



PLANNING DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE ECCE CURRICULUM

From birth, babies attempt to build a relation with their surroundings using all their senses. Babies are wide-eyed, get startled by loud noise, pull back their feet when stroked and slowly make gurgling sounds to a game of peek-a-boo. Psychologists and educationists agree that early childhood (birth to eight years of age) is a crucial stage of life in terms of physical and motor, cognitive, language and social-emotional development of children. At this stage, growth of abilities also takes place at an astounding rate, which leads to a high proportion of early learning. It is a time when children need a stimulating and an enabling environment, and quality learning experiences. In the absence of a responsive environment children may lose chances of development. Advantages of a healthy start could be irreversibly reduced. The significance of the first 1000 days is being increasingly recognized as crucial for lifelong learning. Continuing during the preschool level, it is important to ensure that necessary maturational and experimental experiences are provided to the children that will help them to learn and grow as per their potential. For children to make optimal gains, we need to plan an age and developmentally appropriate Early Childhood Education curriculum to ensure the holistic development of children.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning and significance of age and developmentally appropriate ECCE curriculum;
- discuss the need and importance of contextualisation of ECCE curriculum;

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- describe the principles of quality in ECCE planning;
- justify the need for long-term and short-term planning;
- design and plan a balanced theme-based ECCE programme for young children;
- discuss the inter-relationship among different areas of development and learning through activities; and
- plan an inclusive programme.



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12.1 MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF AGE-AND DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE ECCE CURRICULUM OR PROGRAMME

Planning is the backbone for a high quality ECCE programme. Planning for young children means, thinking ahead. The curriculum needs to be flexible and at many times, spontaneous. However, to reach ECCE goals and objectives, children need to be amidst enriched age- and developmentally appropriate experiences and activities that flow in a loosely organized manner. A high quality ECCE programme or curriculum provides a balanced daily schedule through different activities and experiences based on domains i.e. physical-motor, cognitive, language, socio-emotional and art and aesthetic appreciation.

When we talk about age and developmentally appropriate curriculum, we need to keep in mind the age of the children as well as their developmental level. For example, a child may be physically developed but her language is delayed or a child is very alert with quick grasping power but he has difficulty in walking. Therefore, planning according to age, needs, interests and development has to provide for the different needs of children. This would allow young children to flourish in a stress-free, stimulating environment where flexibility in the programme caters to all children.

12.2 NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXTUALISATION OF ECCE CURRICULUM

While planning a programme for young children, it must be borne in mind that apart from being age and developmentally appropriate, the programme must relate to the context of children's social and cultural lives. If the language or objects or stories or songs are all unfamiliar, it would be difficult to grab the interest children in the classroom dynamics. Local language and simple language appeal to children. Concepts need to relate to real-life concrete experiences and then gradually move to abstract. For example, if you are in a rural area and you are talking about animals, talk about familiar animals first and then gradually show pictures of unfamiliar animals. This is called contextualized learning. Similarly, if you are talking about plants and trees, talk about common and familiar plants from the



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children's environment. Talk and discuss about those vegetables, which the children eat and are familiar with, instead of talking about fruits like strawberries and cherries that children may not have seen. That ensures that teaching and learning become more meaningful and joyful. Lesson that are theme-related, like, food, can have visits to local shops for children to make connections. Celebration of local festivities, national days and regional food days will help children to understand diversity in simple ways. Using multiple methods make ECCE programmes and theme teaching more interesting and contextualized.

In India, diversity can be of two ways; one, where families live in different social, physical and cultural contexts creating a unique milieu, and second when, in one class, there are children from different contexts. Either way, some children find themselves part of a largely majoritarian culture that is not totally their social identity. One uniform curriculum will not work in different spaces. Rural children will respond differently to means of transport or what they see in the environment than urban children will answer. An urban child from a poor family may have only received food from places of worship. Their understanding will vary. A village child may say "The temple is where I meet the priest" while one urban disadvantaged child may reply "The temple is where I get something to eat". One of the major principles in planning is to attend and address children's social realities and not expect responses to curricular content to emerge only in a specific direction. In fact, it is from the variety in children's understanding that we can sow seeds of appreciating differences.

12.2.1 Multicultural Indian Society

India being a multicultural and multilingual nation, we have to guide our thinking in how we deal with children in group settings, especially when dealing with children in the early childhood stage. Children from varied cultural backgrounds enrolled in one preschool would gain by finding a social identity. The context of children's social and cultural contexts can find a place in the curriculum in many ways. Food habits, celebration of festivals, clothes, customs and rituals impact children's approach to the school. For example, a child not knowing the language of the classroom transaction may feel neglected or a child from a rice-eating family may withdraw finding difficulty in eating chapattis or be a little reserved in celebrating unfamiliar festivals. With immense diversity and absence of inclusive practices, the child may find it difficult to adjust and learn and may even opt out of school because of diverse backgrounds. For example, for the theme, Our Environment, each child may name objects from her/his environment with amazing results. Children living near the sea shore may include sea shells, pebbles and fish while those living near a forest may include nest, beehive etc. Allowing children to participate and listening to children permits free expression and involved children.



