motor skills). • **Material Adaptation:** Some guidelines for adapting materials are provided. • **Environment Adaptation:** There are no guidelines provided for adapting the environment.
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	★	• **Materials Represent Diversity of Language:** *Frog Street Pre-K* provides multiple materials for use inside the classroom and for families in both English and Spanish. • **Materials Represent Diversity:** Materials, such as storybooks and picture cards, represent diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, and gender. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** The curriculum provides high-quality guidance for supporting dual-language learners (DLLs) both within activities (e.g., teacher prompts in both English and Spanish) and in a resource guide entitled *Strategies for English Language Learners*. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center:** The curriculum provides minimal guidelines for adapting materials for specific centers' cultural and linguistic needs.

FROG STREET PRE-K		
Ongoing Assessments	★	*Frog Street Pre-K* includes the *Assessment: A Portfolio Approach* resource guide and CD-ROM at no additional cost. The guide provides guidelines for building child portfolios as well as a Prekindergarten Skills Assessment Summary linked to learning goals. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** The assessment fully aligns with the goals covered in the learning activities. The individual skills listed on the Prekindergarten Skills Assessment Summary coincide with those listed for learning activities. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** The assessment aligns with the *Head Start Child Development Early Learning Framework*. • **Using Assessment Information:** The curriculum provides some guidance for how to reflect on assessment results, but does not link results to practice. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** The assessments are easily accessible, user-friendly, and efficient to implement. • **Validated Assessments:** There is evidence that assessments are based on sound developmental principles, but no evidence that they are linked to children's learning outcomes.
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** Comprehensive one-day implementation training is provided. • **Continued Professional Development:** A half-day follow-up training is provided, and additional content-specific trainings are available. • **Level of Individualization:** The curriculum offers a wide range of supports, ranging from whole group instruction to customized classroom coaching. • **Other Program Staff:** Customized trainings are available for other staff, including administrators and coaches. • **Multiple Modes:** Professional development is available in-person and through webinars. • **Evidence of Validation:** There is no evidence of validation.
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** Materials are provided on the *Family Connections* CD, but they are standard, with no suggestions for adapting them to best meet the needs of specific classrooms. • **Teacher Guidance:** Prompts for linking learning to home are provided within activities. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** The curriculum provides minimal guidance for how to use parent and family volunteers in the classroom. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** The *Family Connections Resource Guide* provides guidance for establishing and maintaining parent-teacher relationships. • **Comprehensive:** Family materials provided address some, but not all, learning domains covered in this curriculum.

Galileo Pre-K Online

Curriculum Description

Galileo Pre-K Online from Assessment Technology Incorporated (ATI) is an early childhood curriculum providing activities, assessments, and other tools online by subscription. Thirty-two weeks of customizable lesson plans are provided.

Assessment Technology Incorporated (2015). Galileo Pre-K Online: System Overview. Retrieved from: http://www.ati-online.com/galileoPreschool/indexPreschool.html

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Children ages 18 months through 5 years

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction
- Independent Activities

Cost per Classroom

Annual subscription for *Galileo Pre-K Online* (includes unlimited service and technical support): $260 (discounted to $200 for first year); discounts available for programs of 50 or more classes

Training

ATI offers telephonic, web-based, and on-site training options. No-charge telephonic training, with or without a webinar session, is available as often as desired and focused on client-requested content. Web-based tutorials are available for $139 per person or a site license can be purchased for $960 minimum or $60 per class subscription. On-site training is available for 20 to 40 people for $289 per person (2-day training) or $155 per person (1-day training) plus travel expenses.

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

Galileo Pre-K Online: Galileo Curriculum Framework PDF; Curriculum Guidebook PDF; G3 Activity Library: 3–5 years; Times for Learning G3 Library; and G3: 3–5 years Assessment Scales

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

GALILEO PRE-K ONLINE		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles**: *Galileo Pre-K Online* is fully aligned with Head Start child development principles. Activities are based on developmental sequences described in the Curriculum Framework. A description of how the curriculum was created and emphasis on considering cultural context are included in the Curriculum Guidebook.
Evidence-Based	⯪	*Galileo Pre-K Online* has been evaluated using a descriptive, non-experimental design outlined in the Assessment Technology Incorporated (ATI) research brief, "National Head Start Portrait of Child Outcomes for 2012-2013: Progress Toward School Readiness"). At the time of this review, there are no research studies on this curriculum available in peer-reviewed journals. • **Research Rigor**: This curriculum was investigated using a descriptive, non-experimental design. • **Curriculum Implementation:** No measure of fidelity was used in the study of this curriculum. • **Replication/ Generalizability:** Findings reported in the ATI Research Brief are not generalizable.
Effects on Child Outcomes	☆	• **Child Outcomes:** Due to the descriptive nature of this study, meaningful conclusions about child outcomes cannot be drawn.
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	★	• **Breadth**: *Galileo Pre-K Online* covers all Head Start learning domains. • **Clarity and Coherence**: The curriculum clearly indicates which learning domains are covered in individual learning activities. • **Integration:** Many learning activities address multiple learning domains.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements**: *Galileo Pre-K Online* covers almost all domain elements within the HSCDELF. • **Scope and Sequence:** A scope and sequence for each learning domain are provided in the Curriculum Framework.
Specific Learning Goals	★	• **Goals or Objectives**: The curriculum provides learning goals that are child-focused, developmentally appropriate, specific, and measurable. • **Alignment to Activity Content:** There is evidence of alignment between the learning goals and activities; however, it is not indicated which pieces of each activity meet each goal. • **Alignment between Goals and Scope and Sequence:** There is clear alignment between learning goals and the scope and sequence provided for each learning domain.

GALILEO PRE-K ONLINE		
Well-designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** Learning activities are logical and follow a consistent format. • **Ease of Implementation:** There are multiple supports provided to facilitate implementation. Each activity includes a description, materials list, implementation instructions, enrichment suggestions, and notes. • **Variety:** The curriculum prompts teachers to use multiple strategies and interactive materials to meet a wide variety of learning styles. • **Purpose of Activity Is Clear and Meaningful:** The curriculum does not provide a purpose for each activity that indicates its importance for children's development.
Responsive Teaching	½	• **Variety of Strategies:** The majority of activities provided are teacher directed, and there is little room for differentiation of instruction within lessons. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** Supports for providing high-quality interactions are provided in the Curriculum Guidebook, but few are embedded within activities. • **Instructional Examples:** Few instructional examples are provided.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	½	• **Support for Children below Cognitive/Academic Expectations:** Support for individualizing activities for children performing below expectations is not provided. • **Support for Children above Cognitive/Academic Expectations:** Enrichment Notes are provided with activities, but they offer limited guidelines for individualizing activities for children who perform above expectations. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** The curriculum does not provide support for differentiating based on physical and/or emotional needs. • **Material Adaptation:** The curriculum provides limited guidelines for adapting materials. • **Environment Adaptation:** The curriculum provides limited guidelines for adapting the environment to meet different levels of need.
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	½	• **Materials Represent Diversity:** *Galileo Pre-K Online* provides materials for use inside the classroom and for families in both English and Spanish. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Language and Culture:** Materials, such as books recommended for read-aloud, do not represent a diversity of language and culture. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** The curriculum provides limited support for assisting dual-language learners. English Language Acquisition objectives are provided for each activity, but no guidance is provided for making content accessible to dual-language learners. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center:** No guidance for adapting the curriculum for individual centers is provided.

GALILEO PRE-K ONLINE		
Ongoing Assessments	★	• **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** Assessments fully align with activity learning goals, and assessment scales coincide with goals provided in each domain's scope and sequence. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** Assessments align with the *Head Start Child Development Early Learning Framework*. • **Using Assessment Information:** The curriculum provides support for how to use assessment information to guide future learning activities. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** The assessments are easily accessible, user-friendly, and easy to implement. • **Validated Assessments:** The assessment appears to be based on sound child development principles, but there is no evidence that assessments have been validated.
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** ATI provides a comprehensive on-site training to teachers that covers an in-depth content related to implementing the curriculum. • **Continued Professional Development:** ATI provides on-going professional development opportunities that are tailored to the needs of the programs. In addition, teachers are provided with access to forums where they can ask questions and connect with Galileo consultants. • **Level of Individualization:** ATI provides support at a variety of different levels based upon the needs of the teacher and/or program. • **Other Program Staff:** Professional development is also provided to staff members other than the teachers. ATI indicates that PD can be tailored to accommodate teacher assistants, directors, and special education managers. • **Multiple Modes:** There are multiple modes of delivery, and these are available at different points of the school year. For example, in addition to the on-site initial training and follow-up workshops, teachers can access forums to ask questions, and they are also encouraged to contact ATI with questions at any point in time. • **Evidence of Validation:** While PD materials are generally well designed, there is no evidence that they have been validated and linked to positive change in teachers' implementation.
Family Involvement Materials	½	• **Materials:** Many learning activities are provided for distribution to families, but no support is provided for adapting materials to best meet the needs of each classroom. • **Teacher Guidance:** The curriculum does not provide guidance to review and extend learning at home. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** The curriculum does not provide guidance for using parent and family volunteers in the classroom. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** The *Curriculum Guidebook* includes an Encouraging Family Engagement section that provides guidance for establishing and maintaining parent-teacher relationships. • **Comprehensive:** Family materials provided address most learning domains covered in this curriculum, but they do not provide information on child development or the importance of the parent-child relationship.

Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP®) 3–6 2nd Edition

Curriculum Description

HELP® 3-6 is a curriculum-based assessment tool of over 600 skills in the areas of cognitive, language, gross-motor, fine motor, social and self-help with children ages 3–6. Skills within each area are developmentally sequenced (i.e., one skill leads to or builds the foundation for the next skill). It also includes an accompanying activity guide that provides comprehensive instructional activities for each included skill.

VORT Corporation (©2010). HELP® 3–6. Retrieved from: http://www.vort.com/products/help_overview.html

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–5

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction
- Center or Home-based Instruction

Cost per Classroom

$160.85; $3.50/student (HELP 3–6 Assessment Strands (2nd Ed.)); $3.50/student (HELP 3–6 Charts (2nd Ed.)); $3.50/student (HELP 3–6 Checklist (2nd Ed.))
Manual can be purchased separately.
Retrieved from: http://www.vort.com/products/help_overview.html

Training

Primarily print and manual, 1 initial training day provided

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

HELP® 3–6 Curriculum Guide, HELP® Assessment Manual, HELP® 3–6 Assessment Strands, HELP® 3–6 Charts, HELP® 3–6 Checklist, HELP® 3–6 Activities at Home

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

HAWAII EARLY LEARNING PROFILE (HELP®) 3–6 2ND EDITION		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	☆	• **Child Development Principles**: *HELP* presents learning behaviors and skills in an assessment and curriculum that are not aligned with Head Start child development principles. The learning activities do not follow a sequential and ordered pattern. Additionally, the curriculum does not address the Head Start child development principle that a child's social and cultural context influences a child's learning and development. The purpose of *HELP 3-6* is to address the following early childhood program requirements: assessment and early identification, program intervention and instructional teaching resource, family/parent involvement, and team approach and training guide.
Evidence-Based	☆	At the time of this review, there are no available research studies in published, peer-reviewed journals. • **Research Rigor**: At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Curriculum Implementation:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Replication/ Generalizability:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies.
Effects on Child Outcomes	☆	At the time of this review, there are no available research studies that report child outcomes in published, peer-reviewed journals.
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	⯪	• **Breadth**: This curriculum is divided into six learning domains, including cognitive, language, gross motor, fine motor, social, and self-help. Within these domains, most of the HSCDELF learning domains are covered: Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Social & Emotional Development, Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Physical Development & Health, Logic & Reasoning, Science Knowledge & Skills. • **Clarity and Coherence**: Activities are grouped under specific *HELP* domains, but specific parts of activities that cover different domains are not articulated. • **Integration:** Learning activities address only one learning domain at a time, and there are no strategies for cross-curricular integration available.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	⯪	• **Domain Elements**: Learning activities cover some of the domain elements listed in HSCDELF. However, each learning activity does not explicitly identify which domain elements are included. • **Scope and Sequence:** There are no scope and sequence provided. The curriculum does provide a designated age range for when it is most appropriate for each learning activity to be taught.
Specific Learning Goals	⯪	• **Goals or Objectives**: Each activity provides goals that are child-focused and developmentally appropriate, but not measurable. There is a mix of broad and specific goals. • **Alignment to Activity Content:** There is an alignment between the activity content and learning goals, but individual pieces of the activity are not labeled to match components of the objective. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** There are no scope and sequence provided.

