

Group Times With Materials

For Infants and Toddlers

Week 4 Learning Unit

Scaffolding Children's Learning



Week 4 Learning Unit Topics

Scaffolding Children's Learning

- Scaffolding earlier, middle, and later development
- Anecdotes and assessment
- Using children's engagement for future planning
- Follow-up: Sharing ideas with families and adding materials to the classroom



Remember:

Group Times = Planned Teacher-Initiated Experiences

- The caregiver plans activities based on children's interests and the key developmental indicators.
- The caregiver starts the group time and encourages the children to use materials or move their bodies in their own way.
- Group times can occur anywhere, be spontaneous, and occur throughout the day.
- Children's actions determine the length of group times.
- Group times can be spontaneous and occur throughout the day.



What is Scaffolding?

- Scaffolding is a strategy that we can use to make our observations and interactions with children more intentional and to create meaningful experiences for all children, regardless of their developmental level.
- Knowing where children are developmentally allows us to be more purposeful in planning for children's individual development.

Families' cultures influence every aspect of children's development. How are you incorporating what you know about children's family culture and their child-rearing beliefs and practices while observing children and meeting their developmental needs in the classroom?



Scaffolding Means To:

Both

- Support children's individual levels of development (or where they are currently).

And

- Provide gentle extensions as children move to the next developmental stage.



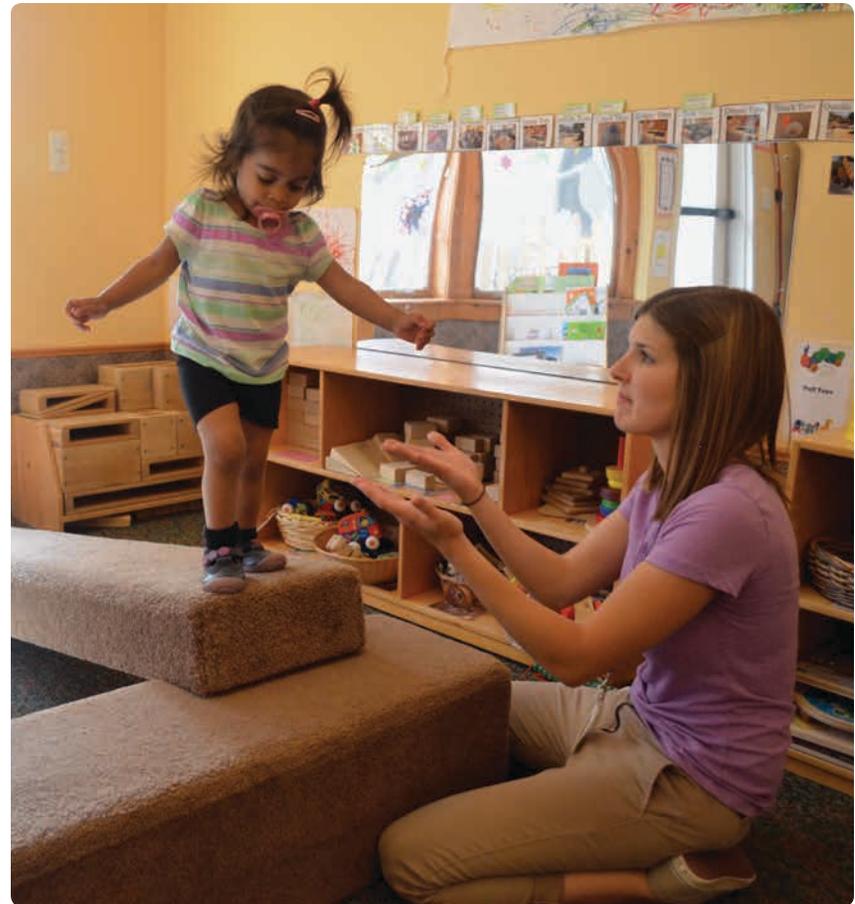
Scaffolding Steps

Step 1 — Identify the content area

Step 2 — Consider children's developmental range

Step 3 — Provide support at their current level

Step 4 — Offer gentle extensions



Step 1: Identify the Content Area

- As you prepare, consider both the interests of your children and the KDI you would like to support for an active learning group time experience.
- Keep your observations of children and what you know about their development in mind.
- Select materials that match children's level of development and present opportunities to extend their thinking and ability.
- Anticipate how they will use the materials and how you will support their ideas and actions.
- Enter these ideas on your planning form.

