



The Work Sampling System®

The Work Sampling System is an instructional assessment that is used in preschool through third grade. Its purpose is to document and assess children's skills, knowledge, behavior, and accomplishments across a wide variety of curriculum areas on multiple occasions in order to enhance teaching and learning.

The Work Sampling System consists of three complementary elements:

- 1) Developmental Guidelines
- 2) Developmental Checklists
- 3) Summary Reports

The Work Sampling System calls for ongoing assessment that is summarized three times per year. By reflecting classroom goals and objectives, it helps teachers monitor children's continuous progress and places children's work within a broad developmental perspective. Through documenting and evaluating individual performance of classroom-based tasks, Work Sampling strengthens student motivation, assists teachers in instructional decision making, and serves as an effective means for reporting children's progress to families, educators, and the community.

Preschool-3 Developmental Guidelines

5th Edition

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The Work Sampling System®



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Introduction

This volume presents the Work Sampling System Developmental Guidelines for Preschool-3 (age 3) in an edition designed for classroom use. For general reference use, the complete text of this edition, along with the Guidelines for five other grade levels, is included in the *Work Sampling System Omnibus Guidelines* (Preschool through Third Grade).

The Work Sampling System's Developmental Guidelines are designed to enhance the process of observation and to ensure the reliability and consistency of teachers' observations. The Guidelines incorporate research, expert advice, and state and national standards, including Common Core. All resources used in the formulation of the Guidelines are listed in the *Teacher's Manual*.

How to Read the Guidelines

The Guidelines present each specific skill, behavior, or academic accomplishment in the form of a one-sentence *performance indicator*. Each indicator is followed by a *rationale* and several specific *examples*. The rationale provides a context that explains the meaning and importance of the indicator and briefly outlines reasonable, end-of-the-year expectations for children of different ages. The examples show several ways children might demonstrate the skill, knowledge, or accomplishment represented by the indicator. These are intended to give teachers a concrete picture of the many different ways children might show their skill or ability in relation to the indicator. Examples are *not* attributes or behaviors that need to be checked off as necessary in order to demonstrate proficiency. Since different teachers may interpret the same indicator in different ways, the Guidelines promote consistency of interpretation and evaluation across children, teachers, and schools.

Although the examples provided for each indicator suggest a variety of ways that children show their skills and knowledge, they do not exhaust all the ways children demonstrate what they know and can do. The students in any particular classroom may show their knowledge in other ways, reflecting their unique backgrounds, interests, and classroom opportunities. We expect that our examples will serve as a catalyst to help teachers think of the range of situations in which children demonstrate specific skills and knowledge, and to understand and evaluate their students' performance within the context of their classrooms. Other examples that are more consistent with an individual teacher's curriculum approach can be added.

In the Guidelines, we have attempted to provide illustrations that are relevant to teachers who work with diverse groups of children. Examples that relate specifically to the development of children with special needs are included to suggest how teachers might assess children with disabilities who are included in regular classrooms. Rather than providing examples related to specific cultural or linguistic groups, we have tried to use inclusive or general language to accommodate children from various cultural, linguistic, economic, and social backgrounds. However, we have included performance indicators for English Language Learners to help measure an ELL's level of English language acquisition. These indicators are located within the Language and Literacy domain.

Developmental Checklist

To facilitate use of these Guidelines in classroom assessment, the Work Sampling System includes a companion Developmental Checklist, which lists the performance indicators and provides space to rate each child's performance three times during the school year. (A sample copy of the Checklist is bound in the center pages of this volume.)

I Personal and Social Development

Emotional and social competence are central to this domain. Teachers learn about children's sense of responsibility to themselves and others, and how they feel about themselves and view themselves as learners—their emotional development—through ongoing observation, conversations with children, and information from family members. Teachers acquire information about children's social competence and approaches to learning by interacting with them, observing their interactions with other adults and peers, and reflecting on how they make decisions and solve academic and social problems.

A Self-Concept

1 Demonstrates self-confidence.

Self-awareness and positive self-image emerge through interactions with others and through affirmative experiences. Three-year-olds usually come to school feeling competent, ready to take pride in their ability to do familiar things. However, when the school experience is unfamiliar, young children can be very tentative. After invitations to participate in activities, they usually begin to play with materials and interact with other children and teachers. Three-year-olds show a positive sense of self by:

- joining other children playing in the house corner, often in parallel play;
- responding to the teacher's greeting and exchanging a few words;
- coming to the snack table and participating in conversations;
- choosing individual activities, such as doing puzzles, painting, or helping to feed the class pet;

- gradually increasing the range and diversity of activities in which they choose to participate;
- greeting classmates when prompted by the teacher.

2 Shows some independence and self-direction.

Helping children make choices and perform tasks they are able to do fosters their independence. Some 3-year-olds appear more independent than they really are because they frequently refuse to do things when they are asked. At this age, children can only make very simple choices (e.g., between sand play and playing in the housekeeping area). They show their independence by:

- engaging eagerly in solitary or parallel play;
- playing with fail-safe apps and/or e-books where any touch will make something happen;
- choosing specific materials for pasting from the collage collection;
- selecting one book from among several choices;

- hanging up their sweaters or coats after seeing others do it;
- observing and experimenting at the sand or water table.

B Self-Control

1 Follows simple classroom rules and routines with guidance.

Three-year-olds are only beginning to respond to simple rules and routines. They need many reminders and support in learning the expectations and appropriate behavior to use in their preschool or child care setting. They show their emerging ability to follow rules and routines by:

- following simple classroom rules, such as "Keep our hands to ourselves," or telling the teacher when they have to use the bathroom;
- standing in line at the slide while waiting for a turn to go up the steps;
- picking up their cups and napkins and putting them in the wastebasket after snack;
- sharing a tablet with other children;

- showing a friend where to put blocks on the shelf during cleanup;
- treating classroom pets gently and with care, especially after being reminded.

2 Manages transitions.

Children this age are beginning to learn how to accept change without undue distress when supported by an adult. Although they may be uncomfortable with the major transition from home to school, they can learn simple classroom transition routines and begin to show comfort with small changes. They show the ability to manage transitions by:

- separating from a parent (or caregiver) at the door with growing ease;
- moving from one classroom activity to the next with a few reminders;
- cleaning up and coming to the snack table after only a few reminders;
- after initially protesting, giving a truck or other toy to another child who has been waiting for a turn;
- responding positively to the signal for a change in activity;
- hanging up their sweaters or jackets upon arrival and joining the classroom activity.

C Approaches to Learning

1 Shows eagerness and curiosity as a learner.

Three-year-olds are naturally curious about everything in their world and are beginning to respond to what they observe. They often ask, “Why?” as well as other simple questions. Examples of this curiosity include:

- checking the gerbil cage daily to see where the gerbil is hiding;
- trying different art experiences and puzzles, or listening to new books;
- indicating awareness of other children by watching or interacting with them;
- showing interest in many different classroom activities;
- showing excitement about a connection between school and home activities (“We peel apples at our house, too!”);
- engaging in an activity by touching and moving manipulatives into new arrangements.