HAWAII EARLY LEARNING PROFILE (HELP®) 3–6 2ND EDITION		
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** Learning activities are clear and easy to follow. Additionally, they follow a similar pattern across different activities. • **Ease of Implementation:** Some supports are provided to facilitate implementation, such as a list of materials and clear instructions, but instructions are brief. • **Variety:** Teachers are prompted to use a variety of strategies, modalities, and materials throughout the activities, but there is little room left for differentiation. • **Purpose:** Each activity has objectives and these objectives have a stated purpose. Additionally, each activity has a definition provided, which sometimes provides a purpose.
Responsive Teaching	½	• **Variety of Strategies:** There is a mix of child-focused and teacher-directed activities, but the majority of the activities are teacher-directed. Our review found no evidence for individual differentiation. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** Some activities have general scripts to help facilitate teacher-child interactions. • **Instructional Examples:** Our review found no evidence of instructional examples that show how to differentiate activities for different personalities or learning styles in the classroom.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	★	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive Expectations**: Some activities provide guidance for how to make the activity less difficult for children who are below developmental expectations. • **Support for Children Above Cognitive Expectations:** Some activities provide guidance for how to make the activity more difficult for children who are above developmental expectations. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** Some activities include support for children with physical needs. • **Material Adaptation:** Some guidelines are provided for how to adapt the materials to meet different levels of need. • **Environment Adaptation:** Our review found no evidence of guidance for how to adapt the environment to meet different levels of needs.
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	½	• **Materials Represent Diversity:** The materials provided for our review are only available in English. However, there are Activities at Home and Checklists and Assessment Strands 3-6, which can be purchased in Spanish from the curriculum company website. The curriculum speaks to the importance of finding materials to include in the classroom that reflect different languages spoken by the children. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Language and Culture:** Some curriculum materials represent diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, gender, etc. Additionally, the curriculum encourages teachers to be sensitive in selecting materials appropriate to the cultural needs of the childcare center. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** The curriculum does not provide guidance and specific strategies for how English-speaking teachers can communicate with dual-language learners. The curriculum does not provide guidance for teachers who speak the home languages of the children and information is not included for ways to encourage development of the home languages. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center:** General guidance for how to adapt the curriculum to meet a specific childcare center's cultural and linguistic needs is provided. However, the guidance is not specific to the learning activities. Our review found no evidence that the curriculum actively engages families or that it encourages adopting and adapting activities from the families' home cultures.

HAWAII EARLY LEARNING PROFILE (HELP®) 3–6 2ND EDITION		
Ongoing Assessments	★	*HELP*'s assessment is based on observation. Included with the assessment is a checklist of behaviors/skills, developmental charts to map out the progress of each child, and assessment strands that are complimentary to the checklist of behaviors/skills. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** The assessment is directly aligned to the learning goals covered in learning activities. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** The assessment aligns to HSCDELF domains. However, they do not completely align with all elements within domains. • **Using Assessment Information:** The assessment provides guidance on how to adapt future instruction, i.e., how to create learning goals for individual students based on teacher and parent input and child assessment information. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** The assessment procedures are clearly laid out for each skill, but it may take a teacher (with parental input) some time to administer. • **Validated Assessments:** Our review found no evidence that the assessment is based on child development principles or has been linked to child learning outcomes.
Professional Development Opportunities	½	• **Initial Training:** There is an initial 1-day training available that covers information about how to use HELP as a curriculum-based assessment, methods for coordinating the use of HELP across multiple adults in the child's life, and techniques for incorporating HELP with other approaches. • **Continued Professional Development:** Our review found no evidence for ongoing, live professional development. After the initial training, all support is available through the curriculum website. • **Level of Individualization:** The trainer for initial training is provided with guidance on how to tailor the training to meet program-level needs. • **Other Program Staff:** The curriculum recommends that all team members should attend the initial HELP training, but there is no modified content available. • **Multiple Modes:** There are multiple modes of delivery available, such as text, the initial 1-day training, and web resources such as FAQ and an opportunity to email the author. • **Evidence of Validation:** Our review found no evidence that professional development materials have been linked with improved teacher practices.
Family Involvement Materials	½	• **Materials:** Some materials are provided for teachers to distribute to caregivers. They consist of primarily activities for parents to complete with the child. • **Teacher Guidance:** Teachers are encouraged to collaborate with parents and use them as a source of information when developing individual goals for children; however, our review found no evidence for how to link learning goals to the home in a meaningful way. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** Our review found no evidence for guidance on how to incorporate family volunteers into the classroom. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** Our review found no evidence for guidance on how to establish and maintain positive parent-teacher relationships. • **Comprehensive:** The parent materials cover multiple learning domains, but teachers are instructed to only share activities with parents for the learning goals that teachers and parents have chosen for the individual child. There is no discussion of the general importance of the parent-child relationship or child development.

NCQTL

For more information, contact us at: NCQTL@UW.EDU or 877-731-0764

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SUMMER 2015

HighReach Learning®

Curriculum Description

HighReach Learning® is a project-based curriculum organized by topic. The curriculum includes a 4-step planning process, which guides teachers in how to include children in the learning process. Additionally, family communication materials are included.

Carson-Dellosa Publishing (2009). HighReach Learning. Retrieved from: www.highreach.com

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–5

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction

Cost per Classroom

Classroom Support Materials, Topics 1-22: $899; Family Connection Set, Topics 1-22: $225

Manual can be purchased separately.

Retrieved from: www.highreach.com.

Training

Training includes a text guide, on-site training, coaching services, webinars, workshops and conferences, and a coaching library.

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

Complete Classroom Set; Growing through Reflection & Observation — A developmental checklist to guide observation and facilitate growth and learning for children from 2.5–5 years of age; User's Manual; Reaching and Relating Guide; Everyday Places and Routines; User's Guide for Implementation for Threes and Pre-K

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

HIGHREACH LEARNING®		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles**: The *HighReach Learning* system is based on sound child development principles that are fully consistent with Head Start (HS) child development principles and research literature. The learning activities follow a sequential and ordered pattern. The curriculum is built upon the belief that children learn best by interacting in a developmentally appropriate and challenging environment through relationships with teachers. The foundational principles fully align with the HS child development principles of orderly and sequential development and the influence of a child's social and cultural context.
Evidence-Based	☆	At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Research Rigor**: At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Curriculum Implementation:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Replication/ Generalizability:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies.
Effects on Child Outcomes	☆	At the time of this review, there are no available research studies that report child outcomes in published, peer-reviewed journals.
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	★	• **Breadth**: *HighReach* evenly covers the learning domains of Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, and Social & Emotional Development. The curriculum somewhat covers the remaining HSCDELF learning domains. • **Clarity and Coherence**: Learning activities are grouped by domain, and it is clear which domains are covered in each activity. However, there is no indication within the activity which parts correspond to each domain. • **Integration:** Each learning activity has a primary learning domain, as indicated by the domain it is grouped under. However, learning activities contain integrated learning objectives, which cover different domains. There is no indication of how these objectives are addressed throughout the learning activity.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements**: The curriculum addresses most of the domain elements from the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. However, it is difficult to determine which domain elements are covered within each learning activity since the activities are sorted at the domain level and not the domain element level. As a result, the teacher must look up the learning activity's objective and how it is linked to an individual domain element. • **Scope and Sequence:** Although the curriculum presents objectives, which closely align with most domain elements and these are broken down into progressive steps, there is no clear scope and sequence for how these are delivered across the year.
Specific Learning Goals	★	• **Goals or Objectives**: Learning objectives, which are listed for each activity, are measurable, child-focused, and developmentally-appropriate. However, it is somewhat cumbersome that the objectives are listed by number and that the teacher must look up what each objective is in the back of the learning experiences guide. • **Alignment to Activity Content:** Each learning activity lists learning objectives that match the content of the activity. However, it is not indicated which parts of the activity cover which objectives. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** The learning objectives for individual learning activities are linked to the overall scope that the curriculum covers. However, there is no indication that objectives are covered sequentially.

HIGHREACH LEARNING®		
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** Learning activities follow the same pattern across all activities (e.g. goal/objective, integrated objectives, materials, teacher preparation, and learning experiences). The learning activities are logically grouped within domains. • **Ease of Implementation:** Some supports are provided to facilitate implementation (list of materials, teacher preparation), but there is little support provided for how to set up the classroom environment. • **Variety:** Learning activities prompt teachers to use a variety of strategies and materials with children. However, teachers are encouraged to choose learning experiences to create a daily plan. Thus, the variety that children are exposed to is contingent on teacher choice, which results in a lower rating. • **Purpose:** The *Reaching and Relating Guide* identifies the purpose for addressing each learning domain, but a purpose is not clearly defined for each learning activity.
Responsive Teaching	★	• **Variety of Strategies:** Learning activities include a balance of child-focused and teacher-directed activities. Additionally, the curriculum encourages teachers to take into account different learning styles and incorporate different strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners (HighReach Learning Growing Through Reflection and Observation model); however, it does not always explicitly articulate how teachers should go about doing so. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** The *Reaching and Relating Guide* includes information regarding teacher-child interactions within the Creating the Learning Environment section. Some learning activities feature scripted questions, but there is not strong support for how to engage in high-quality, teacher-child interactions that are specific to each learning activity. • **Instructional Examples:** Most sub-topics include learning activities that address a variety of different types of experiences and learners (e.g., kinesthetic, artistic, verbal).
Supports for Individualized Instruction	★	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive Expectations**: Some learning activities provide support for differentiating for children with special needs, including children who are performing below cognitive/academic expectations. • **Support for Children Above Cognitive Expectations:** Some learning activities include extension ideas, but these are primarily for ways to expand on the topics presented in the activity rather than for supporting advanced learners. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** Some learning activities provide support for differentiating for children with different levels of need, including children with emotional and/or physical needs. • **Material Adaptation:** Some of the learning activities provide support for how to differentiate learning materials to meet different levels of need. • **Environment Adaptation:** Some of the learning activities provide support for how to adapt the environment for children with different levels of need.

HIGHREACH LEARNING®		
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	★	• **Materials Represent Diversity:** There are materials for use in the classroom (vocabulary lists, storybooks) and for families (newsletters, family posters) that are available in both English and Spanish. The curriculum does not speak to the importance of finding materials to include in the classroom that reflect various languages spoken by the children. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Language and Culture:** Materials reflect diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, and gender. However, there is minimal evidence that the curriculum encourages teachers to select materials that are responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity within the childcare center. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** General guidance and strategies are provided for how English-speaking teachers can communicate with children who speak languages other than English. There is no guidance for teachers who speak any home languages of the children and information is not included for ways to encourage development of the home languages. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center:** Minimal guidance is provided for how to adapt the curriculum in order to meet the cultural and linguistic needs represented in a school. The curriculum does not discuss how to actively engage families in order to adapt and adopt activities from the families' home cultures.
Ongoing Assessments	★	HighReach Learning - Growing through Reflection and Observation is an assessment tool included in the curriculum at no additional cost. There are checklists, domain summary sheets, domain element pages, and HRL-GRO Family Conference Forms. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** There is clear evidence that learning objectives linked with each learning activity are linked to domain elements that are addressed in the HighReach Learning - Growing through Reflection and Observation tool (HRL-GRO). • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** HRL-GRO assesses children on skills that are mostly consistent with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. However, there is not a direct alignment (e.g., no Social Studies Knowledge & Skills domain; instead, some elements are incorporated into the Social & Emotional Development domain). • **Using Assessment Information:** The curriculum provides some general guidelines for how to adapt instruction for future learning activities. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** The assessments are primarily observation measures of each child and could be somewhat time-consuming (e.g., a large number of items to observe for each child three times throughout the year). • **Validated Assessments:** There is evidence that assessments are based on sound child development principles. There is no evidence that the assessments are linked with children's learning outcomes.

HIGHREACH LEARNING®		
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** Initial training, including a text guide, webinars, and on-site training, is available at an additional cost. • **Continued Professional Development:** *HighReach Learning* provides ongoing professional development on a range of topics through webinars, coaching services, and an annual conference. • **Level of Individualization:** There is some support for individualizing the training program. A school can select the level of support they need (a curriculum implementation on-site training and/or a coaching session on-site training, as well as webinars). • **Other Program Staff:** Anyone can attend the webinars, conferences, or on-site trainings, but they are designed for teachers. • **Multiple Modes:** Webinar topics include a variety of entry points: Building Understanding: The Basics; Fine Tune: Beyond the Basics; and Reflecting on Practice: Coaching Services. There are a variety of mediums through which professional development is delivered, e.g., webinars, coaching, conferences, etc. • **Evidence of Validation:** There is no evidence that professional development materials are linked to improved teacher practices.
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** There are a wide variety of materials provided for distribution to families (newsletters, storybooks, family posters), but no strategies are provided for families to review/extend learning outside of the classroom. • **Teacher Guidance:** General guidance is provided to teachers for how to link learning goals from school to home, but it is not specific to learning experiences. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** The Reaching and Relating Guide offers suggestions for how to incorporate families into the classroom. • **Parent- Teacher Relationship:** The Reaching and Relating Guide includes guidance for how to establish relationships with families at the beginning of the year, as well as some guidance for continued maintenance of these relationships. • **Comprehensive:** Family materials are comprehensive and cover a variety of learning domains, including child development. The general importance of the parent-child relationship is discussed.

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HighScope®

Curriculum Description

HighScope® is based on the idea that children and adults learn best through hands-on experiences with people, materials, events, and ideas.

