



Unit 3 – The Role of the Preschool Teacher

Key Topic 2: A Closer Look at Teachers' Responsibilities

Focus Statement

Students examine the major responsibilities of preschool teachers and how these responsibilities are interrelated.

Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP) Student Learning Outcomes

The Curriculum Alignment Project's (CAP) lower division eight courses, CAP expansion courses, and student learning outcomes are mapped onto each instructional guide learning experience. See Appendix A for the specific student learning outcomes, objectives, and examples of course content and topics for the courses listed below.

- Introduction to Curriculum
- Principles and Practices of Teaching Young Children
- Teaching in a Diverse Society
- Practicum-Field Experience
- Curriculum and Strategies for Children with Special Needs

Instructional Methodologies

- Class discussion
- Class presentation
- Creation of a visual representation
- Development of a resource tool
- Jigsaw reading
- Notetaking outline or tool
- Pairs or small groups
- Reflective discussion



- Short paper or report

California Early Childhood Educator Competency Areas to Consider

These competency areas are from the California Department of Education, Early Education and Support Division's *California Early Childhood Educator Competencies* (CDE 2011). The "Competency Areas to Consider" below are listed in this instructional guide as a preliminary exploration of how particular competency areas might be addressed through these learning experiences.

- Culture, Diversity, and Equity
- Relationships, Interactions, and Guidance
- Special Needs and Inclusion
- Learning Environments and Curriculum
- Leadership in Early Childhood Education
- Professionalism



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Before You Start

This key topic focuses on the major responsibilities of effective preschool teachers that are described in Chapter 3 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*. Although these responsibilities are discussed individually, it will be important for students to understand how they sometimes overlap and are related to each other. Just as children’s learning occurs in an integrated manner across different developmental domains, so do teachers’ actions occur across these responsibilities.

Students are asked to review assigned sections in Chapter 3, identify key points, and then create a poster or some other kind of two-dimensional visual representation to share those points with the other students. Materials needed include large sheets of poster or chart paper, colored markers, and tape. If possible, it is suggested that each of the nine posters is identified by a different color—either by using nine different colors of paper or drawing a border on each poster with a different color marker. If faculty choose to ask students to display relationships between the posters as described in the “Putting it together” segment of the learning experience, yarn or string and scissors will also be needed.

If faculty choose to use “Another Approach” for this learning experience, Handout 1, “Identifying the Key Points of Preschool Teacher Responsibilities,” is provided that students can use to record their key points and responses. An electronic version of this handout for this key topic will be available when this instructional guide is online at <http://facultyinitiative.wested.org/> (accessed January 20, 2016). Students will also be asked to review parts of Chapter 3. If students do not have copies of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*, the Portable Document Format (PDF) version can be downloaded from the California Department of Education Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/preschoolproggdlns2015.pdf> (accessed January 20, 2016).

Information Delivery

Students are asked to analyze several major responsibilities of preschool teachers. This information can be presented through a lecture or by having students read all or certain sections of Chapter 3 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*. It is recommended that students read the sections to become familiar with the publication.



Active Learning



Slides 2-4

Getting it started

Begin this learning experience by asking students to form pairs or small groups and assign each group one of the sections in Chapter 3:

- Build and Maintain Positive Relationships with Children (pp. 39–40)
- Build and Maintain Positive Relationships with Families (pp. 40–41, including the green text box on p. 41)
- Create an Environment for Social and Emotional Learning (pp. 41–42, including the orange text box titled “The Teaching Pyramid Framework for Supporting Social Competence” on p. 42)
- Be Responsive to Children’s Linguistic and Cultural Experiences (p. 42)
- Include Children with a Wide Range of Abilities and Approaches to Learning (pp. 42–43, including the text boxes on p. 43 titled “Role of the Preschool Teacher as a Part of the IEP Team” and “Dual Language Learners with Disabilities or Other Special Needs”)
- Understand Children’s Needs and Capabilities (pp. 43–44)
- Plan the Learning Environment and Curriculum in the Domains of School Readiness (pp. 44–45)
- Balance Child-Initiated and Teacher-Initiated Activities (p. 45)
- Assess How Well the Program Meets Children’s Needs (pp. 46–47, including the text boxes on p. 46 titled “Questions for Reflection” and “Becoming a Reflective Teacher”)

As the students read their assigned sections, they are to individually identify key points and think about the following questions:

- What are the knowledge and skills that teachers need to carry out that responsibility?



