

Ayers Institute Viewing Guide
Child-led Inquiry through an Emergent Curriculum
in a Pre-K Classroom

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Focus Standards: Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (TN-ELDS)

- **PK.FL.VA.7a** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on pre-K conversations, reading, and content.
 - Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately.
 - Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word.

- **PK.FL.VA.7b** With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
 - Sort common objects into categories to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.
 - Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives.
 - Make real-life connections between words and their use.
 - Distinguish shades of meaning among familiar verbs describing the same general action. (i.e., jog/sprint)

- **PK.SL.CC.1** Participate with varied peers and adults in collaborative conversations across activities throughout the day.
 - Demonstrate appropriate conversational interactions including taking turns, listening, speaking, answering questions, and wait time.

TN-ELDS Approaches to Learning (PK.AL)

- **Creativity: Actively engage in learning with curiosity, flexibility, and openness to new ideas.**
 - PK.AL.CR.1 Independently interact with a variety of materials through multiple play activities.
 - PK.AL.CR.2 Self-select play activities to support own curiosity and to engage in pretend and imaginative play (e.g., testing theories, acting out imagination).
 - PK.AL.CR.3 Choose materials/props and use novel ways to represent ideas, characters, and objects in symbolic play.
 - PK.AL.CR.4 Demonstrate a willingness to engage in new experiences and activities.

- **Self-Regulation: Engage in learning to effectively plan and problem solve.**
 - PK.AL.SR.5 Maintain focus appropriate to completing a task and/or learning activity.
 - PK.AL.SR.6 Persist in solving a problem or question, with adult prompting.
 - PK.AL.SR.7 Reflect and plan a logical series of steps to accomplish a task, such as writing a message, completing a puzzle, drawing a picture, or building a block structure.

- **Critical Thinking: Actively inquire and reflect about new ideas and activities.**
 - PK.AL.CT.8 Seek additional clarity to further own knowledge (e.g., asks what, how, why, when, where, and/or what if).
 - PK.AL.CT.9 Demonstrate an awareness of connection between prior and new knowledge.
 - PK.AL.CT.10 Identify a problem and attempt multiple ways to solve it, with or without assistance.

- **Communication: Actively engage in conversations with adults and peers.**
 - PK.AL.CO.11 Ask and respond to questions with peers and adults in individual and group activities.
 - AL.PK.CO.12 Seek assistance and/or information when needed to complete a task.

- **Collaboration: Actively engage in learning with other people.**
 - PK.AL.CB.13 Engage in play-based, student-directed activities with a peer or peers (e.g., dramatic play, block building, symbolic play in recess) for at least 15 consecutive minutes, at multiple times throughout the year.
 - PK.AL.CB.14 Demonstrate a willingness to collaborate with others to solve a problem.

Discussion Points:

Learning Environment

- Ms. Barclay provided materials that helped her students confidently engage in the classroom and supported their independence. What were some of these materials and what effect did they have on student activities?
- What materials or routines do you have in your classroom that support students' ability to lead their own learning?
- Throughout the video, students explore learning concepts with a variety of materials. Discuss what instructional and management strategies Ms. Barclay must have established for students to use these materials appropriately.

Instructional Strategies

- How is Emergent Curriculum described in the video? What makes Emergent Curriculum unique?
- How would you describe the teacher's role in Emergent Curriculum? What is the teacher's role during choice time?
- One of the focus standards in this video emphasizes the use of collaborative conversations throughout the day (PK.SL.CC.1). What strategies does Ms. Barclay use to foster collaborative conversations? What types of activities do you use in your own classroom to foster collaborative conversations?
- Two of the focus standards emphasize vocabulary development (PK.FL.VA.7a and PK.FL.VA.7b). How does Ms. Barclay support vocabulary development in her classroom?
- Ms. Barclay discussed the importance of student ownership in her classroom. In what ways does she demonstrate to the students that their work is important? What impact does this have on her students?
- How could Emergent Curriculum be used to support students who are not traditional communicators?

Planning and Assessment

- In the video, Ms. Barclay discusses her process for planning the classroom environment. How does her planning process benefit students? How is your planning process similar or different? How does your planning process benefit students?
- How does Ms. Barclay ensure that students are reaching instructional goals and standards through play?
- How does Ms. Barclay assess student learning in the classroom? Is your assessment process similar or different? Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Ms. Barclay's assessment process.
- What was Ms. Barclay observing during their choice time? What is the purpose of observation while the kids are playing? How can teachers use observation to support students?

Analysis of Student Learning:

- In the video, Ms. Barclay spends time in the block center with students building a tent. Discuss instructional standards that you notice being explored in the block center.

- What do you notice about the pre-K students' inquiry skills?
- Examine student learning samples from your classroom. What do you notice? What instructional strategies can you use to grow your students' inquiry skills development?

Activities for teachers after viewing the video:

- How could you apply what you learned from this video into your classroom? How would aspects of an Emergent Curriculum fit into your daily schedule?
- What long-term goals do you have regarding child-led inquiry in your classroom?