Each individual program consists of a system of teaching practices, curriculum content areas for each topic and age group, assessment tools, and a training model.

HighScope Educational Research Foundation (2012). Preschool. Retrieved from: http://www.highscope.org/Content.asp?ContentId=63

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–5

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group
- Learning Centers

Cost per Classroom

Step 1 Materials: $449.60; Step 2 Materials: $144.70; Step 3 Materials: $362.40 ; The HighScope Preschool Curriculum: $189.95
Additional supplemental, domain-specific curricular materials are available: Growing Readers Early Literacy Curriculum, Numbers Plus Preschool Mathematics Curriculum
Manual can be purchased separately.
Retrieved from: https://secure.highscope.org/ProductCart/pc/home.asp

Training

1-day and 2-day workshops that address a variety of topics, including instruction in learning domains, HighScope's Plan-Do-Review Process, small and large group routines, etc. (Cost varies depending on length of workshop.)
Online workshops that address a variety of topics, including instruction in learning domains, small and large group time, assessment, etc.
Two course options: week-long and multiple-week certification course (Introduction to the HighScope® Curriculum, HighScope® Preschool Curriculum Course, and HighScope® Training of Trainers)

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

Materials from Steps 1-3 of the HighScope® Curriculum Set: The HighScope® Preschool Curriculum (2012); Essentials of Active Learning in Preschool; Educating Young Children (3rd Edition); Lesson Plans for the First 30 Days; Multicultural Programs; Small Group Times to Scaffold Early Learning; Movement and Music; I Belong; Me You Us; Real Science in Preschool: Here, There, and Everywhere; Setting Up the Preschool Classroom

☆	⯪	⯪	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

HIGHSCOPE®		
Grounded in Child Development Princples	★	• **Child Development Principles**: *HighScope* is based on sound, child development principles that are fully consistent with Head Start child development principles and research literature. Although individual learning activities are not provided throughout, domain-specific books offer guidance on how to scaffold each Key Developmental Indicator from simple to complex. The social-emotional and cultural context of the classroom is embedded within the HighScope Preschool Curriculum text (2012).
Evidence-Based	⯪	At the time of this review, there is one research study, the HighScope Preschool Curriculum Comparison study, which has been published in a peer-reviewed journal as an initial study and a follow-up study. There is little research done on the *HighScope*curriculum independent from the Perry Preschool project, a randomized controlled trial which used an older version of the *HighScope* curriculum in addition to home-based services. Additionally, there is little research published in peer-reviewed journals, rather than in curricular publications. The publications from the curricular company suggest that *HighScope* has positive, long-term effects, but these are primarily in the context of the Perry Preschool project. It is impossible to disentangle the effects of the curriculum from the effects of the Perry Preschool project as a whole. Additionally, the fourth progress report of the FACES Head Start study (2000), a descriptive study on Head Start programs, includes information related to the performance of children in Head Start classrooms that use *HighScope*. • **Research Rigor**: The HighScope Preschool Curriculum Comparison (HSPCC) study (Schweinhart & Weikart, 1997; Schweinhart et al., 1986) randomly assigned children into one of three preschool groups: direct instruction, traditional nursery school, and the *HighScope* model. Outcome measures include the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test initially, followed by community behavior outcomes; participant interviews; and school, police, and social services records at ages 15 and 23. The Head Start FACES study (Zill et al., 2003) collected information from classrooms that were already using HighScope curriculum. • **Curriculum Implementation:** Implementation fidelity was collected through classroom observation and participation in home visits. Fidelity to each curricular model is reported to be high, but there is little evidence to verify this. • **Replication/Generalizability:** The sample of the HighScope comparison study was 68 three- and four-year-old children living in poverty. Children in the sample primarily had low scores on the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale (between 60 and 90). The sample was fairly diverse (information only available for percentage of children who were African-American, which was 65%). The FACES study sample included Head Start classrooms from across the nation.
Effects on Child Outcomes	⯪	The HSPCC study found no significant differences for the first decade after participation in one of the three curriculum programs. However, at ages 15 and 23, there were significantly fewer acts of misconduct and less emotional impairment or disturbance for both the *HighScope* and nursery programs, compared to the direct instruction program. The FACES study found that Head Start classrooms that used *HighScope* had children with larger fall-spring gains in letter recognition and cooperative classroom behaviors. Children also showed greater improvement in total behavior problems and hyperactive problem behavior. Additionally, classroom quality was found to be significantly higher for classrooms using HighScope as measured by the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R).
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	★	• **Breadth**: *HighScope* fully covers all of the HSCDELF learning domains. A guidebook is provided for each of the following: Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Social & Emotional Development, Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, and Physical Development & Health. Since teachers create their own plans, evenness of coverage for learning domains depends on each individual teacher. • **Clarity and Coherence**: For the most part, *HighScope* does not specify learning activities for each HSCDELF learning domain, but it does specify teaching strategies for each domain element. Thus, the learning domains are clearly articulated for the teaching strategies provided. • **Integration:** Teaching strategies are learning domain specific. Prompts and ideas for integration across domains are not provided.

HIGHSCOPE®		
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements**: *HighScope* covers the majority of the domain elements in each domain-specific guidebook. However, learning activities are not provided that link to specific domain elements. • **Scope and Sequence:** Each guidebook includes a scaffolding section for each Key Developmental Indicator (KDI) with specific actions for how to build this skill. However, a detailed scope and sequence are not provided.
Specific Learning Goals	★	• **Goals or Objectives**: The *HighScope* curriculum presents goals in the form of its KDIs. These indicators are child-focused and developmentally appropriate, but they are broad. • **Alignment to Activity Content:** HighScope's KDIs are aligned with specific teaching strategies, but for the most part, not with learning activities, since learning activities are not provided. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** There is an alignment between the KDIs and the scaffolding section provided for each. However, there are no overall scope and sequence provided for each HSCDELF domain area.
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	Although the core *HighScope* curriculum (2012) only provides teaching strategies for each key development indicator, other supplemental texts provide example learning activities, including Lesson Plans for the First 30 Days, Music & Movement, Small Group Time to Scaffold Early Learning, Real Science in Preschool. This rating is based on the mixture of evidence of the learning activities provided in these supplemental texts and the absence of explicit learning activities in the core texts. • **Organization of Learning Activities:** For the learning activities included, there is a mix of clarity since some learning activities follow a similar pattern, while others do not. • **Ease of Implementation:** For learning activities provided, a variety of resources promote ease of implementation, including teacher's tips, list of materials, guidelines for setting up the environment, etc. • **Variety:** Learning activities that are included use a range of materials and strategies (whole group, small groups, centers), and there is a mix of teacher-directed and child-focused activities. • **Purpose:** The purpose of the included learning activities and the overall daily schedule is described generally, but individual learning activities are not identified with a clear and meaningful purpose.
Responsive Teaching	★	• **Variety of Strategies:** Each daily schedule (the suggested routine that teachers set up in their classrooms) allows for teacher-directed activities, child-focused time in activities, and individualized time with children. The HighScope curriculum is primarily child-focused and strongly encourages teachers to individualize, based on each child's interests. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** *HighScope* provides strong support for encouraging high-quality, teacher-child interactions. This support is primarily found in a separate section of the HighScope Preschool Curriculum main text, but domain-specific examples are included as well throughout the domain-specific guidebooks. • **Instructional Examples:** Instructional examples are provided that give guidance for how to adapt each Key Developmental Indicator for individual children.

HIGHSCOPE®		
Supports for Individualized Instruction	★	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive Expectations**: Each Key Developmental Indicator includes scaffolding for how to adjust instruction to meet children performing below cognitive and/or academic expectations. • **Support for Children Above Cognitive Expectations:** Each KDI includes scaffolding for how to adjust instruction to meet children performing above cognitive and/or academic expectations. • **Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** *HighScope* provides supports for teachers in how to differentiate instruction for children with other types of special needs, such as physical and socio-emotional needs. This is found in the supplemental text, "I Belong", as well as in the domain-specific guidebooks for Social & Emotional Development and Physical Development & Health. • **Material Adaptation:** The curriculum offers some guidance for adapting the materials to meet the needs of children with different levels of need. • **Environment Adaptation:** The curriculum offers some guidance for adapting the environment to meet the needs of children with different levels of need.
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	★	• **Materials Represent Diversity of Language:** *HighScope* offers materials, including newsletters, for families who speak languages other than English. Classroom materials are provided in English only. The curriculum speaks to the importance of finding materials to include in the classroom that reflect languages spoken by the children. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Culture and Gender:** The materials that are provided represent diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, gender, etc. The curriculum provides some guidance in how to select classroom materials that are responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity within the center. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** There are some guidance and strategies for how English-speaking teachers can communicate with dual-language learners, primarily in the Language, Literacy, and Communication guidebook. The main text includes a section on ways to incorporate a child's home language into the classroom. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center:** There are some general suggestions for adapting the classroom to meet the needs specific to a center, for example, finding diverse food or dolls.
Ongoing Assessments	★	The HighScope Child Observation Record (COR) is an assessment system, which is based primarily on teacher observation of children. Included with the COR are forms for observation records aligned with indicators, anecdotal notes, family reports, etc. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** The COR aligns fully to HighScope's Key Developmental Indicators and to HSCDELF learning domains, but it is not aligned to individual learning activities. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** The COR measures skills that align fully to HSCDELF learning domains. • **Using Assessment Information:** The COR provides support for how to use results in planning for future small group, large group, and individual activities. Additionally, a supplemental book is available, Planning Around the Preschool COR (not included in this review). • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** The COR appears easy to implement, since it is based primarily on observation and keeping anecdotal notes on each child, but it could be somewhat time consuming to use. • **Validated Assessments:** There is evidence that the COR is based on sound child development principles. Studies suggest that the COR has demonstrated both internal and external validity, but there is minimal evidence to suggest that performance on the COR is linked to child outcomes. Currently, a validation study of COR is being conducted by the University of Illinois at Chicago, but results are not yet available.

HIGHSCOPE®		
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** Initial training regarding curriculum implementation is provided throughout year one for teachers at an additional cost. • **Continued Professional Development:** *HighScope* provides ongoing professional development opportunities at an additional cost in a variety of topics, including scaffolding, assessment, and developing lesson plans. • **Level of Individualization:** Individualized coaching is available, and teachers can choose which professional development sessions they are interested in, from a variety of topics. • **Other Program Staff:** Initial training is inclusive of other school and district staff. Additionally, materials are available on the website for other adults, including administrators, parents, policy makers, and researchers. • **Multiple Modes:** There are multiple modes of professional development (e.g., workshops, school visits, web resources, individualized coaching). • **Evidence of Validation:** There is no indication that the professional development materials have been validated or are linked to improved teaching practices.
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** The curriculum provides some materials for distribution to caregivers, such as newsletter kits to personalize and send home. The newsletters focus on domain areas and include activities for families to do at home. • **Teacher Guidance:** The curriculum offers some support for teachers in how to link children's learning in the classroom to the home environment in a more general manner. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** The main text of the curriculum provides support for teachers regarding how to welcome and incorporate families into the classroom. • **Parent- Teacher Relationship:** Strategies for developing and maintaining high-quality, parent-teacher relationships are provided in the main text, including information on home visiting, focusing on strengths, etc. • **Comprehensive:** Family newsletters provide support across some learning domains. The materials found on the website cover a variety of topics, including child development.

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Innovations: The Comprehensive Preschool Curriculum

Curriculum Description

Innovations focuses on seven components: Observation/Assessment Tools, Developmental Tasks, Experiences and Activities, Interactive Experiences, Child Development Theory, the Classroom Environment, and Family Participation and Involvement

Gryphon House, Inc. (2012). *Innovations: The Comprehensive Preschool Curriculum*. Retrieved from: http://www.gryphonhouse.com/store/trans/productDetailForm.asp?BookID=18265

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–4

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction

Cost per Classroom

Innovations: The Comprehensive Preschool Curriculum: $39.95; Teacher's Guide: $16.96

Manual can be purchased separately.

Retrieved from: http://gryphonhouse.com/store/trans/productListingRpt.asp?CatID=48

Training

Self-directed Teacher's Guide

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

Innovations: The Comprehensive Preschool Curriculum, Teacher's Guide

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

INNOVATIONS: THE COMPREHENSIVE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles**: *Innovations* is based on sound child development theory and research that are overall consistent with Head Start (HS) child development principles. Curriculum learning activities are sequenced within domains, but they are not organized in a clear orderly and sequential developmental growth pattern. Additionally, the curriculum does not fully address the HS child development principle that a child's social and cultural context influences a child's learning and development. Thus, the curriculum aligns with only some of the HS child development principles.
Evidence-Based	☆	At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Research Rigor**: At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Curriculum Implementation**: At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Replication/Generalizability:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies.
Effects on Child Outcomes	☆	At the time of this review, there are no available research studies that report child outcomes in published, peer-reviewed journals.
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	½★	• **Breadth**: The curriculum evenly covers Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, and Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, as well as information about how to support Social & Emotional Development. However, other domains are not covered as evenly. • **Clarity and Coherence**: The learning activities are organized within learning domains, but these domains are not directly aligned with HSCDELF learning domains. For some activities (project ideas and group activities), the covered learning domains are not listed. • **Integration**: The learning activities are organized within learning domains, but there is no indication that learning activities support integration across domains.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	½★	• **Domain Elements**: The curriculum covers some of the HS domain elements, but not most, and it is difficult to determine which activities cover these domain elements since it is not explicitly stated. • **Scope and Sequence**: The learning activities are listed in somewhat of a sequential order, but there is no overarching scope and sequence that presents domain elements and breaks them down into progressive steps that are linked to individual learning activities.
Specific Learning Goals	☆	• **Goals or Objectives**: The curriculum provides observable skills for most activities that are somewhat measurable, child-focused, and developmentally appropriate. However, learning activities do not provide a learning goal or objective. • **Alignment to Activity Content**: The content of each learning activity matches the suggested observable skills but does not match a learning objective. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** There is no scope and sequence provided.