2 Attends briefly and seeks help when encountering a problem.

At age 3, children can attend to activities or stories for brief periods of time (5 to 10 minutes). They will stay involved longer if the activity is a favorite one. However, if they encounter a problem, they usually wander away from the activity rather than continuing to try to solve the problem. They require very specific help in problem solving

and explicit guidance when following suggestions. They show increasing ability to attend and persist by:

- listening to a story with a small group of children;
- seeking assistance after trying for a minute or two to put together a difficult puzzle;
- taking part in app browsing (e.g., jumping from app to app by pressing the “home” button, without settling on any specific activity);
- trying several times to get their boots on before giving up and asking for help;
- looking for help when trying to hang up a painting that is still wet;
- following the teacher’s suggestion when unable to choose an activity or when too many children select the same activity area.

3 Approaches tasks with flexibility and inventiveness.

Three-year-olds enjoy discovering how some materials are meant to be used while exploring alternative uses for other materials. Play is mainly exploratory, helping children learn about the properties and characteristics of materials and equipment. Three-year-olds show emerging flexibility and inventiveness by:

- taking Play-Doh® to the house-keeping area to fill the muffin tins before putting them in the play oven;

- getting the snap-it beads from the manipulative shelf to make a necklace for dress-up;
- mixing other colors to see what the result will be;
- suggesting that they feed the leftover carrot scrapings from a cooking project to the rabbit;
- trying a different way to accomplish a task or use an object.

D Interaction With Others

1 Interacts with one or more children.

Knowing how to relate positively to peers and how to make friends is essential to children's sense of competence. At age 3, children are just beginning to learn social skills and how to interact with peers. They still need considerable support and practice. Their play is usually associative (side-by-side), with only brief interactions with other children. Examples of these emerging social skills include:

- participating in classroom routines, such as helping classmates sweep up sand around the sand table, or joining other children feeding the fish;
- playing side-by-side with other children in the dramatic play area, occasionally making comments to a nearby child;
- helping another child set the table for snack;
- participating with other children at the Play-Doh table;
- talking with others during snack or lunch;

- interacting regularly with one or two preferred classmates.

2 Interacts with familiar adults.

When teachers build strong relationships with children, they set the stage for children's openness to learning and academic success. Three-year-olds vary greatly in how they relate to adults. Some are comfortable and interact spontaneously, while other children need time to warm up, become comfortable, or feel safe with adults. Children show increasing comfort by:

- entering the classroom in the morning with a greeting for the teacher;
- responding to questions the teacher asks;
- tapping the teacher's hand in order to request information or attention;
- running over to the adult who is bringing in lunch and asking if they can help;
- communicating with the teacher or other adult about the new dress or shirt they are wearing;
- telling an adult about an event happening at home, such as, "Today is my brother's birthday."

3 Participates in the group life of the class.

Functioning as a group member and accommodating group expectations are difficult for many 3-year-olds; they need guidance from the teacher to learn these things and adjust

to being in school. At this age, children enjoy participating in simple action games that involve minimal time spent waiting for a turn. They show this growing awareness of the group life of the class by:

- participating in small group projects for 5 to 10 minutes, such as helping to fill the water table;
- paying attention to the class signals for cleanup or for listening to the teacher;
- bringing a favorite item from home to share with the class;
- playing group games, such as "Duck Duck Goose" or "Follow the Leader," with adult guidance;
- participating in snack time with peers, learning how to pour juice, how many crackers to take, and how to clean up when finished;
- joining a small group for a walk around the block.

4 Begins to identify feelings and responds to those of others.

Learning to recognize your own feelings and those of others is an important life skill. At age 3, children begin to name their own feelings and recognize the feelings of others. Empathy is elicited by concrete experiences that are similar to those of the child. For example, 3-year-olds can sympathize with a child who has fallen down or who can't get his or her coat on. Children show their caring by:

I Personal and Social Development

- reading books or playing with apps that deal with being left out or fitting in;
 - identifying the feelings of characters in picture books;
 - pretending to soothe a crying baby in the house area;
 - seeking help from the teacher when feeling sad or angry;
 - watching curiously when another child is reluctant to enter the classroom;
 - joining in the laughter when others are laughing.
- asking for help to get a ride on the tricycle or a turn on the slide.

5 Begins to use simple strategies to resolve conflict.

Three-year-olds do not have the skills to settle conflicts on their own. They learn to solve conflicts gradually by watching a teacher model effective conflict resolution strategies and by experiencing compromises facilitated by teachers or other adults. At this age, the expectation is that children will begin to recognize when they need some help to solve a problem. Examples include:

- seeking assistance when disturbed by a child who paints on their pictures or knocks down a block structure;
- asking for help when a child grabs a truck or other plaything;
- seeking help when another child is hitting or pushing;
- yelling at another child, “You can’t come in the house area—it’s full,” and then calling the teacher for help;

II Language and Literacy

The language and literacy skills needed to understand and convey meaning are presented in four components: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Students acquire proficiency in this domain through experience with language, print, and informational text and literature in a variety of contexts. Over time, students learn to construct meaning, make connections to their own lives, and gradually begin to analyze and interpret what they hear, observe, and read. They begin to communicate effectively orally and in writing for different audiences and varying purposes.

Language and Literacy for English Language Learners (ELLs) consists of three functional areas: Listening, Phonological Awareness, and Speaking. Depending on the grade level, these areas contain performance indicators such as Gains Meaning by Listening, Follows Directions, Develops Awareness of the Sounds of English, Speaks in Social Situations, and Communicates for a Variety of Purposes, Using Expanded Vocabulary. As with all other performance indicators, there are three ratings, although grade-level expectations of mastery for ELLs are not given since children can come to school at different ages with varying levels of English language acquisition.

A Listening

1 Gains meaning by listening.

Three-year-olds learn about their world through watching and listening. They gain understanding of stories by listening to them and watching DVDs repeatedly. With familiar stories, they can listen for relatively longer periods of time and gain a deeper understanding of the content each time. Content related to their lives or content about the present are easiest to comprehend. Three-year-olds listen best in small groups and one-on-one situations where they can ask for a story to be read again, ask and answer concrete questions about the story (e.g., who, what, where), or connect an event with something in their own life. Examples include:

- listening and participating in conversations and responding verbally or nonverbally to the content;
- listening to short, familiar CDs and DVDs, and showing understanding through body language (e.g., clapping or nodding) or facial expressions (e.g., smiling or laughing);
- using the “read to me” mode on an e-book to hear a story repeatedly and then running up to the teacher to tell her about the story;
- asking and answering concrete questions (e.g., who, what, where) about a story or event, conversing with a teacher, and responding appropriately;
- listening to a story about lions and later using this information to pretend to be a lion in dramatic play.

