

Session Three: Integration into the Classroom

Using the 2008 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines

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Session Three: Integration in the Classroom

Section One: Overview

In this session, participants will integrate the revised Prekindergarten Guidelines into their current teaching practices as they evaluate, develop and share lessons and ideas. This session will take approximately three hours to complete.

1. Background Information

According to the National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching, professional development is more likely to be effective when it is organized around collaborative problem solving in small groups of teachers and is integrated into teachers' day-to-day work of teaching.

This guide is designed to provide teachers with an opportunity to integrate the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines into their teaching practice. This session guide includes a variety of activities, including those that:

- Help teachers create evaluation criteria for curriculum and instruction
- Encourage teachers to evaluate and define teaching based on the content of the guidelines
- Provide practice developing and teaching lessons that incorporate the content of the guidelines
- Give teachers a chance to apply what they've learned and bring their experiences and new knowledge back to the classroom.

2. Session Goals

After completing this session, participants will be able to:

1. Evaluate curriculum and teaching using criteria from the new Prekindergarten Guidelines
2. Develop and teach a classroom activity which builds on and integrates the content of the Guidelines
3. Actively discuss and reflect on their instructional choices and strategies
4. Use the guidelines and web interactive to further define and improve their instructional practice

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Section Two: Tips for Facilitating Sessions

This section provides tips and suggestions for facilitating sessions using a Web-based interactive to introduce the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. The sessions are intended to help teachers focus on classroom instruction by familiarizing them with the content of the guidelines and encouraging them to use the guidelines as a resource for helping individual children work toward outcomes.

This section includes information about:

1. Getting Organized to Use the Web-Based Interactive
2. How to Obtain a DVD Version of the Interactive
3. How to Get Help
4. Tips for Facilitating Face-to-Face Meetings
5. The Four-Step Framework Used in the Session Plans
6. Working with Adult Learners
7. Using Video and Video-Viewing Strategies

3. Getting Organized to Use the Web-Based Interactive

There is a Web-based interactive that you can use to introduce and orient teachers to the revised Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines.

1. Set up Your Computer

You will need to have QuickTime installed on your computer in order to view the videos in the interactive. There is a link on the page that launches the interactive, or you can download the plug-in at <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>.

Follow the instructions on this site for downloading and installing the plug-in. If you have trouble setting up your computer, email us at teainfo@tea.state.tx.us or call 512-463-9734.

2. Take a Tour of the Interactive

Before facilitating sessions with teachers, we recommend familiarizing yourself with the interactive. Spend time exploring the structure and content available.

4. How to Obtain a DVD Version of the Interactive

To request a copy of a DVD version of the interactive, contact the State Center for Early Childhood Development via email at PREKDVDorders@uth.tmc.edu or call 1-800-315-7204.

5. How to Get Help

To get help accessing the interactive, call 512-463-9734 or email teainfo@tea.state.tx.us.

To get help using the facilitation guide, call 1-800-315-7204 or email questions to circle@uth.tmc.edu

6. Tips for Facilitating Face-to-Face Meetings

Each session guide contains materials and procedures that you can use to help introduce and orient teachers to the content of the Prekindergarten Guidelines. The strategies used in these session guides have been carefully considered to capitalize on the strengths of adult learners and tap into their enormous experience and expertise. Remember that your goal with these activities is to get people moving and talking!

The information that follows is intended to help you make your face-to-face meetings a successful learning experience for teachers.

Preparation

As a facilitator, you must help teachers become familiar with the content of the Prekindergarten Guidelines, reflect on their own use of the instructional strategies recommended, and make plans for how they can help children move toward achieving the outcomes.

Use each session guide as an outline of everything you need to prepare, conduct, and follow-up on each of your face-to-face meetings. Use the facilitator checklist (found in Section Three) to help you get organized and plan. Using a checklist will help you:

- Stay organized:
 - Determine ahead of time which materials you'll need
 - Connect content from one meeting to the next and from one section of the guidelines to the other sections
 - Keep participants informed of upcoming meetings
- Get to know your content:
 - Preview the guidelines and the interactive content, especially the videos
 - Prepare your agenda before each face-to-face meeting
 - Review the activities and determine how much time to allot to each
- Be comfortable with your tools:
 - Double-check that all your technology (such as Internet connections, LCD projectors, and videos) is in good shape
 - Make sure you feel comfortable operating any technology before meeting with your group

Don't leave home without a checklist!

7. The Four-Step Framework Used in the Session Plans

Since the core of the sessions is about collaboration and discourse among teachers, a four-step approach to encourage meaningful collaboration and discussion is recommended. Each session outlined is organized into a four-step framework that will help you facilitate your face-to-face sessions.

