



## CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER STUDY GUIDE FOR Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth Through Age 8, Fourth Edition

The fourth edition of *Developmentally Appropriate Practice* provides a vast overview of key issues in child development and teaching and probes into the areas of equity, diversity, inclusion, and context in early childhood education. This chapter-by-chapter study guide is meant to facilitate self-study and reflection or group discussion and professional development.

How you interact with this book will depend on if you've read previous versions or if this book is new to you, if you are reading the book alone or with a group, and what your timeframe is for reading and reflecting on the ideas in this book. Whatever your approach, know that you are joining hundreds of thousands of early childhood educators in thinking about developmentally appropriate practice. Developmentally appropriate practice is not just a book; it's a self-reflective approach to understanding and supporting young children's development and learning and a lifelong journey for many educators. Welcome.

If you are reading *Developmentally Appropriate Practice* on your own, use this study guide to support your evolving thinking about each chapter and the potential application of the chapters' ideas and strategies for your work. You can write your thoughts in a journal and visit [hello.NAEYC.org](http://hello.NAEYC.org), where NAEYC members post questions and engage in discussions with the NAEYC community.

If you are reading the book as part of a book club, book study, or professional learning community, use this guide as an anchor for group or partner reflection and discussion topics both for your own thinking and for making contributions and suggestions about implications for practice for your group.

### Tips for Reading and Study

- › Decide on a plan for reading *Developmentally Appropriate Practice*. Some chapters can be read in one sitting. Others may be best approached by reading in sections and taking notes. Read the About this Book feature on page xxii as you plan your approach.
- › Decide if you will take notes on your computer or phone, on paper, or in a journal.
- › Consider colleagues or other early childhood education professionals you might collaborate with in reading and discussing this book and its potential application to your work. You can use this guide together. Program directors and instructional leaders can use this guide with groups of educators as an anchor for group readings and discussions.

### How to Use this Guide

1. **Prepare:** Before reading a chapter in the book, consider the thought questions at the beginning of the chapter and jot down your initial thoughts and ideas about them.
2. **Read and engage:** Use the additional thoughts, questions, and exercises provided in the sections of this guide titled **Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding and Questions for Thought and Discussion** to help you engage with the content in a more meaningful and productive way.
3. **Reflect:** After reading each chapter, look at your notes on the chapter thought questions. Reflect (using a journal to self-reflect if that is part of your process) on how your thinking has shifted or developed.

As you read each chapter, you will see that there are numerous topics to explore further to deepen understanding, and you may decide to focus on an idea not suggested in the study guide. If you think an idea would be helpful for other readers, share it at [NAEYC.org/DAP](http://NAEYC.org/DAP), and also look for additional ideas to try that are shared by others.

# Foreword and Preface

Before reading, ask yourself, What assumptions do I have about this book?

## Position Statements on Developmentally Appropriate Practice

The fourth edition of the book includes the 2020 position statement on DAP. Decide how reading the position statement fits in with your reading of the book by answering these questions:

1. Have I read the 2009 position statement?
2. Have I read the 2020 position statement?
3. What questions do I have about the 2020 position statement?
4. Would reading sections of the position statement in conjunction with sections of the book help me to better understand and engage with the content?

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

1. Read the opening statement and introduction to the 2020 position statement. Be honest about your level of understanding and the supports you think you need to understand this document. What do you hope to get out of reading and studying this book that is different from reading the position statement itself?
2. Write down three to six professional goals you have for reading this book.
3. Write down three or four ideas you want to focus on while reading this book.
4. Jot down your thoughts on how you anticipate reading the book will enhance your understanding of developmentally appropriate practice.

## CHAPTER 1

# Intentional Teaching

## Complex Decision Making and the Core Considerations

### Position Statement Connection

Corresponding section of the position statement on DAP:  
Core Considerations to Inform Decision Making (pages 6–7)

*Note:* All position statement page numbers refer to the page numbers in the document itself, which can be accessed at [NAEYC.org/DAP](https://naeyc.org/dap).



