



Unit 5 – Use of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework*

Key Topic 4: Exploring the Curriculum-Planning Process of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework*

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Focus Statement

Students become familiar with the process and importance of the curriculum-planning process, including partnering with families in the process, as described in the preschool curriculum framework. Students review material in the *California Preschool Program Guidelines* and two DVD segments from the *California Preschool Program Guidelines DVD Set*.

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
- Observation and Assessment
- Practicum-Field Experience
- Curriculum and Strategies for Children with Special Needs

Instructional Methodologies

- Class discussion
- Class presentation
- Creation of a visual representation
- Pairs or small groups
- Peer review and feedback
- Reflective discussion



- Video observation

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.

- Family and Community Engagement
- Observation, Screening, Assessment, and Documentation
- Special Needs and Inclusion
- Learning Environments and Curriculum



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Before You Start

Key Topic 4 explores the important process of curriculum planning as it is developed in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework*. This is an ongoing process that begins with careful observation; requires documentation, planning, implementation; and then careful observation of what is implemented. Each step requires reflection and thoughtful conversations among staff and families.

This key topic is designed to be used independently, or to be combined with Key Topics 1, 2, and/or 3. All four key topics in this unit have the same structure and can be delivered separately or as one overarching key topic. To deliver as one overarching key topic, faculty could begin by combining and integrating the “Information Delivery” segments or, alternatively, using them in sequence. Then each of the “Getting it started” segments can be assigned to different small groups for work on the different content of the four key topics in the unit. Each “Keeping it going” section focuses on a brief segment of Disc 1 of the DVD set prepared by the California Department of Education to accompany the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*. These different DVD segments could also be viewed in sequence by the whole class. Each DVD segment could be followed by a brief discussion using the questions in each key topic for each DVD segment. Finally, each “Taking it further” segment could be assigned to the group or groups that had worked on that topic in the “Getting it started” segment. The questions for reflection could be used as a concluding discussion.

It will be helpful if students read Chapter 5 before coming to class and beginning the work in this key topic. The “Getting it started” segment could be done in class or as an out-of-class assignment, with students then bringing their work to a class session for presentation.

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). The two DVDs, titled the *California Preschool Program Guidelines DVD Set*, can be ordered through CDE at www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc or contact the CDE Press sales office at (800) 995-4099.



Information Delivery



Slide 2

Direct students to the section in Chapter 5 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines* on pages 70–73 titled “The Curriculum Planning Process.” Include the section titled “*Partnering with families in curriculum planning.*” Let students know that these pages are an overview of essential content in the curriculum framework. The planning process is addressed separately in the introduction to each volume of the framework and is embedded and integrated into the content throughout each domain of the framework. In Chapter 5 the planning process is emphasized as an ongoing, recurring process that requires intentional observation, documentation, specific planning, implementation, and beginning the process again by observing what is implemented. Direct the students’ attention to the graphic representation of the process on page 71. Let students know that they will be exploring the content of these pages further, as they work in small groups to prepare a presentation on this content.

Active Learning

Getting it started

Organize students into small groups of three or four and ask students to prepare a 5- to 10-minute in-service presentation for colleagues on the content of these pages. Each group can choose their own means of presenting this to the whole group—electronic slides, poster presentation using text or graphics, set of handouts, or whatever method they choose to develop.

Ask students to be sure to include the information:



Slides 3-4

- What are the key components of the curriculum-planning process as presented in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework*?
- What are some benefits of each of these components?
- Why is it important for teachers to intentionally employ this process in early care and education?

Online Options

Instead of creating their presentations in class, students could develop these outside class and post them online. Students could then review their classmates’ presentations and write a brief response to the three discussion questions about the presentations, which could be submitted to the instructor. Or if there is online-discussion capability, the instructor could facilitate an online discussion of the three questions.



- What are some ways that teachers can engage families in the curriculum process?

In responding to these questions, students might find that there are fairly straightforward responses to be found in the text. Suggest that they discuss within their group how to summarize what they find and determine how to present the concepts in an engaging way for their colleagues.

After all the groups have presented, ask the class to briefly discuss the presentations:



Slide 5

- What were some of the similarities and differences in the content highlighted in the presentations?
- Which presentation method seemed particularly effective for you?
- What might you do differently if you were to do this type of presentation again?

Keeping it going

To further illustrate the curriculum-planning process, it is helpful to turn to Disc 1 in the set of two DVDs developed to accompany the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*. Particularly relevant to the content that the students have just explored is the chapter titled "The Curriculum Planning Process."



Disc 1

To continue supporting students' understanding of the curriculum-process presented in the curriculum framework, two segments of this chapter of the DVD will be particularly helpful. The first segment of the chapter is titled "The Context for Curriculum Process" and is approximately three minutes long. The last segment of this chapter of the DVD is titled "Implementation" and also runs for approximately three minutes. These two segments together provide an overview and summary of the information that the students have been working with regarding the curriculum process. The second segment begins at 13 minutes, 30 seconds into the chapter, and, after about 3 minutes, finishes at the end of the chapter. To view the first segment, open Disc 1 to the main menu, click on "Select Chapters," and then click on the eighth chapter, "The Curriculum Planning Process." This segment of the DVD is at the beginning of the chapter. The second segment, "Implementation," can be viewed by moving the sliding cursor to 13 minutes and 25 seconds into the chapter.



It will be most effective to first view these brief segments, which total about six minutes, in sequence together without interruptions and then watch them a second time with the following questions in mind:



Slides 6-7

- What was new or unfamiliar?
- What have you seen or heard before?
- What was particularly helpful?
- What are some important considerations in implementing the curriculum process as described in the readings and in these two DVD segments?
- What are some ways of partnering with families that were demonstrated or discussed in these DVD segments?
- What did you see that parallels the concepts or key ideas in the presentations that you developed?

Taking it further

For an expanded look at the curriculum process recommended in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework*, ask students to go to the section on pages 29–35 in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3*. Ask students to read these pages individually and compile a list of some key ideas in this section. Let them know that this is an exploration and not a search for a certain number of ideas or specific ones. When students have had time to develop their lists, ask them to rejoin their small groups and compare differences and similarities in their lists. Ask each group to come to a consensus on five important key ideas or concepts regarding the curriculum-planning process. Be sure that they include the engagement of families in their key ideas.

Putting it together

Then reassemble the class as a whole group and ask the following discussion questions:

- What additional ideas

Online Options

Students could individually develop their lists and then post them online for their classmates to review. If there is document-sharing and online-discussion capability in the course, the instructor could then facilitate a class discussion in which students compare the lists and agree on the main three to five key ideas or concepts. They could also discuss the questions in the “Putting it together” section.



Slide 8



Slide 9



were in this reading in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3* that were not in the reading in Chapter 5 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*?

- What was familiar?
- Did this bring to mind other readings or other resources about the curriculum-planning process?
- If you were to list the three most important key ideas from both readings, what would they be?



Slide 10

Reflection

The following questions can be addressed in a whole group discussion, in a journal, or in individual written reflections.



Slides 11-12

- What caught your attention as you went through these readings?
- Where would you have liked more examples or explanation?
- If you were to look for more descriptions or explanations of working with all children in an integrated curriculum, where would you start?
- How can you bring this to the work you do with children and families, now and in the future?