STEP ONE: Reflect on Our Experiences

Each meeting begins with time for participants to reflect upon their experiences. Reflection comes first in the cycle, because we believe that it is the most essential element of learning and often the one that practitioners get to last. Facilitators provide opportunities for teachers to reflect on their prior teaching experiences and/or report on their experiences in implementing specific course lessons or strategies by encouraging them to analyze their successes, identify things they would do differently, and share their conclusions with their peers through discussions.

STEP TWO: Set the Stage

The second step in conducting successful meetings continues to build on participants' background knowledge and at the same time prepares them

for learning new material. Facilitators intentionally engage teachers in a discussion or activity related to the new course content to be presented during the session. By intentionally creating a common learning experience related to new content and drawing out or "activating" the rich knowledge that teachers already possess, a firm foundation for building new knowledge and developing new skills is created.

STEP THREE: Investigate the Content

This is the step in the cycle where new content is introduced. Facilitators and participants work together to build new understanding of the content through activities that encourage critical analysis and discussion of the content of the videos and other Web-based course materials.

STEP FOUR: Put It Together

The final step in the cycle supports the application of new understanding by giving teachers a chance to "try it out." In this step, activities are introduced to help teachers apply new knowledge and skills in their classrooms.

8. Working with Adult Learners

Both research and common knowledge agree that adults learn better in peer settings. These sessions are designed to address this through activities that allow teachers to:

- Analyze together the practices featured in the videos
- Share their ideas and expertise with each other
- Reflect on their individual practice
- Provide mutual support to one another as they develop, implement, and refine new teaching practices

Even if you have facilitated adult learning before, it is important and helpful to remind yourself continually that the primary goals of these sessions are to:

- Create a community of learners
- Facilitate the development of content-based knowledge and skills
- Keep the learning process "*planful, playful, and purposeful*" at all times

9. Using Video and Video-Viewing Strategies

The Web-based interactive features commentary and classroom videos designed to meet the needs of adult learners.

1. Features of Classroom Videos

The videos include the following features:

- **Play and Pause**—Clicking the play button beneath the video frame allows you to start and stop the video
- **Highlights**—As some of the videos play, highlights will appear on the right side of the page connecting a scene in the classroom to a specific outcome from the Prekindergarten Guidelines
- **Transcript**—The transcript for each video appears on the bottom of each page, below the video.

2. Video-Viewing Strategies

The videos featured in the interactive provide a focus for discussion and reflection among learning communities. They provide a common experience with many potential stances for viewers that can be reviewed—and analyzed—repeatedly. The authentic, shared learning experience of viewing videos also allows for the creation of a common language for discussion about teaching.

Viewing videos and the activities associated with them can be used to:

- Connect the video content to participants' prior knowledge
- Help viewers focus on specific segments or themes of a video
- Facilitate meaningful discussion among viewers
- Foster classroom application of new insights and skills

Three strategies for video viewing are described below.

- **Single Viewing**
The entire video is viewed without interruption. Activities before viewing help teachers establish purposes for watching. Activities after viewing give teachers the opportunity to ask questions and discuss their reactions.

- **Extended Viewing**

The video is stopped at certain points in order to draw teachers' attention to selected teacher and child behaviors or to features of instruction and classroom environment. The facilitator can highlight key lesson activities, and teachers can make predictions about later activities.

- **Multiple Viewings**

The facilitator shows certain episodes more than once. Revisiting the episodes allows the teachers to view the video for specific purposes. For example, the first time the video is shown, teachers may be asked to focus on instructional strategies. During a subsequent viewing, teachers might be asked to examine child behaviors.

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Section Three: Individual Session Plans

10. Facilitator Checklist

Use this list to help you plan and prepare for leading this session.

1. Before the Meeting

Materials:

- Technology/equipment (LCD projector, screen, computers)
- Miscellaneous items (Post-its, pencils, markers, chart paper, lined paper, tape, paper clips, any useful printouts from the Web site)
- Classroom materials such as math manipulatives, labeled picture cards, picture books, art and writing supplies
- Participant copies of the new Prekindergarten Guidelines

The following materials are required for each session:

- ✓ Projection device
- ✓ Computer
- ✓ Internet connection
- ✓ New Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines

2. Preparation and Follow-up (one to two weeks before)

- Confirm technology/equipment and test computers. (Visit the site to be sure everything is working and you can play video).
- Review the individual session plans.
- Review online materials/video.
- Create and gather materials.