**REMINDER:** Read the thought questions on page 5 of the book!

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

### Shifting to Both/And Thinking

Review “Moving from *Either/Or* to *Both/And* Thinking” on page 8. Think of a scenario you have observed or read about in which an educator’s practices, or even your own, reflected *either/or* rather than *both/and* thinking. What was the situation? Describe the *either/or* approach that was involved. What could the educator have done differently? What might have been some different outcomes for the child or the group?

### Exploring Decision Making and the Core Considerations in Action

The vignettes in this chapter and throughout the book show educators considering each child’s specific learning needs and abilities; the abilities and needs of the group; and the specific contexts for the children, their families and communities, and the educators themselves. Select a vignette from vignettes 1.10–1.13. Identify how the educator applies each of the three core considerations. If reading with a group, discuss your examples and exchange feedback.

### Understanding and Supporting Individuality

On page 20, read the examples of how individuality is misunderstood or rejected. Thinking back on teaching experiences you have observed, experienced, or read about, create your own set of examples that represent how individuality is misunderstood or rejected. Now use a strengths-based perspective and create a list of examples where individuality is understood, accepted, supported, and celebrated. Share your examples with your group.

## Questions for Thought and Discussion

Read vignette 1.2.

1. What does Ms. Davis consider as she selects children's books?
2. How does her process represent intentional teaching?
3. How does this represent a consideration of contexts?
4. Consider the children's books in an early childhood setting (it could be your own or one you are visiting). What do you infer about the intentional decision making or consideration of contexts that informed the book selection?
5. How would you adjust the books being offered? Why?

## CHAPTER 2

# The Principles in Practice

## Understanding Child Development and Learning in Context

### Position Statement Connection

Corresponding section of the position statement on DAP: Principles of Child Development and Learning and Implications That Inform Practice (pages 8–13)



**REMINDER:** Read the thought questions on page 25 of the book!

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

### Digging Deeper into the Nine Principles of Child Development and Learning

The nine principles reflect an extensive research base. Are there some principles you have a better understanding of than others? Would you like to better understand how the principles connect to teacher practice? Are there specific concepts, such as child development, executive function, or trauma, you would like to know more about? To find additional resources on select topics addressed in the chapter, look at Appendix B: Digging Deeper into Knowledge, either in the book or at [NAEYC.org/DAP](http://NAEYC.org/DAP).

### Considering the Research Behind What We Know About Child Development and Learning

As the chapter author writes, “Key themes emerged from the analysis of the research, primarily the importance of culture, context, and relationships. These themes are embedded within each of the nine principles of child development and learning that NAEYC outlines in its position statement.” Look at the child development resources listed on page 293 as well as the references cited in this chapter. Are you familiar with any of the background research? Has it been addressed in child development or other courses you have taken? Consider what it means if these resources have not been referenced or included and jot down some of your ideas.

### The Power of Relationships

Consider how important the relationship the educator forms with each child is. Select a vignette that describes principle 1 or principle 6, and list what the educator does to create supportive relationships with children.

Jump ahead in the book and read vignette 6.1. Consider ways the educator could have interacted to establish positive relationships with all the children involved. Consider or discuss how equity and bias might impact an educator’s relationship with a child. What are some steps educators can take to counter such bias?

## Learning Across Multiple, Interconnected Domains

Research shows the connectedness between social and emotional, linguistic, cognitive, and physical development (principle 2). What are some ways you see this connectedness in the examples featured throughout this chapter? How does this relate to teaching across the curriculum (principle 7)?

Although many educators still refer to children as having specific learning styles, the research on how young children develop and learn does not support the idea that children learn best through a particular learning style (May 2018; Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning, n.d.). Children's well-being and learning are best supported when all areas of development (physical, social, emotional, linguistic, and cognitive) are addressed and connected. Discuss how even when children may be doing something physical, they are also learning through the other domains as well.

## Questions for Thought and Discussion

Read vignettes 2.2 and 2.3.