Step 1 Hint:

These can come in any order:

- Content, then materials
- Materials (interests), then content

Step 1: Identify the Content Area (continued)

Example Completed Toddler Group Times With Materials Planning Form

Originating Idea (KDI; COR)	Introduce paint and various objects to paint with. Creative Arts — Exploring art materials		
Materials <i>Back-up Materials</i>	Orange paint, plastic lids for paint, tape to tape paper to table, paper, large handle paint brushes, cars, sponges, cardboard circles. Backup materials: extra paper, tape, extra objects to paint with		
Beginning <i>Opening statement</i>	“I’ve got some paint for group time today.” “Look at what I have in your tubs.” “What do you think these are and how do you think you can use them with the paint?”		
Middle <i>What children will do according to their development?</i>	Earlier Mouth objects. Put hands in paint and smack the paper. Push car across paper.	Middle Pours paint onto paper. Dabs paint brush in paint and then paper. Tries other materials in the point and puts on Paper.	Later Chooses items to paint with. Dips objects into paint and puts it on the paper. Says what happened if verbal.
<i>How will you scaffold children at different developmental levels?</i>	Imitate what children do. Show the different items to the child. Describe what they do.	Follow children’s lead. Talk with children about what is happening. Describe what they do.	Follow children’s lead. Bring their attention to the affects of the paint with the different objects. Ask verbal children to describe what they are doing.
End (Warning and transition to next part of the routine)	Take cues from children when they are done painting and clean up those children first. Give children a warning. Have children put the paint and objects into the tubs. Walk to the bathroom to wash up. Hang paper to dry.		
Follow-up Ideas	Place objects in art area for toddlers to use at choice time.		

Step 2: Consider Children's Developmental Levels

During Group Time

- Because children develop at varying rates, observe your children's development as *earlier*, *middle*, and *later* development within your group. Some examples of how to think about each of these levels are:
 - Earlier children will mouth, bang, pass from hand to hand, drop, etc.
 - Middle children will explore, investigate, and discover the functions of materials.
 - Later children will make decisions about materials and ideas and may verbalize their thinking.
- Pay attention to what children observe, do, and say.
- Focus on what children *can do* to help you think intentionally about your interactions with each child.
- Know your children's abilities to determine support and extension strategies.

How are you observing each of your children's development and effectively planning for them with an unbiased lens?

Step 2: Consider Children's Developmental Levels (continued)

Example: Painting With Various Objects



Paint and various objects to paint with were chosen as materials for this group time. The teacher observes how each child uses the materials. The younger child pours the paint onto the paper. The teacher can comment on what the child is doing and ask how it rolls smoothly off her plate. The older child is painting with the sponge and watches what she has made. The teacher can ask, "I wonder what happened when you used the sponge?"

Step 2 Hint:

- We expect children to use materials in their own unique ways
- We *anticipate* how children might respond, but we need to support what they *actually* do!

Step 2: Consider Children's Developmental Levels (continued)

Example: Painting With Various Objects (continued)



At the same group time with materials, a young mobile infant chose to mouth the brush and spread the paint out with her hands and a toy car. The teacher supports this child at her current development and expresses her excitement for what she is discovering about paint.

