

# Planning and Recall

*Why and How*

# Week 1 Learning Unit

## *Planning Time*



# What is Planning Time?

In their small group with a teacher, each child plans what they will do during work time that day.

Children's plans come from their own interests and ideas. They can choose to work with any of the materials in any of the interest areas in the classroom.



# Benefits of Planning

When encouraged by supportive adults to expand on their ideas and put their plans into action, children will learn to be confident decision makers.

Children will also come to enjoy the opportunity to share their intentions with their friends and with adults who are sincerely interested in their ideas.

Planning time encourages children to think through what they want to accomplish at work time.

It's more than simply making choices — it's **purposeful thinking**.



*A new planner, Amari is anxious to tell his teacher about how he wants to continue painting, something their group did at small-group time.*

# Why Plan With Preschoolers?

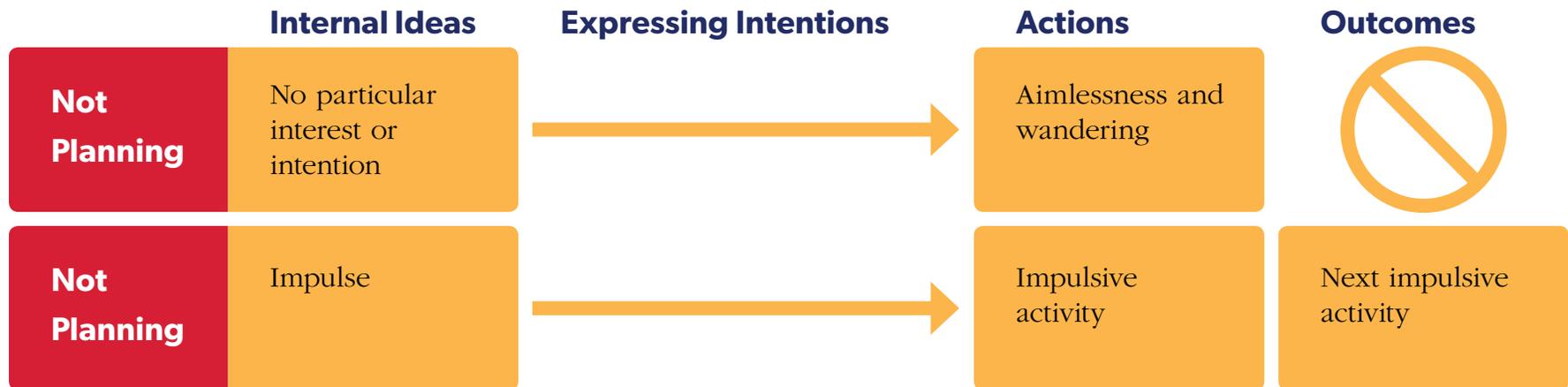
Preschoolers have many ideas they want to try out.

When they are able to follow through on their intentions successfully, they develop a sense of *initiative* and *enterprise*.