The educators in the vignettes are considering all of the developmental domains as they plan learning activities. Choose one vignette and answer the following questions.

1. What is the learning goal, and what developmental domain is the focus?
2. Do other developmental domains also come into play, or does this learning activity have a more specific focus?
3. Considering that children learn best when multiple domains are involved, how would you adjust the activity? Or describe why you would not adjust it.

Think of an example from your own teaching or observations that relates to this.

## References

May, C. 2018. "The Problem with 'Learning Styles.'" *Scientific American*. [www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-problem-with-learning-styles](http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-problem-with-learning-styles).

Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning. n.d. "Learning Styles as a Myth." Accessed October 29, 2021. <https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/LearningStylesMyth>.

## CHAPTER 3

# Context Matters

## Reframing Teaching in Early Childhood Education

### Position Statement Connection

Corresponding section of the position statement on DAP: Core Considerations to Inform Decision Making (pages 6–7), Principles of Child Development and Learning and Implications That Inform Practice (pages 8–13), and content throughout the statement



**REMINDER:** Read the thought questions on page 47 of the book!

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

### Thinking About Context

Read vignette 3.1 about a child playing with playdough and saying the word *cake* when creating something she did not have the vocabulary to describe. Consider what the teacher did to adjust plans to support the child. Think of a different educator, school, and child you have observed or read about in this book or elsewhere. Describe the specific contexts of the child, educator, and school you have in mind. Think about how that educator might have reacted differently or done something differently based on the varying contexts. Discuss if working with a group of educators.

### Best Practices

No practice is developmentally appropriate in all settings and with all children but there are many nonnegotiables described in the nine principles, the three core considerations, and the six guidelines. What is or is not developmentally appropriate can shift depending on the specific children and their contexts. Consider how in the vignette 3.1 the educator would have adjusted practices depending on the specific children. Discuss how and why the term *best practice* is no longer emphasized to highlight how educators make decisions and adjust plans.

### The Importance of Ongoing Inquiry

Self-reflection, anti-bias work, and the work needed to understand context and what it means both personally and professionally are not one-time exercises. As you consider ways to continue this work, identify some possible sources (looking at the resources in Appendix B: Digging Deeper into Knowledge as well as at conferences, webinars, podcasts, and other offerings on topics such as anti-racism and anti-bias education). If you are part of a book study or inquiry group, discuss how an examination of these topics might fit into your conversations.

### Sharing Strengths

On page 54, read the list of ways educators might reflect on their own personal strengths and interests and how they might share those with children. Reflect on how acknowledging one's own interests and strengths might bolster one's appreciation for children's many different strengths. Read through the list and write about a strength you have that you could share with young children.

## Questions for Thought and Discussion

Read vignette 3.5.

1. Ms. Graf is a first-year teacher who observes a group of children engaged in a game where they display strong emotions. She sends another child to ask the children to end the game. What suggestions would you offer Ms. Graf to help her develop her understanding of the value of children's play that she might not be familiar with and grow in her knowledge and professional development?
2. Reflect on your own classroom experiences, contexts, programs, and the communities in which you teach. Does this scenario with Ms. Graf sound familiar? If yes, explain how. If no, explain why.



## CHAPTER 4

# Teaching Content in Early Childhood Education

### Position Statement Connection

| Corresponding section of the position statement on DAP: Principle 7 (page 12)



**REMINDER:** Read the thought questions on page 63 of the book!

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

### Reflection on Your Own Content Knowledge

What new ideas did you learn about supporting content in the early childhood years? What specific practices could you incorporate into your future teaching to better support children’s content learning?

Incorporating literacy, math, science, and social studies into your teaching in ways that reflect an understanding of each content area and where specifically children need support requires a great deal of background knowledge. What more do you want to learn about supporting children’s content learning? Look at the resources in Appendix B: Digging Deeper into Knowledge on topics addressed in this chapter, and consider what professional learning opportunities, coursework, and resources might help you.

