

Activity Matrix: Organizing Learning throughout the Day

Narrator: Welcome, and thank you for taking the time to watch this short presentation on the Activity Matrix: Organizing Learning throughout the Day. In this presentation, you will see examples of what we call the activity matrix and get some ideas for using this planning tool in your own classroom or program.

This is the house framework that the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning uses to help us think about the practices that need to be in place to support school readiness for all children. These practices include the foundational elements to ensure effective and engaging interactions and environments. The pillars are Research-based Curricula and Effective Teaching Practices and Ongoing Child Assessment. The roof represents highly individualized teaching and learning. In this module, we concentrate on the roof.

The activity matrix is a planning tool that helps to make sure that individualized teaching and learning occur. Here is an example of an activity matrix. The activities, routines, and transitions are listed in the left column. The names of the children who need extra support or help are in the top row. An activity matrix can be used for all children, but it is especially useful when planning for children who need this extra support. That may be the child who has an IEP, the child with a behavior support plan, or the child who isn't making enough progress and needs extra practice. An activity matrix may also be useful for a child who is excelling and needs more challenging learning activities.

There are a number of advantages to using an activity matrix. It helps to organize teaching and learning opportunities. It can be a visual reminder. It helps to maximize learning time by planning for teaching to occur throughout all the activities, routines, and transitions of the day. It helps staff be aware of individual children's learning objectives. It helps by matching learning objectives with activities for the individual child. It can be used for any child, but it is especially useful for the child who needs extra support and extra practice.

Let's look at our example again. The schedule of learning activities, routines, and transitions is in the left column. The names of the children are across the top. Here we see the names of three children, but this is just an example. There could be more children; there could be fewer. In the matrix, you see the individual child's learning objective. It shows the times when the child will receive additional teaching and learning opportunities related to their individual objective.

For example, one of Carlos' individual learning objectives is to write using pictures, squiggles, or letter-like forms. His teacher believes she can work on this a few times throughout the day. During outside time, she will provide sidewalk chalk and encourage Carlos to draw with it to mark his name next to how far he jumped, a favorite activity of his. And during the small group activity time, Carlos will be encouraged to write his name on a paper plate; then the children will use it to eat the granola bars they made as a snack. Notice that these extra learning opportunities are distributed throughout the day, and that the teacher can also plan so that the child gets practice on the same objective several times during the day.

There are a variety of ways to create and use the activity matrix. In our in-service, you will find even more ways to make and use this planning tool so that it will work in your classroom or program. The matrix can be a valuable device to help individualize and to plan when and where to provide extra learning opportunities. The goal is to maximize learning time for children. Please see our tips and tools

and helpful resources that accompany this presentation. Thank you for watching. I hope that you find the activity matrix a valuable way to help you individualize teaching and learning for your children.