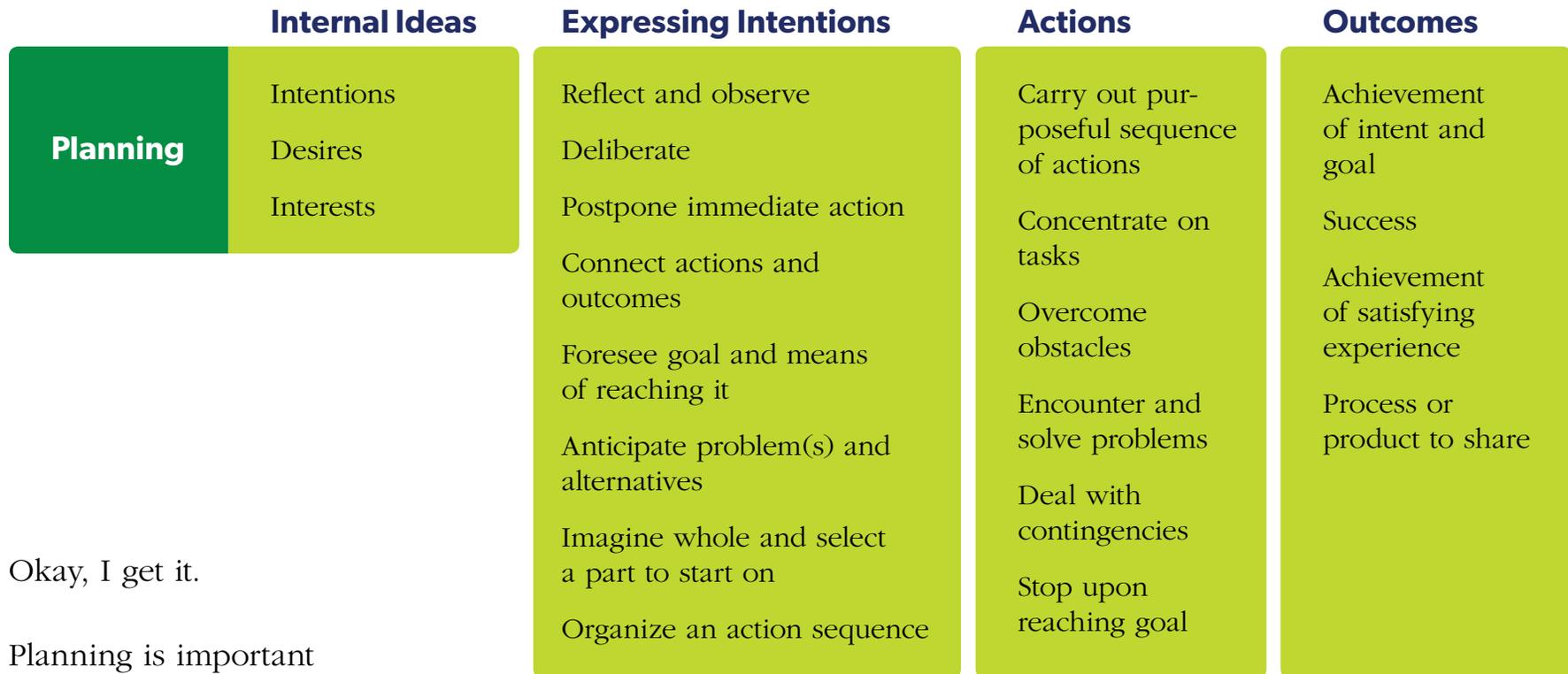
Planning builds on *executive control* functions.



# The Impact of **Not** Planning on Children's Actions



# The Impact of Planning on Children's Actions



Okay, I get it.

Planning is important for children!

But, **HOW** do I do it?

# Planning Time Basics

- Plan with children in consistent small groups.
  - Each classroom adult will work with their smaller group of children.
- Meet where children can see the interest areas and materials.
- Allow enough time for planning.
  - About 10–15 minutes
- Plan individually, with each child in your group.

Planning is an individual process, where each child shares their own thoughts about what they will do at work time.

After sharing his or her plan, the child is free to leave the group and get started.



# How to Plan

## 1. Ask “What” Questions

“**What**” questions engage children’s higher level thinking skills. Children might respond with the big picture of what they want to do, or they might share details, materials, or people included in their plans. “What” questions require children to anticipate their actions or describe their plans.

Many teachers fall into the trap of just asking “where” children will play. “**Where**” questions require just a one or two word answer (e.g., “house area”). These questions don’t challenge children’s higher level thinking skills. “Where” questions just elicit a choice rather than a fuller plan.

## 2. Listen Attentively to the Child’s Plans

- There is no reason to rush through planning!
  - This causes children to feel hurried and anxious, which actually gets in the way of their thinking process.
- Listen for and be aware of both nonverbal and verbal plans.
  - This tells you whether you will be translating the child’s nonverbal communication into words or engaging in a dialogue about the child’s intentions.

## How to Plan (continued)

### 3. Make Follow-Up Comments or Ask Questions to Elicit More Detail

Rather than just taking the child's first response and letting them go play, HighScope teachers encourage children to share more about their plans.