### The Power of Collaborative Planning

One of the hallmarks of high-quality early childhood education is that teams of educators engage in collaborative planning and reflection, especially when team members have strengths in different content areas. What are your individual strengths related to areas of content? How could collaborative planning and reflection support you as you consider ways to strengthen content learning for young children? If you are in a book study group, discuss this with your group and compare your strengths from the perspective of collaborative planning.

### Identifying Elements of High-Quality Early Childhood Education

Read “The Power of Play in the Kindergarten Classroom: Transforming Centers into Places of Engaged Learning” by Amy Blessing on page 281. Consider the elements of high-quality early childhood education that are key to supporting equitable learning opportunities listed on pages 77–78. Jot down a few notes related to each of these elements as you consider this example. Which of these elements are related to teaching content?

### Finding Out About Family’s Funds of Knowledge

Vignette 4.1 shows a teacher using a puppet as a teaching tool because she knows some of the children have been taught *not* to correct a teacher. But helping a puppet is a safe and positive behavior. In this case the educator incorporates an understanding of funds of knowledge from families and cultures into the content teaching experience. What are some other ways an educator might consider family’s funds of knowledge in planning lessons or selecting materials? Consider how educators might learn about family’s specific funds of knowledge.

## Questions for Thought and Discussion

Read “One Interdisciplinary Approach to Science and Literacy in K–2” on page 76. The excerpt describes using children’s observations of ants and boxcars as anchoring phenomena in separate units of study.

1. What are some other observable events that could provide anchoring phenomena for children’s discussion and learning? How might children use their prior knowledge and experiences to make sense of the phenomena?
2. Consider the interdisciplinary opportunities these anchoring phenomena might provide children. What ways could you see using some of the examples you came up with across the curriculum?

## CHAPTER 5

# The Power of Playful Learning in the Early Childhood Setting

### Position Statement Connection

| Corresponding section of the position statement on DAP: Principle 3 (pages 9–10)



**REMINDER:** Read the thought questions on page 81 of the book!

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

### Considering What Is Guided Play and What Is Self-Directed Play

The authors in this chapter clarify that they use the term *free play* rather than *self-directed play*, which is the term used by NAEYC in the position statement on DAP. What do you think of when you think of self-directed play, or free play? Think about learning environments for children of different ages. Are there opportunities for self-directed play in typical learning environments for infants and toddlers? Preschoolers? Kindergartners? Children in the primary grades? What are some of the opportunities teachers can provide for self-directed play at different ages? What are some of the ways children learn during this kind of play? Jot down your thoughts.

Now consider guided play. Look through the chapter and find one or two examples of guided play. What are some of the differences between free play or self-directed play and guided play?

### Play for All

When you think of children playing what do you imagine? What are the contexts for the children? The school? The teachers? Jot down your thoughts. Read the contribution on play and equity, by Ijumaa Jordan, on page 103. Reread your notes about children playing and consider if you have any new thoughts related to play and equity. Write down these new thoughts. Did anything surprise you about this exercise?

### How Joyful and Engaged Is the Play?

Think about a classroom example. You can select one from your own classroom or one you have observed, or select one of the vignettes from Appendix A: Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Action: Educator Snapshots and Reflections.

Look at the chart on page 98 that categorizes joyful learning in the classroom as low, medium, and high as well as the charts for the other five pillars of learning on pages 93–97. Jot down your ideas about what kind of joyful learning is taking place in the example you selected and how you see or do not see the other five pillars being implemented.

### Describing Play and Learning to Families

Consider how you would describe how children learn through play to families. If you were to write a newsletter article for families titled “Five Things Children Learn Through Play,” what would you include on this list?

## Questions for Thought and Discussion

Read vignette 5.3.

While the vignette illustrates how self-directed play extends learning, the teacher does offer suggestions that extend the children's play. In particular, she suggests children could describe the bear's health in a written report when they are done with their play in the dramatic play area.

1. Do you see other opportunities for guided play experiences the teacher could have suggested in this example?
2. When do suggestions from the teacher support children's learning and when do they become too prescriptive or interrupt children's play?