Slide 5



- How does this responsibility support children’s learning and development and/or parent engagement?
- How are teachers helping to create and sustain a high-quality program by carrying out this responsibility?

Keeping it going

Students next share their key points and responses to these questions with the other members of their group. After comparing and discussing these points, they are to come to agreement on what they will present to the rest of the class and create a poster of this information on a large sheet of paper.

Taking it further

Each group presents its poster to the whole class. Encourage students in the other groups to be thinking about similarities to the information on their posters. If there is adequate wall space in the classroom, try to have all the posters placed on the same wall, preferably in a large circular arrangement.

Online Options

Students could post online photographs or scanned copies of their visual representations for their instructor and their classmates to review.

Putting it together

After all the groups have shared their posters, ask the students to discuss where they see similarities among the responsibilities and why. If the posters are on the same wall, students can also display these relationships by attaching a piece of yarn or string between the posters. This could be done in one of two ways:

- Each group has several lengths of yarn or string and indicates the linkages between its assigned responsibility and the other eight.
- Each student could have a piece of yarn or string and make a connection between any two of the posters.

Online Options

If there is online-discussion capability, the instructor could facilitate an online discussion of the linkages the students see among the various responsibilities.



Another approach

Instead of pairs or groups of students reviewing each of the nine sections, faculty could assign a section to individual students. The amount of overlap will depend on how many students are in the class. Students can use Handout 1, “Identifying the Key Points of Preschool Teacher Responsibilities,” to record their ideas. After the students have reviewed their section, explain that they are then to interview other students to learn the key points for the other eight sections. Point out to students that they will then have a summary of the chapter after they have completed the handout.



Slide 6

Then convene the class as a whole group and discuss where they see connections or similarities among the responsibilities. Suggest that they draw lines on their handout to indicate these linkages.

Reflection

Conclude this active learning experience by asking students to reflect individually or as a class on the following questions:



Slides 7-8

- Which responsibility resonated most strongly with you?
- Which one do you feel most confident in carrying out? Which one might be the most challenging for you?
- Why is it important to be aware of the relationships among the different responsibilities? How would this impact your practice as a preschool teacher?
- Which responsibility do you feel is an important one for you to develop? How can you begin to do this?

This second set of more general reflective questions can be used in this and other key topics for additional class discussion or to guide individual student journaling.



Slides 9-11

- Which ideas or part of this class session stood out most for you?
- What seemed familiar or reinforced what you already know or have experienced? What gave you a new perspective or insight that causes you to think differently about teaching preschool children and/or engaging their families?
- Why do you think the content of this class session was presented the way it was? How did this approach help you understand the content? What else would have helped? What does this tell you



about how you learn?

- How will you decide what to apply from this class session in your work with preschool children and families? What will you do to ensure you will implement what you have decided to use?

Deeper Understanding



Slides 12-15

Point out to students the resources listed under “Further Reading” at the end of Chapter 3, which can be found on pages 48–50. Students are to choose one of the articles and write an annotation* of the article.

- Full citation for the article
- Summary
 - Main point(s)
 - Topic(s) covered
 - Main argument(s)
- Assessment
 - Goal or purpose of the article
 - Usefulness as a resource
 - Reliability of the information**
- Reflection
 - Applicability of the information to your practice
 - Changes in your thinking or understanding based on the article
 - Recommendation of the article to colleagues

If possible, compile the students’ annotations into a complete bibliography that each student can have as a resource.

*The annotation elements are based on the description for writing an annotated bibliography from the Purdue Online Writing Lab at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/1/> (accessed January 20, 2016).

**Additional suggestions for evaluating a reading can be found can be found at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/03/> (accessed January 20, 2016).



Identifying the Key Points of Preschool Teachers' Responsibilities

Enter the key points in the box corresponding to your assigned reading section. Then find students who have other sections and record the key points they identified for their sections.

Relationships with Children	Relationships with Families	Environment for Social and Emotional Learning
Children's Linguistic and Cultural Experiences	Children with Range of Abilities and Approached to Learning	Children's Needs and Capabilities
Domains of School Readiness	Child-Initiated and Teacher-Initiated Activities	Program Assessment

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Handout 1 : Identifying the Key Points of Preschool Teachers' Responsibilities