Step 3: Provide Support at Children's Current Level of Development

During Group Time

- Watch what individual children do
- Use materials alongside children and imitate their actions
- Comment on children's actions
- Describe what children are doing
- Respond to verbal and nonverbal communication
- Try out children's suggestions
- Acknowledge children's interactions
- For verbal toddlers, ask them to describe what they are doing



Step 3: Provide Support at Children's Current Level of Development (continued)



This teacher carefully observes her children exploring with the paint on their skin. She talks with them about how the paint feels on their skin and offers her hand for the child to try the paint on.

Step 3 Hint:

- Remember to always pause to see how the child responds to what you are saying or doing with the materials.
- This will give you cues about whether to continue with step three or try step four.

Step 3: Provide Support at Children's Current Level of Development (continued)

Example With Different Sizes of Balls and Tubes

- The following slides are a description of a group time with balls and tubes and an example of how to think through each of the developmental levels.
- Observe the children and what they are doing with the materials.
- How will you support each of them according to their developmental level?



Step 3: Provide Support at Children's Current Level of Development (continued)

Working With Different Sizes of Balls and Tubes Scaffolding Example: Earlier Development

Things children might say or do at this stage:

Mouth, bang, drop, or bat the balls. Children might babble and smile.

To support children's current level of development, you might:

- Use the materials yourself and imitate what the child does (e.g., bang the ball, bat the ball back to the child).
- Repeat the child's cooing and babbling.

Step 3: Provide Support at Children's Current Level of Development (continued)

Working With Different Sizes of Balls and Tubes Scaffolding Example: Middle Development

Things children might say or do at this stage:

Roll, pick up, and drop balls; Look through tubes; Put balls in tubes and watch them roll. Children might use single words.

To support children's current level of development, you might:

- Imitate the child's actions; Roll the ball like the child.
- Put the balls in the tubes with children and tip the tubes to allow the balls to roll.
- Repeat the child's words. Describe what the child is doing and comment what happens with the balls and tubes.
"The ball rolled really fast," "You have a small ball in your hand."
"The big ball rolled slowly."

Step 3: Provide Support at Children's Current Level of Development (continued)

Working With Different Sizes of Balls and Tubes Scaffolding Example: Later Development

Things children might say or do at this stage:

Put the different sized balls in tubes and watch them roll. Child might use two- to three-word phrases.

To support children's current level of development, you might:

- Imitate the child's actions; Roll the balls through the tubes like the child.
- Ask the child to describe what they did; "Jeremy, look how far your ball went. Tell me how that happened?" Talk about how fast/slow the different sized balls roll using words like fast, rapidly, speedy, quick, slower, sluggish, etc. Repeat, restate and extend children's language.

Step 4: Offer Gentle Extensions

During Group Time

- Offer additional materials
- Pose simple questions
- Suggest new ideas to try
- Ask children for additional ideas
- Refer children to one another
- For verbal toddlers:
 - Ask them to explain their thinking
 - Pose a new challenge



Step 4: Offer Gentle Extensions (continued)



This teacher is showing the child a different way to use the materials. The child may try it or go back to using the materials the way she was and that is okay. If the child accepts your extension, then they are ready for more ideas. If they don't then continue to support the child where they are.

Step 4 Hint:

- Carefully observe how children respond to your extension. Pushing them to advance before they are ready can make them lose interest, discourage their initiative, and/or weaken their trust in your dependability to support their effort!

Step 4: Offer Gentle Extensions (continued)

Example With Different Sizes of Balls and Tubes

- The following slides are a description of an example of a group time with balls and tubes and how to think through offering gentle extensions.
- Observe what children are doing with the materials.
- How can you challenge children's thinking by posing a question or demonstrating a different way of using the materials?



Step 4: Offer Gentle Extensions (continued)

Working With Different Sizes of Balls and Tubes Scaffolding Example: Earlier Development

Things children might say or do at this stage:

Mouth, bang, drop, or bat the balls. Children might babble and smile.