## CHAPTER 6

# Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners

### Position Statement Connection

Corresponding section of the position statement on DAP: Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners (pages 15–17)



**REMINDER:** Read the thought questions on page 111 of the book!

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

### Understanding Key Concepts

The chapter addresses many key aspects of building and supporting a learning community that affirms and includes *all* children and contributes to their well-being and learning. What are some key concepts you learned about while reading this chapter? Are there concepts you would like to know more about? What are some ways you might bolster your knowledge?

### Classroom Examples

Think of a classroom example you have experienced, observed, or read about that exemplifies a caring community of learners and describe it in writing or with a partner if in a reading group. Look at the charts and discuss examples from the charts you think are exemplified by the classroom example you shared.

### Reflecting on Why *Equitable* Was Added to this Guideline

This guideline used to read “Creating a Caring Community of Learners” and now reads “Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners.” Why do you think the word *equitable* was explicitly added? Is it enough to want to care? What actions and approaches might hinder an equitable approach to creating a caring community?

### Further Reflections on Equity

The author addresses educator bias toward children of various social identities and specifically bias against Black boys. He shares statistics related to suspension and expulsion of Black boys from early childhood programs. How can teachers learn to identify and address their own biases and increase their cultural competence? How can they best support Black boys’ social, emotional, physical, psychological, and intellectual development? How does self-reflection and considering one’s own contexts and anti-bias work fit into creating a caring, equitable community of learners?

## Questions for Thought and Discussion

Read vignette 6.4.

1. A number of elements in this example contribute to Martha and her family feeling seen and welcomed. Some of these elements were already in place before their arrival. How did Mr. Harold use these and other elements of the program to welcome this particular family and child?
2. Think of another family with social or cultural contexts that are different from the Sanchezes'. In what ways might an educator welcome specific families?

## CHAPTER 7

# Engaging in Reciprocal Partnerships with Families and Fostering Community Connections

### Position Statement Connection

Corresponding section of the position statement on DAP: 2. Engaging in Reciprocal Partnerships with Families and Fostering Community Connections (page 18)



**REMINDER:** Read the thought questions on page 145 of the book!

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

### Rethinking a Family Engagement Event That's Not Well Attended

Read vignette 7.2, which describes a family engagement effort that was not well attended. The vignette shows one educator offering input from the community perspective and another educator beginning to consider the perspectives of families as she rethinks her school's family engagement offerings. Write down some of your thoughts as to how this vignette outlines some differences between engagement and partnership. If engaged in a group book study, discuss your thoughts and perspectives.

### Creating a Family Partnership Questionnaire

Imagine you're tasked with creating a questionnaire to identify families' needs and perspectives as a starting point for developing family engagement activities based on a true partnership with families. What questions would you ask? What are some other considerations for the questionnaire? Draft six to eight questions for the questionnaire and outline three considerations.

Read vignette 7.4. Are there any adjustments you might make to the form or how you introduce it to families?

### Considering Community Resources

One of the examples of developmentally appropriate practices outlined in this chapter (in the All Ages chart, Working in Collaborative Partnerships section) reads as follows:

Educators connect families with one another and with community resources available. They reinforce families' social networks by providing opportunities for families and community members to meet and discuss shared interests and goals around children's well-being (e.g., introducing family members during drop-offs and pickups, creating convenient spaces where families can meet and talk, and offering assistance, when needed, with using technology to connect and communicate).

Consider the kinds of resources and opportunities you might make available to families. How would they be different for families of infants and toddlers and families of older children? Jot down the kinds of local resources you would want to find or opportunities you would want to offer to families for each of the following age groups: infant and toddler, preschool, kindergarten, and primary. Think of a specific community. Would you make any adjustments based on geography, family demographics, home language, or culture?

## Thinking About Family Partnerships and Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Think of a specific family partnership example from your own classroom experience or one you have observed, or select a vignette that addresses family partnership from this book. The example can be one you think demonstrates thoughtful family or community partnership in action or it can be one where you or the educator might have approached it differently. Spend five minutes describing your example in writing.

