

Intentional Lesson Planning for Infants and Toddlers

The Path to Intentional Teaching

Week 1 Learning Unit

The Components of HighScope Planning



Lesson Plans

Many curriculums (and teachers) approach lesson plans in a variety of ways. Do any of these sound familiar?

“I sit down on the weekend and plan for the whole month. That way, I get it over with and don’t have to worry about it again.”

“I like using weekly themes. I get bored doing the same old things in my class week to week. Themes let me switch it up. Plus, the parents think I’m really teaching something.”

“I’ve been teaching FOREVER!!! I keep all my old lesson plans and reuse them from year to year. If you’re in my class, and it’s the third week of March, you’ll be doing the same thing that all my children have done for the past 20 years.”

“You know, I’m not really one for planning ahead, especially for babies. I’d rather just do what feels right in the moment. I guess you’d say I’m more the spontaneous type!”

“I buy lots of books of plans. I’ve got a whole book shelf full of them. I just take down a book and follow the plan exactly as written. It takes all the work out of planning. In fact, you might call it ‘Lesson Planning for Dummies!’”

So... What’s the **problem**?

Who Are the Lesson Plans for?

Each of those methods of planning would make you think that the lesson plans were there for the benefit and/or ease of the teacher.

Is that really why we have lesson plans?

Of course not!

Lesson plans aren't there for the convenience of the teacher.

Nor are they there to add more paperwork to the teacher's job.



What's the Purpose of HighScope Lesson Plans?

In HighScope, we believe that the purpose of lesson plans are to support **children's** learning and development!



HighScope Lesson Plans

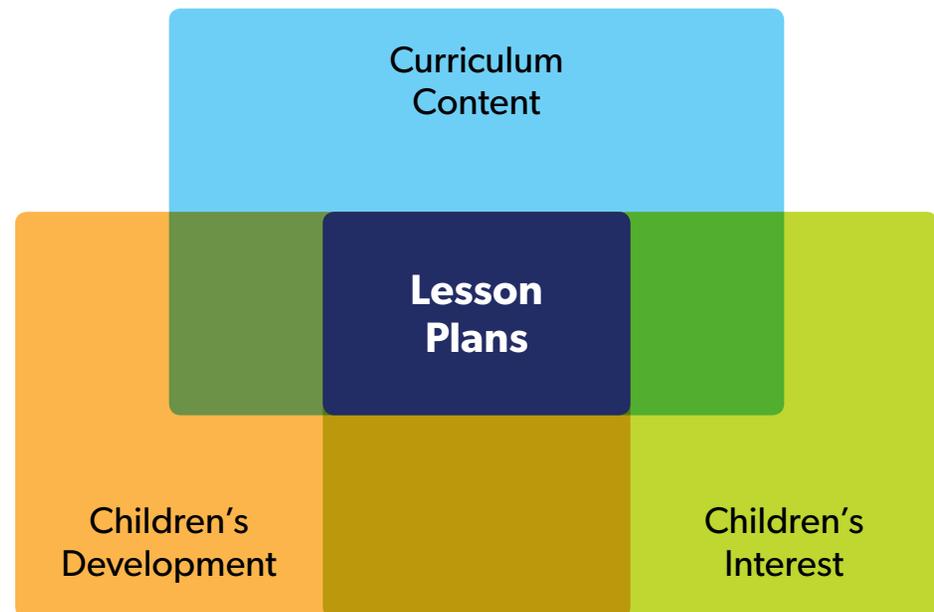
HighScope teachers plan by looking at

- Curriculum content we want to support.
- Children's development.
- Children's interests.

These can be illustrated by the graphic on right.

Let's take a **closer look**.

Components of HighScope Lesson Plans



Curriculum Content

- Think about the curriculum content you want to support.
 - ▢ In the HighScope curriculum, this might come from the key developmental indicators (KDIs) or items from COR Advantage.
- You might want to support content you've seen emerging from your infants and toddlers or you might want to introduce content that you're not seeing.
 - ▢ Either is acceptable!



■ Curriculum Content (continued)

Curriculum Content Examples

Example 1:

Supporting Emerging Content

Yesterday, I saw toddlers bouncing up and down to the music.

I'd like to support more moving to music in the classroom.

Example 2:

Supporting New Content

In looking over my anecdotes and COR Advantage items, I've noticed that I don't have much information about children's movement to music.

I'd like to support more moving to music in the classroom.

Remember, either way is acceptable!

Children's Development

- It's crucial to think about your children's developmental levels.
- Then consider how this information will affect the ideas that you have for the lesson plans.
- You might ask yourself:
 - What can my children do? Not do?
 - How might this child respond to the activity?



Children's Development

Children's Development Examples

Example 1:

Climbing on tables and other furniture

During choice time, I find myself redirecting toddlers from climbing on tables and other furniture. We have climbing structures outside but we don't go outside until the afternoon.

My teaching team and I are going to add things to the classroom that the toddlers can crawl *through* (e.g., tunnels), crawl *in* (e.g., large boxes), and climb *on* (e.g., pillows, large foam blocks).

Example 2:

Reading books

I'd like to make sure my infants and toddlers have a lot of exposure to books and language, but they never want to sit and listen to stories as a whole group. They all want to hold the book and turn the pages.

My coteacher and I are going to offer many one-on-one experiences throughout the day so children can hold the book, turn the pages, and point to pictures that interest them.

Children's Interests

- One of the strengths of HighScope lesson planning is planning based on children's interests.
- Use your observations (anecdotes) to identify
 - Activities and materials children use frequently.
 - How children use the materials.
 - How children interact with each other and with the teachers.
 - Any play themes that emerge from *children's play*.
- If children are interested in the materials, they are more likely to be engaged in the activity.