Therefore, when we plan a programme for an ECCE centre, we need to ensure social and cultural orientation. Contextualization is an effort to relate the content of the curriculum to the local environment. Generally, to contextualize ideas, statements or events is to contain categories with local and complete meaning. It is the act or process of putting information into context as also making sense of information from the situation or location in which the information was found. Research supports that contextualized instruction leads to better learning. In short, begin children's early learning from their environment, which they are familiar with and which they have already observed. Slowly, children will try and question and seek connections of facts to their origin and context. Such kind of contextualized experiences help them feel interested, motivated for school and ultimately, a feeling of success and achievement.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.1

Fill in the blanks:

- (a) In,an effort is made to relate the content of the curriculum to the local environment.
- (b) India is a.....and multilingual nation.
- (c) Developmentally appropriate ECCE curriculum keeps and level of children in consideration.
- (d) An ECCE programme needs to be and can be improved to reflect new.....
- (e) There is an immense diversity and children may find it difficult to adjust and learn as they all have diverse.....

12.3 PRINCIPLES OF QUALITY ECCE PLANNING

A high quality ECCE programme helps to ensure appropriate opportunities for all children keeping the focus on holistic development of the children. Thus, it is important to develop an ECCE programme balancing both children's development and contextual needs. The programme or ECCE curriculum should ensure a stimulating environment with diverse learning opportunities. According to the developmental characteristics, all children are naturally motivated to learn and are capable of learning. Young children learn when they have opportunity to:

- play
- observe and express
- form familiar and new experiences
- participate, engage and communicate



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- experiment and explore
- ask questions
- imitate, enact and perform
- feel physically and emotionally safe

Keeping in view the objectives of ECCE and developmental characteristics of pre-school children, the MWCD, in its Curriculum Framework (2013) has talked about the following **Principles of Programme Planning**:

- The activities should be **age appropriate and developmentally appropriate**.
- Activities fostering all domains of development should be appropriately planned.
- **The attention span of young children is 15-20 minutes**; therefore, the duration of activities should be 20 minutes, with additional time allotted to winding up and initiation of the next activity. However, the programme should allow space and flexibility for need-based variations.
- There should be a **balance** between structured and unstructured; active and quiet; outdoor and indoor; self-directed and adult-initiated learning opportunities and individual, small group and large group activities.
- The learning experiences and activities should progress from **simple to complex**.
- A wide range of individual and group experiences should be planned. These should be **related to the child's environment**, are enjoyable and challenging for children.
- Routine fosters a sense of security in children. Therefore, some routine should be followed in the daily programme.
- The ECCE programme should never be rigid. It needs to be flexible.
- The duration of pre-school programmes **should be three to four hours**. The programme should provide for some rest period during the day and if it is of longer duration, like a full-day programme, nap time is to be ensured.
- Learning opportunities should be **interconnected, linking learning experiences across developmental domains** in a meaningful context, reflecting the real-life context of the children.
- The language used should be the **mother tongue** of the child. Efforts should be made to extend their language sensitively and introduce the school language gradually to facilitate school readiness.
- Curriculum goal and objectives should guide **classroom processes and**



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assessment of the children. The curriculum should be implemented in a manner that reflects responsiveness to family/ home values, beliefs and experiences.

- The programme should provide **opportunities for exploration and experiential learning**, promoting active engagement with people and objects in the environment.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.2

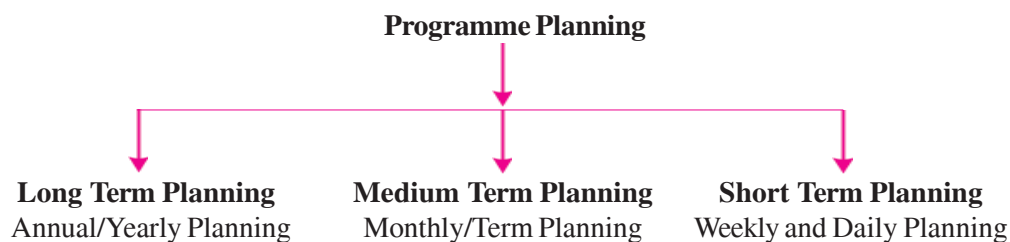
Fill in the blanks:

- A high quality ECCE programme helps to ensure opportunities for development of the children.
- The ECCE programme should provide opportunities forand experiential learning to the children.
- Learning opportunities should be, linking learning experiences across developmental domains.
- The activities planned should be age and appropriate.
- The routine followed in an ECCE programme should foster a sense of..... in children.