The next section of slides will help you determine how to do this based on a child's developmental level and experience with the planning process.



# Planning With Nonverbal, Young, or New Planners

Nonverbal, young, or new planners may be less able to keep mental images in their mind. It's important to adapt your strategy to their development to help them be successful in the planning process.

You can do this by using the techniques in the following examples.

## Strategies for Nonverbal, Young, or New Planners

**Keep planning props and games simple and concrete.** (You'll learn more about concrete planning props and games later in the learning unit.)

A: Can you bring back something you'd like to play with?

## Interpret the child's gestures and actions.

A: You are pointing to the block area. Show me what you'll do there.

## Planning With Non-Verbal, Young, or New Planners (continued)

**Ask an initial open-ended question**, followed by comments that repeat or restate what the child says.

A: What will you do today, Jenna?

C: Make somethin'.

A: You're going to make something. (Pause.)

C: Like Ryan's.

A: Like Ryan's building.

C: Yeah, with the big blocks.

A: With the big blocks. (Pause.)

C: And then I'm bein' a doggie to live there.

A: You're making a building and then you'll be a doggie who lives in the building.

C: Yep!

A: You'd better get started! Can I come and visit you when you are the dog?

C: (Nods as she gets up to go to the block area.)

# Planning With Older or Experienced Planners

Older planners and experienced planners are better able to keep mental images in mind.

Over time, they are capable of making plans that include several details, sequences, and even multiple plans for one work time.

Children's plans include

- What they will **do**.
- What they will **use**.
- **Who** they will do it with.



*Miracle writes down that she wants to play with Julia in the block area, while the teacher writes out what they decided they will be doing.*

## Planning With Older or Experienced Planners (continued)

### Strategies for Planning With Older or Experienced Planners

#### Encourage them to talk about *space* and *materials*.

This can help children anticipate and solve problems that otherwise might prevent them from carrying out or even getting started on their plans.

A: So you want to make a building. What will you use?

C: The blocks.

A: I see Kaedin and Emma are using the blocks for their boat.

C: Hmmm, I could use the red ones then.

A: So you'll use the red cardboard blocks to make a building.

#### Encourage them to talk about *details*.

Talking about details gives a child the opportunity to put a fairly extensive mental picture into words and to think through and describe some of the steps needed to accomplish the task they have in mind.

A: So you want to make an exercise machine. How will you do that?

C: Well, I'm gonna use the giant Tinkertoys to make those lifter things.

A: A lifter thing like a bar with weights on the ends?

C: Yeah, I'll get a long Tinkertoy for the lifter and then put the round wheels things on for the weights.

## Planning With Older or Experienced Planners (continued)

A: So your exercise machine will have a lifter with weights.

C: I'll make a part for your feet where you put them under and lift them like this. (He lies on the floor and demonstrates.)

A: So your legs will get exercise too.

C: Yep!

### Encourage them to talk about *sequence*.

Sequence conversations allow children to organize multiple intentions. Some children follow these “maps across time” quite rigorously once they have described them in their own words.

A: Myra, what's your plan?

C: Play in all the areas.

A: All the areas. That's a lot of places! What will you do first?

C: Go to the art area. Make a Happy Birthday card for my mom.

A: Ah, a Happy Birthday card.

C: With flowers! And then put it in my cubby and read a book.

A: First, you'll make a Happy Birthday card with flowers, then put it in your cubby and read a book.

C: And then go to the block area. Yeah, I'm gonna make a house in the block area and then go to the house area and get stuff to make soup in my house!

A: I don't know if I can remember all that!

C: Write it!

A: Okay. You tell, I'll write (and writes as Myra repeats her plan, starting with the card).

## Planning With Older or Experienced Planners (continued)

### Remind children about their prior work.

Reminders help children build on their previous plan and begin to see that the plans they make from day to day can be related.

A: Hi Tonio, what do you think you'll be doing today?

C: Be a policeman.

A: You made some police officer things yesterday.