To support children's current level of development, you might:

- Use the materials yourself and imitate what the child does (e.g., bang the ball, bat the ball back to the child). Repeat the child's cooing and babbling.

To offer extensions, you might:

- Pose a challenge: Put the ball in the tube. Observe the child to see if they look or move to reach for the tube/ball. If the child does not reach for either, continue to support the child at their current level.

Step 4: Offer Gentle Extensions (continued)

Working With Different Sizes of Balls and Tubes Scaffolding Example: Middle Development

Things children might say or do at this stage:

Roll, pick up & drop balls; Look through tubes; Put balls in tubes and watch them roll. Child might use single words.

To support children's current level, you might:

- Imitate the child's actions; Roll the ball like the child. Put the balls in the tubes with the child and tip the tubes to allow the balls to roll.
- Repeat the child's words. Describe what the child is doing and comment what happens with the balls and tubes.
"The ball rolled really fast," "You have a small ball in your hand."
"The big ball rolled slowly."

To offer extensions, you might:

- Try different sized balls to fit in the tubes and/or different sized tubes (e.g., small balls that easily go through all tubes and large balls that will not go through smaller tubes).
- Pose a question: "Here is a big ball, which tube will you put it in?"

Step 4: Offer Gentle Extensions (continued)

Working With Different Sizes of Balls and Tubes Scaffolding Example: Later Development

Things children might say or do at this stage:

Put the differently sized balls in tubes and watch them roll. Child might use two- to three-word phrases.

To support children's current level of development, you might:

- Imitate the child's actions; Roll your balls through the tubes like the child.
- Ask the child to describe what they did; "Jeremy, look how far your ball went. Tell me how that happened?" Talk about how fast/slow the different sized balls roll using words like fast, rapidly, speedy, quick, slower, sluggish, etc. Repeat, restate and extend children's language.

To offer extensions, you might:

- Pose a new challenge: Say, "I wonder how fast the small ball goes through the long tubes?"
- Gently introduce a new idea: "What do you think would happen if we put some tubes together and rolled the balls through?"

Scaffolding Scenarios

Read the following group time scenarios and then decide how you would scaffold each child's learning. Be specific and use exact language.



Scaffolding Scenarios (continued)

Scaffolding Scenario #1

- While using paints and paper, Henry (a 12-month-old) smacked his hand in the paint on his paper and it splashed a little onto the table and around him. He screamed with excitement and smiled each time he hit the paper. The other three older toddlers used paintbrushes or their fingers to move the paint around their paper.

What ideas do you have to honor Henry's experience and scaffold his learning?

- What content is present in this experience?
- What is his level of development in that content area (earlier, middle, or later)?
- How would you support his current level?
- How would you offer an extension to what he is doing?

Scaffolding Scenarios (continued)

Scaffolding Scenario #2

- While using corks and tennis ball containers, Minnie (two-year-old) grasped a cork in each hand and dropped them into the container. When there were no corks left, she handed the empty cork container to Jenna (caregiver) and said, “Mo.” An older toddler, Micah, who has filled his container up, dumps all the corks on the floor and starts dropping them in the container one at a time while saying various numbers.

What ideas do you have to honor both Minnie’s and Micah’s experiences and scaffold their learning?

- What content is present in each child’s play?
- What is each child’s level of development in that content area (earlier, middle, or later)?
- How would you support each child’s current level?
- How would you offer an extension to what each child is doing?

Scaffolding Scenarios (continued)

Scaffolding Scenario #3

- While using tin cans, big beads, and metal juice lids, Eliza, an older infant (11-month-old) grasped a big bead in her hand and banged it on top of her tin can while Omari, a young toddler (15-month-old) dropped his beads into the tin can and made loud banging noises. They looked at each other and continued making the sounds by repeating their actions. The other two older toddlers, Rhea and Joshua, filled their tin cans with beads and lids and put the lid on top and shook it around while laughing with each other.

What ideas do you have to honor each child's experience and scaffold their learning?

