



Early years curriculum materials

Happy Valley

A day at Wyreema State School: Prep to Year 2

Used with kind permission of the teacher Ann Barnes and
the children of "Happy Valley" at Wyreema State School.



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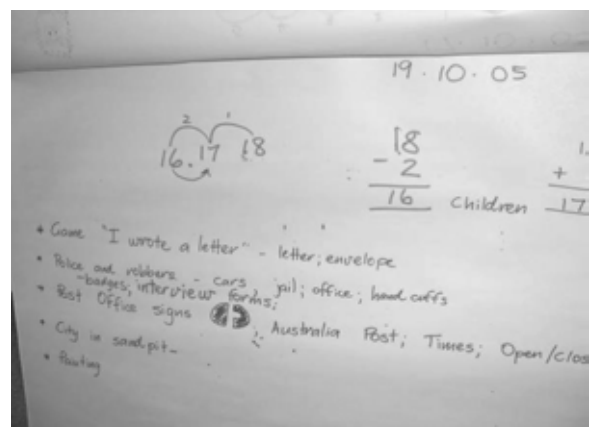
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In this example of a day's routine and activities, the headings indicate the timetable followed.

Calendar and roll — literacy and numeracy

The day begins with a routine of looking at the calendar and weather. Literacy and numeracy skills are used to work out what day it is and how many days until the next month. Concepts of before, after, tomorrow and yesterday are explored. Once the person of the day has filled in the spaces, the whole group reads the sentences.

The teacher takes the roll, and notes the number of children present compared with the number of children on the roll. This problem is represented with children, followed by a number representation on the easel.



Planning the day — oral language

The children review their plans from the previous day, and negotiate how they will go about their plans.



Outdoor play — gross-motor and reading

The children go to outdoor play, starting with the obstacle course. The teacher has placed Year 1 and 2 sight words on the plank. Children read the words as they place their hands on them. Most Prep children have a go at these words, even though it is not required. The teacher scaffolds the Prep children who attempt the words.



Outdoor play — mathematical understandings, reading, cooperation

The children make a plan to measure who can go the fastest on the scooter board. The children make a list with their names in order, and take turns with the scooter board and the timer.



Year 1 children are shown supporting a Prep child to find his name. The children use the timer and fill in the time independently. Later, at reflection time, the children compare their times, using language such as faster, slower, less and more, and using number comparisons, e.g. "I only took 34 seconds — that's two seconds quicker!"



Outdoor play — writing

Zali is making a sign for the post office (a classroom project at the time). She paints the Australia Post symbol from memory. The aide supports Zali in finding out how to write the words, by using the book they read that morning. Zali is asked to write the date on her sign. She uses the calendar inside the room to remind her of the date.



Outdoor play — science investigation

These boys are constructing a dam. There is a lot of discussion about water use and the weather. The boys discuss who has a tank, dam or town water. They discuss the need for conservation of water and ways to be water wise. While they are constructing the dam, the concept of absorption is discussed — and ways to stop the water soaking in to the bottom of the dam. They consider a plan to use plastic to line the bottom of the dam the next day.



Outdoor play — writing, social & personal learning

As part of the post office discussion, this Year 2 child plans to play the game “I wrote a letter to my love”. She has found an envelope, and has written “to my love” independently. She has also found a stamp and has placed it in the top right corner. At the end of outdoor time, the children and the aide play the game as a whole group.



Outdoor play — social & personal learning, oral language

These children are playing “police and baddies”. When the game becomes too rough, the children sit with the teacher and discuss the rules. Rules for the game and driving the cars are developed, and the children decide to make identification badges for the police and the “baddies”, so that they can identify them. The teacher revisits the recent “police friend” project they did earlier in the term.



Outdoor play — a phonics discussion

The children have made a sign saying “bade”. The teacher scaffolds these Year 1 and 2 boys through the process of analysing the word — explaining that to add an “eee” sound to the end of a word, they would need a “y” as in “happy”. They also discuss having two “d”s in “baddy”, so that the “a” sound would be a short sound.



Reading groups

During outdoor time, the teacher (or aide) takes a reading group inside for guided reading. The teacher takes them through a new book using a guided reading approach.

The learning support teacher and the aide also support children for individual reading at other times of the day.



Year 2 children do spelling tasks and the other children read familiar books while waiting for their turn. Some Prep children have requested to be part of reading groups, and also take home a reader.



Morning tea and lunch

At this time of year, the prep children join the rest of the school for morning tea and lunch.



Group time

After music with the specialist teacher (non-contact time for the teacher), the children plan the indoor session. Some plans come from the previous day's activities (the post office), others evolve from outdoor play (making a speed gun and police badges). The children discuss what they will need for their tasks, and how they will go about the process.