2 Follows two-step directions.

Three-year-olds require substantial individual support, instruction, and physical guidance to follow directions. They can follow two-step directions best if they are part of the classroom’s routine modeled by the teacher or other children and when instructions are accompanied by nonverbal gestures. Examples include:

- using the main menu of an app to jump between activities and the home screen;
- following directions given to them specifically (e.g., “Please pick up that toy and put it on the shelf.”);
- matching movements and actions to the music and directions in a song;

- following the teacher's simple direction (e.g., "Find a book and take it to your table,") without needing individual clarification;
- putting on their coats when reminded it is time to go home and remembering to take their backpacks.

B Speaking

1 Speaks clearly enough to be understood by most listeners.

Three-year-olds are learning about the power of words and the excitement of communicating. They can speak in short sentences to convey their needs, wants, and ideas. Articulation errors may be present, but speech is usually clear enough to be understood with little difficulty. They are beginning to use some simple grammatical rules such as how to form regular plural nouns (e.g., saying "one pig, two pigs"). Correcting articulation and grammar often leads to less talk by children. When 3-year-olds are given many opportunities to talk, the length and complexity of their sentences increase. Examples include:

- telling a story or describing a familiar event (e.g., birthday party) using words, props, and gestures to convey meaning;
- signing or using a communication board to indicate food choices at snack;
- initiating a conversation with an adult or child and asking and answering questions;

- forming plural nouns correctly saying, "There is one block here and two blocks there;"
- expressing feelings, likes, or dislikes in conversations;
- asking and answering simple questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood (e.g., "What's for lunch?" or "Can we play outside today?").

2 Follows rules for conversation.

Three-year-olds understand that they are expected to respond when someone speaks to them. They are able to take turns when talking with support, although they may interrupt a teacher or other child if they are excited about a topic. However, they are only beginning to acquire other rules of social language (e.g., staying on topic). Examples include:

- making up dialogue for a role-play in the dramatic play corner;
- acknowledging another's verbal message by saying, "Uh-huh," "Yeah," or "OK;"
- providing descriptive details to clarify meaning (e.g., "the red one");
- changing the current topic and telling someone about a recent trip to the park;
- using a quiet voice and simple words when talking to a baby;

- responding to the teacher's nonverbal signal such as a finger to her lips to indicate, "Wait until Susie is finished talking before you have a turn."

3 Uses expanded vocabulary and language for a variety of purposes.

Three-year-olds are fascinated with language and enjoy experimenting with new words. Their vocabulary is expanding rapidly as they begin to use contrasting words like "big," "small," "high," and "low," and descriptive words that give greater clarity and complexity to their language. When an adult expands on their spoken words or models complex language appropriate for the child's language level, 3-year-olds begin to use increasingly complex vocabulary. Examples include:

- using the word "tremendous" learned from a Dr. Seuss book when telling a classmate about the amount of sand piled up in the sand table;
- telling long stories to the "baby" in dramatic play;
- making up "silly" words (e.g., doggie, froggy, soggy, toggy, loggy);
- generating words that are similar in meaning (e.g., happy/glad, angry/mad) with guidance and support;
- describing what they did over the weekend by saying, "I saw a gigantic, orange pumpkin."

C Reading

1 Begins to develop knowledge of letters.

Three-year-olds may show interest in letters, especially the letters in their names, and notice labels and signs in their environment. They are beginning to understand that combinations of letters make up the words the teacher reads in books. Examples include:

- pointing to classroom labels and “reading” the word printed there (e.g., “fish,” “clock,” “puzzles”), although not recognizing the same words if they appear elsewhere;
- “scribbling” with a QWERTY keyboard and “reading” back what they have written;
- asking, “What does that say?” when they see a sign, label, or other print;
- recognizing letters in a specific context only (e.g., labeling the “K” in Kmart, but not the “K” in “Kathy”);
- correctly identifying a few letters by their shapes;
- seeing a “T” and saying, “That’s my name.”

2 Demonstrates beginning phonological awareness.

Phonological awareness is the ability to hear and discriminate the sounds of language. Three-year-olds spontaneously play with the sounds of words and show some awareness of rhyming sounds. Examples include:

- repeating familiar rhyming verses or songs;
- joining in with other children to recite rhymes and poems at circle time;
- repeating sequences of nonsense sounds (e.g., bo-be-bah);
- using rhythm sticks to tap out the syllables in their names;
- experimenting with sounds to make nonsense words (e.g., spaghetti, baghetti, laghetti);
- clapping to represent the syllables of short phrases (e.g., “We like pizza!”).

3 Shows appreciation and some understanding of books.

Three-year-olds become very excited about books and learn that books are handled in particular ways. Children’s interest in a specific story or topic, the appropriateness of the text and illustrations, and the size of the group are key factors in their ability to sit still and stay focused during story reading. Examples include:

- holding a book right side up and turning pages one at a time starting at the front of the book;
- recognizing a favorite book by its cover and asking that it be read to them;
- bringing a book with a ripped page to the teacher for mending;
- recognizing that the title of a book is on the front cover;

- playing with app versions of a familiar story, using the “let me read” mode to provide the narration, and highlighting favorite animations.

4 Begins to recount key ideas and details from text.

Three-year-olds are actively engaged in understanding stories. They begin to follow what characters say and do in a story. Frequently, children memorize some of the words of the story or can finish sentences in books that have repetitive patterns of phrases, especially when the story has been read repeatedly. Children can use digital versions of a story to extend and supplement (but not replace) traditional printed picture books. Examples include:

- asking relevant concrete questions (e.g., who, what, where) as a story is read;
- labeling pictures in familiar books;
- pointing to pictures of characters in a story and recalling what the characters did or said;
- recalling, with some prompting and support, important facts from informational text read aloud;
- retelling a story using flannel board cutouts or hand puppets;
- telling portions of a familiar story from memory.

D Writing**1 Represents stories through pictures, dictation, and play.**

One of the first tasks in writing is to understand that letters are symbols that can represent words, thoughts, and ideas. Three-year-olds are actively engaged in discovering that symbols and pictures represent real things. For example, many know that the golden arches are a symbol for McDonald's®. They understand that dolls can represent real people (e.g., "This is the mommy doll and this is the baby doll.") or that a play phone represents a real phone. Examples include:

- describing their drawings when the teacher says, "Tell me about your picture;"
- listening on a toy phone and telling the teacher, "I'm talking with Mommy at work;"

- covering a paper with large swirls of paint, telling the teacher, "This is my house," and asking the teacher to write "My House" on the painting;
- asking the teacher to write a note for their family telling about the visitor who brought a snake to class;
- dictating words to express preferences (e.g., "I would like to go to the fire station to see the truck.");
- using puppets, costumes, props, or movement/dance to dramatize stories.

2 Uses scribbles and unconventional shapes to write.

Three-year-olds are beginning to understand that print can tell stories and express ideas. Although their initial attempts at writing are not conventional, they often make scribbles that begin at the

top of the paper and move from left to right, showing their beginning understanding of writing. Examples include:

- scribbling on paper and describing the thoughts they have "written" down;
- drawing a round form and after putting some red in the circle, announcing, "Here's an apple;"
- making a sign consisting of several scribbles and putting it in the block area to warn others to "Keep Out;"
- scribbling letter-like marks on their pictures and reporting that they wrote their name;
- making shopping lists consisting of pictures, scribbles, and shapes in the dramatic play area before going to the "grocery store;"
- making several short wavy lines on the notepad in the dramatic play area to serve as a shopping list.