INNOVATIONS: THE COMPREHENSIVE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM		
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** The learning activities are organized into unit-like sections (e.g., *What Will I Be?, Space, Spin Me a Tale*, etc.) and then within each section, the curriculum lists possibilities for learning activities under content areas (e.g., Literacy/Writing Possibilities, Math/Manipulative Possibilities, etc.). Most activities follow a similar pattern (Materials, Teacher Talk, Instructions, Observation/Assessment). • **Ease of Implementation:** There are some supports provided for most activities, such as a list of materials, an example of teacher talk, Instructions for each activity, and skills to observe. • **Variety:** The curriculum uses mostly a hands-on, child-focused approach with some teacher-directed activities. Teachers are encouraged to use interactive materials. Use of a variety of strategies, materials, and modalities is not explicitly identified in learning activities. • **Purpose:** The purpose of each activity is not stated.
Responsive Teaching	½	• **Variety of Strategies:** There is a presence of both teacher-directed and child-focused teaching, but there is little room left for individualizing the instruction. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** There is a description of how to engage children in high-quality interactions in a separate section that is not specific to learning activities. • **Instructional Examples:** Our review found no evidence for instructional examples for differentiating the instruction.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	☆	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive Expectations**: Our review found no evidence for how to adapt learning activities for children performing below cognitive/academic expectations. • **Support for Children Above Cognitive Expectations**: Our review found no evidence for how to adapt learning activities for children performing above cognitive/academic expectations. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** Our review found no evidence for how to adapt learning activities to support children with physical and/or emotional needs. • **Material Adaptation:** Our review found no evidence for how to adapt the materials to meet different levels of need. • **Environment Adaptation:** Our review found no evidence for how to adapt the environment to meet different levels of need.
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	½	• **Materials Represent Diversity:** The materials for use inside the classroom and for families are provided in English. The curriculum does not speak to the importance of finding materials to include in the classroom that reflect languages spoken by the children. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Language and Culture:** The suggested books represent some diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, gender, etc. Our review found minimal guidance on how to select materials that are responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity within the program. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** The curriculum provides minimal guidance and strategies for how English-speaking teachers can communicate with children who speak languages other than English. Additionally, the curriculum provides no guidance for teachers who speak the home language of the children. Information is not included for ways to encourage development of the home language. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center:** The curriculum provides a few suggestions for incorporating different cultures in the parent section, but there is little guidance for how to adapt the curriculum to meet the different cultural needs of children. Furthermore, the curriculum does not discuss active engaging of families to adapt and adopt activities from the families' home cultures.

INNOVATIONS: THE COMPREHENSIVE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM		
Ongoing Assessments	★	The assessment available is included with the *Innovations* curriculum and primarily relies on anecdotal notes and an observation checklist of learning skills and behaviors. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** There is minimal alignment between the assessment and the learning goals covered in learning activities. Most individual learning activities only list skills/behaviors to observe that are linked to an observation checklist. This checklist is part of the assessment. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** The assessments are minimally aligned with Head Start learning domains. • **Using Assessment Information:** The curriculum provides minimal instruction on how to use assessment information to modify future instruction. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** The assessments appear to be easily accessible and efficient to administer. • **Validated Assessments:** There is evidence that assessments are based on sound child development principles. There is no evidence that the assessments are linked with children's learning outcomes.
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** The curriculum provides a *Teacher's Guide*, which is a supplementary book that provides 43 modules to be completed by the teacher. These modules address the implementation of the curriculum. • **Continued Professional Development:** Although there are modules provided in the *Teacher's Guide,* they are primarily self-guided and there is no other form of professional development. • **Level of Individualization:** There is minimal support at the individual level. • **Other Program Staff:** There are no professional development materials provided for staff members aside from teachers. • **Multiple Modes:** Professional development is only available in text. • **Evidence of Validation:** There is no evidence that professional development materials are linked to improved teacher practices.
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** There are minimal materials provided for distribution to caregivers. • **Teacher Guidance:** There is some guidance provided to teachers for how to link learning goals to the home. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** Suggestions for using family volunteers in the classroom are provided at the beginning of the curriculum in a general manner, as well as several suggestions are provided for each unit. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** The *Teacher's Guide* includes a module on how to establish positive, parent partnerships. • **Comprehensive:** The parent materials cover information related to child development and building positive parent-child relationships, as well as some coverage of learning domains.

NCQTL

For more information, contact us at: NCQTL@UW.EDU or 877-731-0764

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SUMMER 2015

The InvestiGator Club®

Curriculum Description

The InvestiGator Club® is based on children's natural curiosity about the world. It taps into this by connecting play, imagination, and content to the real world.

Robert-Leslie Publishing (2012). The InvestiGator Club: Inquiry-Based Learning Systems. Retrieved from: http://www.investigatorclub.com/

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–4

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction

Cost per Classroom

Prekindergarten Learning System: $2,483; Assessment and Intervention System: $118

Manual can be purchased separately.

Retrieved from: http://cart.investigatorclub.com/products.asp

Training

Regional workshops: Each system purchased will receive a voucher for four participants to attend two-day workshops coordinated with major conferences held throughout Florida; web cast trainings; DVD; and workbook

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

Prekindergarten Assessment and Intervention System, Teacher Resource Guide, Weather Watcher's Teacher Guide, Watch It Grow Teacher Guide, Finny Feathery Furry Friends Teacher Guide, Under Construction Teacher Guide, Splash and Dig Teacher Guide, Building Social and Emotional Skills Activity Guide, InvestiGator Club Prekindergarten Learning System: Let's Investigate Teachers Guide, Adaptive Learning Kit Resource Guide

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

THE INVESTIGATOR CLUB®		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles:** *The InvestiGator Club* curriculum is grounded in sound child development principles that are fully aligned with Head Start child development principles. Learning activities follow a sequential and ordered pattern that goes from simple to complex. The foundation for the curriculum emphasizes the importance of children's active learning, interacting with others, and home context. The curriculum is built upon the belief that children learn best by interacting in a developmentally appropriate and challenging environment through relationships with teachers. The foundational principles fully align with the Head Start child development principles of orderly and sequential development and the influence of a child's social and cultural context.
Evidence-Based	☆	At the time of this review, there are no research studies on *The InvestiGator Club* available in peer-reviewed journals. However, an efficacy study was conducted by a group contracted by the curriculum company, which used a pre-test, post-test design with no control group. The study found significant positive child outcomes over the course of the year. • **Research Rigor**: At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Curriculum Implementation:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Replication/Generalizability:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies.
Effects on Child Outcomes	☆	At the time of this review, there are no available research studies that report child outcomes in published, peer-reviewed journals.
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	★	• **Breadth**: The curriculum covers the majority of Head Start learning domains. Coverage of the learning domains varies across activities, and teachers are provided a choice of which activities to implement. Thus, teachers could choose to focus more or less on certain learning domains. • **Clarity and Coherence**: There is a mix of clarity regarding which domains individual learning activities cover. Some activities specify which domain is covered in their title, while for others the domains are not identified. • **Integration:** Some learning activities address more than one learning domain, primarily the activities that are options for the teacher to choose.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements**: The curriculum covers almost all domain elements within the HSCDELF. However, the majority of learning activities do not indicate which domain elements are covered. The domain elements are linked to units and not the learning activities within the units. • **Scope and Sequence:** The scope and sequence is clearly identifiable and breaks down learning domains into progressive steps. However, this is linked to units as a whole, rather than to individual learning activities (units last approximately four to six weeks).
Specific Learning Goals	★	• **Goals or Objectives**: Goals are provided for learning activities that are child focused and developmentally appropriate; however, sometimes the goal is broad rather than specific, which would make it difficult for teachers to assess whether it has been achieved. • **Alignment to Activity Content:** There is a match between activity content and the specified learning objectives. It is not articulated which parts of the activities meet which goals. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** There is evidence of broad alignment between the scope and sequence and the units as a whole, but not to individual learning activities.

THE INVESTIGATOR CLUB®		
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** Learning activities are clear and easy to follow. They follow a similar pattern across activities; additionally, units follow a similar pattern. • **Ease of Implementation:** The activities provide multiple supports for implementation, including teaching tips, a list of materials, clear directions and prompts, reproducible examples, and guidelines for how to set up learning centers. • **Variety:** There are a variety of teaching strategies used throughout the learning activities, and teachers are encouraged to incorporate materials to make units more interactive (e.g. inviting a bird keeper to do a presentation, bringing in disposable cameras, etc.). • **Purpose:** The purpose of each learning activity is provided through the learning objective, but these are broad. Additionally, some activities include a research tip that provides information about the meaningfulness of teaching specific skills.
Responsive Teaching	★	• **Variety of Strategies:** *The InvestiGator Club* uses both teacher-directed and child-focused activities. However, the primary learning activities are mostly teacher directed and whole group, while the optional activities are more child focused and small group. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** The foundation of the curriculum emphasizes the importance of teacher-child interactions. Learning activities often include scripted prompts or questions, but do not often include guidance in how to engage in meaningful conversations with children. • **Instructional Examples:** Some instructional examples are provided (i.e., the optional learning activities), but there is not explicit guidance in how to select which activities would best fit the learning styles present in a particular classroom.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	★	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive Expectations**: The curriculum provides support for children performing below cognitive expectations in several supplemental texts, including the Teacher Resource Guide and the Adaptive Learning Kit Resource Guide. Additionally, some learning activities include prompts for how to differentiate to children who are struggling with the activity. • **Support for Children Above Cognitive Expectations:** *The InvestiGator Club* provides some support for children performing above cognitive expectations in the "Gifted and Talented" section of the Adaptive Learning Kit Resource Guide, as well as in some differentiation tips for advanced learners that are specific to learning activities. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** The curriculum offers some support through the Adaptive Learning Kit Resource Guide and an occasional differentiation tip that is targeted to children with physical or emotional needs. • **Material Adaptation:** General guidance is provided for adapting materials to meet different levels of need. • **Environment Adaptation:** General guidance is provided for how to adapt the environment to meet different levels of need.
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	★	• **Materials Represent Diversity:** The curriculum provides materials for use inside the classroom and for families in both English and Spanish. General guidance is provided about the importance of finding materials to include in the classroom that reflect languages spoken by the children. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Language and Culture:** The curriculum materials reflect diversity (characters, picture books), and offer some general guidelines for selecting materials that are responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity within a childcare center. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** The curriculum provides activity-specific support for how English-speaking teachers can communicate with children who speak languages other than English. There is no support for teachers who speak the home languages of children who are dual-language learners. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center:** Other than the welcome materials and activities, there is minimal support in adapting the curriculum to meet cultural needs specific to a center. The focus appears to be on adapting the curriculum for Spanish speakers. The curriculum does not provide guidance to actively engage families in order to adapt and adopt activities from the families' home cultures.

THE INVESTIGATOR CLUB®		
Ongoing Assessments	★	*The InvestiGator Club*'s assessment is included with the curriculum package and is observation based. The assessment includes assessment cards, anecdotal notes, family surveys, class records, individualized education plans, assessment checklists, and progress forms. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** Individual learning activities include assessment tips and check-ups, which align to the end of unit assessment checklists. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** The assessment and intervention system aligns with the majority of HSCDELF learning domains. • **Using Assessment Information:** The assessment offers some support to teachers in how to differentiate future instruction in the form of assessment cards that provide intervention strategies for specific skills. Additionally, the Teacher Resource Guide provides suggestions for how to use assessment information. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** Assessments are easily accessible and easy to implement. Nonetheless, it may be time consuming to complete the assessment checklist on each child at the end of each unit. • **Validated Assessments:** There is evidence that assessments are based on sound child development principles. There is no evidence that the assessments are linked with children's learning outcomes.
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** Initial training is provided in the introduction to the curriculum (text), facilitator guide (DVD), and online curriculum demonstration webinars. • **Continued Professional Development:** The curriculum company offers various professional development workshops online, including center-based learning, assessment, literacy, etc. However, these are not specific to the curriculum. • **Level of Individualization:** There is some individualization, as teachers could choose on the curriculum company's website which topics they are interested in pursuing (for an additional fee), and there appear to be "customized workshops" which a childcare center can call to arrange. However, there is little information about what the customized workshops entail. • **Other Program Staff:** There are few professional development opportunities for staff members other than the teacher. • **Multiple Modes:** Professional development appears to be in text or webinar format primarily. The customized workshops may be in person, but it is unclear. • **Evidence of Validation:** Our review found no evidence of research supporting that professional development materials impact teacher practices.

