**Attaching curriculum, pedagogies and assessment**

**An example of practice in Prep**

**Project approach - 'My bedroom is a special place'**

**Australian Curriculum - Humanities and Social Sciences - Geography**

**Sequencing teaching and learning**

**How do I teach it?**

**Achieving range and balance**

**Approach**
- Project approach

**Practices**
- Child initiated
- Limited duration
- Block play

**Strategies**
- Use of class dolls
- Including recording materials
- Researching
- Construction

**Characteristics of age-appropriate pedagogies**
- Active
- Agentic
- Collaborative
- Creative
- Explicit
- Language rich and dialogic
- Learner focused
- Narrative
- Playful
- Responsive
- Scaffolded

*See over for an exploration of approaches, practices and strategies, and the characteristics of age-appropriate pedagogies evident in this example of practice.

**Our students**

**Working together to ensure that in every classroom, every student is learning and achieving**

This is an example of how one teacher incorporated a *project approach* when implementing the Australian Curriculum Humanities and Social Sciences (Geography) learning area.

One of the children in the class had been having renovations carried out at home and was very excited to share with his classmates that the final touches were being added to his bedroom, and that he would be, “Having [his] first sleep in [his] special place tonight!” This generated lots of conversations about the children’s bedrooms. Another child asked, “Can we take Annie and Jake home to see our bedrooms?” The teacher decided to use this idea, due to its potential for linking to the Humanities and Social Sciences curriculum as focus for a project, ‘My bedroom is a special place’.

- Annie and Jake, two classroom dolls, shared photographs and drawings/maps of their bedrooms (modelled responses created by the teacher) with the children. Annie and Jake were sent home with a camera, pencils, pens, crayons and paper to allow the children to create a visual representation (map/drawing) of their bedroom. During this home visit, the children acted as researchers, to investigate the Geography key inquiry questions “What are places like?”, “What makes a place special?” and “How can we look after the places we live in?”

The children’s visual representations were then displayed in block corner. These were used as plans for block constructions of the children’s bedrooms. This block play lead to geography-rich conversation between the children, focused on the key inquiry questions. The teacher was part of these conversations, and recorded and transcribed evidence of learning related to the applicable Content Descriptions. This project lasted for three weeks. The children accessed block corner during indoor learning time, choosing to work independently, with a partner or in small groups.

**Assessment**

**What do my students already know? How well do they know it?**

Assessment for learning - bedroom photographs/drawings/maps, transcript of questions/discussions

Assessment as learning - pre and post block play discussions, peer feedback, teacher feedback

Assessment of learning - Unit 2 - Geography Year Prep (V4.0) - Guide to making judgements

**Making judgments**

How will I know how well my students have demonstrated the Achievement Standard?

**Recall knowledge to make personal connections**

**C2C Unit 2 - Geography Year Prep (V4.0) - Guide to making judgements**

** Applying (AP)** - Refers to data collected to support an explanation of why a place is important to others. Gives a detailed description of a way the place may be cared for. Represents the distribution of features accurately.

**Making Connections (MC)** - Gives a detailed description of the features of places. Describes direction and location using simple geographic terms.

**Working With (WW)** - Describes the features of familiar places and maps of their bedroom. (modelled responses created by the teacher) with the children.

**In Inquiry and skills**

- **Reasons why some places are special to people, and how they can be looked after** (ACHASSK017)
- **Reflect on learning to propose how to care for places and sites that are important or significant** (ACHASSK018)

**Foundation (Prep) Year Content Descriptions (as applicable to this project approach)**

**Knowledge and Understanding**
- The representation of the location and features on simple maps and models (ACHASSK014)
- The places people live in and belong to, their familiar features and why they are important to people (ACHASSK015)

**Inquiry and skills**
- Sort and record information and data, including location, in tables and on maps and labelled maps (ACHASSK003)
- Draw simple conclusions based on observations, and information displayed in pictures and texts on maps (ACHASS004)
- Reflect on learning to propose how to care for places and sites that are important or significant (ACHASS009)

**Foundation (Prep) Year sub-strand-specific Achievement Standard - Geography**

By the end Foundation Year, students describe the features of familiar places and recognise why some places are special to people. They recognise that places can be represented on maps and models and why places are important to people.

Students observe the familiar features of places and represent these features and their location on pictorial maps and models. They share and compare observations in a range of texts and use everyday language to describe direction and location. Students reflect on their learning to suggest ways they can care for a familiar place.