Look through the charts for this chapter. Find five points that describe developmentally appropriate practices and/or examples of practices to avoid that reflect your family partnership example.

## Questions for Thought and Discussion

Read vignette 7.3.

Mrs. Potter is concerned about Skylar's progress and lets Skylar's mother know that a team will be contacting her to evaluate Skylar for a possible developmental delay.

1. Although Mrs. Potter talked about her concerns with Skylar's mother before the school contacted her about a meeting, the mother was still nervous and uncomfortable after the phone call. What else could Mrs. Potter have done to prepare Skylar's mother for the process?
2. What kind of relationship do you think Mrs. Potter has with the parent? In what ways can the family–teacher relationship help or hinder the process of trying to help a child who may have a disability or developmental delay?
3. As noted in Chapter 8, "Observing, Documenting, and Assessing Children's Development and Learning," communication with families about observations and assessments is an important aspect of both documenting and assessing children's development and learning and partnering with families. As part of developmentally appropriate practice, "Educators regularly discuss results from their assessment process with family members and listen to family members' observations so they have a more complete picture of children's development and learning." What might have led Mrs. Potter to have concerns that Skylar might have a developmental delay? Discuss what she may or may not have already communicated about this information in the context of partnering with families.



## CHAPTER 8

# Observing, Documenting, and Assessing Children’s Development and Learning

### Position Statement Connection

Corresponding section of the position statement on DAP: 3. Observing, Documenting, and Assessing Children’s Development and Learning (pages 19–20)



**REMINDER:** Read the thought questions on page 159 of the book!

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

### Understanding Key Concepts

Consider the many terms and concepts described within this chapter, such as *formative assessment*, *summative assessment*, *validity*, and *reliability*. Are there terms you better understand after reading this chapter? What terms and concepts would you like to learn more about to develop your understanding?

In the vignettes in this chapter, the educators understand both what the assessments they use can tell them about what children know and can do and also what that the assessments might not measure well. Discuss your own knowledge, understanding, and experience with the process of assessment. What do you need to be able to understand and incorporate appropriate assessment practices into your work with children? Jot down your ideas or discuss if participating with a group.

### Identifying the Three Steps to the Assessment Process

The authors describe assessment as “a systematic means of collecting and documenting information about children’s learning and development to monitor children’s progress toward learning goals, make curriculum decisions, and improve teaching practices.” They describe assessment as a three-step process. Select two vignettes from this chapter and identify the three steps of the assessment process in each vignette.

### Partnering with Families

Vignette 8.4 demonstrates why partnering with families is so important. What else does this example demonstrate? Look at the charts containing examples of developmentally appropriate practices and identify five points that connect to this example. If with a group, compare what you each have identified.

### Understanding If Assessments Are Valid and Reliable

Page 164 contains a description of what it means that appropriate assessment tools are reliable and valid. Consider what approaches to assessment are essential for children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and how this relates to assessments being valid and reliable.

## Questions for Thought and Discussion

Read vignette 8.5.

1. Mr. Hernandez is attentive to Madeline's math learning challenges. He observes that Madeline is not able to solve word problems related to using money. How did Mr. Hernandez adjust lessons and activities to support Madeline?
2. It can be beneficial to involve children in thinking about what they know and are able to do. When Mr. Hernandez noticed that the hands-on activities had supported Madeline's knowledge in solving math problems using dollars and quarters but that she needed more support using nickels and dimes, how might Mr. Hernandez have shared his observations and assessment to involve Madeline more in her own learning?

## CHAPTER 9

# Teaching to Enhance Each Child's Development and Learning

### Position Statement Connection

Corresponding section of the position statement on DAP: 4. Teaching to Enhance Each Child's Development and Learning (pages 21–24)



**REMINDER:** Read the thought questions on page 181 of the book!

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

### Effective Teaching Strategies

Read the strategies effective teachers use listed on pages 183–184. Select one of the vignettes from this chapter or reflect on a teaching experience you have observed or experienced. Identify the strategies the teacher is using and others you think the teacher could have called upon. Jot down your ideas and discuss if participating in this book study with others.