12.4 PLANNING AND DESIGNING AN ECCE PROGRAMME

Planning is essential for every aspect of human activities. In case of children’s development, a complete absence of planning may leave the entire teaching learning process disorganised, and fail to achieve desired goals. ECCE curriculum should include activities for language, cognitive, physical and socio-emotional development of children as goals for planning.

Planning is usually organized over three different time scales, which are linked and follow on from each other. They are:-





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Broadly, there are two types of planning viz. Long Term Planning and Short Term Planning. Medium Term Planning is a part of Long Term Planning.

12.4.1 Long Term Planning means drawing up a plan for the whole year. At the beginning of each academic year, it is decided as to what to teach and how to teach for the next twelve months. This planning includes:

- Learning experiences and curriculum i.e. what children need to achieve during the preschool years
- Identification of skills and concepts
- Teaching strategies to be used
- Selection of themes for the whole year
- Development of schedules/calendar of activities on selected themes
- Play equipment and Teaching Learning Material (TLM) to be resourced
- Strategies to note progress in the learning
- Budgeting and allocation of funds for various expenditures, events, activities, repairs and maintenance

Medium Term Planning means monthly and term planning. After long term planning, monthly planning to decide themes and concepts need to be identified. Themes and concepts using child oriented methods and strategies benefit children. Monthly planning also assists in reflecting on how children engage and respond with space to modify strategies and improve the quality of the programme. Monthly planning contributes to mid-term planning with the aim of noting the progress made by the children. Term-wise planning is based on identifying themes and concepts that promote children's exploration and development in different domains such as enhancing mental functions, increasing skills in communication as well as social competence. Themes have to appeal and engage children so that they can display their skills and comprehension. Children's progress can be recorded and shared with parents and families. In short, this planning focuses on a term or a month.

From the year's plan, a monthly plan is drawn, which sets the goals for a fixed period of time and gives a broad outline of activities. Mid-term planning is the actual period of execution of work with children requiring consistent review of children's participation and response to the content. Content and methods of work can be modified based on how children engage and benefit.

12.4.2 Short Term Planning means weekly and daily planning. These plans are more specific than long term and medium term plans. Short term planning can address individual children's needs and interests. Listening to children and incorporating their needs by watching how they engage is a way to involve them actively in the planning process. Short term plans can be used to focus attention on particular children who may require additional support. In preparing short term plans, points to be decided are:

- What resources are needed
- How to change and adapt the play environment
- What time in the day particular activities will take place
- Who will be there and what her/his role might be
- How the learning will be assessed

However, it is important to include the interest of each child in the plan developed for the group. Let us know more about short term planning in terms of weekly and daily programme schedules.

Weekly Planning: It is a part of short term planning. As themes involve planning for over a week or over a longer period, it may be better to identify sub-themes for different days of the week and then decide on the activities as per the daily programme /schedule to explore different aspects of the theme. It has been observed that thematic approach makes learning not only easy and interesting but also enables children to master basic concepts better. Let us find out the steps in developing a weekly plan:

- Selection of theme for the week
- Listing activities related to the theme
- Deciding daily schedule of activities such as what will be done on the first day, second day, etc.
- Setting goals for each activity
- Preparing material required for organizing each activity
- Organising and arranging the classroom environment according to the theme and the activities selected

Daily Plan/Schedule: This is often drawn up by the teacher to provide a systematic guide to activities during the day. Daily plan includes:

- Variety of activities that are offered inside and outside the classroom
- Organising resources the children will use
- Special arrangements with regard to ensuring children's participation
- Time given to different activities



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The daily plan should reflect a balance of the following:

- Active and quiet activities
- Child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities
- Indoor and outdoor activities
- Individual, small group and large group activities
- Free and guided play activities

Goals to be achieved from planning for the whole year

There needs to be a clear ideas of the goals and steps to achieve them in planning the learning experiences for the whole year. Listed below are some goals necessary for helping children learn:

- Winning the trust and confidence of the children
- Inculcating healthy habits among children
- Ensuring personal safety of the children
- Development of the fine and gross muscles of the children
- Development of language skills
- Development of social skills
- Development of concepts like number, time, colour, form etc
- Development of independence
- Understanding of self and the environment
- Development of creative art and aesthetic appreciation

12.5 THEME BASED ECCE PROGRAMME

You have learnt the principles of programme planning. Let us now study how to do theme based planning.

Theme Based Planning

Integrated themes and projects form the core content of the ECCE programme or curriculum. These themes should be developed in a suitable manner so that it enables children to make meaningful connections among the different concepts and develop holistic understanding of the world around them. The preschool curriculum should be flexible and responsive to the needs of the children. It is to be ensured that the theme based ECCE programme is constructed to suit the diverse social, cultural and linguistic contexts in the country. The daily/weekly/



monthly theme based programme should be prepared with a good selection of learning experiences that strengthen all domains of development and are age and developmentally appropriate. The activities for different domains and concepts should be planned purposefully to enable children to actively engage with and experience the concepts. These will help to consolidate the early learning and lay the foundation for the future.