Language and Literacy for English Language Learners**A Listening for English Language Learners****1 Follows directions.*****Not Yet***

As young children begin to learn English, they show no understanding of entirely verbal teacher directions. They will complete tasks only if a teacher intervenes, models, and encourages them.

They remain quiet and make no attempt to respond orally or through actions. They sometimes model the behavior of other children after observing them.

In Process

With more experience in school, English language learners begin to follow directions under certain circumstances. At times, they show a desire to participate by

responding immediately to directions; other times they watch others for clarification about what to do. As their confidence increases, they may ask for repetition of directions (e.g., "Teacher, please say again.") or complete one or two steps of a multistep direction. Taking additional time to understand directions before being expected to respond, hearing a story again, and listening to

a description for the second time all help English language learners follow directions successfully.

Proficient

English language learners proficient at following directions can understand, respond, and restate directions. After being given a set of directions, children can explain the directions to a classmate, although sometimes they use their native language to do so. They can listen to instructions for making a product and then restate the directions for themselves and others (e.g., “First, we collect the pieces. Then we put them in order. Then we glue them together.”). At this point, they can easily complete classroom tasks given only verbal directions.

B Phonological Awareness for English Language Learners

1 Develops awareness of the sounds of English.

Not Yet

Initially, children learning English may have difficulty distinguishing the sounds of English. They may confuse sounds in English and may substitute one sound for another, frequently one from their native language. For example, they may substitute /b/ for /p/ and say ‘ben’ instead of ‘pen.’ When repeating words that they hear, they commonly omit the final sounds. If children are given a word and asked to choose the

picture that matches the word, they may select an incorrect picture or seem confused (e.g., when asked to point to the cat, they may choose ‘cap’). When given choices of words that rhyme, children may guess, or select words that do not rhyme or not respond at all.

In Process

As English language learners begin to hear and recognize the sounds of English, they make progress in many areas. They may enjoy songs and try to sing along, but substitute incorrect words or sounds for unknown lyrics (e.g., may sing “Ole Macdona had a farm. . .”). Most of the time, they can identify rhyming words. They begin to distinguish some sounds such as /t/ and /d/, but others such as /l/ or /r/ may be more challenging. When given a task involving sounds, they often respond with a nonsense word (e.g., when asked for a word beginning with the /p/ sound, they might respond with ‘pob’). When given a word and asked to select the corresponding picture, they may select the picture without regard to sound carrying meaning (e.g., given the word ‘giraffes,’ they may choose a picture of one giraffe, ignoring the final ‘s’ sound).

Proficient

At this level, English language learners can recognize and manipulate sounds in a variety of different situations. They can

identify the number of syllables in words by clapping them out and select rhyming words from an oral list. They can create new words from a given word by replacing the first sound with a different one (e.g., replace the /b/ in ball with a /t/ to make tall). They can identify the sound three words have in common (e.g., sun, salt, seen), and find things in the environment that begin with the same sound (e.g., cup, coat, cubby).

C Speaking for English Language Learners

1 Speaks in social situations.

Not Yet

Children new to English initially speak in their native language as well as when conversing with others of the same language background. They can be quiet and unresponsive when the teacher asks them to repeat a new word or inconsistently attempt to say new words.

In Process

As children spend more time in English language environments, their first sentences are often formulaic speech, words used frequently in the classroom and in social situations such as, “Good morning,” “Hi,” or “How are you?” With more experience, they use known phrases in appropriate situations (e.g., saying “thank you” when given something or “goodbye” when leaving). Children sometimes use

a variety of language “chunks,” unanalyzed phrases or sentences (e.g., “Gimme that,” “I go,” or “What’s that?”).

At this stage, children may speak to their peers in comprehensible language but not respond to the teacher. When they do respond to questions, they usually use one or two words. They may combine languages, often in one sentence when they substitute a word from their native language into an English phrase or sentence (e.g., “I live in una casa.”).

Proficient

Children are considered proficient when they greet others, ask for help, respond voluntarily to questions, willingly participate in whole- and small-group discussions, and understand and participate in conversations with classmates. At this level, they can use language to demonstrate comprehension (e.g., they can retell stories in short sentences that may not be grammatically correct, but that demonstrate an accurate understanding of the main events and key details of the story).

III Mathematical Thinking

This domain's focus is on children's approaches to mathematical thinking and problem solving. Emphasis is on how students acquire and use strategies to perceive, understand, and solve mathematical problems. Mathematics is about patterns and relationships and about seeking multiple solutions to problems. The content of mathematics (concepts and procedures) is stressed in this domain, but the larger context of understanding and appreciating (knowing and doing) how mathematical processes can be used is also of great importance.

A Processes and Practices

1 Shows interest in solving problems.

Three-year-olds are drawn into the world of mathematics in many ways. They observe people counting money, measuring things, and talking about two shoes and two eyes. Examples include:

- completing simple puzzles;
- building a tall block tower and changing or rearranging blocks after some blocks fall;
- using number words in play (e.g., "I'm adding 10 hundred scoops to my pile");
- deciding that cubes belong in the empty space on the block shelf by looking at the picture of a square;
- talking about "lots and lots—million-killion—of people at the store today;"
- responding to questions about the number of eyes, ears, or fingers on one hand.

2 Begins to reason quantitatively.

With experience and support, 3-year-olds can reason about small numbers with some accuracy. Their reasoning may often be inaccurate from an adult's viewpoint because their thinking is based on prior experiences and understanding of language. Examples include:

- responding to the question, "How many are there?" by holding up three fingers (correctly);
- answering, "all gone" when asked "How many cookies did you eat;"
- saying, "I want more!" and when asked, "How many more?," shrugging and saying, "Lots;"
- putting three counters in a diagonal row (e.g., a die) and saying, "Three;"
- playing with apps that present sets from 1 to 10, illustrated by interesting sets of items such as schools of colorful fish.

3 Uses words and representations to describe mathematical ideas.

Three-year-olds express their mathematical ideas by using materials, making simple drawings, and through gestures and words. Examples include:

- saying, "I lost my bear. Now I have one;"
- building a tower with blocks and showing a friend how it was built;
- answering a "How many?" question by showing the correct number of fingers;
- correcting Silly Sam, a puppet who can't count to five correctly;
- drawing a picture of a plastic insect and attempting to represent the number of legs.

B Number

1 Shows interest in counting.

Three-year-olds can count small sets of one, two, or three objects with one-to-one correspondence. Most 3-year-olds can verbally recite the counting sequence with some correspondence and some errors. Examples include:

- counting out loud to themselves while occupied with an activity;
- singing counting songs and participating in finger plays about counting;
- commenting that everyone at snack has two crackers and one cup of juice;
- pointing to each object they count and assigning the appropriate number to it;
- being actively involved in reading a counting book;
- dragging and dropping blocks to make number sets that match a target numeral.

