



## Professional Development Institute

### Flex Course Syllabus

# Developmentally Appropriate Content Activities for Early Learners (PreK-2)

**PDI Course Number: 120T02**

**ACE Course Number: LE5719**

**UCSD Course Number: EDUC40299**

If you would like information about receiving credit for completing this course, [please click here](#).

### Course Timeline

Participants have one year to complete the course. Participants must spend a minimum of three weeks in this course.

### Course Description

As long as a classroom activity is designed for a specific grade level, then that must mean it is developmentally appropriate, right? Wrong! Developmentally appropriate activities are designed to be at the correct *developmental* level of the student, presented in an appropriate way so that s/he has access to the learning. This may or may not “mesh” with his/her grade or age level and applies to a broad spectrum of students including those with learning disabilities as well as students who are gifted and talented. This online course is designed for PreK-2 teachers who are looking to explore how to update their current curriculum to make it more developmentally appropriate for all their young learners. This course begins by defining exactly what developmentally appropriate means. As teachers progress through the course, they will learn about the importance of play. They will learn specific strategies for bringing developmentally appropriate activities into phonological awareness, phonics, and sight word instruction. Teachers will learn about the developmental stages of writing and will be introduced to a variety of activities to supplement their writing instruction. Additional developmentally appropriate strategies and activities are discussed for each of the content areas including mathematics, science, and social studies. By the end of this course, teachers will feel more confident and

successful in their quest to implement developmentally appropriate activities into their own teaching practices.

## **Educational Outcomes**

1. Teachers will learn what it means to be “developmentally appropriate.”
2. Teachers will learn best practices for creating developmentally appropriate lessons for their students.
3. Teachers will understand the benefits of incorporating developmentally appropriate activities into their own teaching practices.
4. Teachers will understand the principles that inform developmentally appropriate teaching practices.
5. Teachers will learn about the different types of play and why movement is instrumental to young students’ learning schemas.
6. Teachers will learn specific strategies for incorporating developmentally appropriate structured play into their classrooms.
7. Teachers will learn specific strategies for incorporating developmentally appropriate activities into their phonological awareness, phonics, and sight word instruction.
8. Teachers will learn about the various stages of writing development and will be given specific ideas for incorporating developmentally appropriate activities into each of them (emergent, early, and fluent).
9. Teachers will learn about several developmentally appropriate writing activities that can be used to help students build their fine motor skills.
10. Teachers will learn about writing workshop and will be introduced to several developmentally appropriate mini lessons that can be used.
11. Teachers will explore specific developmentally appropriate activities which are designed to help PreK-2 students develop their numeracy skills and sense of number, pattern recognition and creation skills, sorting skills, measurement skills, and graphing skills.
12. Teachers will learn about the scientific method and how best to apply it at a developmentally appropriate level.
13. Teachers will learn specific strategies for incorporating students’ interests into their science instruction.
14. Teachers will be introduced to the expanding communities model as a means to connect the content to social studies instruction.
15. Teachers will understand the various components of social studies and the benefits of teaching the subject at the PreK-2 level so that students can make deep connections to the world.
16. Teachers will learn how to properly use literature in order to fully develop a variety of social studies topics in their classrooms.

## **Instructional Media**

- Online Discussions
- Online Engagement
- Online Collaboration
- Instructor Feedback

- Instructor Interaction
- Online Resources and Websites
- Supplemental Instructional Materials
- Printable Classroom Resources

## Evaluation

- Test #1 (5% of final grade)
- Test #2 (5% of final grade)
- Test #3 (5% of final grade)
- Test #4 (5% of final grade)
- Test #5 (5% of final grade)
- Autobiography and Goals for the Course (10% of final grade)
- Article/Video Reflection (15% of final grade)
- Course Collaboration/Share Ideas with the Class (10% of final grade)
- Cumulative Assignment/Project: Design Five Developmentally Appropriate Activities (20% of final grade)
- Culminating Practicum (20% of final grade)

## Topical Outline

### Unit One

- An Introduction to Developmentally Appropriate Activities
- Developmentally Appropriate Activities
- The Importance of Play
- **Assignment #1**  
*Write an autobiography including information about yourself, your grade level and what you specifically hope to learn about incorporating developmentally appropriate activities into your teaching practices. Your autobiography should be a minimum of three paragraphs.*
- **Test #1**

### Unit Two

- Phonological Awareness Instruction
- Phonics Instruction
- Sight Word Instruction
- **Assignment #2**  
*As an educator, it is important to be aware of the research, studies, and professional work done in the field. In the course, you will find an article and video that are relevant to the specific course content. Read the article and then write an essay with your thoughts.*

- **Test #2**

### Unit Three

- Stages of Writing
- Building Fine Motor Skills to Aid Writing
- Writing Instruction
- **Assignment #3**  
*Online Discussion Board Participation/Engagement: Please post a tip, strategy, or idea that specifically relates to effectively incorporating developmentally appropriate activities into the classroom. The tip, strategy, or idea that you share needs to make a difference to other teachers in their own classrooms. Your assignment should be a minimum of three paragraphs and detailed enough for another teacher to follow easily. This is a great opportunity to share and collaborate with other teachers at your grade level around the country. Take time to review and respond to other postings that are relevant to your classroom population in order to gain effective ideas to use immediately in your classroom*
- **Test #3**

### Unit Four

- Numeracy/Number Sense Instruction
- Patterns and Sorting Instruction
- Measurement and Graphing Instruction
- **Test #4**

### Unit Five

- Developing the Scientific Method in Young Learners
- Developmentally Appropriate Experiments for Young Learners
- Incorporating Students' Interest into Science Education
- **Test #5**

### Unit Six

- Making Connections to the World
- Activities Following the Expanding Communities Model
- Using Literature to Develop Social Studies Topics
- **Assignment #4**  
*Create five classroom activities, one for each of the content areas mentioned in the course (reading/ELA, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies). Each of the activities should be developmentally appropriate to grades PreK-2 and should be original (meaning that they are different from what was discussed in the course). The activities should be described with enough detail so that someone else can easily use them in their own teaching practices. Follow the examples given throughout the course.*

*Be sure to label each activity with the grade level(s) and content area to which each activity best applies.*

- **Assignment #5**

*The culminating practicum is a three-step process. (1) In the first assignment, you were asked what goals you had and what you hoped to learn from the course. Think back to your original goals for this course. Write a minimum two-paragraph reflection specifically describing how what you learned can be used to help you reach those goal(s). (2) Next, write a minimum three-paragraph plan that specifically describes the ways in which you intend to implement a particular strategy you learned in this course into your own teaching situation. (3) Last, write a minimum two-paragraph reflection describing a student you have or have had in the past. Then, discuss how the strategies you learned in this course will specifically benefit that student as you put your plan into action.*

## **Bibliography**

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