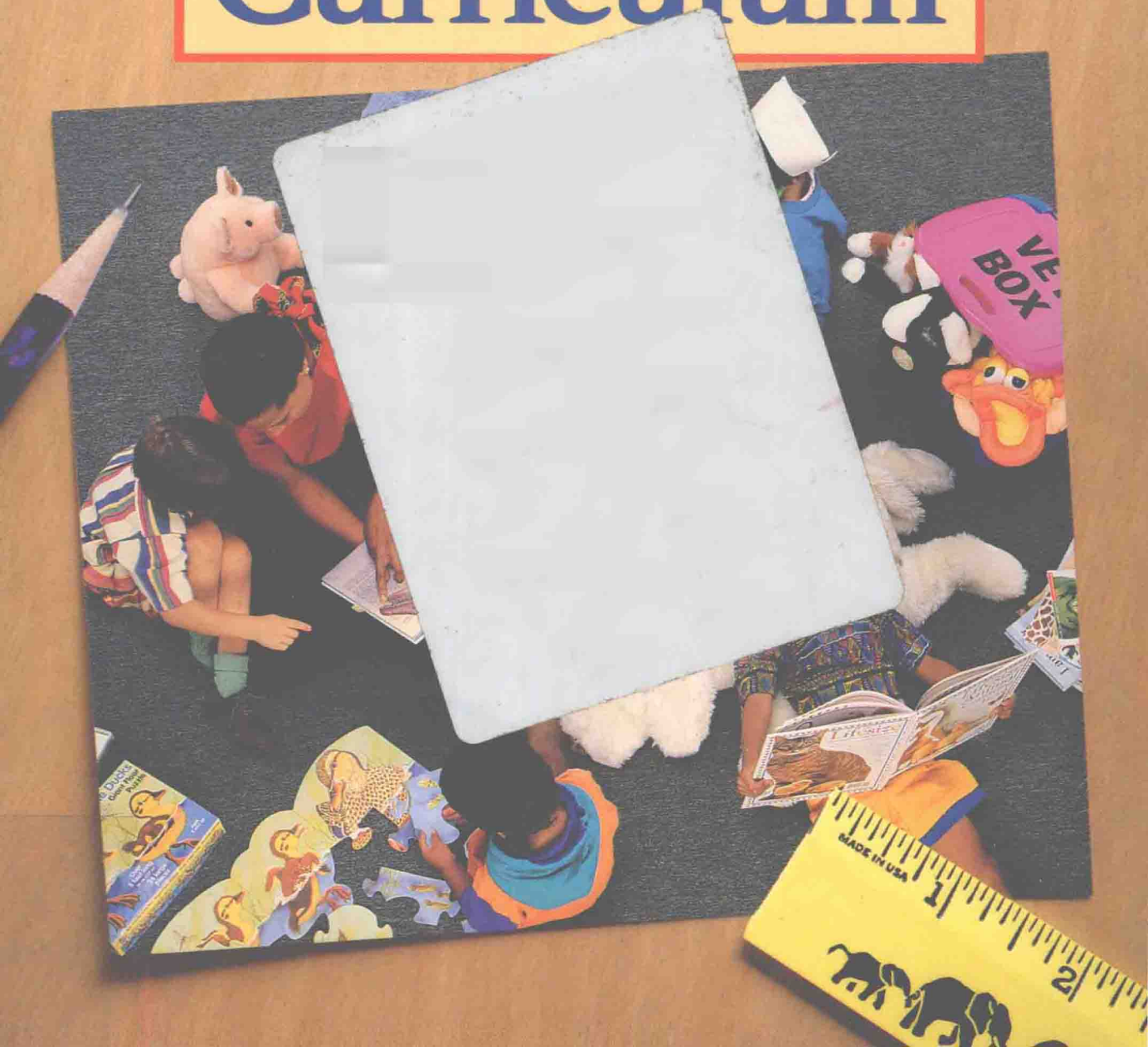


Approaches To Preschool Curriculum



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Preface

Curriculum planning at the preschool level revolves around two basic themes of education—how children learn and what they should learn. Different views on these key issues have led to a variety of approaches to preschool curriculum. This book describes the leading curriculum approaches and discusses the focus, goals, structure, and implementation techniques of each approach. The book also illustrates how curriculum goals can be developed by teachers and how different kinds of classroom activities can help meet these goals.