2 Shows interest in quantity.

Most 3-year-olds can identify a group of one, two, or three objects without counting. This is called *subitizing*. They can compare collections of one to four items verbally or nonverbally when the items in both sets are the same. Examples include:

- following directions for getting “just two jars of paint” for the easel;
- recognizing that they have the same number of cars as a friend does;
- commenting that there are two cookies left on the plate without counting;
- making a collection of three white buttons to match another collection of three buttons;
- using the sign for the word “more” to mean a larger quantity.

C Operations and Algebraic Thinking

1 Begins to understand addition and subtraction.

Three-year-olds can add and subtract very small quantities (no more than two) by manipulating objects. They can respond to direct action terms like “take away,” “give,” or “one more.” Examples include:

- exclaiming when one toy is missing, “My toy is hiding;”
- responding when someone gives them a toy car and asks, “Now, how many cars do you have?” by showing two fingers;
- showing four fingers when asked, “How old are you going to be next year;”
- responding to the question, “How many crackers do you have left now that you’ve eaten one?” by smiling and holding up one finger;
- using apps to mix, match, and combine numerals and sets by sliding objects on a screen.

D Measurement

1 Shows understanding of some comparative words.

Three-year-olds are beginning to experiment with measurement concepts when they describe people and objects. They hear and understand words describing size that are used frequently in everyday conversation (e.g., big, little, tall, short, long). Examples include:

- showing how big the shell on the science table is by holding up their hands to indicate its size;
- standing next to a classmate and observing that he is “taller than me;”
- making a line of blocks and commenting that this road is “the longest one in the world;”
- using measurement words when describing things to peers or the teacher (e.g., talking about how long the bead necklace is or announcing, “My block building is the biggest.”);
- selecting all the big buttons and putting them in one box, then picking out all the small buttons and putting them in another box.

2 Participates in measuring activities.

Three-year-olds play with measuring as they use materials in different areas of the classroom (e.g., measuring cups and spoons in the dramatic play corner, measuring cups at the water table). They are just beginning to understand the teacher’s use of measuring tools for a cooking project. Children this age show beginning awareness of measuring by:

- making sure that only one pinch of food goes into the fish tank;
- filling the big bottle in the water table with many small cups of water;

- pretending to measure the length of a road of blocks with a tape measure;
- finding the cup, and with the teacher's help, measuring one cup of flour for a recipe;
- playing with a balance scale, pretending to weigh their dolls on a human scale;
- using measuring cups and spoons at the sand table.

F Geometry

1 Shows understanding of several positional words.

Three-year-olds often describe things in relation to their own position in space. However, they understand common positional words when asked to place objects on top of or below something, when asked to point to the bottom, or to indicate up and down. They can understand such positional words as “over,” “under,” “above,” “on,” and “next to.” Examples include:

- putting their hands over their heads in response to a recorded movement song;
- finding the Scotch® tape when told it is on the art shelf next to the paper;
- noticing that they are standing in front of a classmate in a line or beside a classmate in the circle;
- correctly using positional words as they work, play, and perform routine tasks;

- placing their leg braces next to their mats at rest time when the teacher asks them to do so;
- recording stories using spatial language (e.g., over, under, above, etc.).

2 Identifies several shapes.

Three-year-olds become aware of shapes in their world when they are taught to identify geometric shapes that have been labeled by the teacher. Although they focus initially on circles, they can be expected to match and identify squares and triangles as well. They begin to look at common objects with a new focus and gain mastery when encouraged to observe, explore, and name various shapes. Examples:

- matching paper circles and triangles on the collage table with other circles and triangles;
- cleaning up the wooden blocks and placing them on the correct shelf by matching the shape of the block to the paper shape on the shelf;
- pointing to all the objects in the room that look like circles;
- beginning to identify and label shapes in their environment;
- noticing a common attribute and commenting on it (e.g., “These are all round!”);
- experimenting with 2-D and 3-D shapes.

3 Begins to explore composing and decomposing shapes.

Three-year-olds can compose (put together) 3-D shapes as they make arches, enclosures, corners, and crosses. Their efforts are likely to be unsystematic, involving trial and error, and simply adding pieces. Three-year-olds can only manipulate individual 2-D shapes and are unable to compose or decompose them with intention. Examples include:

- building in the block center and combining blocks in a seemingly random manner;
- showing a pattern block shape that fell off the design table and saying, “Look, I found a square;”
- trying to build a tall tower using triangular prisms or spheres and experiencing many collapses;
- making a long string of individual pattern blocks;
- solving simple jigsaw puzzles on touch screens that use drag and drop parts that combine to make a whole.

The Work Sampling System

IV Scientific Thinking

The central areas of scientific investigation—*inquiry skills and practices; physical, life, and earth sciences*—are addressed in this domain. Also emphasized are the processes of scientific investigation because process skills are embedded in and fundamental to all scientific inquiry, instruction, and content. The focus in this domain is on how children actively investigate through observing, recording, describing, questioning, forming explanations, and ultimately drawing conclusions.

A Inquiry Skills and Practices

1 Asks questions that arise during explorations.

Three-year-olds already have some well-developed ideas about how the world works, and they are curious and inquisitive about everything. Their questions and ideas are often implicit, meaning they have not expressed them verbally. As 3-year-olds play and explore, they express their questions, ideas, and interests through body language, facial expressions, and actions, as well as make comments about what they observe. Teachers can encourage children to further articulate their observations and questions (e.g., “I notice you poured the water really fast in the cups. Are you thinking that you can get the water to squirt higher that way?”). Examples include:

- studying an ant crawling on the sidewalk and asking where it is going;
- picking up a twig they find lying on the ground;

- looking at several pinecones and pointing out every detail they see or feel (e.g., the points and the sticky stuff);
- observing a gerbil and commenting about how funny his mouth looks when he eats;
- listening to an audio recording of sounds and guessing what the sounds are (e.g., running water, an airplane);
- using a tablet to take photos or videos of an interesting flower, leaf, or insect.

2 Uses senses and simple tools to explore.

Three-year-olds seek to explore the world using all their senses along with tools to aid in their explorations. They excitedly act on objects and materials indoors and out to observe the results of their actions, and they love to take things apart. Three-year-olds enjoy using simple tools for specific purposes. Examples include:

- looking at a variety of objects through a large magnifying glass;
- describing and identifying natural items by touch;

- comparing and matching scents;
- guessing the source of familiar sounds;
- investigating objects and materials they can act on like balls, goop, sand, and water over time and in different settings;
- taking still digital photos with the tablet camera, and then commenting on them during a review session the next day.

3 Makes meaning from explorations, and generates ideas and solutions based on their own observations of the natural and human-made worlds.