### Understanding Scaffolding

Scaffolding is described in this chapter, in a number of vignettes in other chapters, and in the discussion of principle 8 in Chapter 2. Consider all that is involved in providing scaffolding to support children in ways that challenge them to achieve a level just beyond their current mastery and that provide many opportunities for the children to reflect on and practice newly acquired skills. How would this look different for infants? Toddlers? Preschool-age children? Kindergartners? Children in the primary grades?

Select one vignette from the book and list at least five concepts (such as children's development and learning; knowledge of a specific content areas such as math, literacy, or science; play; assessment; cultural responsiveness; equity) the educator would need to know about and understand to provide scaffolding for this child in this situation. Discuss the implications for being an effective early childhood educator.

### Learning Formats: Small Groups, Individual, and Large Groups

Jot down or discuss how two educators described in this chapter meet the needs of the whole group while individualizing strategies to make learning meaningful, relevant, and appropriately challenging for each child.

### Setting Up the Environment

Find five photos of kindergarten classrooms by searching the internet. Consider the environment depicted, what the children and teachers are doing, and how they seem to be interacting. What do you see that seems to support or not support developmentally appropriate practice? Share and discuss your examples.

## Questions for Thought and Discussion

Read vignettes 9.2 and 9.3.

In vignette 9.2, Mrs. Chen teaches a public pre-K class, and in vignette 9.3, Mr. Booker teaches second grade. In both vignettes, the educators are using play to facilitate learning. Think about the teacher's role and how they each support play in these two examples.

1. How does each educator support play? What is similar between their approaches, and what is different?
2. How do they encourage and support children's curiosity and interest? Discuss how the different ages of the children might impact their approaches.

## CHAPTER 10

# Planning and Implementing an Engaging Curriculum to Achieve Meaningful Goals

### Position Statement Connection

Corresponding section of the position statement on DAP: 5. Planning and Implementing an Engaging Curriculum to Achieve Meaningful Goals (pages 25–27)



**REMINDER:** Read the thought questions on page 215 of the book!

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

### Understanding Key Concepts

Curriculum planning is an active process, in which educators make informed decisions and ongoing adjustments that are responsive and individualized to best support the emerging skills of each child. Read pages 218–219, which describes a high-quality early childhood curriculum. What concepts do you want to know more about? What are some ways you could learn more?

### Windows and Mirrors

A knowledge-rich curriculum provides mirrors that reflect children’s lives, with windows that help children discover new people, places, and ideas. What are some examples of mirrors? What are some examples of windows? Why do children need both materials and content that reflect their own experiences as well as those that offer them new knowledge and experiences?

### Cross-Curricular Planning in Different Contexts

Read vignette 10.3. Find three to five developmentally appropriate practices in the All Ages and/or Kindergarten charts that you can see reflected in the practices described in the vignette. Consider how you might adjust the learning activity for a different group of children. What changes would you suggest for preschoolers? For second graders? For a different geographic setting?

### Both/And Curriculum Planning

The authors cautions that “more complex emergent curriculum projects require advanced planning, a specific sequence of steps and processes, consideration of goals that are being addressed, and the knowledgeable oversight of an experienced teacher.” Why is experience important when using an emergent curriculum approach?

## Intentional Curriculum Planning

Consider how intentional curriculum planning could help educators refine their practices to engage children more deeply with language, content knowledge, inquiry skills, and positive dispositions for learning, such as selfagency, persistence, and motivation. Look through the vignettes in the book and find one you think demonstrates this.

## Questions for Thought and Discussion

Read the “In Context” box titled “Curriculum Themes that Support Positive Identity” on page 217.

