How to Support Active Learning at Work Time

The "Do" in HighScope's Plan-Do-Review

HIGHSCOPE®

Week 1 Learning Unit

Understanding Work Time

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Work Time Basics

Work Time

- Immediately follows planning time.
- Lasts about 45–60 minutes.
- Has no preset activities.
- Has all areas of the room and classroom materials available for children to use in their plans.
- Is immediately followed by cleanup, then recall time.

Work Time Dos and Don'ts

During work time, children

- **Do** change their plans.
- **Do** work with **any** of the materials in **any** of the interest areas.
- **Do** move materials from one area to another.
- **Do** decide **where** they will play, **what** they will play, and **who** they will play with.
- **Don't** have to "replan" each time they change a plan. For example:
  - Children do not indicate a change by moving their symbol to a different interest area on a permanent planning board.
- **Don't** do preset activities.
- **Don't** get interrupted by adult plans.

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Work Time Basics (continued)

During Work Time

- Children follow their original plans.
- Children also pursue **new ideas** and plans that come up as they play.
- Children play with **purpose** and **concentration** — work time play is **not** random flitting!

Work Time for Teachers

Work time is the part of the HighScope daily routine when teachers

- Play alongside children as partners.
- Interact with children, sharing conversation about the play.
- Scaffold children's learning.
- Take anecdotes about what children say and do.

Work Time for Children

Work time is the part of the HighScope daily routine when children

- Carry out their plans.
- Play with purpose.
- Interact in a social setting.
- Solve problems with materials.

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Work Time Basics (continued)

Children carry out their plans.

Children turn their plans into purposeful actions when they

- Make choices.
- Select materials.
- Finish what they have started.
- Discover new ideas.

Wait...

Does this mean a child has to stay with their plan for all of work time?

Of course not!

Children can change their plans, modify their ideas, and get new ideas while they play. We'll share more about this in Week 2.

Children play with purpose.

Work time is both purposeful and playful.

Throughout work time children apply

- The concentration and seriousness of **work**.
- The enjoyment and spontaneous creativity of **play**.

Work time promotes children's natural need to explore, experiment, invent, construct, and pretend — **to play**! Children play in a social setting.

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Work Time Basics (continued)

Children play in a social setting.

The social nature of work time is clear when you see children, who have **chosen to be together**, working in pairs and groups.

Even children **working alone** are aware of others playing nearby.

Such a work time environment produces a constant, comfortable hum of conversation, laughter, and noise, resulting from children intent on carrying out their ideas.

Children solve problems with materials.

The plans children pursue at work time often lead to unexpected events or problems:

- The top to the glue bottle is dried up.
- The roof for the barn collapses.
- There are not enough bowls for the party.
- The bubbles in the water table disappeared.

By dealing with these and other unexpected difficulties, children develop the ability to solve problems, which not only serves them later in school but throughout their lives.

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Why is Work Time Such an Important Part of the HighScope Daily Routine?

Children engage in active learning, deciding what they will do and

- Who they will play with.
- Where they will play.
- What they will play with.

Children construct knowledge (as described by the KDIs) when they

- Interact, build, pretend, represent, figure out, look at books, write notes, blend colors, use magnets, set the table for a party, mold clay, repair, weigh shells, beat drums, race cars, feed babies . . . (To be continued in Week 2.)

Adults observe, learn from, and support children's play. (To be continued in Week 3.)

Work Time = Active Learning!

Active learning takes place when these five ingredients are present:

- **Materials.** Children need an abundant supply of diverse materials available. Materials appeal to all senses and are open ended, that is, they lend themselves to being used in a variety of ways and help expand children's experiences and stimulate their thought.
- **Manipulation.** Children handle, examine, combine, and transform materials and ideas. They make discoveries through direct hands-on and "minds-on" contact with these resources.
- **Choice.** Children choose materials and play partners, change and build on their play ideas, and plan activities according to their interests and needs.

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Why is Work Time Such an Important Part of the HighScope Daily Routine? (continued)

- **Child language and thought.** Children describe what they are doing and understanding. They communicate verbally and nonverbally as they think about their actions and modify their thinking to take new learning into account.
- **Adult scaffolding.** "Scaffolding" means adults support children's current level of thinking and challenge them to advance to the next stage. In this way, adults help children gain knowledge and develop creative problem-solving skills.

Children are Active Learners

Active learning involves both **physical activity** and **mental processes**.

- **Physical activity is involved in active learning** because children use objects in their environment to test ideas and to answer their questions.
- **Mental processes are involved in active learning** because children start to understand the effects of their actions, thus extending their understanding of the world.

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Active Learning

Look at the following pages and identify the first three ingredients of active learning in each.

- **Materials**
- **Manipulation**
- **Choice**

We will discuss more about child language and thought and adult scaffolding in Weeks 2 and 3 of this course.

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Active Learning (continued)

Putting on a Show

In this series of photos, look at the ways children have creatively used classroom materials to enact their plans — putting on a dance recital!

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Active Learning (continued)

Building with K'nex

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Active Learning (continued)

Refilling the Stapler

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Active Learning (continued)

Building with Legos

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Active Learning (continued)

Mixing Colors and Painting

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Active Learning (continued)

Experimenting and Testing Ideas

After noticing his Styrofoam wouldn't stay still on the table, Caleb tested out using the vice.

Amari experiments with white paint to try and make light blue.

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Active Learning (continued)

Trying Out Ideas

Jordan figures out how to tape the "scope" on his "gun."

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Active Learning (continued)

Active Learning in All Classroom Areas

The new additions to the water table attract a crowd!

Kristin pours "hot tea" for her customer in her tea shop.

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Active Learning (continued)

In the woodworking area, children use real tools, such as protective glasses, hand drills, screwdrivers, hammers, nails, and screws to construct projects and to understand how the tools work.

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Active Learning (continued)

Using Materials in Unique Ways to Carry Out Plans and Ideas

Miracle *uses baby blankets as smocks and a bowl as a sink in her hair salon.*

As her customers wait under the "hairdryers," Miracle *looks up hairstyles on her phone.*

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Active Learning (continued)

Working Together

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Active Learning (continued)

Working Alone

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A Peek Ahead

This week you will

- Discover the true meaning behind "A Day in the Life of an Open-Ended Material."

Next week you will

- Learn more about what children do at work time.

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