Three-year-olds enjoy pointing out things that are the same and different. They seek to identify relationships and look for patterns, sometimes making associations between objects and events that are close in time or space or important to them (e.g., my pink ball will be the fastest). They soak up information through all their senses, interpret it in relation to their previous experiences, and generate ideas about the world and how it works. At times, their

ideas may be based on limited evidence (e.g., the green marble sank so all green things must sink), and their ideas may be strongly held. Examples include:

- looking at pictures of bugs in a book and observing that some of them have wings and some of them do not;
- expressing their emerging ideas by saying, “Look! That round apple didn’t sink,” after noticing evidence that supports or conflicts with their idea;
- noticing that the wind is blowing leaves around, and saying, “It can’t blow me away;”
- pointing out that, “The worm and ant must be friends because they are next to each other;”
- noticing and describing similar attributes of one item, such as butterflies or moths, when shown the results of an image search.

4 Communicates experiences, observations, and ideas with others through conversations, representations, and/or behavior.

Three-year-olds easily engage in symbolic play (e.g., using blocks to represent roads, buildings, and even telephones). They are beginning to think representationally, and are able to use pictures and symbols to stand for familiar objects, events, and even people. Because of these developing skills, 3-year-olds can participate in science discussions and observational drawing as ways

of communicating their observations and ideas. They can participate in short (5-minute) small-group science conversations with peers to share observations and ideas. Nonverbal communication continues to be important and can be used in combination with language. Examples include:

- talking as they experiment with magnets in a small group activity, noting which things the magnet could pick up;
- using scientific vocabulary like “observe” and “explore,” and math words like “big,” “short,” “tall” and “round” or “square” to describe and compare observations;
- acting out how they tiptoed outside to observe birds, and then showing how the birds flew away;
- describing events they have observed and saying, “That ball bounced high” or “Oh, the goop melted;”
- experimenting with crayons, pencils, markers, paints, and 3-D materials to represent their observations and ideas about objects, materials, organisms, and events.

B Physical Science

1 Explores the properties of objects and materials, and how they change.

Three-year-olds’ play and daily activities bring them into contact with many natural and human-made objects and materials that can be explored and described in

terms of their physical properties. They especially enjoy exploring materials (e.g., sand and water) that move and flow in response to their actions. Examples include:

- describing objects using vocabulary like “small,” “big,” “round,” “long,” “soft,” and “hard” (e.g., “This cotton feels really soft!”);
- touching, jabbing, and swiping a touch screen to see what happens;
- sorting objects based on one property such as size, color, or shape when the task is demonstrated;
- trying to add water to only one side of the sand table so they have sand and mud in the table;
- exploring how materials can change when they are mixed, melted, or frozen (e.g., making Play-Doh, painting with colored ice cubes);
- identifying certain attributes as good for particular uses (e.g., choosing soft material for a baby blanket, using a hard surface for building).

2 Explores how objects and materials move.

Three-year-olds are nonstop movers and shakers, and they explore stability, balance, and motion using their own bodies as they run, roll, tumble, squat, jump, hop, and bend. They are also enthusiastic helpers, and their balance explorations are extended when they have oppor-

tunities to carry things (e.g., jugs or bags of different sizes, shapes, and weights) and/or experiment with pouring from different positions (e.g., sitting and standing). Examples include:

- exploring stability and balance as they pile, stack, build with, and knock down different types of blocks and building materials;
- observing how water moves and flows as they pour it back and forth between different containers, move it with their hands, or drop objects into it;
- exploring and comparing how different balls and other objects slide, spin, and roll on different surfaces and inclines, and in response to their own pushing and pulling;
- using different cars and trucks, watching how fast/slow each goes down the slide;
- describing (e.g., “fast,” “slow”) and/or demonstrating the movement of balls and other objects using their bodies.

3 Explores and describes light and sound.

Three-year-olds have been exploring light and sound almost from the time they were born. Most young children (unless they have sensory impairments) are adept at visually recognizing the people, places, pets, and particulars of their lit up world, and easily identify familiar sounds, including the voices of friends and family members, whether or

not they can see them. Examples include:

- exploring the different sounds they can make with their bodies and mouths (e.g., tapping, stomping, clapping, clicking, or humming);
- observing sounds indoors and out, and identifying the sources of familiar sounds (e.g., a bird, a lawnmower, or water running);
- observing their own shadow, and how it changes, as they play outdoors on a sunny day (e.g., noticing that it moves when they move);
- using tools and materials that appear to change the colors of familiar things and settings (e.g., colored paddles or cellophane);
- collecting colors using tablet-based cameras (e.g., using an app like Color Collector by Zinc Roe).

C Life Science

1 Explores the characteristics of living things.

Three-year-olds, when provided with encouragement and opportunities, notice the animals in their immediate environments, even the smallest insects. They also notice, and are very sensitive to, the ways in which the important adults in their lives react to, approach, and talk about living things. Examples include:

- participating in nature walks and using their senses to look at, listen to, smell, and touch the animals and plants they find (as safe to do so);
- observing an ant or other insect outdoors, noticing that it has a body and legs, and following it to see where it goes and what it does;
- participating in bringing small visitors to the classroom (e.g., worms, snails, or insects) and observing them by using hand lenses;
- collecting leaves, twigs, seeds, and other plant parts and observing, comparing, and describing them and talking about where they were found and where they came from;
- using simple apps on tablets to explore curated collections of clear, still images of insects.

2 Explores the needs of living things.

Three-year-olds begin to gain an understanding of needs by thinking and talking about their own needs and how they get those needs met in their homes. Examples include:

- participating in an investigation of a living and an artificial plant to figure out what the living plant needs that the non-living plant doesn't;
- talking about what they need when it's cold out, or when they are upset;

- participating in a bird-feeding activity and describing and/or demonstrating what and how birds eat based on observation;
- observing small creatures outdoors and generating age-appropriate ideas about what they need to live and where they find it (e.g., a caterpillar needs a leaf to eat and finds it in a tree);
- discussing how and where they get their needs for food met.

D Earth Science

1 Observes the sky and the natural and human-made objects in it.

Three-year-old children are very interested in the sky and the living and nonliving things they observe, including the sun, stars, clouds, birds, and human-made objects like airplanes, helicopters, and kites. They benefit from many facilitated opportunities to observe the sky during the day (and at night, if possible). Examples include:

- noticing the night sky is different from the day sky;
- noticing the difference between the skies on different days and/or nights, or when the weather changes;
- saying, “There were millions of stars out last night;”
- describing what objects the clouds in the sky look like;
- spotting or pointing to a rainbow;

2 Explores rocks, water, soil, and sand.

Three-year-olds are consummate collectors and enjoy going on nature walks to look for and collect objects they find outside, including rocks of all sizes and shapes. They benefit from encouragement to collect a smaller number of objects and observe them closely. Examples include:

- using hand lenses to observe and describe the physical characteristics of natural objects found in the local environment;
- integrating natural objects and materials into their play (e.g., building houses for small creatures outdoors from rocks, dirt, and mud);
- examining a rock collection and responding to requests such as, “Find some more brown ones,” or “Show me a rock that isn’t smooth;”
- observing differences between dirt when it is dry and when it is wet;
- taking close-up photos of rocks found on the playground, using a tablet camera.