THE INVESTIGATOR CLUB®		
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** The curriculum provides materials for teachers to distribute to caregivers, such as an introduction letter and family welcome guides. Additionally, there is a parent section of the curriculum's website which contains a parent toolbox and other resources. • **Teacher Guidance:** The Teacher Resource guide includes a section on "Parents as Partners" which has tips for how to encourage parents to help children at home. Additionally, each teacher guide (or unit) has a "Family Involvement" section, which includes letters and activities to share with families. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** The Teacher Resource guide includes details on how to use parents and family volunteers when they come into the classroom. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** There are specific sections of the Teacher Resource Guide that provide support in how to have effective communication with parents. • **Comprehensive:** The parent materials are comprehensive. There are details on child development, and they cover a broad number of learning domains and topics.

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Let's Begin with the Letter People®

Curriculum Description

Let's Begin with the Letter People® is an early education curriculum that uses two introductory units and 26 thematic units to develop children's language, early literacy skills, social-emotional expression, and skills and concepts in all content areas.

Abrams & Company Publishers, Inc. (2009). Let's Begin with the Letter People. Retrieved from: http://www.abramslearningtrends.com/c/product.web?nocache@3+s@Na.JXBeQMN9Q2+record@3788

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Social & Emotional Development, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Creative Arts Expression, Physical Development & Health

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–4

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction
- Learning Centers

Cost per Classroom

Introductory Program Set: $1,299; Comprehensive Program Plus Set: $3,495

Manual can be purchased separately.

Retrieved from: http://www.abramslearningtrends.com/c/homeshowcase4.web?nocache@1+s@zsLeteAMajRT

Training

Abrams Learning Trends will provide customized, initial product training (half/whole day) on multiple purchases of *Let's Begin with the Letter People®* at no cost. Additional follow-up product training can be scheduled, if needed. One consultant is provided per 40 to 50 attendees. The audience can include preschool classroom teachers and assistant teachers, administrators, and/or district trainers. Additional specific, ongoing professional development training on various literacy and content area topics for preschool children, including oral language development, phonological awareness, print awareness, alphabetic knowledge, mathematics, science, social studies, and classroom management techniques, can be provided and customized to meet specific needs. This training consists of one consultant per 40 to 50 attendees and costs $2,500 per day per consultant.

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

Let's Begin with Letter People® Comprehensive Program Plus

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

LET'S BEGIN WITH THE LETTER PEOPLE®		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles**: The curriculum is fully aligned with Head Start child development principles. The learning activities follow a sequential and ordered pattern. Additionally, the social and cultural context of a child's life is incorporated into the learning activities.
Evidence-Based	☆	Only studies that involved the *Letter People* comprehensive curriculum and were included in peer-reviewed journal articles or funded reports were used for the purposes of determining the rating for this component. • **Research Rigor**: At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Curriculum Implementation**: At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Replication/Generalizability:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies.
Effects on Child Outcomes	☆	Abrams Learning Trends cites two efficacy studies for the comprehensive curriculum. These studies used a pre-test, post-test design with no control group, which limits one's ability to draw conclusions from them. The studies found significant outcomes across a variety of skills, including language and literacy, mathematics, and social-emotional domains. Additionally, there are several research studies evaluating the effectiveness of the language and literacy-specific *Letter People* curriculum, an older version of the curriculum. According to the Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research Consortium study, there were no discernible effects found in oral language, print knowledge, phonological processing, or mathematics for the language-specific curriculum (Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research Consortium, 2008).
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	★	• **Breadth**: The *Letter People* covers most of the HSCDELF learning domains, including Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Language Development, Social & Emotional Development, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Creative Arts Expression, Physical Development & Health, as well as technology. • **Clarity and Coherence**: Throughout each day's set of learning activities, the curriculum notes which learning domains are covered specific to the learning activity. However, it does not point out parts of the activity that match different domains. • **Integration:** Within activities, there is a mix of evidence for integration. Some activities cover only Language Development and/or Literacy Knowledge & Skills, while others cover Language Development and/or Literacy Knowledge & Skills plus one additional domain, e.g., Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health motor skills, Social & Emotional Development.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements**: The curriculum addresses most of the domain elements within the HSCDELF learning domains, including Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Language Development, Social & Emotional Development, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Creative Arts Expression, Physical Development & Health, as well as technology. • **Scope and Sequence:** A detailed scope and sequence are provided for Social & Emotional Development, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills (reading and writing separately), Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Creative Arts Expression, Physical Development & Health, and technology. Although the scope and sequence are somewhat broad, they are linked to a weekly set of lessons.

LET'S BEGIN WITH THE LETTER PEOPLE®		
Specific Learning Goals	★	• **Goals or Objectives**: Learning objectives are identified for each activity. Some learning objectives are broad while others are specific, child-focused, and developmentally appropriate. • **Alignment to Activity Content:** There is evidence of a match between the learning goals and the activity, but the pieces of the activity are not labeled to match components of the objective. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence**: There is evidence of alignment between the learning goals for each learning activity and the scope and sequence.
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** Activities are logical and follow a similar pattern. All learning activities present the objectives, materials, and a short narrative describing the activity. • **Ease of Implementation:** Throughout the activities, multiple supports are provided to facilitate implementation, including teacher's tips, list of materials, guidelines for setting up the environment, etc. • **Variety:** The curriculum prompts teachers to use multiple strategies (whole group, small groups, centers) and interactive materials. There is a mix of teacher-directed and child-directed activities. • **Purpose:** For some activities, the purpose of the activity is well-defined and appears to be a meaningful part of the overall curriculum.
Responsive Teaching	★	• **Variety of Strategies:** Within activities, the majority of whole group activities are teacher directed, while activities within the small groups and centers are child directed. Room is left for differentiation to meet different learning needs. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** The curriculum offers support, regarding how to provide high-quality interactions, that is embedded within the learning activities. • **Instructional Examples:** There are some instructional examples provided to a range of learning preferences or personalities. Some instructional examples are in a general manner, while others are more specific to the learning activity.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	½	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive Expectations**: The curriculum provides some differentiated activities, primarily in the areas of Language Development and Literacy Knowledge & Skills, for children who are cognitively and/or academically below expectations. • **Support for Children Above Cognitive Expectations:** The curriculum provides some differentiated activities, primarily in the areas of Language Development and Literacy Knowledge & Skills, for children who are performing above cognitive and/or academic expectations. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** Guidelines are not provided for how to adapt learning activities for children who have physical and/or emotional needs. • **Material Adaptation:** Minimal guidelines are provided for adapting materials to meet different levels of need. • **Environment Adaptation:** Minimal guidelines are provided for adapting the environment to meet different levels of need.

LET'S BEGIN WITH THE LETTER PEOPLE®		
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	★	• **Materials Represent Diversity:** The curriculum provides multiple materials in a language other than English for use inside the classroom (e.g., Spanish versions of the 20 interactive math and science big books) and for families (e.g., a weekly family newsletter in Spanish). These materials are not provided in other languages. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Language and Culture:** Multiple materials represent diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, gender, etc. However, the curriculum does not provide guidance in how to select classroom materials that are responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity within the childcare center. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** Prompts are provided for how the teacher can support dual-language learners in the classroom in a general manner (e.g., within the *Ready, Set, Go! Teacher Guide*). The curriculum provides some support for teachers on ways to encourage development of the children's home languages. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center:** The curriculum provides minimal suggestions for how to adapt the instruction to meet a specific center's cultural and linguistic needs.
Ongoing Assessments	★	The Let's Begin with the Letter People Assessment Express and Assessment Booklet are included at no additional cost in the Comprehensive Program Plus. The assessment includes testing items and tasks for the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** There is evidence that the assessment aligns with learning goals covered in weekly units. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** The assessment measures students' skills on outcomes that are fully aligned with the HSCDELF outcomes and learning domains. • **Using Assessment Information:** The curriculum provides minimal instruction for a teacher on how to reflect on assessment information. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** The assessment is easily accessible, user-friendly, and efficient to implement. • **Validated Assessments:** Evidence is provided that the assessment is based on sound child development principles. However, there is no evidence that the assessment is linked to children's learning outcomes.
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** Half- or full-day training is provided and customized for a specific program. The website provides an opportunity to set up a presentation for your program, but there is little information regarding the comprehensiveness of initial training. • **Continued Professional Development:** There is continued professional development available, if needed. This professional development is available in a variety of ways (e.g., webinar-based training, phone or email support from a teacher consultant, etc.). • **Level of Individualization:** The curriculum provides moderate levels of individualization (e.g., teachers or programs may choose from a menu of content areas and may do webinar or group training). • **Other Program Staff:** Other staff members and families are invited to participate in the available professional development, but there is no modified content. • **Multiple Modes:** There are multiple modes of delivery (e.g., lecture, interactive discussion, hands-on activities/explorations, and reflection). • **Evidence of Validation:** Our review found no evidence that the professional development is linked to changes in teacher practices.

LET'S BEGIN WITH THE LETTER PEOPLE®		
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** Family involvement materials are provided (including information for caregivers about how to extend learning at home), but there are no supports for individualizing these materials for specific classroom needs. • **Teacher Guidance:** There is guidance provided for the teacher in how to link learning goals to home in a meaningful way; however, the guidance was written in a general format and not specific to each learning goal. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** There are no suggestions for how to use parent and family volunteers in the classroom. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** The materials mention the importance of the parent-teacher relationship, but do not provide specific instructions about ways to establish or maintain the relationship. • **Comprehensive:** Materials for parents provide support across some HSCDELF learning domains, but do not include additional topics, such as child development.

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Opening the World of Learning (OWL)

Curriculum Description

Opening the World of Learning (OWL): A Comprehensive Early Literacy Program focuses on six thematically organized units: Family, Friends, Wind and Water, The World of Color, Shadows and Reflections, and Things That Grow. The content of each unit is built around a daily routine within an activity center.

Schickedanz, J., & D. Dickinson (2012). Opening the World of Learning. Retrieved from: http://www.pearsonlearning.com/microsites/owl/

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–4

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction
- Learning Centers

Cost per Classroom

English and Spanish Comprehensive Pre-K Kit: $3,300

Manual can be purchased separately.

Retrieved from: http://www.pearsonlearning.com/microsites/owl

Training

1-day workshop; coaching/modeling 2-day cycle; 1-day small-group lesson study; consultative services

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

English and Spanish Comprehensive Pre-K Kit

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

OPENING THE WORLD OF LEARNING (OWL)		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles**: *OWL* is based on sound child development principles that are fully consistent with Head Start child development principles, as well as existing research literature. The curriculum is built upon the belief that children learn best by interacting in a developmentally appropriate and challenging environment through relationships with teachers. The foundational principles fully align with the Head Start child development principles of orderly and sequential development and the influence of a child's social and cultural context.
Evidence-Based	★	At the time of this review, there are two published articles; the first one conducts secondary data analysis on the results obtained from the OWL Consortium Project (Ashe, 2009), and the second one investigates the impact of an Early Reading First Program (*OWL* as well as coaching) on the language and literacy achievement of children from diverse language backgrounds (Wilson, Dickinson, and Rowe, 2013). In addition to these articles, the OWL Consortium Project and an evaluation conducted by WestEd examine the effectiveness of OWL (Wilson, 2009; Abdullah-Welsch, Schmidt, Hahn, Tafoya, and Sifuentes, 2009). The WestEd study specifically evaluated the OWL Early Literacy Program. • **Research Rigor**: The curriculum has been investigated utilizing quasi-experimental designs. Measures used to assess curriculum effectiveness were independent from the curriculum. The secondary data analysis investigated data from the OWL Consortium Project, which did not include control groups. Measures chosen to monitor student outcomes included an independent and standardized measure. The WestEd study used a quasi-experimental design with a matched comparison group, and included an independent and standardized measure. The Early Reading First Program employed a quasi-experimental pre-test-post-test design that uses the age cutoff typically applied by preschool programs as the selection variable. • **Curriculum Implementation:** Studies include a measure of fidelity with mixed results. The OWL Consortium Project reports low fidelity in year one, but by year two, the project reports that all programs delivered part or all of the six units. The WestEd study collected fidelity data through implementation logs and observations; the study reports a strong level of implementation (all treatment teachers followed OWL schedule, 97% had set up their classrooms appropriately, etc.). The Early Reading First Program used classroom observations to assess fidelity of program implementation twice each school year. The study reports low fidelity in year one, but by year two, implementation fidelity increased on all 10 segments and remained high in the third year. • **Replication/Generalizability:** Preschool programs featured in studies represent a variety of educational and community settings, including Head Start; the majority of the sample were children from low socio-economic status.
Effects on Child Outcomes	★	Studies indicate positive child outcomes associated with using the *OWL* curriculum. The OWL Consortium Project reports positive child outcomes found in language and early reading skills (e.g., alphabet knowledge, print knowledge), with mean effect sizes of 0.15 (Year 1), 0.35 (Year 2), 0.41 (Year 3), and 0.36 (Year 4). The WestEd project reports significant gains in early literacy for the treatment group, as measured by the PPVT-III. The Early Reading First study reports moderate to large effects in early language and literacy for the treatment group, as measured by the PPVT and Woodcock Johnson Picture Vocabulary.
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	★	• **Breadth**: *OWL* covers the majority of HSCDELF learning domains, including Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Social & Emotional Development, Creative Arts Expression. • **Clarity and Coherence**: Learning activities clearly list which learning domains are covered. Throughout each learning activity, aspects of the activity that match different learning domains are identified. • **Integration:** There is a mix of integration across activities. Some focus on only one learning domain (small groups), while others integrate across two or three learning domains.

