

Principles of Teaching Early Childhood Education

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Outline

- Developmentally Appropriate Practice
- Characteristics of Young Children
- Characteristics of Young Children's Learning
 - Play and Children's Learning and Development

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

- **DAP:** Practices that promote young children's optimal (best) learning and development

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

- **Core Considerations:** Early childhood practitioners make many decisions each day that influence the learning and development of the children under their care. Those decisions should be based on:
 - Knowledge of child development and learning
 - Knowledge of an individual child
 - Knowledge of the social and cultural context

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

• Principles of child development and learning that inform practice

- All domains of development are important (#1)
- Children develop best when they have secure, consistent relationships with responsive adults (#7)
- Always mentally active in seeking to understand the world around them, children learn in a variety of ways (#9)
- Play is an important vehicle for development (#10)
- Development and learning advance when children are challenged to achieve at a level just beyond their current mastery (#11)

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

• Guidelines for DAP

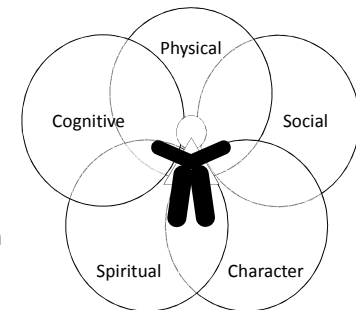
- Creating a caring community of learners
- Teaching to enhance development and learning
- Planning curriculum to achieve important goals

Principles of Culturally Appropriate Practice (CAP)

- Educational practices should be based on culturally relevant standards of development
- Education should reflect the goals and resources in the child's natural environment
- Education should complement children's development within their family and culture

Domains of Development

- **Cognitive:** Mental/thinking abilities
- **Physical:** Growth and health
- **Social:** Interactions with others
- **Character:** Behavior that reflects good morals and ethics
- **Spiritual:** Daily transformation in the image of God through faith and obedience

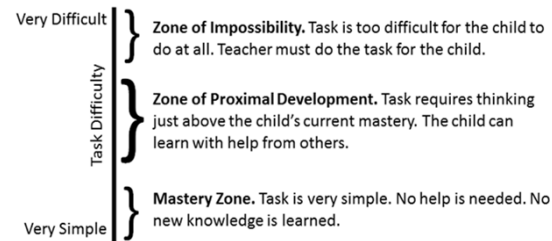


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Principles of Child Development #11

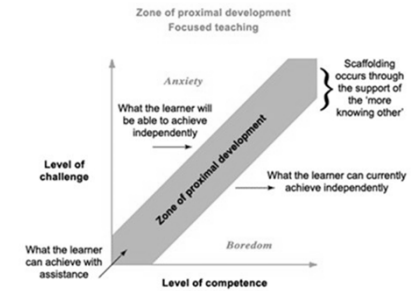
Development and learning advance when children are challenged to achieve at a level just beyond their current mastery

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development: Range of tasks that a child can not do alone but can accomplish when assisted by a more skilled partner



Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

- The ZPD is where real learning is possible because the task is above the child's current level of mastery, but still within reach
 - Instruction should always be aimed at a child's ZPD.
- The ZPD is continually changing as children practice and master new skills



Scaffolding

- To assist in learning within a child's ZPD, the teacher should provide scaffolding
 - **Scaffolding:** Assistance by a more skilled person that allows a child to complete a task they cannot do independently
- Types of Scaffolding
 - Adapting content or learning materials to children's developmental level
 - Modeling
 - Questions



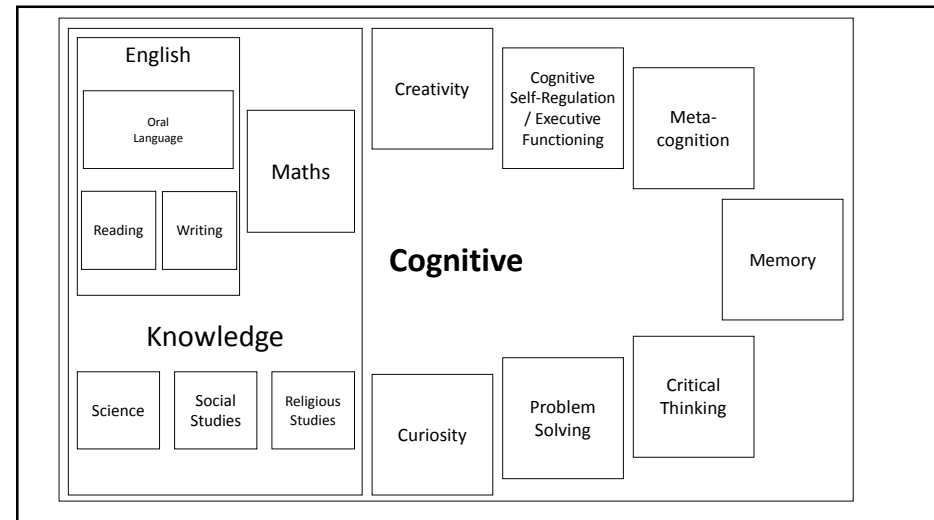
Characteristics of Young Children

- Driven to learn
- Capable
- Energetic
- Think concretely
- Unidimensional thinking
- Self-directed speech

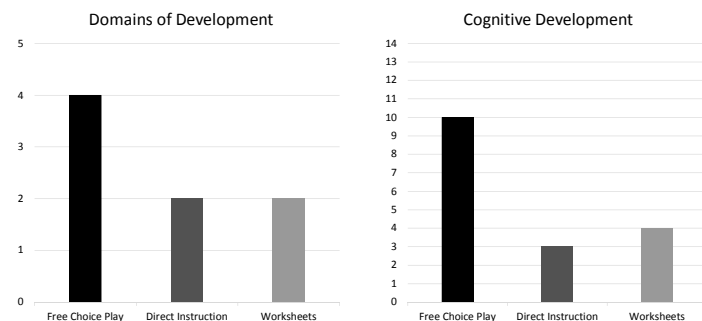
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Characteristics of Young Children's Learning

- Warm relationships
- Enjoyable learning experiences
 - Joy and learning go hand-in-hand (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009)
- Active learning experiences
- Time
- Repetition
- Mistakes
- Implicit learning experiences
 - *Implicit*: The ability of being understood from something else, though not directly revealed or expressed
 - Children learn and develop much through play



Analysis



Conclusion: Free choice play nurtures many more areas of development than direct instruction or worksheets

What if free-choice play can be transformed to guided play whereby teachers integrate instructional activities with play to purposefully foster learning and development?

Conclusion

- Learning in the early years is much broader than head knowledge
- Integrating instructional activities with play is a powerful way to nurture a broad range of developmental skills and knowledge
- Early childhood care and education in Nigeria needs to be reconceptualized to integrate playful, culturally relevant activities that nurture this broad range of skills and knowledge