

The Teaching Loop

Narrator: Hello. Welcome to this short presentation on the teaching loop. The teaching loop is used to embed planned teaching interactions within typically occurring activities, routines, and transitions in the early learning setting. It's a way of providing children with lots of opportunities to learn and practice new skills and concepts.

The teaching loop fits into the roof of our house. The house framework is a way to illustrate all of the important elements of effective teaching and learning. The house rests on a solid foundation of engaging interactions and environments. The house also includes research-based curriculum and teaching practices and ongoing child assessment. The roof represents highly individualized teaching and learning. There are three parts of the roof, as you can see here, and the teaching loop is the way to provide embedded teaching and learning opportunities.

Before you start planning the teaching loop, you need to know or identify the child's individual learning objective. Take a look at these children and watch for their specific learning objectives. One child is learning colors.

Teacher (in Spanish): Very good. Rosalita, what color is this?

Girl: Ummmm, green.

Narrator: Another child is learning to respond to his peers.

Teacher: Trade. So, you want to trade. So, you've got offer her a different puppet. So, here's some choices. So, if you're going to trade, you can say, "Hey, Lena, do you want this one, and I'll take Eddie?" Lena says, "Nope." Do you want to offer her this one? Trade this one? Nope. How about this one? [gasps] Wait and take turns.

Narrator: And another child is learning to copy patterns.

Teacher: So we'll have to use a triangle, and what shape is that one?

Girl: I don't know.

Teacher: I guess we can call it like an oval.

Girl: This one is the shape.

Teacher: Yes, that is the shape, you're absolutely correct.

Narrator: The teaching loop is a brief, focused teaching interaction that takes advantage of the child's day and usual activities to maximize learning.

The idea behind the loop is that the teacher plans what to say or do and what level of help to provide, so that the child will practice the learning objective. And then the teacher acknowledges the child's actions. By using the teaching loop, the teacher offers the child lots of learning opportunities on the child's individual learning objective. The teaching loop can be used during any activity at any time of the day. The child gets extra opportunities and extra practice on their learning objective when the child needs to use the skill.

The teaching loop takes planning. There are four important steps. First, provide the cue.

Teacher: And then where does it go?

Narrator: Then, the teacher gives some assistance, just the right amount of help. This is sometimes called scaffolding, or prompting.

Teacher: Can it go here or can it go here? We're making a pattern.

Narrator: Next, the teacher observes the child's response.

Teacher: Okay, put it right here.

Narrator: And finally, the teacher acknowledges the child and provides feedback.

Teacher: Perfect! So we have red, green, red, green.

Narrator: Let's watch.

Teacher: And then where does it go? Can it go here or can it go here? We're making a pattern. Okay, put it right here. Perfect! So, we have red, green, red, green.

Narrator: That's a teaching loop. It is planned ahead of time and it is specific to the child's learning objective. One teaching loop is never enough. Teachers embed these loops and learning opportunities throughout the day. Children need lots of practice to learn something new. This presentation highlighted the teaching loop. Planning and using teaching loops can be an effective way to provide individualized teaching for children who need extra help. This might be a child with an IEP or IFSP or a child with a behavior support plan. Sometimes, children just need extra practice that focuses on a specific objective or step. Use the teaching loop to provide practice time during the activities and routines that the child already participates in.

Teacher: You got it? Okay. Make sure it goes on your plate. Just a little bit. Perfect. That was perfect. Nice, nice.

Narrator: Look at the tips, tools, and resources to learn how to use the teaching loop. And check out our longer module to master this teaching practice. Thank you for listening.