OPENING THE WORLD OF LEARNING (OWL)		
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements**: *OWL* fully covers almost all domain elements and indicates for each learning activity which domain elements are included. • **Scope and Sequence:** There are an extensive scope and sequence for all learning domains that identify the skills covered for each unit and week.
Specific Learning Goals	★	• **Goals or Objectives**: *OWL* specifies goals for each learning activity that are specific, measurable, child-focused, and developmentally appropriate. • **Alignment to Activity Content:** Our review found evidence of a match between content of learning activity and the learning goal, but the curriculum only occasionally identifies parts of the activity that align with specific goals. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** There is evidence of alignment between the scope and sequence and weeks within units, but not individual learning activities.
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** Learning activities are logical, clearly organized, and follow a similar pattern across activities. • **Ease of Implementation:** Multiple supports for implementation are provided to teachers, including a list of materials, clear directions, and specific teaching tips for meal time, transitions, and outdoor play, etc. • **Variety:** Each day of instruction includes center time, small group, and whole group. The curriculum comes with diverse materials (i.e., books and a manipulative kit). Additionally, *OWL* encourages diversity of options for center time. • **Purpose:** For most activities, the purpose is clear. Furthermore, occasional research is cited to support individual activities or skills.
Responsive Teaching	★	• **Variety of Strategies:** Each daily schedule allows for teacher-directed activities, child-focused time in activities, and individualized time with children. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** *OWL* provides strong support for encouraging high-quality, teacher-child interactions, including sections at the beginning of each week (for example, *Making the Most of Meal Time*) and those embedded within activities (language to use to scaffold and provide feedback). • **Instructional Examples:** Instructional examples from learning activities are targeted towards a broad range of students. However, differentiated instructional tips primarily provide support for teachers in working with children who are dual-language learners. The tips for adapting curriculum to meet the needs of other students are limited.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	★	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive Expectations**: *OWL* provides both unit-specific and activity-specific support to "Make it Easier," a section within the curriculum, for children who are performing below academic or cognitive expectations. • **Support for Children Above Cognitive Expectations:** The curriculum provides both unit-specific and activity-specific support to "Make it Harder," a section within the curriculum, for children who are performing above academic or cognitive expectations. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** The curriculum includes supplemental material in the Planning and Assessment teacher guide, which supports the teacher in differentiating instruction for children with special needs, such as physical needs. • **Material Adaptation:** *OWL* offers minimal guidance for adapting materials to meet the needs of children with different levels of need. • **Environment Adaptation:** The curriculum offers minimal guidance for adapting the environment to meet the needs of children with different levels of need.

OPENING THE WORLD OF LEARNING (OWL)		
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	★	• **Materials Represent Diversity:** Most classroom and family materials are in both English and Spanish, but are not available in other languages. Additionally, the curriculum offers suggestions in the Planning and Assessment teacher guide in how to support families who speak other languages (e.g., Vietnamese, Cantonese, etc.). • **Materials Represent Diversity of Language and Culture:** Materials included with the curriculum (picture books, teacher guides) represent diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, gender, etc. Supplemental materials, such as a manipulative kit and puzzles (available for purchase) also reflect diversity. However, the curriculum provides minimal guidance for selecting materials that represent the cultures of a specific classroom. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** The curriculum offers support for dual-language learners at a variety of levels. At the most general level, the curriculum offers support in the supplemental text, the Planning and Assessment teacher guide. Within each unit, there are suggestions for beginning, intermediate, and advanced activities for English language development. Within activities, there is support for children who are dual-language learners specific to each learning activity. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Program:** The curriculum offers general guidance in how to welcome families of all cultures into the classroom, but not in a manner specific to the learning activities.
Ongoing Assessments	★	*OWL*'s assessment is included in the curriculum and is primarily observation based. The assessment includes: observation checklists, screening assessments, and progress monitoring recording forms. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** Individual learning activities provide "Monitoring Tips", but these are not always aligned to the "Assess and Check" curricular assessment. The "Assess and Check" chapter provides information about how to assess children's progress that is aligned to learning goals from the curriculum. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** While the overall learning goals of the curriculum are aligned with the HSCDELF, the assessment measures are abbreviated and do not fully cover all domains. • **Using Assessment Information:** The assessment chapter within the Planning and Assessment guide offers detailed step-by-step instructions on how to assess children throughout the school year, as well as guidelines for how to differentiate instruction once teachers have assessment data. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** The curriculum provides assessment forms, which are easily accessible, user-friendly, and efficient to implement. • **Validated Assessments:** Evidence is provided that the curriculum assesses children in skills that are predictive of later academic success. However, our review found no evidence that the curricular measures have been linked to children's outcomes.

OPENING THE WORLD OF LEARNING (OWL)		
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** *OWL* provides professional development in teacher guides and DVD resources for how to set up the classroom and a plan for how to use the curriculum. Additionally, the website suggests that training is offered in a live, face-to-face manner regarding a variety of topics, including project implementation. • **Continued Professional Development:** The curriculum company website suggests that training is offered in a live, face-to-face manner regarding a variety of topics, including classroom management, analysis of student work, etc. Our review found little evidence for what this ongoing professional development may include or what form it occurs in. • **Level of Individualization:** The curriculum company website suggests that "experienced consultants will work with you," but it is unclear the extent to which the company will individualize, for example, at the teacher level, program level, etc. • **Other Program Staff:** There is no indication that there is professional development offered for staff other than teachers. • **Multiple Modes:** There appears to be two primary modes of professional development: text materials and live training offered by the company. • **Evidence of Validation:** Our review found no evidence that the professional development materials have been linked to improved teacher practices.
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** The curriculum provides a weekly family newsletter and take-home books for families. Our review found no evidence of support for teachers in how to adapt materials to best meet the needs of the classroom. • **Teacher Guidance:** The curriculum offers some support for teachers in how to link children's learning in the classroom to the home environment. This is provided in the form of teacher tips on the sides of learning activity pages and in the supplemental guide, the *Planning and Assessment* guide. Additionally, the curriculum encourages teachers to offer family workshops that are designed to deepen families' understanding of how they can support children's learning. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** The curriculum offers minimal guidance in how to encourage families to participate in the classroom environment. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** The curriculum provides some guidance in how to create parent-teacher relationships and connect with parents in the *Planning and Assessment* guide. However, little guidance is provided for maintaining high-quality, positive relationships. • **Comprehensive:** Family materials were not available for this curricular review, so it is difficult to assess the quality and comprehensiveness of the weekly newsletters.

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SUMMER 2015

PreschoolFirst

Curriculum Description

PreschoolFirst combines assessment with curriculum through learning experiences. *PreschoolFirst* connects developmental assessment to curriculum goals for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

The Source for Learning, Inc. (2003-2013). *PreschoolFirst*. Retrieved from: http://www.preschoolfirst.com/, http://sourceforlearning.org

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–4

Delivery

- Individualized Instruction
- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction

Cost per Program

Basic Account (single site/center account): an annual license fee of $100 and an annual per-student charge based on the number of children actively using the system: 1–50 ($6/child); 51–100 ($5/child); 101–150 ($4/child); 151–250 ($3/child)

Premium Subscription (includes aggregated multi-site Head Start progress reports by total program, site, or center, class, and child): one time start-up fee of $3,750, which includes administrative and initial teaching staff training, plus an annual per-student charge based on the number of children actively using the system: 40–250 ($15/child); 251–500 ($14/child); 501–750 ($13/child); 751–1000 ($12/child); 1001–1250 ($11/child); 1251-1500 ($10/child); 1501–1750 ($9/child); 1751+ ($8/child)

Scholarship and "In-Kind Opportunities" are available to help defray costs.

Contact PreschoolFirst for cost information: http://www.preschoolfirst.com/contact

Training

Online Trainings are provided on an ongoing basis, and Chat Sessions are available at no cost throughout the year. Customized Teacher Training is offered for a fee.

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

PreschoolFirst Research-Based Assessment and Curriculum Resource

☆	⯪	✪	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

PRESCHOOLFIRST		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles:** *PreschoolFirst* follows 10 foundational principles that focus on the "whole child." These principles include, but are not limited to: children are competent and capable; children learn through play; young children learn best from engaging in both self-initiated play and teacher-planned, structured activities; families must be engaged in their child's learning and are an essential part of each child's success, etc. These principles align mostly with Head Start Child Development principles. The social-emotional and cultural context of the classroom is incorporated into the foundational principles (e.g., children are cultural beings) and activities. Additionally, the curriculum accounts for different developmental levels so the activities become more complex throughout the year. However, learning activities are not organized to progress from simple to complex; the teacher chooses the sequence of units.
Evidence-Based	☆	At the time of this review, there are no research studies on *PreschoolFirst* available in peer-reviewed journals. • **Research Rigor**: At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Curriculum Implementation:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Replication/Generalizability:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies.
Effects on Child Outcomes	☆	At the time of this review, there are no available research studies that report child outcomes in published, peer-reviewed journals.
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	★	• **Breadth**: The curriculum covers domains consistent with the Head Start outcomes framework. Teachers are prompted to individualize based on children's progress across several *PreschoolFirst* domains: Cognitive, Communications, Fine Motor, Gross Motor, and Socio-emotional. Thus, evenness of coverage is dependent on teacher choice. • **Clarity and Coherence**: Some learning activities include which domains and observable behaviors/skills are covered through the instruction. The observable behaviors are identified when targeted within the lesson. • **Integration:** There is a mix of integration. Most learning activities address more than one learning domain.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements**: The majority of domain elements from the Head Start outcomes framework are covered within this curriculum. A few of the elements from the Physical Development & Health domain are not covered. • **Scope and Sequence:** There are no scope and sequence provided.
Specific Learning Goals	★	• **Goals or Objectives**: Learning objectives are listed for each activity as observable behaviors, as well as links to state standards and HSCDELF learning domains and domain elements. These behaviors are developmentally appropriate and child-focused, but they are somewhat broad. • **Alignment to Activity Content:** There is an alignment among the objective behaviors, linked standards, and activity content. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** An alignment exists between activities and the list of developmental behaviors. PreschoolFirst provides for each age range.

PRESCHOOLFIRST		
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** Learning activities are logical and follow a similar pattern across different activities. • **Ease of Implementation:** Some supports for implementation are provided, including a list of materials, clear instructions, and set-up directions. • **Variety:** There is some variety in teaching strategies (teacher-directed, small group, buddy time, individualized instruction). *PreschoolFirst* encourages classrooms to use materials typically found in a high-quality classroom, e.g., puzzles, magnifying glasses, sand and water tables, etc. • **Purpose:** The purpose for each learning activity is identified in the link to state standards and HSCDELF domains.
Responsive Teaching	★	• **Variety of Strategies:** There is a mix of child-focused and teacher-directed activities. Teachers are prompted to select activities for different developmental levels and learning styles. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** The curriculum includes some scripted language to facilitate teacher-child interactions, such as prompts and questions. Additionally, there is a separate section that provides guidance for teachers in how to engage in high-quality, teacher-child interactions. • **Instructional Examples:** The curriculum provides some instructional prompts for engaging children with different levels of need, but there are few instructional examples for adapting the curriculum to meet a variety of learning styles.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	★	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive/Academic Expectations**: The curriculum encourages teachers to individualize activities according to each child's needs. The curriculum generates activities for a teacher to use with a child who is below cognitive and/or academic expectations. • **Support for Children Above Cognitive/Academic Expectations:** The curriculum encourages teachers to individualize activities according to each child's needs. The curriculum generates activities for a teacher to use with a child who is above cognitive and/or academic expectations. • **Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** The curriculum generates activities for a teacher to use with a child who is performing below developmental levels for fine motor, gross motor, or socio-emotional skills. • **Material Adaptation:** The curriculum primarily provides new activities to be used with a child who is performing below developmental expectations. However, at times, the material or environment of an activity is modified in order to meet different levels of needs. • **Environment Adaptation:** The curriculum primarily provides new activities to be used with a child who is performing below developmental expectations. However, at times, the material or environment of an activity is modified in order to meet different levels of needs.
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	½	• **Materials Represent Diversity of Language:** Materials for families can be acquired in Spanish through the curriculum's web interface. Materials for use in the classroom are in English only. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Culture and Gender:** Suggested trade books reflect a variety in terms of culture and gender. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to add their own activities to represent diversity in their classroom and community. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** There is little to no support provided for dual-language learners in the classroom. The curriculum encourages teachers who are bilingual to adapt the materials in the second language. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center:** There is little to no guidance in adapting the curriculum to meet cultural needs specific to a center.