12.5.1 Steps in Theme Based Planning

(a) Identify a Theme

The first step is to identify a theme and related sub-themes. Questions to consider during this step include:

- What content are children expected to learn as a result of participating in this theme?
- Is the theme right for the age and developmentally appropriate experiences.
- Do children have some understanding and background knowledge about this theme?

(b) Think and create activities, ideas and experiences for different themes

The second step involves brainstorming ideas for activities for each theme. It is often helpful to include children's ideas. Watching children during free play in school or in parks often provides ideas that will naturally appeal to children. Consider questions such as:

- Why am I choosing this activity?
- Are all the activities chosen age appropriate and developmentally appropriate?
- Are all the activities meaningful and relevant?
- Are the activities catering to all children?
- Are the selected activities and games according to the local specific context?

(c) Planning a Theme Web

Now let's take a look at a sample web. This web takes a thematic approach but still focuses on areas. The chosen theme is 'Animals'. The teacher has to decide what s/he wants to include in the activity areas to allow the theme to be explored further. The activity areas need to have specific activities and learning material



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related to the theme. The purpose of webbing is to brainstorm ideas for the theme. Let's look at Web-1 that shows different domains of development. Now, based on the same, think about any theme and start brainstorming ideas, activities and experiences for the theme. (See Web-2). Brainstorm activities for language, gross motor, fine motor, cognitive, sensory and socio-emotional development.



Fig. 12.1 Web-1: A balanced ECCE Programme

- (d) After webbing on a chosen theme, you need to bring it into the weekly/daily plan dividing the activities and experiences according to the needs, interests, age and context of children. You will read further on how to prepare a long term theme based plan for the three to six years age group monthly theme-based plan; weekly theme based plan and a daily schedule or plan.

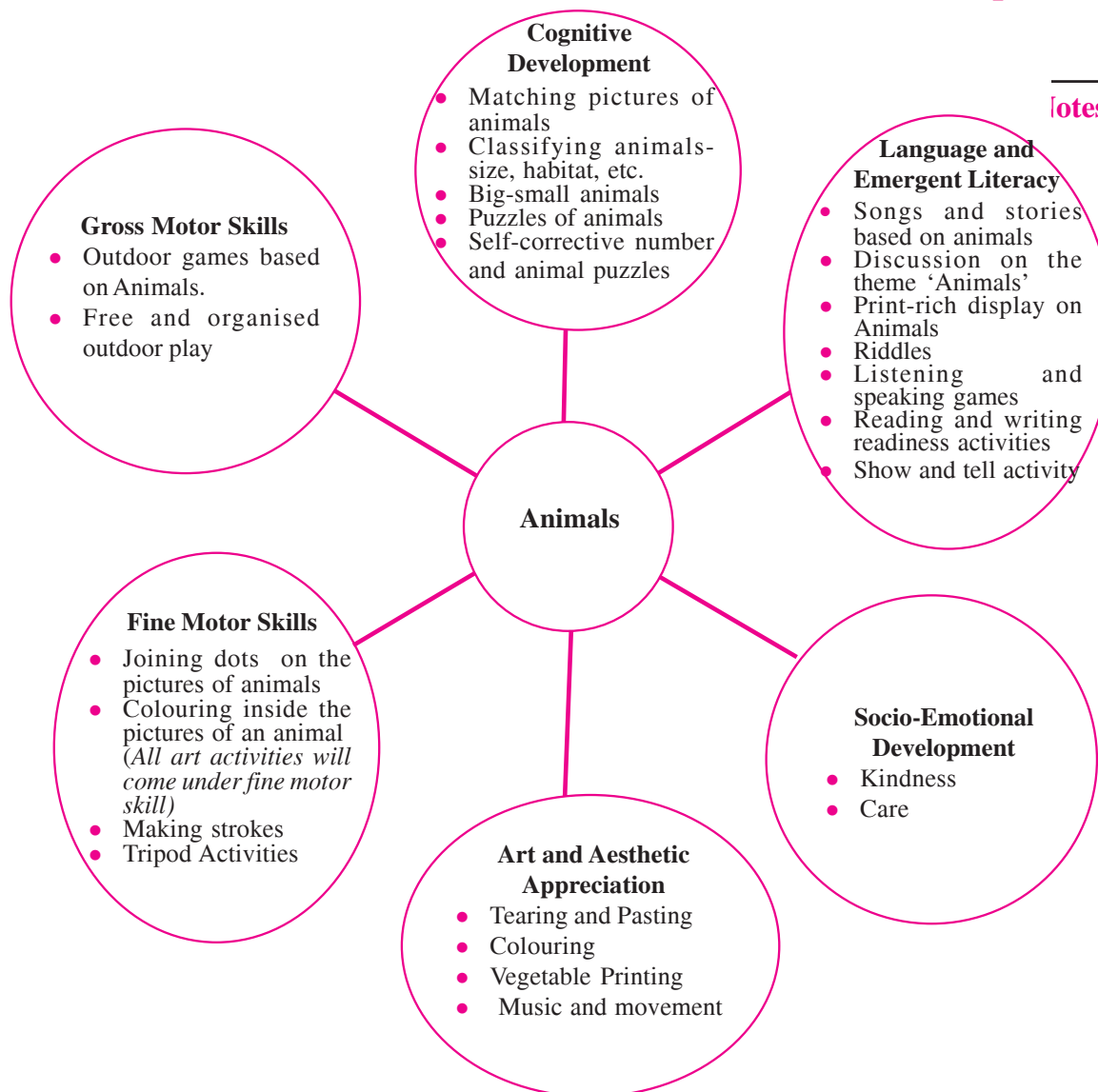
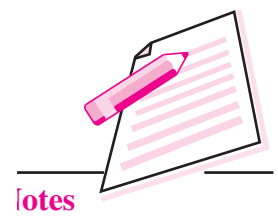