C: Yep. I made me a police badge. I gotta get some tape to hold it on my jacket. An' handcuffs too.

A: I remember you tied two bracelets together with yarn for handcuffs.

C: Now I need a belt 'cause where you're carryin' the handcuffs you put 'em over your belt.

A: So today you need a belt.

C: There's one in the house area I'm gonna get. And I need a map that says where to go. You know, those big folding ones?

A: I have one of those in my car.

C: (Looks around.) I could make it from that big paper. (Points to the art area.) Okay?

A: Okay!

## Planning With Older or Experienced Planners (continued)

### Encourage playmates to plan together.

When children play together, it often makes sense for them to plan together. This gives them a real-life setting for teamwork and cooperative problem solving.

A: What are your ideas for work time, Lilly?

C: Play with Shelby.

A: Play with Shelby.

C: Play with the shoes and clothes like we did the other day.

A: Maybe you and Shelby can make a plan together?

C: We'll tell you!



# For All Planners

For all planners, it's important to **use a variety of planning experiences** over time.

Each day, you will choose a different prop or game to help your children think about and share their intentions and ideas.

- Encouraging children to plan in different ways supports their brain development — different experiences will help them use different thought processes.
  - Talking, drawing, or getting a toy they will use all require children to use different skills as they share their intentions.
- Varying your planning experiences helps to keep children interested and engaged.
  - Remember, if you are bored with planning time, so are the children!

# Our Favorite Ways to Ruin Planning Time

## Every Day, the Teacher...

Says, “If you want to play in the house area, you can go.”  
Repeats for all the areas until all the children are dismissed.

Asks, “What are you going to do today?... Okay, you can go.”

Asks, “Where are you going to play?... Okay, you can go.”

Writes down the child’s plan.

Avoid falling into the “**Rote Planning Trap**” by using a variety of experiences to keep children engaged and challenge their brains!



# Planning Experiences

Planning experiences can be divided into four categories:

- Visibility games and tours
- Props and partnerships
- Group games
- Representations

**Hint:** Use these experiences at the beginning of the year and gradually move to more abstract experiences as children become more experienced with planning!

## Visibility Games and Tours

- Visibility games and tours are concrete ways to show planners the interest areas and materials. They are very useful for younger children or children who are new to the planning process.

## Planning Experiences (continued)

### Examples of Visibility Games and Tours



*Bring back something you'll use in your plan.*



*Drive the truck to the area you'd like to work in.*



*Stop at each area to see who wants to play there.*

## Planning Experiences (continued)

### Props and Partnerships

Using props and encouraging partnerships are simple ways of making planning time interesting and engaging for children.

Props are toys or easily made materials that can be used to help children share their plans. Most classroom materials can be turned into planning props!

Partnerships used with older, experienced planners can be useful, in which one child describes his or her plan to a partner and then the pair switches roles.

### Examples of Props



*Look at something you'll use.  
Tell us what you'll do.*



*Place your clip on the area you'll work in. Tell us what you'll do there.*

## Planning Experiences (continued)

These examples illustrate how teachers can use children's interests to devise planning props.

When thinking about your planning times, consider the following:

- What are your children's interests?
- How would you devise a planning prop using your classroom materials?



*Call a child on an old cell phone.*



*Feed the baby which area you want to work in and tell the baby what you'll be doing!*



*Lego "dog houses" with area signs: Put your dog in the area you want to work in and share you plans.*



*Bean Bag Toss: Place area labels on buckets. Children toss bean bags into the bucket representing the area they want to work in.*

## Planning Experiences (continued)

### Group Games

Group games help to determine whose turn it will be to plan next.

Because group games are fun, they help to keep children's attention while they wait their turn to plan.

### Caution!

The emphasis during planning time should be on encouraging children to share their intentions!

If you find more of your time is spent on managing the game than supporting the children who are planning, your games might be too complex.

## Planning Experiences (continued)

### Examples of Group Games



Play "hot potato" with a small ball.



Create a spinner with letter linked symbols.