- What content is present in each child's experience?
- What is each child's level of development in that content area (earlier, middle, or later)?
- How would you do to support each child's current level?
- How would you offer an extension to what each child is doing?

Anecdotes and Child Assessment

Group time with materials is an optimal opportunity to engage with children and also to make careful observations and notes about children's development.

- Keep note-taking materials during group times with materials
- Listen carefully for what children say and observe what children do
- Take objective and descriptive notes of children's words and actions
- Later, organize your notes, discuss with your team, and enter the notes into your child assessment tracking tool
- Use your notes for purposeful planning daily



Reflect on how you are including every child in your primary caregiving group in your observations and planning.

Anecdotes and Child Assessment (continued)



At group time while using paint brushes, shaving cream and food coloring, Giselle swirled the food coloring and shaving cream around with her paint brush then made dots on the table.

Anecdotes and Child Assessment (continued)



At group time while sitting on the carpeted blocks, Angela said “this my train, choo choo!”

Using Children's Engagement for Future Planning

- During group times with materials, pay careful attention to the actions children engage in repeatedly. This helps us know their interests and areas of development they are focused on.
- Plan future experiences that are similar, follow children's leads, support their development, and create connections between experiences.
- Repetition of similar experiences secures brain connections and builds mastery of concepts and actions.

Incorporate families' observations and their children's interests that they have shared with you to ensure that you are incorporating children's cultural experiences into your planning.

For example:

During group time with materials, children were exploring balls and tubes. Julia, the caregiver, noticed children trying to fit different sized balls into different sized tubes openings. Through trial and error, they discovered that small balls fit through large tube openings.

During team planning, Julia and her coteachers discussed the observations and decided for the next group time to offer shapes and shape sorting containers for children to further experiment with fitting objects into specific spaces.

Using Children’s Engagement for Future Planning (continued)

Based on the idea you learned from children’s engagement, this is what your next day plan might be and how you will scaffold children’s learning during group time with materials.

<p>Materials <i>Back-up Materials</i></p>	<p>Homemade and/or shape sorters of various kinds. Backup materials: extra shaped objects.</p>		
<p>Beginning <i>Opening statement</i></p>	<p>“Yesterday I noticed that you were fitting the small balls into the large tubes so today I thought we could use these sorters and fit different shapes and objects into them?”</p>		
<p>Middle <i>What children will do according to their development?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Earlier</p> <p>Watch others. Bang objects together. Explore and mouth objects.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Middle</p> <p>Try to fit objects into the shape sorter. Drops and chooses another shape if it does not fit. Accidentally fit shapes into the right place.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Later</p> <p>Chooses a shape and looks for the same shape on the sorter. Fits in the shape. If the shape does not fit, continues to find the right hole to fit the shape.</p>
<p><i>How will you scaffold children at different developmental levels?</i></p>	<p>Imitate what the child does. Describe what the child is doing. <i>Gentle Extension:</i> Turn sorter to help child find the right hole.</p>	<p>Follow the child’s lead. Describe what the child is doing. Take turns dropping in the shape the child puts in. <i>Gentle Extension:</i> Bring child’s attention to the attributes of the shapes and the shape sorter.</p>	<p>Ask the child to describe what they are doing and how they are finding the holes. Talk with them about the attributes of the shapes. <i>Gentle Extension:</i> Ask the child to describe the attributes of the shape and what to look for in the shape sorter (e.g., “looks like your shape has three sides and three points. Look for three sides and three points on the sorter”).</p>

Follow-up

In addition to completing child assessment and planning future experiences, these follow-up steps support and extend children's learning:

- Discuss as a team which materials from the group time can be added to the classroom space for further engagement.
- Print photos of children engaged in learning experiences and post them in the classroom or create a book to remind children of their experiences.
- Share observations with families so they can provide similar experiences at home.
- Ask families what they observe their child doing at home so you can provide similar experiences in the classroom.