3 Observes weather and seasonal changes.

Three-year-olds enjoy being outdoors in all types of weather and experience wind, rain, snow, and

sun as they do everything else: joyfully, and with all their senses. Outdoor experiences help keep them connected to living things and to the natural rhythms and patterns of the earth. They benefit from daily opportunities to be outside, as long as it is safe. Examples include:

- exploring the elements of weather directly in the course of their play and making regular observations of the weather;
- choosing appropriate dress for different kinds of weather as they engage in pretend play;
- asking for an umbrella when it’s raining or mittens when it’s cold;
- observing that they go swimming outside in the summer when it’s warmer, but not in the winter when it’s colder;
- giving a “weather report” in class by choosing the sun if it’s sunny or the raindrops if it’s raining;
- telling the class how they play outside when it snows.

V Social Studies

This domain includes a broad array of theoretical ideas from anthropology, sociology, history, political science, geography, economics, and psychology. In early childhood, these themes are explored through play, personal interactions, literacy activities, projects, data collection and analysis, and report presentation beginning with the study of self, family, and community. In the primary grades, content areas are broadened to include local and state history, economics, political science, and geography. The exploration of social issues and their underlying theoretical constructs permit young children an opportunity to use meaningful content that helps prepare them as life-long learners.

A People, Past and Present

1 Begins to recognize their physical characteristics and those of others.

For 3-year-olds, understanding culture begins with understanding themselves and their families. They combine their developing expertise in language with observations of themselves and those around them. They can identify their own physical attributes and point out the attributes of others. Examples include:

- talking about details of similarity and difference, such as hair color and style;
- imitating a deaf child's sign language and learning some signs;
- discussing food preferences with other children;
- asking about the different words Chinese- or Spanish-speaking classmates use when describing stories or events;
- noticing common physical attributes, such as two eyes, one nose, and two ears;

- announcing that they are girls, "and Kevin and Isaiah are boys."

B Human Interdependence

1 Begins to understand different kinds of families.

As 3-year-olds engage in role-playing, they come to understand their own life experiences and learn about the roles of their family members. This understanding develops through concrete exploration during dramatic play, informal conversations, and "trying things out." Examples include:

- pretending to nurture a doll by feeding and talking to it;
- adopting the roles of different family members when playing with other children in the dramatic play area;
- telling someone about a family routine by saying, "My uncle takes me for walks after supper;"

- telling a classmate, "My big sister reads to me," and being amazed to find out that the classmate does not have an older sister;

- bringing in a family photo and introducing "my two daddies" to the class.

2 Recognizes that people do different kinds of jobs.

Three-year-olds may be able to name a parent's job (e.g., nurse, plumber, farmer), but may not know what parents actually do at their jobs. Visiting a grocery store, going to the library, or watching a bridge repair crew at work help 3-year-olds learn about different jobs. Examples include:

- pretending to be a grocery store clerk in dramatic play;
- requesting a hard hat so that they can "fix" the road made of blocks;
- looking at an app, online video, or picture book about a pet store and pointing to the pictures of the workers;

- describing a visit to a parent's workplace;
- grabbing a briefcase in dramatic play and saying, "Goodbye. I'm going to work," then simply wandering around the classroom;
- using pretend smart phones, keyboards, and laptops for role play.

3 Explores technology in their environment.

Three-year-olds explore technology that they discover in their everyday environment. This might be electronic toys, TV, DVDs, smart phones, tablets, and video game consoles. Children this age can recall particular things they like to do with specific types of technology (e.g., 3-year-olds may request to use a tablet to see family pictures, watch a movie, or play a game). Examples include:

- listening to a story on a tablet;
- browsing apps (trying out an app, but then pressing the "home" button to try another);
- taking a picture;
- playing early math, logic, and/or language activities on tablets;
- using a digital timer, flashlight, or music player in dramatic play;
- turning the light table on and off in the science area, and commenting on the changes.

C Citizenship and Government

1 Shows beginning awareness of rules.

At age 3, children are beginning to learn about how to behave in groups. They often repeat rules but cannot follow them consistently without adult help. They do not yet understand the reasons for rules. Examples include:

- chanting that it's time to clean up while continuing to play;
- riding a tricycle only in the specified area of the playground;
- waiting with coat and hat on because the rule is that everyone needs to be ready before anyone goes outside;
- repeating the rule that there is no hitting in this classroom because hitting hurts;
- participating actively in class clean-up time.

D People and Where They Live

1 Shows beginning awareness of their environment.

Three-year-olds show awareness of their environment by first noticing features of their homes and other familiar places. Over time, their curiosity about place extends to their neighborhoods. They comment on changes and inquire about unfamiliar items. With guided observations from adults, 3-year-olds can become aware that sometimes people do things that affect the environ-

ment in a negative way. Leaving too many toys on the rug, for example, makes it difficult to have circle time. Examples include:

- saying, "Now that it's cold outside, we have to wear mittens and hats;"
- helping to bring in playground toys so they will not get wet if it rains;
- telling the teacher about the water flowing over the road on the way to school;
- helping to wipe off the table after a painting project "to make it all clean;"
- discussing ways their families help keep their neighborhood clean or safe;
- helping to take cans, bottles, and paper to the recycling center.

VI The Arts

This domain focuses on children's engagement with the arts (dance, dramatics, music, and visual arts), both actively and receptively. Two ideas are emphasized: how children use the arts to express, represent, and integrate their experiences; and how children develop an understanding and appreciation for the arts. Opportunities to use a variety of materials, guidance in the use of those materials, and communication with adults and peers about process and product enable children to demonstrate what they know, expand their thinking, and make connections among the arts, culture, history, and other domains.

A Expression and Representation

1 Participates in group music experiences.

Most 3-year-olds eagerly participate in large- and small-group music activities; children who choose not to participate often repeat the activity's songs and movement later or at home. Children can carry a simple tune and remember some words to songs and finger plays. They can participate in rhythm bands, but have trouble integrating several activities at once, such as singing and playing a rhythm instrument simultaneously. Their participation includes:

- joining in songs during circle time, engaging in a song's hand motions, and remembering the words to an oft-repeated song;
- suggesting words for open-ended songs, such as "Aiken Drum," or suggesting animals for "Old MacDonald Had a Farm;"

- galloping, marching, or jumping to the beat of a favorite song, slowing down or speeding up when the rhythm changes;
- asking to sing a particular song at circle time;
- trying different ways to make sounds with triangles or cymbals;
- using a tablet to listen to music at the listening center.

