



Age-appropriate pedagogies

Approaches

Teacher and child behaviours unpacked

Various teaching approaches may be considered age-appropriate for teaching the Australian Curriculum in the early years. The teacher's role in enacting a range and balance of age-appropriate pedagogies involves deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful decision making and actions to promote children's innate drive for independent learning.

When selecting an approach, teachers need to consider:

- children's interests and capabilities
- their own interests, skills, capabilities and philosophies
- the Australian Curriculum
- evidence of children's learning
- school and community contexts.

Approaches	Teacher and child behaviours	
Inquiry learning <i>active, agentic, collaborative, creative, scaffolded</i>	Teachers may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initiate the inquiry through a question, problem or idea • support children to theorise, hypothesise and wonder • provide opportunities for children to become more confident and autonomous problem-solvers and thinkers • organise for learning experiences extending beyond singular activities, that can be repeated or returned to, and that lend themselves to active engagement in purposeful learning. 	Children may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initiate the inquiry by posing factual and exploratory questions based on personal interests and experiences • work as researchers, inferring, hypothesising, predicting, investigating, experimenting and recording • use skills in decision-making, planning and problem solving • reflect, rethink, reframe their questions, problems or ideas • share new learning with others and plan for future learning.
Event-based <i>active, agentic, collaborative, creative, explicit, language-rich and dialogic, learner-focused, narrative and playful</i>	Teachers may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evoke children's interests and experiences, orienting them towards the staging of an event • guide planning, preparation, rehearsal and enacting events • promote child agency, including children's ideas and thoughts in event decision-making • explicitly teach and model the desired skills of collaboration and cooperation. 	Children may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan, prepare, rehearse and enact events in real-life contexts • identify, explore and compare culturally diverse activities and objects • express their opinions and listen to the opinions of others throughout the event-based approach • identify the thinking used to solve problems in given situations • share their thinking about possible courses of action.
Project <i>active, agentic, collaborative, explicit, learner-focused, responsive, scaffolded, playful, language-rich and dialogic</i>	Teachers may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitate a three-step process that includes planning, exploration and culmination • orientate children towards a shared outcome or the creation of an artefact • provide opportunities for individual children or small groups to explore aspects of the project that are of specific interest to them • provide opportunities for children to negotiate the medium used for creating and sharing their project. 	Children may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engage with research materials including authentic objects, books, magazines, newspapers, music and websites • suggest alternative and creative ways to approach the project • gather information or depictions from given sources • use ICT as a creative tool to generate simple solutions, modifications or data representations • reflect on whether they are satisfied with the outcome of the project.



Approaches	Teacher and child behaviours	
Explicit instruction <i>active, explicit, learner-focused, responsive, and scaffolded</i>	Teachers may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> teach skills, strategies, vocabulary terms, concepts and rules that match the children’s instructional needs break down content into manageable instructional units based on children’s cognitive capabilities review children’s prior skills and knowledge before beginning instruction begin lessons with a clear statement of goals and expectations, providing step-by-step demonstrations followed by guided and supported practice. 	Children may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage in a learning environment that progressively withdraws scaffolding as mastery is increased trial modelled metalanguage and behaviours within meaningful classroom contexts move towards applying skills, strategies, concepts and rules independently transfer new knowledge to broader teaching and learning contexts identify when, and from whom, help can be sought.
Play-based learning <i>active, agentic, collaborative, creative, scaffolded</i>	Teachers may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> construct opportunities for play within (not as opposed to, or as well as) the learning program/environment make connections between play and the Australian Curriculum visible for all involved and clearly articulate this relationship model, support, initiate and generate play to include the use of, for example, miniature worlds, socio-dramatic, puppet, media, block, sand, water actively engage in and guide the play — before, during and after. 	Children may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually with people, objects and representations explore relationships, learn to resolve conflicts, negotiate and regulate their behaviours have increased feelings of success and optimism as they act as their own agents and make their own choices develop resilience and the beginnings of empathy as they begin to understand other points of view test and apply their new found knowledge.
Direct teaching/ instruction <i>explicit and scaffolded</i>	Teachers may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> control content, activities and lesson pacing use pre-planned sequences of content and activities (fixed, linear and incremental) use behaviouristic learning principles (getting children’s attention, reinforcing correct responses, providing corrective feedback, practising correct responses) place children in ability/achievement groups. 	Children may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> follow and participate in structured class routines follow a series of instructions acquire content or skills through rote learning, drill and repetition practise content or skills using worksheets and workbooks produce a desired action/behaviour/product.

Conceptual framework swatch

A range and balance of approaches is required to maximise children’s engagement with the curriculum.

The relationship between the child, teacher, curriculum, context, evidence of learning and the approaches and characteristics is demonstrated by the Conceptual framework swatch.