3. Preparation (30–40 minutes before)

- Post daily objectives and agenda
- Hang any needed signs on walls
- Write or type the Scenario Cards from Activity 2C
- Put materials near doorway for participants to collect as they enter (e.g., nametags, handouts)
- Set up projector and organize chairs so that everyone can see
- Set up food if appropriate
- Turn on computers

11. Reflect on Our Experiences

Activity 1: Develop Evaluation Criteria: Partner-Group Share (20 minutes)

In this first activity, participants will reflect on their classroom experiences and their understanding of the revised Prekindergarten guidelines. They will use this knowledge to develop questions to consider when developing curriculum.

Materials

- ✓ Chalkboard, whiteboard, or sticky flip chart paper and appropriate writing utensil

Procedure

1. As participants arrive, ask them to find a partner.
2. Ask the pairs to consider the following prompts:
 - What questions do you ask yourself when developing curriculum?
 - What would you include on a checklist for evaluating prekindergarten curriculum and instruction?

An example might be “planful, playful instruction” or “engaging in multiple learning modalities”.

3. Give participants five to seven minutes to discuss these questions with their partner.
4. On chart paper, create a chart labeled “Evaluation Criteria”. For example:

Evaluation Criteria	
Criteria	Evidence
1. Planful instruction	promotes desired outcomes

5. Reconvene participants as a large group and ask several volunteers to share their responses to the prompt.
6. Write their responses on the chart paper.
7. Ask participants to list evidence or an example for item.
8. Ask the participants to recall the five key interactive teacher behaviors that support a child’s emotional and cognitive growth that they discussed in the first session. Provide a review if necessary. Add them to the checklist if necessary.
9. Explain to participants that they will be referencing and adding to the chart throughout the session.

12. Setting the Stage: Evaluating Classroom Examples

Activity 2a: Evaluating "Surprise Garden" (20 minutes)

In this part of the session, teachers will view a case study and evaluate the classroom examples using the checklist they created in the previous activity.

Materials

- ✓ Chalkboard, whiteboard, or sticky flip chart paper and appropriate writing utensil
- ✓ Web Interactive

Procedure

1. Using the Web-based interactive, navigate to the *Case Studies* section using the yellow top navigation. In the left-hand navigation, select "Surprise Garden".
2. View the video.
3. Facilitate a discussion using the following prompts:
 - Which classroom routines and rules helped the children focus and engage in the activity?
 - How did the teacher make the writing activity exciting and meaningful to the children?
 - How does the teacher support children in both social and cognitive readiness through this lesson?
 - What works in this lesson? Why?
4. Next, ask participants to evaluate the classroom examples from the video based on the chart they developed in the introductory activity.
 - What evidence do they see that the examples meet the criteria listed on the chart?
 - Are there any additional criteria that could be added to the chart?
5. Add criteria and evidence as needed to the Evaluation Criteria Chart.

13. Setting the Stage: Evaluating Classroom Examples

Activity 2b: Evaluating "Counting Pumpkins" (20 minutes)

Participants will view another case study integrating several domain skill areas. Again, they will evaluate the classroom examples using the chart the created in the previous activity.

Materials

- ✓ Chalkboard, whiteboard, or sticky flip chart paper and appropriate writing utensil
- ✓ Web interactive

Procedure

1. Using the Web-based interactive, navigate to the *Case Studies* section using the yellow top navigation. In the left-hand navigation, select "Counting Pumpkins".
2. View the video.
3. Facilitate a discussion using the following prompts:
 - How did the teacher build and reinforce the mathematics concepts through the series of activities in this lesson?
 - What strategies did the teacher use to make the lesson accessible for her English language learners? For children still developing the mathematical concepts?
 - What works in this lesson? Why?
4. Next, ask participants to evaluate the classroom examples from the video based on the checklist they developed in the introductory activity.
 - What evidence do they see that the examples meet the criteria listed on the chart?
 - What additional criteria could be added to the checklist?
5. Add criteria and evidence as needed to the Best Practices Checklist.

14. Setting the Stage: Choosing an Activity

Activity 2c: Choosing a Scenario (10 minutes)

In this part of the session, participants will choose a “scenario card” and form small groups where they will develop a lesson based on their scenario.

Materials

- ✓ Prepared “Scenario Cards” (text is provided in Step 2 below)

Procedure

1. Explain to participants that you have six different scenario cards. Participants will work in small groups to develop a lesson or classroom activity to address one of the scenarios listed on the card. Then they will model or teach part of the lesson to the whole group. Read to the participants the following text from each scenario card as listed below.

Scenario #1:

In *Counting Pumpkins*, the teacher uses a familiar book and simple stories as a springboard to the mathematics lesson. Incorporate emergent literacy components into a math content lesson.