PRESCHOOLFIRST		
Ongoing Assessments	★	*PreschoolFirst* has an assessment that is computer-based. The assessment relies on observation and includes class progress charts, checklists, developmental summaries, and conference reports. • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** There is clear evidence that the provided assessment aligns with observable behaviors identified within learning activities. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** The curricular assessment measures students on observable behaviors that are aligned with the Head Start childhood outcomes framework. • **Using Assessment Information:** Teachers enter assessment data into the computer program, and the program provides suggested activities for the developmental level of the child. Differentiation for future activities would depend on the assessment data that the teacher enters into the system, and there are no other guidelines for the teacher to differentiate for future activities outside of updating observations in the system. Additionally, teachers are provided with class progress charts to record and track children's progress. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** The assessment checklists appear easy to administer and user-friendly. • **Validated Assessments**: There is evidence that assessments are based on sound child development principles, but there is no evidence that the assessments are linked with children's learning outcomes.
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training:** The curriculum includes an implementation guide and "Quick Tour" for the online system. Additionally, there is a 1.5 or 3 hour webinar available for an additional fee. • **Continued Professional Development:** Ongoing training webinars and live chats are available to teachers. • **Level of Individualization:** Individualized consultations and coaching are provided upon request via phone support, webinars, and trainings. Additionally, the curriculum company has a toll-free number and email available. • **Other Program Staff:** There is an introductory training available for program administrators. • **Multiple Modes:** Professional development materials are available online and in text format. • **Evidence of Validation:** There is no evidence provided for validation of the professional development materials.
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** The materials that review what a child is learning in the classroom are provided for teachers to distribute to families. However, these materials offer minimal strategies for families to review/extend learning outside of the classroom. Some materials can be individualized to each child. • **Teacher Guidance:** Teachers are provided with some support in how to link learning goals to the home environment. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** Teachers are provided with ample guidance in how to incorporate family members as volunteers in the classroom. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** The curriculum mentions the importance of a positive teacher-parent relationship, and provides techniques for initial and ongoing bonding with families. • **Comprehensive:** Parent materials are comprehensive. They include information related to specific skills that children have mastered, as well as information about learning domains and child development.

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SUMMER 2015

Scholastic Big Day for PreK™

Curriculum Description

Big Day for PreK™ is organized into eight themes and includes five key elements of success: big experiences, meaningful conversations, best children's literature and nonfiction, innovative technology, and comprehensive program.

Scholastic Inc. (2013). *Scholastic Big Day for PreK*. Retrieved from: http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/early-learning-program/big-day-for-prekindergarten.htm

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–4

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction
- Learning Centers

Cost per Classroom

Curriculum materials: $2,850; half-day implementation training: $2,299; full-day implementation training: $2,899

Manual can be purchased separately.

Retrieved from: http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/early-learning-program/BigDay_OrderForm_ACA.pdf

Training

Half-day and full-day implementation trainings offered for a cost
Webinar series available free of cost
Each teacher receives access to the online professional development course, *Developing Foundations for Early Childhood Success*.

Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters

Scholastic Big Day for PreK English Edition, which includes Teacher Welcome Kit, Big Theme Box Themes 1-8, Big Learning Box, Big Wall Chart Box, Big Book Box, Little Book Box

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

SCHOLASTIC BIG DAY FOR PREK™		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles:** *Big Day for PreK* (BDFP) is fully aligned with Head Start child development principles. Learning activities progress from simple to more complex and build on each other throughout each theme. The social-emotional and cultural context of the classroom is addressed in teacher guides and the professional handbook.
Evidence-Based	⯪	At the time of this review, there are no research studies on *BDFP* curriculum available in peer-reviewed journals. • **Research Rigor**: At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Curriculum Implementation:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies. • **Replication/Generalizability:** At the time of this review, there are no available published research studies.
Effects on Child Outcomes	☆	At the time of this review, there are no available research studies that report child outcomes in published, peer-reviewed journals. There is a study that has been conducted by Scholastic in one elementary school without a comparison group. Results on the Scholastic assessment demonstrate significant growth in oral language, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, and mathematics after three months of instruction.
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	★	• **Breadth**: *BDFP* covers all HSCDELF learning domains. The curriculum evenly covers Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, and Mathematic Knowledge & Skills, as well as embedding Social & Emotional Development instruction throughout. It also incorporates several additional content areas each day (e.g., Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Health & Development, etc.). • **Clarity and Coherence**: *BDFP* clearly articulates when specific learning domains are being covered at different points in the learning activity. • **Integration:** Major learning activities integrate multiple HSCDELF learning domains, including Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Social & Emotional Development, etc.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements**: *BDFP* fully covers almost all of the HSCDELF domain elements, and the domain elements included in each learning activity are identified. • **Scope and Sequence:** A scope and sequence exists that links each domain element to themes, and each week there is a scope and sequence embedded that broadly links each domain element to some of the learning activities.
Specific Learning Goals	★	• **Goals or Objectives**: The curriculum provides learning goals for each learning activity that are child-focused and developmentally appropriate, but most are broad rather than specific (e.g., "uses gross motor skills," "identifies letters"). • **Alignment to Activity Content:** There is evidence of alignment between the learning goals of the learning activity and the content of the learning activity. It is indicated which pieces of the activity meet which goals. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence:** There is an alignment between the learning goals and the overall scope and sequence.

SCHOLASTIC BIG DAY FOR PREK™		
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities:** The *BDFP* theme guides are well-organized, and learning activities and units follow a similar pattern throughout. • **Ease of Implementation:** The curriculum includes multiple supports for implementation (e.g., weekly and daily overviews, lists of materials, modification suggestions, vocabulary lists, etc.). • **Variety:** Instruction is delivered through a variety of strategies, including whole group, small groups, and learning centers. Materials are diverse and interactive (e.g., pasta, photographs, classroom tools, etc.). • **Purpose:** The purpose for each week is identified in the "Big Idea" and "Knowledge Focus" sections, but each individual learning activity does not have a clearly articulated purpose. Each learning activity does, however, appear to be a meaningful part of the overall curriculum.
Responsive Teaching	★	• **Variety of Strategies:** Within the curriculum, there is a presence of both child-focused and teacher-directed strategies. Whole-group activities tend to be teacher-directed. Suggestions are made for ways to differentiate instruction for individual students. • **Teacher-Child Interactions:** *BDFP* provides some support for providing high-quality, teacher-child interactions specific to learning activities (i.e., example questions). Additional support is provided in a general manner in the professional handbook. • **Instructional Examples:** The curriculum provides some instructional examples for how to respond to different learning preferences in the "Making Learning Bigger" section.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	★	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive Expectations**: Some learning activities include ways to adapt the activity for learners that are below cognitive and/or academic expectations. • **Support for Children Above Cognitive Expectations:** Some learning activities include ways to enrich the activity for learners that are above cognitive and/or academic expectations. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs:** Some learning activities include ways to support children with physical and/or emotional needs. • **Material Adaptation:** There are some, general guidelines for adapting materials in the professional handbook. • **Environment Adaptation:** There are some, general guidelines for adapting the environment in the professional handbook.
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	★	• **Materials Represent Diversity of Language:** *BDFP* provides multiple materials for use inside the classroom and for families in languages other than English and Spanish. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Culture and Gender:** Materials represent diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, gender, etc., and are incorporated throughout learning activities. Additionally, the professional handbook communicates the importance of selecting materials that represent cultural and linguistic diversity specific to the center. • **Support for Dual-Language Learners:** The curriculum provides activity-specific support for dual-language learners in the sections of "English Language Development" and "Bridge to English." Guidance is infused throughout the curriculum. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center:** *BDFP* provides general suggestions for adapting the instruction to meet a specific center's cultural and linguistic needs rather than activity-specific suggestions.

SCHOLASTIC BIG DAY FOR PREK™		
Ongoing Assessments	★	Scholastic's Early Childhood Inventory (SECI) includes both a formal assessment and informal assessments (observation guides, checklists, anecdotal records, etc.). • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities:** There is evidence that SECI and informal assessments align with learning goals covered in learning activities. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes:** Informal assessment checklists measure students' skills on outcomes that are mostly aligned with HSCDELF learning domains, but the formal assessment (SECI) measures skills that are limited to Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, and Mathematics Knowledge & Skills. • **Using Assessment Information:** Within learning activities, support is provided for one-to-one follow-up based on the teacher's behavioral observations. Additionally, general support is provided for how to use assessment results to adapt instruction for Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, and Mathematics Knowledge & Skills. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** The formal assessment is approximately one hour per child, and it is recommended that it be given by the teacher three times per year. Informal assessments occur throughout the day. All assessments appear user-friendly and efficient to implement for the most part. • **Validated Assessments**: There is evidence that assessments are based on sound child development principles. There is no evidence that the assessments are linked with children's learning outcomes.
Professional Development Opportunities	½	• **Initial Training:** Initial training for implementation is provided in either a half-day or full-day format; the website does not specify what the implementation training includes. Additionally, a free online course is offered for each teacher that covers foundational principles of early childhood instruction. • **Continued Professional Development:** The curriculum provides ongoing professional development for a limited number of topics. At the time of this review, there were three webinars available covering oral language, read-alouds, and phonological awareness. • **Level of Individualization:** The website suggests that individualization of the implementation training is available, but full details are not provided. • **Other Program Staff:** Other program staff are invited to participate, but it is unclear if there is modified content for administrators. • **Multiple Modes:** Professional development is provided in text format, online, and through the in-person implementation trainings. • **Evidence of Validation:** There is no evidence that the professional development enhances teacher practices.
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials:** *BDFP* provides materials for teachers to distribute to caregivers that review what children are learning and provide strategies for families to extend learning outside of the classroom. Additionally, there is an opportunity for teachers to personalize newsletters that go home. • **Teacher Guidance:** Guidance is provided to teachers on how to link learning goals to home in a meaningful way for each theme. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers:** Suggestions are provided for how to use parent and family volunteers for each theme. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship:** The curriculum provides some suggestions for how to establish and maintain a positive, parent-teacher relationship. • **Comprehensive:** The parent materials provide support across multiple learning domains and are comprehensive. However, many of the parent materials are only available online; these materials would not be accessible to parents who do not have Internet access or who are not "internet-savvy."

NCQTL

For more information, contact us at: NCQTL@UW.EDU or 877-731-0764

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Tools of the Mind

Curriculum Description

Tools of the Mind curriculum focuses on children's cognitive and social and emotional self-regulation, as well as emphasizes early literacy and mathematics.

Tools of the Mind. (2007). Retrieved from: http://www.toolsofthemind.org/

Covered HSCDELF Learning Domains

Creative Arts Expression, Approaches to Learning, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Logic & Reasoning, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Science Knowledge & Skills, Social Studies Knowledge & Skills, Physical Development & Health, Social & Emotional Development

Target Population

Preschool children, ages 3–4

Delivery

- Small Group Instruction
- Whole Group Instruction

Cost per Classroom

Classroom Support Materials, Topics 1-22: $899; Family Connection Set, Topics 1-22: $225

Manual can be purchased separately.

Inquiries regarding cost of training materials should be directed to: training@ToolsoftheMind.org.

Training

Teachers assigned to the *Tools of the Mind* group received four full days of curriculum training before the start of the school year. During the school year, they received 30-minute classroom visits approximately once a week from a *Tools of the Mind* trainer to address any difficulties they were having with the curriculum. In addition, *Tools of the Mind* teachers received one half-day workshop and five one-hour lunchtime meetings to discuss aspects of the curriculum. Control group teachers received similar amounts of training. They attended workshops on the already established district curriculum given by the district for the same amount of time.

