



Unit 1: Introduction to the Framework

Key Topic 2: Getting to Know the Eight Overarching Principles

Focus Statement

Students become familiar with each of the eight overarching principles that guided the development of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1*.

Before You Start

This is an opportunity for each student to become familiar with all eight overarching principles. There is also an opportunity in Unit 7 of this instructional guide for deeper exploration of the eight overarching principles. In Unit 7, students have an opportunity to use the eight overarching principles as a way to reflect on and review self-developed and/or commercially available curricula.

For this exercise, students will need to read the relevant pages of Chapter 1 in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* (PCF, V1). They can be asked to read pages 5-8 and do the first piece of the following exercise before they come to class, or class time could be used for the initial reading and writing.

Before you begin this exercise, prepare one large label for each of the eight overarching principles. These are to be taped in different areas of the room. This could be done with chart paper or just written on sheets of paper. If you have access to half sheets that have a sticky backing (e.g., large Post-it® notes), those work very well.

The first part of the following exercise is to be done by students individually, and then there is a whole group discussion. For very large groups, small groupings could be developed for the discussion.

Information Delivery



Slide 2

The following are key concepts for this key topic:

- These are some dictionary definitions of “principle”: basic assumption, value-based standard, belief- and ethics-based characteristics.
- The eight overarching principles in the PCF, V1 are derived from research on what is effective practice and what supports children’s learning and development (PCF, V1, p. 5).

- These eight overarching principles have guided the development of the curriculum framework and are intended to provide children individually, culturally, and linguistically responsive learning experiences and environments (PCF, V1, p. 5).

Active Learning



Slide 3

Getting it started

Ask students to read pages 5-8 of the PCF, V1 and, for each eight overarching principle, find one key sentence or phrase that they think would be important to remember in their work.

Ask students to write out these key sentences or phrases on separate half sheets. If they do the reading and writing out of class, ask them to bring these written statements to class.

Keeping it going

Then ask them to tape or somehow attach each of their half sheets under the appropriate label that you have posted around the room. Have them circulate and view each of the collections of key sentences or phrases.

Provide an opportunity for students to reflect on what they see. You can support this by asking these questions:

- Were the key points the same?
- Where were there differences?
- Did you agree or disagree with any that were different from yours?
- Would you change any of yours after seeing any that are different?
- What does this tell you about the eight overarching principles?



Slide 4

Putting it together

Ask students where they have seen these eight overarching principles carried out in settings they have observed or may be working in. If this is done in pairs or small groups, try to ensure that each grouping includes someone who has access to an early care and education setting.



Slides 5-6



This does not need to be an exhaustive discussion but rather an opportunity to quickly reflect on what these eight overarching principles look like in action.

The following questions might stimulate discussion:

- How are relationships made central?
- What evidence is there that play is a primary context for learning?
- What do you see that suggests that learning is integrated?
- What examples of intentional teaching have you seen?
- How are meaningful connections made with families and communities?
- How are learning opportunities provided for all children as individuals?
- How is children's learning supported with responsiveness to culture and language?
- Is there time for teachers to reflect and plan?

Taking it further

The preceding questions could be used as the basis for an observation or an interview/panel discussion. This possibility is described in more detail in Unit 7, Key Topic 1.

Reflection



Slide 7

The following questions can be used to support reflection on this key topic. These can be done as a journaling exercise or as a class discussion.

- What was new information in this key topic?
- How did this new information surprise you?
- What was familiar?
- What additional information would you like to know that relates to this key topic?
- How could you get that information?



Deeper Understanding



Slides 8-10

Ask students to review the guiding principles in the following documents:

1. *Preschool English Learners: Principles and Practices to Promote Language, Literacy, and Learning, 2009. 2nd ed.* Sacramento: California Department of Education.

Ten principles are found throughout the guide and summarized in Appendix A on page 93.

2. *“Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation: Building an Effective, Accountable System in Programs for Children Birth through Age 8.”* Position statement with expanded resources by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2003. (NAEYC)

The guiding principles and values are on page 5 of this document, which is available on the NAEYC Web site.

Ask students to write a paper in which they compare these principles with the eight overarching principles in the PCF, V1, and respond to the following questions:

- Where are the similarities? What do these similarities tell us about what is important in the field of early care and education?
- Where are the differences? Why might there be these differences?