Content

Part 1 of the book focuses on the role of curriculum in providing structure in the daily life of the classroom. In addition to defining the leading approaches to curriculum, the book presents views of supporters and critics of each approach. It also provides numerous examples of how these different approaches translate into practice.

The first chapter of the book begins with a survey of different types of care for young children—including family day care, group home care, child care centers, and preschools. In subsequent chapters, the umbrella terms *preschool* and *preschool setting* are used to refer to all types of care for young children unless otherwise specified. Throughout the book, the word *teacher* is used broadly to include teachers and caregivers. Typical situations, stages, and problems encountered in preschool education are illustrated in examples in the text. The children featured in these examples usually are identified as either male or female to avoid awkward he/she and him/her constructions.

Other chapters in Part 1 also cover the role of play in the curriculum, the physical environment, and methods for creating curriculum goals, objectives, and written plans.

Part 2 relates curriculum to the various developmental domains of early childhood: physical,

emotional, social, cognitive, and creative. Each of these chapters begins with a short overview of leading theories of child development or main issues related to the particular area of development. The chapters provide practical techniques for developing and using curriculum activities to help children acquire the skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to each area.

Part 3 summarizes the key ideas on the social and cognitive goals of curriculum. It provides an overview of the developmental tasks of the primary years and summarizes the types of experiences that preschool teachers can provide to prepare children for kindergarten and elementary school.

Each chapter in the book begins with learning objectives and a list of important terms. Within the chapter, these terms are highlighted in *italics*; they are defined again in the Glossary at the back of the book. Author and publication date for each source are cited in the text—for example (Erikson, 1972); full bibliographic information is provided in the References at the back of the book.

Special Features

The book's practical approach to preschool curriculum is reinforced in a section called *Applications* and in a series of "Focus on" features on topics of concern to preschool teachers.

The *Applications* section that concludes each chapter provides hands-on suggestions for teaching strategies and activities that relate to the curriculum elements discussed in the chapter. The *Applications* section addresses the reader directly as "you," to create a more immediate connection between author and reader.

Focus on Cultural Diversity shows how multicultural issues affect the development of preschool curriculum and the implementation of activities. There are two variations on the theme: one is intended to encourage sensitivity and

awareness in teachers; the other focuses primarily on teaching children about diversity. Both offer tips and guidelines for making multiculturalism an integral part of the classroom. The theme of multiculturalism runs throughout the text as well.

Focus on Communicating presents discussions of everyday problems as well as extremely sensitive topics. Written in dialogue format, this feature illustrates one way—not necessarily the best—that a teacher might communicate with parents or children. It invites students to consider other ways of handling the communication and of using curriculum activities to address the issue.

Focus on Activities presents typical activities related to the topics covered in the chapter. This feature includes a rationale or objective for the activity, materials, and suggestions for effectively carrying out the activity.

End of Chapter Materials

Each chapter ends with a comprehensive chapter review. These materials include a *Summary* of important points covered; *Acquiring Knowledge*, a section that can be used to review chapter content; and *Thinking Critically*, a section that raises questions early childhood educators need to consider. *Observations and Applications* proposes vari-

ous situations in which students can practice observational skills and apply their knowledge of curriculum development. *For Further Information* lists books, curriculum guides and resource books, and, in some chapters, videotapes.

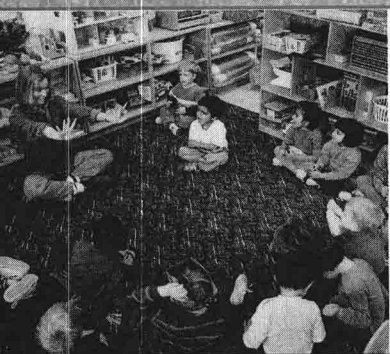
Supplementary Materials

The **Instructor's Guide** is a useful teaching support tool. It includes *Teaching Strategies* for each chapter in the text, *Chapter Tests*, and a list of sources for teaching curriculum development.

The **Study Guide** is a workbook that provides students with a means of checking their mastery of the material covered in the text. *Study Questions* review the content, concepts, and vocabulary of each chapter. *Observation Activities* direct students to observe in the field firsthand the kind of activities and behavior they are studying in the text. *Application Activities* require students to apply their knowledge to case studies and current issues in curriculum development and teaching at the preschool level.

Test Bank. The computerized *Test Bank* provides a variety of questions that can be used to build a customized test for students. The software leaves room for instructors to add their own questions. Answers are included.

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PART 1