Curriculum Material Reviewed by Raters

Pre-K Intro, Background, and Theory Manual (7th Edition); Pre-K Training Manual; Pre-K Training Manual Additional Scaffolds Appendix, Coach Handbook

☆	⯪	★	★
No evidence	Minimal evidence	Some evidence	Solid, high-quality evidence

TOOLS OF THE MIND		
Grounded in Child Development Principles	★	• **Child Development Principles:** The *Tools of the Mind* curriculum is grounded in child development principles that fully align with the Head Start child development domains. Learning activities follow a sequential and ordered pattern that builds from simple to complex. The foundation for the curriculum is in Vygotskian psychology. The curriculum is consistent with the Head Start child development principle of the importance of a child's social and cultural context.
Evidence-Based	★	At the time of this review, there are two research studies published in peer-reviewed journals (Barnett et al, 2008; Diamond, Barnett, Thomas, and Munro, 2007). • **Research Rigor**: Research studies that have been conducted with the curriculum have used rigorous methods, including randomized control trial and quasi-experimental design. Additionally, researchers who are not authors of the curriculum have evaluated *Tools of the Mind*. Outcome measures include these standardized assessments: PPVT-III, WJ-III, EOWPVT-R, WPPSI, and the Dots Test. • **Curriculum Implementation**: For one research study, a high level of fidelity was reported, as evidenced by teachers' reports of curriculum implementation. • **Replication/ Generalizability**: The research study samples are primarily low-income, urban, and diverse.
Effects on Child Outcomes	★	There is a mix of outcomes. One study reports positive outcomes for preschool children in self-regulation and executive functioning. However, the other study reports evidence of positive outcomes for children's executive functioning and classroom quality, but no discernible effects across oral language, print knowledge, cognition, and math.
Comprehensive across Domains of Learning	★	• **Breadth**: *Tools of the Mind* covers all of the following learning domains evenly: Language Development, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, and Social & Emotional Development. Additionally, the curriculum covers Science Knowledge & Skills and Creative Arts Expression (including dramatic play). • **Clarity and Coherence**: Each learning activity clearly articulates which learning domains are covered within them. However, the parts of activities that address specific domains are not articulated. • **Integration**: Learning activities are grouped by domain and primarily address one learning domain. Some activities integrate across more than one learning domain.
Depth for Each Covered Learning Domain	★	• **Domain Elements**: *Tools of the Mind* has some learning domains explicitly addressed, such as Mathematics Knowledge & Skills and Literacy Knowledge & Skills. However, other domains are covered, but not explicitly addressed in the same, consistent way. • **Scope and Sequence**: An identifiable scope and sequence exists for most domains and their domain elements. It is indicated how the domain elements are covered in each training period (a two-to-three month period of school); however, it is not indicated how the domain elements progress from each section to the next, or how the scope and sequence is linked to individual learning activities.
Specific Learning Goals	★	• **Goals or Objectives**: The goals of learning activities are consistently stated and are child-focused and developmentally appropriate. However, they are not always specific and measurable (e.g.,"Make use of listening and comprehension skills" or "Build vocabulary"). • **Alignment to Activity Content**: The content of learning activities is matched to the stated learning goals, but there is no indication throughout the learning activity of how or when each goal is addressed. • **Alignment to Scope and Sequence**: The scope and sequence aligns with broad standards, rather than with the objectives for individual learning activities.

TOOLS OF THE MIND		
Well-Designed Learning Activities	★	• **Organization of Learning Activities**: *Tools of the Mind* presents logical learning activities which follow a similar pattern across different activities. • **Ease of Implementation**: Activities offer teachers multiple supports to facilitate implementation. Each activity goes into depth about the structural flow and process, materials needed, and if appropriate, classroom setup. • **Variety**: Activities prompt teachers to use a wide variety of strategies (e.g. shared learning) and interactive materials (e.g., physical objects that prompt memory). • **Purpose**: Additionally, the authors consistently provide a research-based rationale for each learning activity.
Responsive Teaching	★	• **Variety of Strategies**: There is a balance of teacher-led and child-directed activities with many opportunities for individualizing for children. There are multiple opportunities for different learning styles within activities. • **Teacher-Child Interactions**: Some learning activities provide activity-specific guidance in how to engage in high-quality interactions with children. The importance of high-quality learning interactions between the teacher and children are emphasized throughout the curriculum. • **Instructional Examples**: Although the curriculum provides support for children having difficulty with the activities, it does not consistently provide instructional examples for how to meet a variety of learning styles and preferences.
Supports for Individualized Instruction	★	• **Support for Children Below Cognitive Expectations**: The *Tools of the Mind* curriculum offers a separate manual, Additional Teacher Scaffolds, which provides activity-specific supports for children with cognitive, emotional, and physical disabilities. The supports are broken down into specific skill deficits (e.g. expressive language, memory, basic skills, etc.). • **Support for Children Above Cognitive Expectations**: *Tools of the Mind* provides support for children who are performing above cognitive/academic expectations. "Up the Challenge" is built into every activity, and there are directions on how to change content to make it more difficult. • **Differentiating Support for Children with Emotional and/or Physical Needs**: The *Additional Teacher Scaffolds* manual provides specific supports for children with emotional and physical disabilities. • **Material Adaptation**: The curriculum includes ample support for teachers in how to adapt materials in order to meet the needs of all children. • **Environment Adaptation**: Some support is provided to the teacher in how to adapt the classroom environment in order to meet the needs of all children.

TOOLS OF THE MIND		
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive	★	• **Materials Represent Diversity**: *Tools of the Mind* has an entire separate curriculum in Spanish, with all materials in Spanish. Curricular materials (training, first theme) provide some support for including activities and materials that represent various languages spoken by the children. • **Materials Represent Diversity of Language and Culture:** The curriculum provides some materials that represent diversity, for example, a Sound Map that teaches sounds for writing, in which the chosen word has the same beginning sound in each language: "turtle" and "tortuga." • **Support for Dual-Language Learners**: *Tools of the Mind* gives some guidance on how to work with children when none of the teachers speaks the children's home languages. Specifically, it gives guidance on how to integrate children into the classroom. However, our review found no evidence of ways to encourage a child's development of his/her home language. • **Meeting Cultural Needs Specific to a Center**: The curriculum primarily provides suggestions for adapting learning activities to meet a childcare center's cultural and linguistic needs. There are brief sections that highlight the importance of actively engaging families in order to adapt and adopt activities from the families' home cultures.
Ongoing Assessments	★	*Tools of the Mind* 's assessment is included at no additional cost. The assessment is accompanied with no materials and is based on observation to determine each child's "zone of proximal development." • **Meaningful Alignment to Activities**: *Tools of the Mind* encourages teachers to use dynamic assessment to determine a child's zone of proximal development. There is evidence that the assessments generally align with skills covered in learning activities, but not specific ones. • **Meaningful Alignment to Head Start Outcomes**: Teachers are encouraged to determine what each child can do independently and then compare this with a developmental continuum for this skill or concept. With the introduction of supports, the teacher continues to monitor the child's progress and growth. Assessments are aligned with some of the domains of HSCDELF, such as Mathematics Knowledge & Skills, Literacy Knowledge & Skills, Social & Emotional Development, etc. • **Using Assessment Information**: The curriculum provides prompts for how to reflect on assessment results and incorporate this knowledge into future instruction with each child. • **Teacher-Friendly Assessments:** Assessments may take some time to learn how to administer, but they are relatively efficient to implement. • **Validated Assessments**: There is evidence that assessments are based on sound child development principles. However, there is no evidence that the assessments are linked with children's learning outcomes.

TOOLS OF THE MIND		
Professional Development Opportunities	★	• **Initial Training**: Comprehensive initial training regarding curriculum implementation is provided throughout year one. • **Continued Professional Development**: In year two of implementation, teachers and other staff complete additional training, including receiving feedback on implementation of the curriculum. Additionally, teachers and other staff can apply for endorsement. This endorsement allows them access to web resources and specific workshops. • **Level of Individualization**: Professional development is differentiated based on the needs of the program. In the Coach Handbook, there is a note about the structure of coaching in different programs. • **Other Program Staff:** Minimal professional development is provided for program staff members other than the teachers. There is a handout for volunteers. • **Multiple Modes:** There are multiple modes of professional development (e.g. workshops, school visits, web resources, and individualized coaching). • **Evidence of Validation:** There is no indication that the professional development materials have been validated or are linked to improved teaching practices.
Family Involvement Materials	★	• **Materials**: *Tools of the Mind* provides 20 newsletters throughout the year to families, that cover what children are learning each month. Additionally, the curriculum offers support for ways to adapt materials to best meet the specific needs of the classroom. • **Teacher Guidance:** General guidance is provided to teachers on how to link learning themes to home. • **Incorporating Family Volunteers**: The curriculum provides minimal guidance for how to use parent and family volunteers when they come into the classroom. • **Parent-Teacher Relationship**: The curriculum provides minimal guidance for establishing and maintaining a parent-teacher relationship. • **Comprehensive:** There are no comprehensive materials for parents to provide support across learning domains. Additionally, there is no discussion of the general importance of the parent-child relationship or child development.

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APPENDIX A: DETAILS ABOUT THE REVIEW PROCESS

Selection of Reviewers

Curriculum reviewers were required to have an advanced degree (either MA or PhD) in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, or a related field. They were also required to have research or field experience in early childhood education or early childhood development. In total we had eight reviewers rate the curriculum.

Training of Reviewers

Reviewers were required to complete 10 to 15 hours of training before rating any of the curricula. Reviewers were first required to read the following background material:

- The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework
- A checklist of Steps on How to Evaluate Pre-K Curricula

Reviewers then carefully reviewed the rating rubric. Once reviewers felt that they understood the rating rubric they were given a practice curriculum to review and rate. This curriculum had been previously independently reviewed by three core reviewers. These reviewers met together and came to a consensus for each rating of this curriculum and provided a detailed justification for each criterion within each component. Reviewers compared their individual ratings and justifications with this consensus rating. Trainees met with one of the core raters to discuss issues that arose from this practice training. Once all questions were clarified, raters were provided with curricula to independently review.

Review Process

Two reviewers, who were not associated with the curriculum, independently reviewed all curricular materials thoroughly. Each used the rubric to determine a rating for each criterion within each of the 13 components. Additionally, the reviewer wrote a rationale for each rating. Component ratings were determined by averaging the evidence across the criteria within the respective component. Each reviewer spent approximately 8 to 10 hours reviewing, scoring, and writing rationales for each curriculum.

Ratings and rationales were provided to the NCQTL core curricula team at the University of Virginia. An individual who did not serve as a reviewer compiled the ratings and rationales for each curriculum. A core rater reviewed both sets of ratings and justifications. If discrepancies existed between the two sets of ratings, then a core rater reviewed curricular materials in order to determine a final rating for each component.

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APPENDIX B: DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF INCLUDED TABLES

The first table includes:

- Delivery—how the curriculum was administered (whole group, small group, individuals, pairs, etc.)
- Covered Learning Domains—domains (both Head Start learning domains and other, i.e., technology) covered in the curriculum
- Target Population—intended audience of the curriculum
- Cost of Implementation—total cost of curricular materials (manipulative kit, assessment materials, total curriculum package, etc.)
- Training—professional development opportunities offered by the publishers, as well as the cost
- Curriculum Materials Reviewed by Raters—curricular materials included in the review

The second table includes:

- Ratings for each of the 13 components
- A rationale for the rating

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APPENDIX C: LIST OF CURRICULUM RESOURCES

Below is a list of NCQTL resources that are available to help programs choose and implement an early childhood education curriculum:

- **Linguistically and Culturally Relevant Early Childhood Environments**
  The importance of culturally and linguistically diverse environments is described. This resource can be used to better understand Component 10. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/culturallinguistic/Dual%20Language%20Learners/ecd/supportive_environments/Linguisticallyan.htm
- **Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework—Head Start Approach to School Readiness**
  The importance of family and community involvement in the education of children is addressed. This resource can be used to better understand Component 13. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/sr/approach/pfcef
- **Head Start Approach to School Readiness—Overview**
  A full report on the school readiness approach is included on this page. Part of school readiness depends on having the appropriate curriculum, along with various other elements. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/sr/approach/
- **Office of Head Start Summit—On the Road to School Readiness**
  This page describes the Head Start Summit from February 2011. There is information on school readiness, the roles of curriculum, ongoing assessment and instruction, and using data for program self-assessment/improvement. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/sr/quality/summit
- **Using What You Learn from Observation—A Form of Assessment**
  This page describes the purpose of ongoing assessment and observation. This resource can be used to better understand Component 11. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Ongoing%20Assessment/edudev_art_00070_080505.html
- **Services to Children with Disabilities**
  This page describes differentiation for children with various disabilities. This resource can be helpful in understanding Component 9. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/Disabilities/Services%20to%20Children%20with%20Disabilities
- **Planning and Curriculum**
  This page has information on the definition and requirements of curriculum, planning to choose a preschool curriculum, the roles of staff and parents in curriculum, and teaching strategies for children who are advanced or perform below average. This resource can be used to understand Components 9, 12, and 13. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Curriculum
- **Focusing on Child Development**
  This page lists information on various domains of learning. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Domains%20of%20Child%20Development
- **A Head Start on Picturing America Resource Guide**
  This resource has information on the arts and how they influence various learning domains. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hs/resources/video/Vid/HSPA_Resource_Guide.pdf
- **Curriculum, Assessment and The Head Start Framework: An Alignment Review Tool**
  This resource is designed to help programs determine how well an early childhood assessment or curriculum aligns with the domains and domain elements identified in the HSCDELF. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/docs/alignment-guide.pdf
- **Choosing a Preschool Curriculum**
  This guide is designed to help programs make informed decisions about choosing a preschool curriculum and assuring high-quality implementation of the curriculum in their programs. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/docs/preschool-curriculum.pdf

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