Fig. 12.2 Web Plan on the Theme "Animals"

Note: The teacher needs to provide activities and learning material related to the on-going monthly/weekly theme in the Activity Areas in the classroom.

Local festivals and celebrations may be added to make the theme planning contextual and local specific.



Sample of a full year Theme Based Planning (three to six years age group)

Themes	Activities	Material/Aids
<p><i>Adjustment to School Environment</i> Myself <i>Celebration: Baisakhi(Festival)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free and guided conversation on awareness of self (one's own name, name of father, mother and siblings), home address, school's and teacher's name Parts of the body and their functions, cleanliness (good habits) Stories and rhymes Following simple instructions Development of senses Matching Colour concept Physical and motor development activities Creative and socio-emotional development activities 	<p>Picture charts, cards (story, touch and odd man out), puppets, colour dominoes, creative art material, balls, dolls, beads, building blocks, puzzles, sound boxes, feely bag and classification cards, etc.</p> <p>Costumes for festival celebration</p>
<p>Myself, My Family (recap), My Neighbourhood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free and guided conversation on my family, understanding relationships, respecting the feelings and rights of other children, relating well with adults by listening to them and following their instructions, empathy and care towards the old, people with special needs, the needy, care and nurturance towards plants, animals and other forms of life Stories and rhymes Development of senses (rough-smooth, smell) Matching and identification Concept of size (big-small) Time concept (early-late) Pattern making (three to four objects) Physical and motor development activities Creative and socio-emotional development activities 	<p>Simple one line riddles, cards (picture reading, touch, matching, classification, seriation and pattern making) materials with different smell, dominoes, same object of different size, indoor free play material, outdoor play equipment, material for creative art work and clay</p>
<p>Animals (Wild, Domestic and Pet animals; Common birds and insects; Aquatic animals)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free and guided conversation on wild, domestic and pet animals; common birds and insects, aquatic animals. Activities for imparting knowledge about their habitat, food, babies, usage/benefits, their care and nurturance. Colour concept (primary colours) Shape concept (basic shapes) Pattern making Matching, identification, naming, classification Physical and motor development activities Creative and socio-emotional development activities Role play, dramatisation, puppet play stories and rhymes, emotional development activities 	<p>Colour and shape dominoes, cards (picture reading, matching, picture), stories, rhymes, patriotic songs, music system, stick puppets (sun, moon, stars), dolls, beads, seeds, building blocks, puzzles, material for creative art work, clay</p>