## Planning Experiences (continued)



*Place names and letter link symbols under bowls. Choose a bowl and see whose turn it is to plan.*



*Give each child a number. Roll the dice. The child that has that number gets to share their plan.*

## Planning Experiences (continued)

### Representations

Representations involve making or using symbols, photographs, pantomime, drawing, or writing along with talking.

These experiences encourage children to visualize, describe, or represent their intentions more fully.

They are usually used with more experienced planners.

### Examples of Representations



*Children use a coding grid to make a path to the area they want to play in.*

## Planning Experiences (continued)



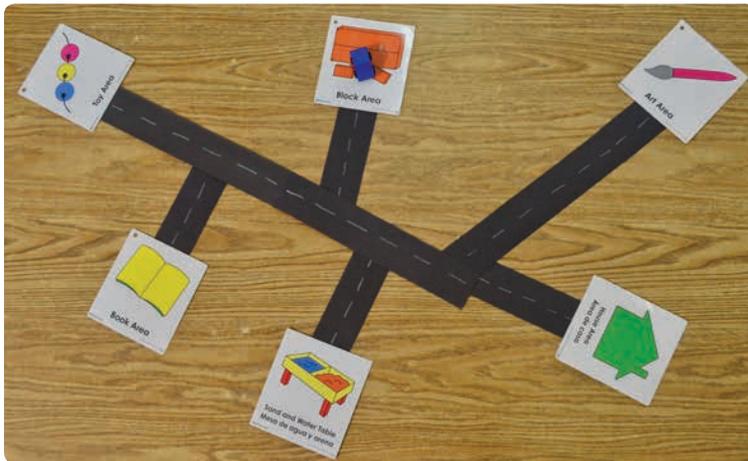
### Planning Maps

Give children a simple map of the classroom. Ask them to initial the area (or place the beginning letter of their name using the magnet letter) where they want to work.



### Planning Roads

Drive your matchbox car down the road that leads to the area that you'd like to work in.



### Planning Boards

Each child has a whiteboard. They can write or draw their plans with the help of word cards. Here, Wilder, an older 4-year-old, copies Rosie's name and draws a picture, saying, "We're gonna play bear hunt!"

# Concrete or Abstract Experiences

No matter what prop or game you choose, it's important to consider whether it is concrete or abstract.

## Concrete Experiences

- Concrete experiences connect children with the actual area they will work in or the materials they will use.
  - Children will actually see the area they will work in, or touch or look at the materials they will use.
- Concrete experiences are the obvious choice for younger children or new planners.

## Abstract Experiences

- Abstract experiences require children to hold mental images of their plans in mind.
  - Children have to remember the areas, the signs that stand for the areas, the materials in the room in order to make their plans.
- Abstract experiences are most effective with experienced planners and older children.

## Concrete or Abstract Experiences (continued)

### Concrete Examples

- Go to the area you will play in.
- Go get a material you will use and show everyone.
- Look through a tube at something you will play with. Tell us about it.
- Get something you will use and trace around it.
- Take the magic wand and tap on something you will use.
- Put the sticky note with your letter link symbol on something you will play with.

### Abstract Examples

- Look at area symbols on cards and place your figure on the area you will work in.
- Draw your plan.
- Talk on a telephone to share your plan.
- Sit in a circle and roll a ball to the next person to plan.
- Pull names out of a hat.

# A Caution About All Planning Props and Games

If your planning experience focuses on choosing the area, always follow up by asking **what** the child will do there!

Remember the purpose of planning time — to help children express their intentions. Don't turn planning time into a test. **Avoid** things like “when you tell me this color (or letter or number), you can make your plan.”

Keep planning experiences **simple**. Remember, they are there to support children making plans. If the game or prop becomes the focus, rather than the plan, it's time to reevaluate what you are doing!

Props and games keep children's interest, but it's your **interaction strategies** that help children better form and express their plans!

# A Peek Ahead

## This week you will

- View video clips of planning time.
- Try out planning strategies in your classroom.

## Next week you will

- Learn the ins and outs of recall time.

