

Curriculum at the Advantage Learning Center

ASSESSMENT AND CURRICULUM
ARTICLE 2 OF 2
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Curriculum planning and assessment are a cycle. See the Advantage Learning Center's article on Assessment for more detailed information about how teachers complete the child assessments that drive curriculum.

When creating a lesson plan, teachers at the Advantage Learning Center start by looking at child assessment data in Teaching Strategies GOLD¹. There are various reports that show teachers which skills to focus on in the upcoming lesson.

The “Documentation Status” reports shows objectives² that are missing data. While there could be many reasons for the missing data, this report shows objectives the teacher should focus on for the whole class. The “Class Profile” report shows the current skill levels for the class overall. This allows the teacher to see which particular skills the class should work on next. The “Individual Child” report shows where each child currently is along a progression³. This shows the particular skills each child needs to practice.

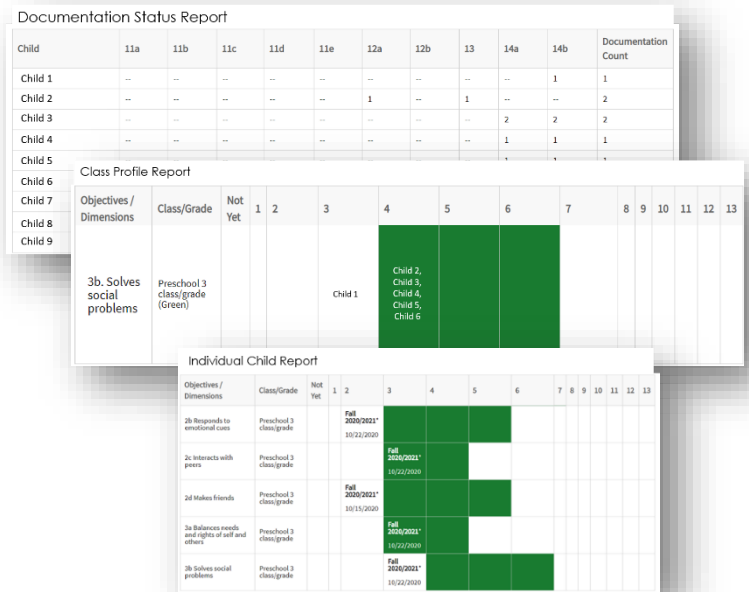
After using this data to identify which objectives and skills will be a focus for the next lesson plan, teachers may choose a theme. While not required, a theme can serve as a focus for children and can help teachers choose activities. Themes could be topical



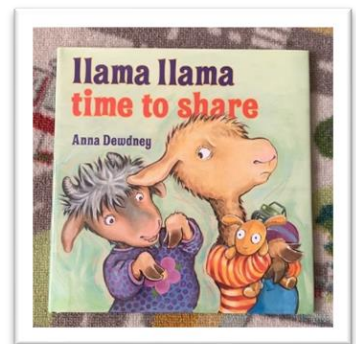
and include things children will see and experience such as the changing of seasons or holidays. Themes could also be based around children's interests. For example, if children are very interested in a construction project happening near the

center, the teacher might choose Construction as a theme.

The next step a teacher takes is to choose or create activities. Based on the skills the teacher has identified, and possibly working within the



chosen theme, the teacher will decide how each skill is best practiced. Most often, each skill will have many activities. For example, if working on the skill “suggests solutions to social problems” within Objective 3b “Solves social problems”, the teacher will plan a variety of large group activities, small group activities⁴, and interactions. For large group, they might plan to read and discuss a book about sharing. Later, in small group, the teacher may ask



¹ **Teaching Strategies GOLD** is the assessment tool used at ALC. It is software that allows teachers to track child observations. For more information, see ALC's article on assessment.

² An **objective** is a competency valued in state early learning standards and standards of professional organizations.

³ A **progression** is a range that shows widely held developmental expectations in each learning objective. For example, Objective 2d. “Makes friends” starts with the skill “seeks a preferred

playmate” that children typically develop between ages 1-2 years and ends with the skill “forms friendships based on mutual trust and assistance” that typically happens around second to third grade.

⁴ A **large group** activity involves the whole class. Sometimes called “circle time”, the children all sit together with the teacher and attend the same activity together. A **small group** activity involves a smaller group of children (2-4) focusing on an activity with the guidance of a teacher.

children to role play how to share a toy. The teacher will keep this skill in mind during her interactions with children and will scaffold feedback⁵ as she notices children attempting to solve conflicts with one another.