2 Participates in creative movement, dance, and drama.

Three-year-olds enjoy moving, playing, and creating with their bodies. They are ready to use dance and other movement to express feelings that would be difficult for them to express verbally. They experiment with creative ways to move and take on roles that enable them to act out very simple stories. Examples include:

- crawling, "flying," walking on tiptoe, or performing almost any other imaginative movement in response to music;
- using scarves in free movement, floating them overhead or twirling them around;

- imitating animals (e.g., butterflies, elephants);
- responding with bodily, facial, and arm movements to the moods and rhythms of different types of music;
- participating in "self dancing" by watching real-time video reflecting gross motor movements on a screen, with or without addition of digital effects;
- using technology props for representational play (e.g., unused computer keyboards or non-functional PDAs with mechanical keyboards).

3 Uses a variety of art materials for tactile experience and exploration.

Three-year-olds enjoy the flexibility and control that comes with using the wide range of art materials available in the classroom. Many children like being "messy" in a controlled situation, while others work hard to keep clean. At this age, their motivations are exploration, pleasure, and discovery, not the end products that might result from their

efforts. Examples of their efforts include:

- trying one medium many times in order to experience its properties in depth (e.g., painting at the easel several days in a row, using several colors, or covering the whole paper with paint);
 - constructing a flat structure with blocks, randomly exchanging pieces until they feel satisfied;
 - punching, patting, rolling, squishing, and flattening Play-Doh;
 - using a variety of drawing materials (e.g., markers, pencils, chalk, crayons);
 - playing with finger paint or colored shaving cream, making many different swirls and dabs;
 - scribbling, painting, and mixing colors using a digital palette that includes simulations of charcoal, watercolor, and chalk.
- copying the dance steps of a classmate during creative movement;
 - humming or moving to the rhythm of music played during a quiet time;
 - listening attentively at a concert;
 - watching as classmates enact a short story or poem;
 - showing sustained interest in a presentation by a puppeteer or actor;
 - watching or listening to a recording of a performance, play or dramatic event on a mobile device and then sharing discoveries (e.g., “My favorite part was when she pretended to be on a ship.”).

B Understanding and Appreciation

1 Responds to artistic creations or events.

Three-year-olds begin to appreciate the artistic expressions of other people, although this often requires modeling and encouragement from adults. They may watch other children creating or may attend a short children’s theater or musical presentation. They show their emerging appreciation by:

VII Physical Development, Health, and Safety

The emphasis in this domain is on physical development, health, and safety as integral parts of a child's well being and educational growth. The functional components address gross motor skills, fine motor skills, and personal health, nutrition, and safety. In gross motor, the focus is on a child's ability to move in ways that demonstrate control, balance, and coordination. Fine motor skills include strength, coordination, and eye–hand skills. These skills are important in building the foundation upon which self-care skills, handwriting, and artistic expression mature. The third component addresses a child's growing ability to understand his/her personal health, including self-care, nutrition, and physical safety.

A Gross Motor Development

1 Moves with some balance and control.

Three-year-olds are very focused on practicing their newly acquired physical skills. They can jump with two feet, hop a few times on each foot, and climb stairs. Running is a joy, as is galloping, dancing, and jumping. However, for some, their actions may still appear a bit awkward. Examples of increasing body control include:

- moving around the classroom without bumping into furniture;
- starting, turning, and stopping when running without crashing into things;
- jumping like a frog or kangaroo with both feet together several times in a row;
- using alternating feet when going up stairs (coming down stairs may still be one step at a time without alternating feet);
- walking on a line on the floor;

- jumping from a large block and landing securely.

2 Coordinates basic movement patterns to perform simple tasks.

As 3-year-olds learn to control their bodies, they can combine several separate actions to perform more advanced movements. For example, throwing a ball requires not only a thrusting motion, but also the ability to release the ball at the proper moment to send it in the right direction. Their movement patterns may appear awkward. Three-year-olds show this growing coordination by:

- catching a large ball with two hands;
- kicking a large stationary ball in a forward direction;
- pedaling and steering a tricycle around the playground or gym without crashing;
- climbing onto the swing seat unassisted;
- scrambling up the side of a low jungle gym;
- throwing a bean bag to another person so that it can be caught.

B Fine Motor Development

1 Begins to use strength and control to perform simple tasks.

Three-year-olds are just beginning to develop enough fine motor ability to perform many simple tasks. They are very interested in trying to use new materials and tools that are available in the classroom. They will engage in the same task over and over again, gaining mastery and strength as they work. They show persistence in gaining fine motor control by:

- removing and replacing marker caps;
- pushing Pop-It Beads together and then pulling them apart;
- tearing a piece of tape off the tape dispenser (but often getting the tape stuck together in the process);
- swiping and tracing on a touch screen;
- putting Duplo® blocks, LEGO® blocks, or Bristle Blocks® together and taking them apart;

- experimenting with the use of scissors.

2 Uses eye–hand coordination to perform simple tasks.

Developing eye–hand coordination is challenging for 3-year-olds. They are beginning to learn how to manipulate scissors, and they can build with blocks, complete simple puzzles, and string beads. They learn to combine their fine motor and perceptual abilities when they play and work with manipulatives in the classroom. Examples include:

- turning a puzzle piece several different ways to find the right fit;
- building a tall tower, eight to ten blocks high;
- making patterns in the sand with their fingers and tracks with toy cars;
- experimenting with making “bridges” and “houses,” and other real-life structures out of one-inch cubes;
- putting pegs in a peg board following a specific design or picture using one hand.

3 Explores the use of various drawing and art tools.

Three-year-olds experiment with drawing implements and other art tools. Through exploration, they develop the control from which writing skills emerge. They use many different grasps, both hands, and sometimes their arm as they practice. Examples of experimentation include:

- using different drawing tools (e.g., crayons, markers, and chalk);
- experimenting with sponges, brushes, cotton swabs, and other tools for painting lines and shapes;
- painting at the easel, trying big and small brushes and different strokes, all the while watching the effect of their hand and arm movements;
- sprinkling glitter on lines of glue or pasting many felt shapes on top of each other;
- swirling finger paint around and noticing the way patterns appear and disappear.

C Self-Care, Health, and Safety

1 Begins to perform self-care tasks.

Three-year-olds are just beginning to manage their personal care as they learn dressing, eating, and grooming skills. They are eager to try to do things for themselves but still need adult support and guidance. Self-care skills include:

- putting on some of their own outside clothes;
- brushing their teeth when assisted and prompted by an adult;
- buttoning and unbuttoning large buttons;
- going to the bathroom when needed, with reminders;

- washing their hands and drying them, with verbal prompts and support;
- wiping nose with a tissue, with a reminder.

2 Follows basic safety rules with reminders.

Three-year-olds are beginning to learn rules for safety. Staying with the class when walking around the block, staying inside the playground, and not touching outlets are safety rules that 3-year-olds can remember. They may not fully understand the reasons for these rules. Children this age show they are learning basic rules by:

- repeating a common safety rule that has been discussed (e.g., waiting on the sidewalk until the bus aide comes to take them to the bus);
- leaving the room only when given permission to do so;
- walking and standing far away from the swings so they don't get hurt, with reminders from the teacher;
- holding someone's hand whenever walking outside the school grounds;
- following the teacher's directions during an emergency event or practice drill.