

## Engaging Interactions: Focusing Children on Learning Goals

Narrator: Hello, and welcome to this short presentation on focusing children on learning goals. This module highlights methods or strategies that teachers can use to help children understand the goal or purpose of learning activities. It is one in a series of modules on instructional interactions. Focusing children on learning goals fits into the foundation of the House Framework.

Narrator: The National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning uses the House Framework to portray four key components of effective teaching. All are important to help children be ready for school. The foundation of the House is engaging interactions and environments. An important element of engaging instructional interactions is to help children focus on learning goals. Teachers help children focus on and think about the goal of an activity or learning experience by guiding their attention to the goal and reminding them of the goal during the activity. The teacher helps the children connect their participation to the concept or idea that the teacher wants the children to learn. There are three strategies that teachers can use in their teaching to help children focus on the goal.

Narrator: One strategy that teachers can use is to preview or set the stage before the activity. The teacher starts the activity by talking about what the children will learn, the big idea or the concept. The teacher might define or describe the concept. The teacher shares their excitement about what the children are going to learn.

Teacher : Today we are going to work with number 9.

Narrator: Another strategy that the teacher can use happens within the activity and while the children are actively watching and participating. The teacher makes comments and statements that help children pay attention to the learning goal. The teacher doesn't simply encourage participation. The teacher points out the relationship of the children's activity to the planned learning goal.

Teacher: And remember we're working with number 9. What if I do this?

Boy: 1, 2, 3, 4

Girl: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

Narrator: The third strategy is to recap or summarize at the end of the learning activity by commenting on what the children learned. The teacher restates the purpose of the activity -- the big idea or concept - and relates the children's actions to that big idea.

Teacher: You still make number 9.

Narrator: There are many opportunities for teachers to use these strategies to focus children on learning goals. Teachers need to plan the activity with a purpose in mind, an important concept or idea.

Teachers can take advantage of all sorts of activities and routines that occur during the day and plan for learning in the domains of the Head Start framework.

Narrator: This short presentation highlighted three ways that teachers can help focus on learning goals. These are strategies that teachers can use to help children learn valuable knowledge and skills. They can set the stage by talking about the process and purpose of the activity before it begins. They can make comments and statements within the activity to focus children on the goal. They can summarize the activity by pointing to what the children learned about.

Narrator: Please see our tips and tools and helpful resources that accompany this presentation. Thank you for listening.