Teachers of all ages do this. The difference between classes is the content of focus and the particular skills taught. While the children in the above example were practicing the skill “suggests solutions to social problems,” from Objective 3b, the children in an infant class will be practicing, “expresses feelings during a conflict.”

The teachers in an infant class would notice that an older infant cries when another child

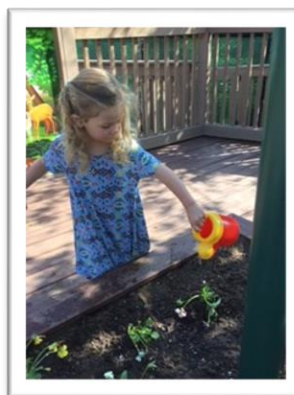
touches them too roughly. Infant teachers will plan to sit with children and verbalize the interactions children have by saying something like,

“Eugene you didn’t like it when Lucy crawled on your leg. Lucy, let’s move over here so you can crawl without touching Eugene.” Therefore, when planning an experience to allow infants to practice Objective 3b, the infant teachers focus on planning interactions.

For all ages, once the teacher has planned activities to allow children to practice the chosen skills, they will make sure the lesson plan includes activities for all of the 10 content areas⁶ as well as large group and small group activities. If they notice a missing content

area, they will plan activities for that content.

For toddler and preschool classrooms, the teacher will also make plans for furthering any ongoing long-term projects. For example, the class may be doing a science project in which students track plant growth.



After planning activities, the next step is to determine necessary changes to classroom materials and supplies as well as changes to the environment. For example, the blocks area will need to be temporarily expanded because a teacher noticed overcrowding in that area.

When all the planning for skills, activities, content areas, large and small groups, interactions, materials, supplies, and physical environment is complete, the last step is to implement the lesson plan. While implementing the lesson plan, the teacher makes observations and takes notes for child assessments.

The cycle starts once again.



| Creative Curriculum Wiggle Worms | | | | | Goals for the week | |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|---|
| Theme: Winter Wonderland Week: January 4th-8th | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses scientific inquiry skills by observing and exploring things in the environment Demonstrates awareness that the environment changes- seasons Solves social problems- suggests solutions to social problems | |
| Large Group | | | | | | |
| Monday Read: Lama Llama Time to Share Discuss: what did the characters share? How did they decide to share? What was the result? | Tuesday Discuss: what is a season? Is it still fall? What does winter look like? How should we dress in winter? Read: The Millon | Wednesday Read: Let it Snow Watch & Sing: Snowflake, snowflake | Thursday Discuss: what does winter feel like? How should we dress in winter? What can we do in winter? Read: The Twelve Days of Winter Sing: 5 little snowmen | Friday Read: Just a snowman Sing: I'm a little snowman | | |
| Small Group | | | | | | |
| Monday Roleplay: sharing "snow" scoops and cups | Tuesday Sticky mittens White and blue sensory bin Dance with scarfs to frozen soundtrack | Wednesday Sparky winter process art Winter cookie cutters and playdough Snowman bowling | Thursday Snow globe Painting ice Building igloos with sugar cubes | Friday Snow globe Melted snowman Melling ice with salt Nuts, bolts, and tools | | |
| Literacy Lama Llama Time to Share Let it snow The Millon Just a Snowman The Twelve Days of Winter | Health and Safety Wipe your nose please, then wash your hands. Staying safe and warm while playing in the snow | Technology Listening/dancing to frozen soundtrack Building igloos | Ar Advantage Learning Center, we use Creative Curriculum—an approach based on learning outcomes. This curriculum encompasses all areas of development and focuses on the whole child. Teachers plan activities and projects with physical, cognitive, and language development in mind as well as the academic subjects (math, science, literacy, and social studies) and the creative arts. These activities include goals for the knowledge and skills to acquire for children. Here at Advantage Learning Center, we understand that learning and development in one domain impacts the other domains, e.g. the same activity may be listed in several different domains at the same time. | | Language Development Snow, ice, cold, melt, igloos, winter, snowman, season | Social Emotional Development Sharing, suggesting possible solutions to sharing "snow" cups and scoops |
| Creative Expression and the Arts Sparky winter process art Painting ice | Science Snow/ice exploration | Social Studies Discussing/practicing how to stay warm | Physical: Fine Motor Building igloos Melted snowman Sticky mittens | Physical: Large Motor "snowball fight" Snowman bowling Dancing with scarfs | | |
| Mathematics Small, medium, large | Review/Reflect | | | | | |

⁵ **Scaffolding** means to provide hints (verbal or physical) to enable a child to persist in their effort to achieve a task.

⁶ A content area is the subject matter. Examples are literacy, social studies, and language development.