<p>Transportation (Road, Air, Water)</p> <p><i>Celebration:</i> <i>Teacher's Day</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free and guided conversation on road, water, air transport, safety rules related to transportation and teacher's day • Following simple instructions • Sound discrimination, vocabulary related to the theme • Development of speaking skill (show and tell) • Development of basic cognitive skills like classification, sequential thinking, concept of space(in-out), seriation, matching, identification and naming • Role play, stories and rhymes • Identification of different kinds of transport (air, water, road) naming transport, identifying and imitating sounds of different transport, observation and memory, classification, identifying, time concept (before-after) • Physical and motor development activities, creative and socio-emotional development activities 	<p>Puzzles (three pieces), cards (picture reading, m a t c h i n g , classification, what is missing, sequential thinking) riddles, toys, picture charts, indoor play equipment, outdoor play material, material for art and craft and clay work material</p>
<p>Vegetables Fruits Plant life</p> <p><i>Celebrations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dussehra (Festival)</i> • <i>Gandhi Jayanti</i> • <i>Deepawali (Festival)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free and guided conversation on vegetables, fruits, plant life, festivals and Gandhi Jayanti • Identification and naming of common fruits and vegetables, difference between fruits and vegetables, their washing, benefits of eating them, their colour, shape, taste and texture. Identification of fruits and vegetables, which are eaten with peel or without peel, grows above the ground or below the ground. Identification of trees, grass, climbers, flowers. • Development of basic cognitive skills like matching, problem solving, reasoning • Concept of space (over-under), height (tall-short), time (day-night, morning, afternoon and evening) and classification • Sorting (foodstuff like rice and grams mixed together), concept of thickness (fat/thick-thin) 	<p>Picture charts, cards (sorting, matching, pre-number concept, odd man out), cereals for sorting, puzzles, art and craft material for Deepawali decoration, free indoor play equipment, outdoor play equipment, raw fruits and vegetables, plants, pot for germination</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houses • Winter Season <p><i>Celebration:</i> <i>Christmas</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free and guided conversation on need of house for humans and animals, about home family, vocabulary related to types of houses, different parts of the house, household objects, winter season, Christmas celebration • Visit to a construction site and zoo • Stories, poems and rhymes • Development of speaking skill and vocabulary • Visual description • Development of basic cognitive skills • Concept of shape, space (above-below) and time (before-after) • Recognition of position (front-back), recognition of temperature (hot-cold), relationships, classification, pattern making 	<p>Picture charts, matching charts, art and craft material for C h r i s t m a s celebrations, cards (pre-number concept, sequential thinking, matching) outdoor play equipment, indoor free play equipment, puzzles</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sorting, identification and naming-sun, moon, stars, sky, water etc. • Physical and motor development activities • Creative and socio-emotional development activities 	
<p>Water Celebrations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lohri (Festival)</i> • <i>Makar Sankranti (Festival)</i> • <i>Pongal (Festival)</i> • <i>Eid</i> • <i>Gurpurav</i> • <i>Republic Day</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free and guided conversation on importance of water for survival of living beings, common uses of water, importance of clean drinking water, sources of water, need for conserving water and avoiding its wastage, Lohri, Makar Sankranti, Pongal and Republic Day Celebration. • Development of basic cognitive skills through experiments/ demonstrations: floating and sinking, objects that dissolve and that do not dissolve in water, clothes dry in sun because water goes up to the sky (evaporation), properties of water (colour changes, taste changes if you add lemon, sugar, salt, etc.) • Stories, poems and rhymes • Physical and motor development activities • Creative and socio-emotional development activities 	<p>Tub, caps of bottles, picture charts, colours, brushes, glasses, beads, art and craft material, clay, salt, sugar, sand, twigs, marbles, feathers, origami paper to make boats</p>
<p>Community Helpers Celebration:</p> <p><i>Basant Panchami</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free and guided conversation on need and importance of Doctor, Nurse, Tailor, Cobbler, Postman, Policeman, Driver, Milkman, Barber, Gardener/Mali, Porter, Teacher, Washer man/Dhobi and House help • Inviting community helpers to the preschool and to interact with the children • Development of listening and speaking skills • Stories and rhymes • Vocabulary related to the social environment and picture reading • Development of senses • Observation, remembering and recalling the activities of community helpers • Matching of tools and equipment of community helpers, missing game, seriation, classification (based on one concept at a time) and pattern making (3, 4 objects) • Concept of time (recap), pre-number (wide and narrow), number, part and whole relationship • Physical and motor development activities • Creative and socio-emotional development activities 	<p>Conversation charts, pictures of community helpers, matching cards, tools and equipment, doctor set, indoor play equipment, outdoor play equipment, dolls, building blocks, beads, puzzles.</p>



<p>Repetition of previous themes</p> <p><i>Celebration:</i></p> <p><i>Holi (Festival)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free and guided conversation on Holi • Stories and rhymes related to themes • Development of speaking skills (fluency and clarity of expression), listening skills (listening with comprehension), writing skills (drawing of circle, triangle, square) and reading skills (picture reading) • Experiencing air around them, blowing out air onto hands, air blows away light objects in the environment • Matching, identification and naming colours, shapes, big, small, more, less, tall, short, fat, thin, wide, narrow, far, near, recognise positions, e.g., in, out, over, under, front, back, above, below • Missing and memory game, seriation, classification, time and number concept, pattern making • Physical and motor development activities • Creative and socio-emotional development activities 	<p>Colours, balloon, picture reading cards piston (pichkari), cards- for matching, crayons, shape, pre-number concept, number, sorting, seriation, dominoes, outdoor play equipment, indoor play material and building blocks</p>
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Note: Festivals and other occasions can be taken up for ‘theme based conversation’ as and when they occur. All festivals need to be celebrated in the preschool.