Indoor time

These children are following through their plans to make police badges. They use the documentation about their police visit, and find a photo to copy. These badges are made in very accurate detail.



Indoor time — mathematics (attributes of objects and collections), thinking, problem solving, oral language, cooperation, persistence

These children are planning and making a radar gun (for the police game). The aide is scaffolding the process, discussing how a rectangle has become a cylinder. The aide also scaffolds the problem-solving process when discussing the construction of the radar guns. When the children have finished they go outside to try out the new gun. They discuss the concepts of fast, slow, more, less, biggest number and smallest number.



Indoor time — writing, numeracy, fine-motor, social & personal learning

During planning time, the teacher asks how the children would know the post office was open. The children decide to make “open” and “closed” signs. The teacher scaffolds this Prep child through the process of writing the words. Here he is figuring out a way to display the signs, so that they can be turned around as required.



The teacher works with a Year 2 child who wants to buy a stamp from the post office. She has asked the boy for 50c which he makes up using two 20c and one 10c. The teacher documents children's responses as part of the monitoring and assessing process.



These children work independently on a computer program they have been taught.



Indoor time — science, reading, writing, design and technology

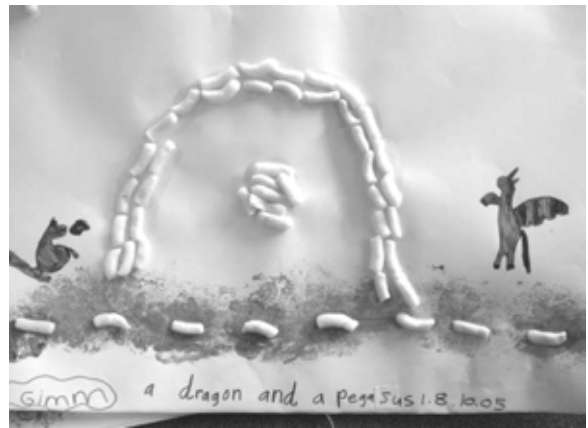
This child has discovered that the paper clip on the filing cabinet is magnetic. With the teacher's scaffolding, she designs an investigation to sort magnetic and non-magnetic objects. She creates a "YES" box for the objects that are attracted to the magnet, and a "NO" box for those that aren't. As she investigates each object, she writes its name on the appropriate page. She sounds words out, and uses the list of common words on the wall. Later she reports to the class, who liken her investigation to one they have done about floating and sinking. They discuss similarities and differences.



Indoor time

Meanwhile other children are working on individual and group projects. During this time the teacher also conducts maths groups with individuals or groups of children, preferably in a play context.

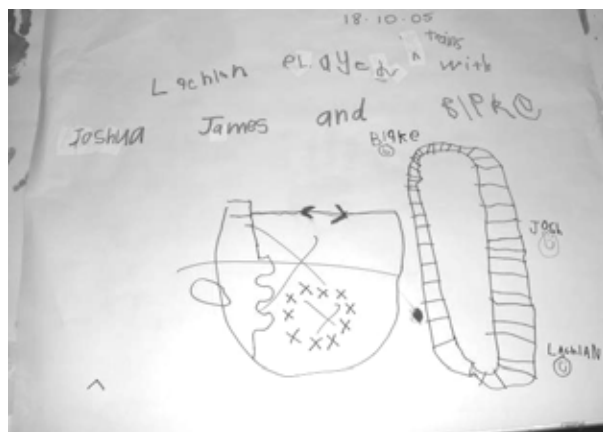
The children then have lunch and quiet time or library visit.



Lunch/quiet time/library

Interactive writing time

Each day the class selects a “daily reporter”, who makes up a story about their day to “report” to the parents. The story and illustration are displayed outside the classroom at the end of the day as a news item for parents. The text is actively negotiated with the children. For example, a child says “I had fun digging...”. The teacher explains that other people will be reading the story, so they need to write it in the third person. The children take turns writing the words or parts of words on butcher's paper, with the teacher scaffolding the children's emerging knowledge about print. The teacher uses questioning and direct instruction to show children print conventions such as spaces between words, left-to-right and top-to-bottom directionality, capital letters, and punctuation. The teacher starts with the children's strengths, and works from the “known”. For example, a Prep child writes their name and the beginning sound of “tunnel” which he knows. A Year 2 child adds “digging”, using letter sound association, and her knowledge of “ing” at the end of a word. The teacher focuses attention where the children need it; for example, they may start with letter formation and then shift to phonetic structures as they become more proficient. This process can be used for recounting stories, lists, recipes, invitations or letters. As children attend to meaningful text, they develop their knowledge of the conventions embedded in that text.



For samples of planning formats related to this case study, see Planning & organising on the *Early years curriculum materials: Teacher's CD-ROM*.