

Scaffolding

Provide *just enough* assistance to enable each child to perform at a skill level *just beyond* what the child can do on his or her own.

Provide hints.

Say

Look over here.

Did you notice that...

Do you think this is big enough?

Does this look right?

Remember when...

This reminds me of...

Let's go back and look...

What's the same/different?

How can you make sure...?

Do

Comment on the task to guide toward the solution.

Point towards relevant answers.

Provide visuals (e.g., pictures, drawings etc.).

Rearrange materials (e.g., puzzle pieces) to make a task easier to complete.

Offer a range of answers.

Say

Let's look at some choices...

Is this a... or a...?

Which works best, ... or...?

Should we pick... or...?

We have three choices...

Do

Give suggestions.

Give relevant pictures or objects.

Use additional resources.

Say

Let's ask a friend.

How about using...?

What else might work?

Do

Give relevant materials (e.g., books, visuals, crayons).

Direct children to relevant tools (e.g., calendars, number lines, etc.).

Fostering Children's Thinking

Interactions that focus on *big ideas* and deepen children's knowledge of the world around them.

Provide tasks where children can observe, predict, and experiment.

Observe	What do you see/hear?	What's happening?	What do you notice about...?	How many do you see?	
Predict	What happens next?	What else might we see/do?	How could ...?	What will happen if ...?	
Experiment	Let's try it out.	Did it work?	What happened after...?	What changed?	Why did it change?

Create opportunities for children to brainstorm, plan, and solve problems.

Say	How did this work?	Why did that happen?	Why did it change?	We have three choices...	What/Who/Where/When/How else?
	Tell me more.	How do you know?	Let's go back and look.	I wonder where he will go to find that?	

Draw on a child's everyday experiences; connect to previous knowledge.

Say	What does this remind you of?	Remember yesterday when...?	What did you learn?	How do you know?	What makes you think that?
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Focusing Children on Learning Goals

Helping children understand what they are learning.

Describe learning goals BEFORE activity starts.

Say

The goal for group time is ...

We will work on...

Today, we are going to learn more about...

When I read this book, listen for...



Make statements about learning goals DURING activity.

Say

You really know about ...

I see that you ...

That's right. We are exploring...

Remember, we are talking about...



"Wrap-up" by restating learning goals at the END of the activity.

Say

We found out that...

Now we know that...

Let's talk about what we learned when we...

Tell me what you discovered when...



Making Learning Meaningful

Meaningful activities and classroom interactions that support children's understanding of the world around them.

New learning goal

Children's previous experiences

Recognize environmental print

Looked at signs in the community

Label emotions

Read a favorite book about a birthday party

Recognize cause and effect

Conducted a science experiment?
What happened?

New learning goal

Children's everyday lives

Understand healthy habits

Ask children why they brush their teeth

Classify objects

Sort recycling materials at home

Describe living things

Talk about pets, gardens, or friends

New learning goal

Hands-on opportunities

Tell a story using dialogue and props

Furnish dramatic play area with costumes and materials

Recognize past events

Find photos/draw pictures of babies

Use tools to gather information

Place microscope in discovery area

Using the Scientific Method

Sets of procedures that help learners investigate their world and acquire new knowledge.

Steps:

Suggestions:

QUESTION

Help children form their own questions related to their world.

- Wow! This is very interesting.
- You look curious about...
- I saw you watching...
- You seem to be fascinated with...

OBSERVE

Ask children to use their senses and closely observe the world around them.

- What do you notice?
- How does that feel/taste/sound?
- Look at these different parts of...
- Let's take a picture so we can look at it again.

PREDICT

Encourage children to make an educated guess about what will happen in the future.

- What's your guess?
- What do you imagine...?
- I wonder what might happen if...?
- How do you think this will turn out?

EXPERIMENT

Provide opportunities for children to experiment and test their predictions.

- Let's try this out.
- We can check out...
- What could we do to see if this is true?
- How could we keep track of how things change?

DISCUSS

Allow children to discuss the results of their experiment.

- What did we learn about...?
- How is this different/same from when we started?
- Which grew the fastest/longest/heaviest? Why?
- Was your prediction correct? How do you know?

Providing Feedback

Motivating children and helping them obtain a deeper understanding of concepts.

Engage in back-and-forth conversations.

(More than yes/no and right/wrong)

Say

I see. You are...

Tell me more about that.

What if...?

Do

Wait to give the child time to think.

Listen to and build on the child's response.

Add new and interesting materials that relate to what the child is doing.

Encourage children to explain their thought processes.

Say

Why do you think that?

How did you know?

Why didn't it work the first time?

Do

Create challenges to encourage problem-solving.

Repeat what the child did but in a slightly different way.

Make a playful mistake to encourage child's thinking.

Encourage effort and persistence.

Say

Wow! You have been working on that a long time.

You worked on that yesterday and you're trying again today.

You look like you are thinking hard about...

Do

Offer nonverbal encouragement and praise.

Provide support as needed to keep the child going.

Remind the child of the goal or purpose of the task.