Sample - Daily Plan (4 hours)		
<i>Duration</i>		<i>Activities</i>
09.00 am	09.30 am	Welcome Warming up exercises Health/Cleanliness inspection Prayer (rhymes, songs and dialogue with children)
09.30 am	10.00 am	Going to the classroom, settling down, informal attendance (who has not come today, why, what may be the reason) Language development activity may be based on theme (free conversation or guided conversation)
10.00 am	10.30 am	Outdoor activities, swings, slides, sand and water play, wheel toys, tricycles, etc.
10:30 am	11:00 am	Washing hands, Snack time
11:00 am	11:30 am	Rest, listening to rhymes, songs, or stories on a music system
11:30 am	12:00 pm	Activity for cognitive skill based on theme (structured conversation on theme)



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12:00 pm	12:30 pm	Indoor free play in small groups, blocks, dolls, puzzles, constructive tools, etc.
12:30 pm	12:50 pm	Creative activity
12:50 pm	01:00 pm	Socio-emotional development activity (story, rhythmic movements, rhyme, dramatisation and role play)
01:00 pm		Dismissal

How to conduct activities for children in the age group of three to six years, separately on the sub-topic, 'Common Usage of Water'.

Objective: To familiarise children with the common uses of water.

Duration: Minimum two days (younger age group needs more time than the older age group)

Material: low cost –or no cost material, teacher made

Activities for children in the three to four year age group

Free conversation: Teacher may start a day with free conversation with children on common uses of water. (Note–: All children must be given a chance to speak). From free conversation teacher may proceed towards structured conversation related to water which will help children pick up more information about the uses of water and develop their vocabulary related to water. If there is a pet in the ECCE centre, children may be encouraged to give it water to drink and be allowed to observe the animal drinking water.

Songs and rhyme: Singing songs and rhymes related to the use of water promoting language development, conducting music and movement and creative and aesthetic development activities.

Outdoor activity: Showing children a gardener watering plants, centre assistants mopping floor, water in the washroom being used by everyone for washing hands, water being used in the school kitchen, making tea using water, etc.

Water play: Letting children play with a small tub of water freely with containers of different shapes and sizes, some with holes, so that the water drips from them.

Field trip: Taking children out to observe a pond or lake, if it is nearby. Rhymes and songs related to water for developing vocabulary.

Activities for children in the four to six year age group

Guided conversation related to water: Using audio-video material, picture books with pictures of common uses of water can be used.

Role play: Encouraging children to think about uses of water. Getting children to dramatise different uses of water, each child can act out one use and the others can guess what it is.



Drawing children's attention towards display of charts on uses of water.

Fine motor skills: Children can colour the pictures, do free hand drawing related to common uses of water.

Children can water plants and they can be told that if the plant is not watered, it turns yellow and dries.

Children may be allowed to wash their spoons and hands using water under teacher's supervision.

They may observe puddles of water and may like to play or float paper boats. Children can do this activity indoors too.

Children may be asked to observe their parents and family using water for different purposes and have a discussion next day in the class.

Teacher can focus on conducting simple experiments such as floating and sinking, things that dissolve and do not dissolve, observing wet clothes dry in sun, melting of ice-cubes left in the open, etc.



ACTIVITY 12.1

Design a weekly plan on any theme for preschool for four hours duration.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.3

State whether the following statements are true or false:

- (a) Planning is usually organized over five different time scales.
- (b) Long term planning means drawing up a plan for the whole year.
- (c) Short term planning cannot address individual children's needs and interests.
- (d) A classroom rich in pictures, posters and charts provides challenge, fun and excitement to the children, especially for theme teaching.
- (e) Activity time can note that the children make choices about the activities in which they engage.
- (f) It is important to schedule 40-50 minutes cleanup time, particularly after activity time, for children and teachers to participate in putting the classroom back into order.



ACTIVITY 12.2

Visit a preschool in your neighbourhood and study the daily schedule being followed and write a report of a hundred words.



Notes

12.7 APPRECIATING DIVERSITY AND PLANNING AN INCLUSIVE PRESCHOOL

Children differ in their needs, interests and abilities. They develop in different ways at different places where the developmental process is consistent and every individual normally passes through each major stage of development. In ECCE centres or programmes often, despite being accessible to children, there is a mixed composition of children with multiple home language backgrounds, children following different religions, socio-economic conditions, urban-rural differences, quality of schooling or lack of it, diverse socio-cultural practices and food habits and so on. Gender is also a significant issue as girls and boys are treated quite differently in most social structures. Boys get more privileges and girls are often neglected. At the centre, one must ensure that there is no discrimination.

Hierarchies of caste, economic status and gender relations, cultural diversity as well as the uneven economic development that characterise Indian society also deeply influence access to education and participation of children in school. This is reflected in the sharp disparities between different social and economic groups, which are seen in school enrolment. Each child enters the school with different experiences and expectations. Hence, children need to feel that each one of them, their homes, communities, languages and cultures are valuable and their diverse capabilities are accepted; that all of them have the ability and the right to learn and to access knowledge and skills. Diversity refers to the range of similarities and differences among children, staff and families in an ECCE programme and community. It includes race, culture, abilities, gender and age. For the early learning and childcare experiences, it is important to recognise and respect diversity. This enhances each child's social and emotional well-being and promotes caring, cooperative and equitable interactions with others. Each child must feel a sense of belonging and feel positive about his or her own identity. When home and school cultures differ, it is important to resolve these cultural conflicts in a mutually respectable way. This can only be done through:

- open dialogue among families and teachers
- learning about each other's cultures and expectations
- respecting each individual's unique culture and identity

Providing opportunities for children to explore similarities and differences in a positive atmosphere supports respect for diversity. Self-esteem, confidence and emotional development are strengthened when children and families feel accepted and supported. Therefore, curriculum must:

- be context sensitive and culturally relevant
- foster caring attitudes and empathy

- respect diversity
- address gender issues and promote equal rights
- ensure learning of basic life skills

ECCE curriculum in most cases does not address this diversity from the perspective of ensuring inclusion and sensitivity towards all groups. This can be possible if this issue is dealt with comprehensively in teacher preparation so that every teacher can adapt the given curriculum to her/his immediate context.

Inclusive practices are intended to identify and remove barriers to full acceptance, participation and learning for all children. Inclusion recognises that many challenges associated with disability are embedded in socio-cultural attitudes and practices. Inclusion does not entail a one size fits all mainstream approach, but seeks to recognise and respond to diversity, without isolating children with special needs and removing them from everyday activities. Inclusive practices allow teachers to support individual needs within the regular context.

Strategies for an inclusive ECCE centre:

- Encouraging social interactions
- Requesting help/suggestions from children's families
- Simplifying directions to children
- Modifying group activities to allow participation
- Providing extra help to teach skills
- Modifying the daily schedule
- Responding appropriately
- Giving physical assistance to participate in all programme routines and activities
- Assisting with the use of tools, play material, etc
- Rearranging the environment
- Obtaining parent permission to share information with other specialists
- Adapting toys and play materials
- Adapting an existing piece of furniture or equipment to meet individual needs



Notes



Notes

- Create space and time to sensitively discuss children’s different backgrounds, cultures, family structures and abilities
- Introduce different cultures through stories and games.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.4

Match column A with column B.

Column A	Column B
(i) Inclusive education	(a) Ensures learning of basic life skills
(ii) Hierarchies	(b) Self-esteem, confidence and emotional development
(iii) Curriculum	(c) Race, culture, gender, etc.
(iv) Positive atmosphere	(d) Inclusive ECCE centre
(v) Diversity	(e) Caste, economic status



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

In this lesson, you have learnt:

- A good ECCE curriculum is defined as age appropriate, all round development, play based, integrated, experiential, flexible, and contextual.
- The ECCE Programme should include activities and experiences for holistic development.
- Principles of Planning - It should be flexible, balanced and integrated.
- The programme planning for preschools include:
 - Long Term Planning –Annual or Yearly planning
 - Medium Term Planning- Monthly Planning and Term Wise Planning
 - Short Term Planning- Weekly Planning and Daily Planning/Schedule
- Daily planning includes the entire schedule of the day in a preschool.
- Weekly Planning makes learning not only easy and interesting but also enables children to master the basic concepts better.
- Recognising and respecting diversity is very important to early learning and childcare experiences.

Planning Developmentally Appropriate ECCE Curriculum

- Incorporating diversity and inclusion benefits children, families and staff because it helps develop a sense of belonging and strengthens understanding and acceptance of differences so that everyone can learn from each other.



TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Suggest two activities each for cognitive and socio-emotional development of four year old children.
2. Design any two activities for the language development of the children.
3. What are the guiding principles of an effective ECCE programme?
4. Discuss the various components of daily programme schedule.
5. Design a day's schedule for three year old children on any theme of your choice.
6. Write down the activities for children in the three-to four-year and five-to six-year age group (separately) on any theme of your choice.
7. What do you understand by the following terms?
 - i. Inclusion
 - ii. Diversity
 - iii. Contextualisation



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

12.1

- (a) contextualisation
- (b) multicultural
- (c) age, developmental
- (d) developmentally appropriate, experiences
- (e) backgrounds

12.2

- (a) holistic
- (b) exploration
- (c) interconnected



Notes



Notes

- (d) developmentally
- (e) security

12.3

- (a) False
- (b) True
- (c) False
- (d) True
- (e) True
- (f) False

12.4

- (i) d
- (ii) e
- (iii) a
- (iv) b
- (v) c

GLOSSARY

- **Contextualisation:** According to the children's environment/context/region specific.
- **Developmentally Appropriate ECCE Curriculum:** A programme designed to meet children's development and learning.
- **Diverse needs:** Varied/different needs of children.
- **Inclusion:** An approach where all children are included; where ALL children learn together in one classroom, regardless of their strengths and weaknesses.
- **Reinforcement:** The activities can be repeated by using different materials; by using additional material to strengthen the concept.
- **Stimulating environment:** Interesting, appealing and exciting classroom environment.

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WEB RESOURCES

- The Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development available at www.excellence-earlychildhood.



Notes