Scenario #2:

In *Counting Pumpkins*, the teacher focused on multiple mathematics skills — counting skills and adding to/taking away — in one lesson. Develop a lesson that focuses on multiple skills in the mathematical content area.

Scenario #3:

In *Surprise Garden*, children learn by exploring the same concept in different ways. The teacher facilitated the growth of outcomes across multiple domains by expanding on a science activity. Choose a favorite discovery/science-based lesson. Develop a shared writing activity and extend your lesson to address outcomes from multiple domains.

Scenario #4:

Choose a language rich book and develop a list of new vocabulary words. Develop two or three different ways you could introduce these new words into a learning activity.

Scenario #5:

Extend learning from a read aloud by developing an activity to help children retell a story through art (with a conversation between the teacher and the child), dictation, or acting out with props.

Scenario #6: Create a small group lesson around a familiar topic to expand vocabulary and language production. Remember to include visuals and manipulatives in your lesson.

2. After reading each Scenario card, place each card on a different table and ask participants to choose a group to join. Depending on the size of the whole group, you may need to limit how many participants can be in each group.

15. Investigate the Content: Developing an Integrated Classroom Activity Activity 3A: Development: Small-Group Collaboration (40 minutes)

In this part of the activity, participants will develop a classroom activity based on their chosen scenario card using the revised prekindergarten guidelines and the web interactive.

Materials

- ✓ Revised Prekindergarten Guidelines
- ✓ Web-based interactive
- ✓ Classroom Materials such as picture books, art supplies, math manipulatives, labeled picture cards
- ✓ Chart paper and pens/pencils
- ✓ Scenario Cards

Procedure

1. Encourage participants to use the Scenario Card, Revised Prekindergarten Guidelines, Web Interactive, Classroom Materials and the Completed Evaluation Checklist to guide their instructional decisions as they develop their activity.
2. Explain to the groups that after developing their lesson idea, they will “teach” part of the lesson to the group or role-play how the lesson might look in the classroom. If they develop a small group lesson, they might choose to have several participants from their team act as “children” while others act as teachers. The demonstration should be between 3-4 minutes long.
3. Ask participants to write down the domain areas and outcomes they are addressing in their activity.
4. Give participants 30 minutes to research and develop their activity and practice their presentation. Provide classroom materials for participants to use for their activity.

5. Circulate among groups as they develop their activity and encourage them to be creative and try new instructional strategies they may have learned.

16. Investigate the Content: Developing an Integrated Classroom Activity Activity 3b: Presentation: Role Play and Discussion (50 minutes)

In this part of the activity, each group will present their activity through a role-play of a portion of the lesson. Then, the groups will self-evaluate their lessons using the evaluation criteria chart.

Materials

- ✓ Chart paper
- ✓ Checklist
- ✓ Classroom Materials

Procedure

1. Ask small groups to share their scenario/lesson with the group.
2. Ask each group to read their Scenario Card, share the domain areas and outcomes addressed and give a brief summary of the lesson before starting the demonstration.
3. Then the group should give a 3-4 minute demonstration of their lesson.
4. After each presentation, ask the group to provide their own self-evaluation. What worked? What might they do differently? Do they perceive any difficulties using this activity in the classroom?
5. After all the groups have presented their activity, facilitate a brief discussion using the following prompts:
 - What example would you use in your classroom? Why?
 - What would you do differently to address challenges you have in your classroom?
 - What evidence did you see in these lessons to support the criteria listed on the Evaluation Checklist?

17. Putting It Together

Activity 4: Bringing it Home to Your Classroom (20 minutes)

In this last activity, participants will reflect on their experiences and create a “take home” sheet of activity and instructional ideas for their classroom.

Materials

- ✓ Evaluation Criteria Chart
- ✓ Chart Paper and pen
- ✓ Paper and pens/pencils for participants

Procedure

1. Have participants take a final look at the Evaluation Criteria. Ask: Is there anything else they'd like to add to the chart?
2. Provide participants with paper and pens. Explain that they are going to create an individualized “take-home” idea sheet.
3. Ask them to write “Strengths” on their paper. Looking at the criteria and evidence, which areas do they feel are reflected in their current teaching practice? Ask them to list them. These are the tools they already have in their teaching toolbox.
4. Ask them to write “New Tools”. Looking at the Evaluation Criteria Chart and thinking of all the activities they have completed in the training sessions, ask them to write down the new ideas, instructional strategies and knowledge they've gained.
5. Ask them to share their reflections with a partner.
6. Reconvene participants into large group.
7. Facilitate a brief discussion to end the session using the following prompts:
 - What will you take with you back to your classroom?
 - How might you incorporate some of your “new tools”?