Children's Interests (continued)

Children's Interests Examples

Example 1: Cars

From my classroom observations, I've noticed that several of my children love cars! They use them during choice time, outside time, and many want to carry one during transitions.

Tomorrow for group time, I think I'll plan to use the small Matchbox cars and planks in the block area. Children can use the blocks and planks to make ramps. They can roll the cars on the floor or down the ramps and observe what happens.

Example 2: Dinosaurs

Dinos, dinos, dinos. My toddlers are dinosaur crazy!

I think I'll add dinosaurs of different sizes to the sand and water table. They will be able to make different prints in the sand and engage in pretend play.

Intentional Lesson Planning

We've just shared the three components of HighScope lesson planning.

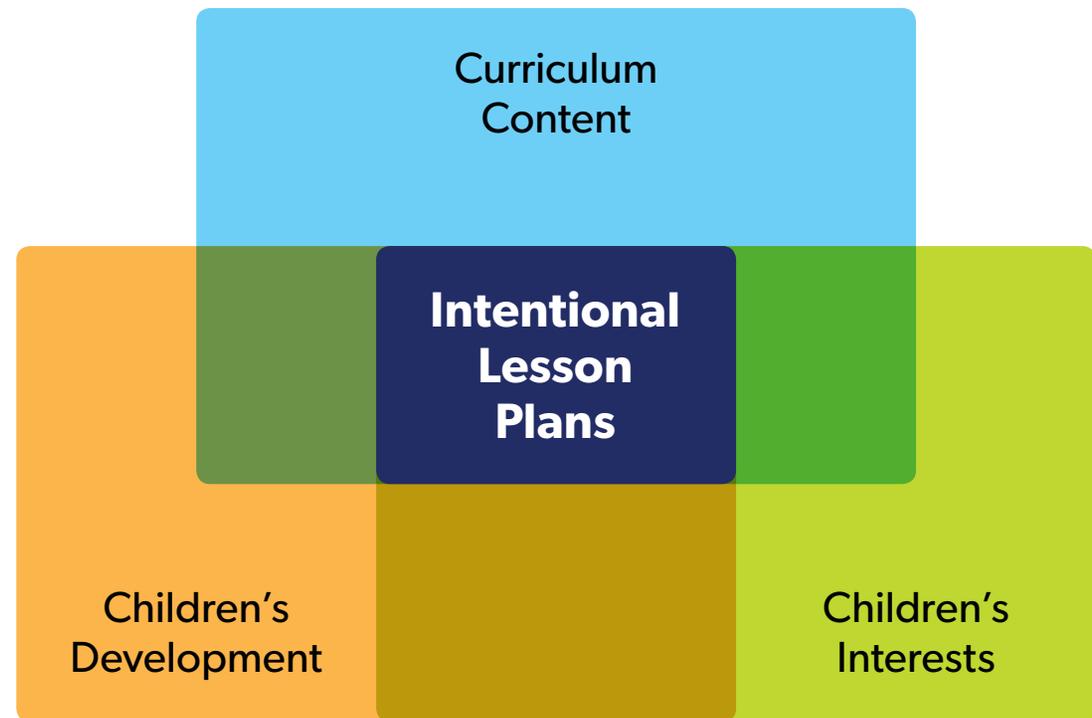
The real trick comes in combining these components, allowing teachers to intentionally scaffold children's learning.

Let's take a **closer look**.



■ Intentional Lesson Planning (continued)

- Intentional lesson planning comes when you overlap, or use several of the components in one planning idea.
- Take a look at the following slides for examples of intentional lesson planning.



■ Intentional Lesson Planning (continued)

Content and Interests

- I don't have any anecdotes for COR Advantage Item **BB. Observing and classifying**.
- Several children in my group love picking up rocks and sticks on the playground.

Lesson Plan Idea: For group time, I'll give each child a basket and we'll go on a walk to collect items. Then we'll explore what each child found, naming the objects as we explore.

Development and Interests

- I've noticed that several of my children enjoy building with blocks. They stack them on top of each other to make towers two-blocks high. They seem to get stuck there and don't know what else they might do.
- Some children love the blocks, others really enjoy the animal figures.

Lesson Plan Idea: I'll add small animal figures to the block area and let children know of this new material on the message board at greeting time. Then some children might make block roads for the animals to walk on. Others might not use the figures at all, and that's fine with me.

■ Intentional Lesson Planning (continued)

Content and Development

- I would like to support COR Advantage Item **X. Art.**
- Some of my children enjoy exploring textures and new materials.

Lesson Plan Idea: For group time, I'll give each child a piece of paper and paint and invite them to explore the texture of the paint. I'll bring brushes as a back up material in case they don't want to put their hands in the paint.

Content Development Interests

- I would like to support COR Advantage Item **Z. Movement.**
- Some of the toddlers move to music in many ways (later development); some infants turn their heads to the music or bounce up and down while sitting (earlier development).
- Children love using the scarves for peek-a-boo and for playing in the house area.

Lesson Plan Idea: For group time with movement and music, I'll play an instrumental music selection and give the children scarves to use as they move to the music. For children at earlier development, I'll encourage moving along to the music. For other children (later development), I'll see if they can name some of their movements.

Remember!

HighScope lesson plans always start with our observations (anecdotes) of what we see children doing and saying.

It is from those observations (anecdotes) that we learn more about

- Curriculum content evident or absent from children's play.
- Children's developmental levels.
- Children's interests.



A Peek Ahead

This week you will

- Watch a HighScope lesson planning session and share your reflections.
- Observe your classroom and share your initial planning ideas.

Next week you will

- Learn more about partnering with parents.
- Explore how to scaffold children's learning at different developmental levels.

