

New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality

Creative Arts

INTRODUCTION

For children, the critical component of the creative arts is the process rather than the end result or product. Children develop independence, self-motivation and self-expression through concrete, hands-on, individualized learning in environments that stimulate creativity through music, dramatic play, dance and the visual arts. In many instances, creative arts in the preschool classroom are inextricably linked to other curriculum areas. When integrated in a developmentally appropriate way, creative arts promote curiosity, problem-solving abilities, verbal and nonverbal expression and can be used as a strategy for learning about different cultures and content areas.

The teacher needs to be aware of the importance of providing children with the materials and time necessary to explore, experiment and create in their own way. Providing children with the freedom to create, however, does not preclude the teacher from supporting children's artistic development by using strategies such as describing, modeling, feedback and others to scaffold their learning. The teacher should be knowledgeable about the artistic traditions of different cultures and should integrate aspects of such cultures throughout the classroom environment and activities.

EXPECTATION 1: Children express themselves and develop an appreciation for music.

EXPECTATION 2: Children develop an appreciation for dance and movement.

EXPECTATION 3: Children develop an appreciation for dramatic play and storytelling.

EXPECTATION 4: Children develop awareness and appreciation for visual arts (e.g., painting, sculpting and drawing).

EXPECTATION 1: Children express themselves and develop an appreciation for music.

Preschool Teaching Practices

- Provide opportunities for children to play musical instruments (e.g., flute, trombone, triangle, drums, maracas, etc.) in their own way.
- Model what children can do with instruments (e.g., echoing with instruments, creating different levels of sound by striking different places).
- Use appropriate musical terminology (e.g., the correct names of instruments, terms such as rhythm and melody).
- Use songs and rhythmic activities throughout the day.
- Utilize a variety of music from different cultures and genres for classroom activities (e.g., classical, jazz, rock, reggae, rap, etc.).
- Provide opportunities to experience performances of music (e.g., performances by members of the local community and/or professional troupes, as well as performances by peers).

Preschool Learning Outcomes

1.1 Sings alone or with others.

1.2 Uses a variety of musical instruments (e.g., traditional instruments, homemade instruments, his/her body) to create music alone and/or with others.

1.3 Discusses his/her reactions/feelings to diverse musical genres and or styles (e.g., in reaction to listening to a classic lullaby a child might say, "This music makes me feel quiet inside.").

EXPECTATION 2: Children develop an appreciation for dance and movement.

Preschool Teaching Practices

- Provide a range of music from different cultures and genres for dance and movement activities (e.g., classical, jazz, rock, salsa, reggae, rap, etc.).
- Provide opportunities for children to participate in both structured and unstructured dance/movement activities (e.g., provide music and scarves and encourage children to make up their own dance movements, as well as playing a game that requires children to "freeze" their body in a certain position).
- Participate in all movement and dance activities with the children.
- Model different dance movements (e.g., twist, bend, leap, slide).
- Help children to develop skills needed to perform movements (e.g., the teacher repeats a movement slowly for a child who asks, "How did you do that?").
- Use correct terminology when referring to movements (e.g., gallop, twist, stretch).
- Provide opportunities to experience performances of dance (e.g., performances by members of the local community/professional troupes, peers in classroom).

Preschool Learning Outcomes

2.1 Explores different ways of moving his/her body with and without music.

2.2 Attempts to move to the beat of music.

2.3 Responds to changes in tempo (e.g., moving slowly or quickly, on tiptoes to soft music, gliding to a waltz).

EXPECTATION 3: Children develop an appreciation for dramatic play and storytelling.

Preschool Teaching Practices

- Provide props and materials that promote children's active participation in dramatic play and storytelling (e.g., dress up clothes, objects from different cultures, story books, flannel boards, puppets).
- Provide a variety of locations and times throughout the day where children engage in dramatic play and storytelling in their own way (e.g., outside time, reenact a story during circle time, block area).
- Join in dramatic play to promote the development of cooperation and encourage more complex roles (e.g., scaffold children's ideas about playing 'restaurant' by suggesting that everyone in the restaurant has an important job to do).

- Expose children to stories from cultures other than their own (e.g., at circle time and informally, during choice times).

Preschool Learning Outcomes

- 3.1 Plays a role observed in his/her life experiences (e.g., mom, baby, fire fighter, police officer, doctor, car mechanic).
- 3.2 Makes up new roles and acts them out, especially from familiar stories.
- 3.3 Participates with others in dramatic play, negotiating roles and setting up events.
- 3.4 Differentiates between pretend and real.

EXPECTATION 4: Children develop awareness and appreciation for visual arts (e.g., painting, sculpting, and drawing).

Preschool Teaching Practices

- Display children's art work at eye level.
- Provide children with access to a variety of developmentally appropriate, curriculum referenced art materials and encourage children to use the materials in their own way (e.g., sculpting materials, paint, crayons, markers, collage materials, glue).
- Expose children to visual art from different cultures and artistic traditions (e.g., museum postcards and prints, calendar art, internet web sites, videos).
- Introduce children to terminology used in visual arts (e.g., line, form, color, shape).
- Emphasize the importance of the art process by employing open-ended process-oriented activities (e.g., the teacher provides children with watercolor paint, paper and brushes and encourages them to paint rather than having everyone make a dinosaur puppet with the same materials).
- Make specific and nonjudgmental comments about the qualities of children's work (e.g., instead of the teacher saying, "I like the pink flower you painted, it's pretty," he or she could say, "I see you used long, thin, lines for the leaves in your painting.").
- Plan art activities that extend children's understanding of art techniques (e.g., plan a small-group activity where children explore paint brushes of all shapes and sizes to discover the different types of strokes they make).
- Use children's work as a springboard to explore and discuss art forms independently and in small groups (e.g., extend children's understanding of balance, as an element in creating sculpture, to balancing one's body in different ways).
- Encourage children to respond to different artworks and to accept the responses of others (e.g., encourage a variety of responses to questions such as, "Are there any happy colors in this painting? Which ones? Why?").

Preschool Learning Outcomes

- 4.1 Plans and works independently to create own art representations.
- 4.2 Recognizes and describes various art forms (e.g., photographs, sculpture, paintings).
- 4.3 Explores and describes art choices (e.g., "I used red for my screaming mouth," or "I made lots of little circles because it is snowing so hard.").