1. In what ways might a curriculum that is supportive of Native American children be different from other curricula? How might/should it be similar? Think about the features of a high-quality curriculum.
2. Why is it important to plan curriculum that supports children’s identities? What are children missing out on if educators do not do this?

## CHAPTER 11

# Demonstrating Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator

### Position Statement Connection

Corresponding section of the position statement on DAP: 6. Demonstrating Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator (page 28)

## Prepare

Before reading the chapter, consider these questions and jot down your initial thoughts and ideas:

1. What does it mean to be an early childhood professional?
2. What kind of background, knowledge, and experiences should an early childhood professional have?
3. What do you know about ethical and other early childhood professional guidelines?

## Reflect

After reading the chapter, look at your notes on the three questions above. How has your thinking shifted or developed after reading the chapter? Spend some time journaling and reflecting on if and how your thinking has developed after reading the chapter.

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

### Consider the Educator Stories Included in this Chapter

Did the educator stories feel familiar or unfamiliar to you? Select one question that the interviewees responded to, and answer it yourself in writing. If in a discussion group, agree first upon which question to respond to and discuss and compare your responses.

### Familiarize Yourself with Key Initiatives and Position Statements Referred To

The chapter discusses a number of initiatives and NAEYC position statements, including the “Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment,” the *Unifying Framework for the Early Childhood Profession*, and “Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators.” How many of these had you heard about? Which ones are new to you? Select one and become familiar with it. If participating in a reading group, provide the group with a summary of the document you read about.

### What Does It Mean to Be an Early Childhood Professional?

While the journey to becoming an early childhood education professional is personal, the interviews with Losmeiya Huang, Sim Loh, and Ashley Simpson also reveal common themes related to what it means to be a professional. Identity, mastery of competencies, adherence to core early childhood education guidelines, recognition, and

reflective practice are intertwined aspects of how early childhood educators define professionalism. The chapter also highlights activism, equity, and compensation. Jot down a few sentences that describe your own journey as an early childhood professional. If part of a study group, discuss with a partner.



## APPENDIX A

# Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Action

## Educator Snapshots and Reflections

### Position Statement Connection

| Corresponding section of the position statement on DAP: The entire position statement

This collection of vignettes and reflections, written by early childhood educators, provides snapshots of the educators' interactions with children and what they have learned through their everyday experiences. After reading the vignettes, spend time journaling and reflecting on the following:

1. What, if anything, surprised you in these vignettes?
2. How do you see engaged learning demonstrated?
3. What are some ways you see the educators self-reflecting and showing their own learning processes?

## Ideas to Deepen Your Understanding

### Connections to Developmentally Appropriate Practice

The educators shared some of their thoughts on how their example connects to developmentally appropriate practice and referred to specific sections of the position statement. Select one vignette and decide what chapter topic it best reflects. Where would you place it within the chapter that addresses that topic? What ideas from the chapter does it expand upon? Be sure to reference specific points from the chapter.

### Educator Self-Reflection

In some of the examples, such as “More than One Way to Tell a Story in Kindergarten,” “We Put Paper on the Floor: Supporting the Emergent Literacy Skills of Infants and Toddlers,” “‘Why Are We Doing This?’ A Conversation with Preschoolers About Similarities and Differences,” and “A Scribble Is Never Just a Scribble: Art, Story, and Process in a Classroom of 2s and 3s,” you can see the educators rethinking an aspect of teaching and adjusting plans. Select one of these vignettes and describe how the planned activity and children’s interests and questions are both considered. How are educator self-reflection and decision making reflected?

### Contribute Your Own Story

Using the same questions the authors of these vignettes considered in their reflections, describe a learning experience you participated in or observed and write your own self-reflection. Contribute your story, if you like, at [NAEYC.org/DAP](https://naeyc.org/DAP).

1. Describe the learning experience. What were the learning goals? What happened? What did the children learn? How did the teacher adapt their practice in response to the children?

2. Describe the connections to developmentally appropriate practice. Please be sure to reference specific areas of the position statement.
3. Describe your thoughts. What did you observe and notice? What did you learn? What questions arose?