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**An example of practice in Prep**

**Becoming Aware (BA)**
- Names a place. Names a feature.
- Names a feature and information displayed in pictures and texts and on maps and labelled maps (ACHASSK003)
- Sort and record information and data, including location, in tables and on maps and labelled maps (ACHASSK003)
- Draw simple conclusions based on observations, and information displayed in pictures and texts on maps (ACHASS004)
- Reflect on learning to propose how to care for places and sites that are important or significant (ACHASS009)

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Characteristics of age-appropriate pedagogies

Active
- Requiring physical and embodied engagement across all areas of learning. Whether this is indoors or outdoors, activity is essential in order to activate children’s full potential. Their focus, concentration, motivation and self-regulation are enhanced through moving, doing and interacting within a range of learning environments.

Agentic
- Ensuring that children have voice in their learning. Their ideas and interests initiate, support and extend learning possibilities in order to build on their real-world understandings and experiences.

Collaborative
- Being social and co-constructed. Children and educators work together to identify ways of learning and understanding through sustained shared thinking and action.

Creative
- Inviting children to consider “What if?” They encourage investigation, inquiry and artistry to explore new possibilities and ways of thinking.

Explicit
- Making conscious for both learner and educator the relationships between the learning purpose and processes employed and the skills and understanding these processes support.

Language rich and dialogic
- Ensuring that learning occurs in environments where rich language is modelled and employed by both children and educators. Meaningful dialogues between children, as well as between children and educators, are created to support thinking, learning, engagement and imagination.

Learner focused
- Recognising that all children learn in different ways and that learning is a highly individualised process. They also acknowledge differences in children’s physical, intellectual, cultural, social and personal experiences and perspectives.

Narrative
- Acknowledging the important role that personal, written, oral and digital stories play in all our lives. They support both the production and comprehension of narratives through active processes, especially play.

Playful
- Encouraging children to make connections through imagination and creativity to explore alternate worlds and ways of thinking. These worlds, not bounded by reality, offer the freedom children need to innovate and enact new possibilities.

Responsive
- Incorporating a willingness to be flexible, to ensure that learning is always child, context, content and discipline appropriate. To achieve this, educators will balance opportunities for structure and spontaneity, open-ended and specific tasks, and child-led and educator-led learning.

Scaffolded
- Including such actions as modelling, encouraging, questioning, adding challenges, and giving feedback, provide the support needed to extend children’s existing capabilities. Effective scaffolding by both educators and other children provides active structures to support new learning; it is then progressively withdrawn as learners gain increasing mastery.

Approach - Project approach

Practices*
- Child initiated
  - After having renovations carried out at home, one child was excited that he would be sleeping in his new bedroom. This generated lots of conversations amongst the children about their bedrooms. Another child asked, “Can we take Annie and Jake home to see our bedrooms?”
  - Limited duration
    - This project was prompted by a special event in one child’s life. Time constraints, including school-based events and balancing other curriculum areas, meant that this project was limited to a three week timeframe towards the end of Term Three.

- Block play
  - Block play was used to further enhance the children’s geographical knowledge of modelling and mapping at school after their project research at home.
    - These are examples of the Practices implemented, and not intended as a finite list.

- Use of class dolls
  - Annie and Jake were honorary members of the class. They had been used to support the teaching of social skills in the classroom earlier in the year, and had visited the children at home at the end of Term One, as part of a History task.
  - Including recording materials
    - Annie and Jake were sent home with a camera, pencils, pens, crayons and paper to allow the children to create a visual representation (map/drawing) of their bedroom.

- Researching
  - The children acted as researchers to investigate the Geography key inquiry questions for Foundation:
    - What are places like?
    - What makes a place special?
    - How can we look after the places we live in?
  - Construction
    - The children were offered time to construct models of their bedrooms using blocks, boxes and other construction materials as a can do activity during indoor learning time.
    - These are examples of the Strategies implemented, and not intended as a finite list.

- Questions for teacher-based reflection
  - How is an array of effective pedagogies ensured?
  - How are holistic development and academic goals balanced?
  - How is a balance between child-initiated and adult-initiated learning experiences fostered?
  - How are positive personal relationships with children nurtured?
  - How is playfulness in learning and teaching interactions embedded?
  - How are high-quality, verbal interactions encouraged?
  - How are interactions to scaffold cognitive challenge and develop higher order thinking incorporated?
  - How are real-life, imaginary, spontaneous and planned experiences integrated?

- Questions for school-based reflection
  - How is the provision of training, resources and support considered?
  - How are the professional demands on teachers, and the lead-in time required to establish new approaches, recognised and supported?

* These are examples of the Strategies implemented, and not intended as a finite list.