

Teacher Resource Page

Georgia's Pre-K is excited to introduce an updated and enhanced teacher section on our website. Teachers will find a variety of tips, ideas, and resources in several new categories. Here are just a few of the items found under each section:

General Information: Story time with Alliance Theater and health/hygiene posters.

Pre-K Instructional Models: Tip for success for each of the three instructional models.

Schedule and Lesson Plan

Templates: Sample lesson plans and daily schedule templates for all three instructional models

Virtual Learning Resources:

Tips, ideas, and links to additional resources for full distance classrooms.

Social Emotional Tools: Social Stories, COVID-19 related social-emotional resources, greetings and problem-solving ideas.

Family Engagement and Resources: Georgia's Pre-K@Home, talking about COVID-19, and learning placemats.

Establishing Virtual Relationships

Teachers begin establishing and building relationships with students the first day of school; however, forming these relationships virtually may seem like a daunting challenge. Here are a few tips to consider to ensure an emotionally supportive atmosphere.

Greet each child by name daily. When engaging in a virtual setting, time is limited as well as student engagement. Using a student's name says to them that you care about them and makes them feel important.

Encourage peer conversations. Consider allowing additional time during morning meeting and other opportunities throughout the day for students to converse with one another.

Make connections to your personal life and

the real world. Kids love having a "sneak peek behind the curtains" of their teachers' lives. Sometimes, students are amazed to discover that their teacher does not live in the classroom.

Take a moment each day to share something personal about your life. When teachers share about their hobbies, family members, or pets, students begin to make real life connections and the teacher may find additional common ground. Implementing a "Show-and-Tell" time once a week is a great way to make connections.

Provide opportunities for journaling. Encourage families to journal about their daily activities. The student may draw a picture of their favorite part of the day and the family may write down what the child says. Teachers may provide opportunities for students to share something from their

journal while asking follow-up questions to gain additional insight into the student's life.

Allow regularly scheduled times for connections with individual students and families.

Some children in your classroom will not be as engaged in virtual large group experiences and may thrive from more one-on-one time with their teachers. Have individual conversations and targeted support with individual students at least twice a week.

Teachers may also consider implementing Myron Dueck's "2 X 10 Theory," by spending two minutes daily to connect with challenging students. Making these connections will foster a stronger relationship not only with the student but also with the family.

2020-2021 Georgia's Pre-K Teacher of the Year Finalists

Congratulations to our six Pre-K Teachers of the Year (TOTY) finalists who were announced in May, 2020. These six finalists will complete the second phase of the TOTY process this fall and the two winners (one from a public school and one from a private childcare center) will be announced in early October.

Alderine Healey is a teacher at YMCA Paulding Early Learning Center in Hiram, Georgia. She has her Master's degree in Early Childhood Education and has been a Pre-K

teacher for 11 years. Alderine's goal as a teacher is to prepare children to be successful not only in school but also in society.

D'Arri Moore is a teacher at Andrew and Walter Young YMCA in Atlanta, Georgia. He has an Early Childhood Development degree and has been a Pre-K teacher for six years. In his spare time, D'Arri spends his time volunteering for different organizations in his community.

Deana Snowden is a teacher at Demorest Elementary school in Demorest, Georgia. She has a degree in Early Childhood Education and

has been a Pre-K teacher for 17 years. Deana also enjoys being a role model to other teachers and education professionals.

Genevieve Rodriguez is a teacher at Tabula Rasa, The Language Academy in Lawrenceville, Georgia. She is a certified teacher and has been teaching Pre-K for four years. Genevieve feels her strong behavior management and social/emotional lessons impact the overall classroom climate and her students in a positive way.

Heather Melillo is a teacher at West End elementary school in Rome, Georgia. She has her Specialist degree in

Early Childhood Education and has been a Pre-K teacher for four years. In her free time, Heather is very involved in many clubs and organizations in her school and community.

Tricia Floyd is a Pre-K teacher at Maxwell High School of Technology/Pre-K in Lawrenceville, Georgia. She has her master's degree in Early Childhood Education and has been a Pre-K teacher for 12 years. The most rewarding part of being a teacher for Tricia is having students come back to visit letting her know what an impact she had on their lives.

Choice Boards

Are you interested in a way to organize distance learning activities? Choice boards may be a helpful tool for you to use with your students and their families while promoting student engagement, motivation, and differentiation.

A choice board is a graphic organizer that allows students to choose different ways to learn about a particular concept. Choice boards are generally set up like Tic-Tac-Toe with 9 squares. Students may have the choice to complete a certain number of activities or select activities from the choice board to make a pattern.

Here are a few suggestions for implementing differentiation through the use of choice boards.

- When creating the boards, remember to include the various learning styles of the students including but not limited to kinesthetic, visual, and auditory.
- Boards can be created for weekly, bi-weekly, or even monthly activities. Instructions can be given for each task; however, remember to keep it simple for parents to assist.
- Tic-Tac-Toe: Encourage students to complete any set of three activities to form a Tic-Tac-Toe. Students may choose these activities horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. When using this method, a “FREE CHOICE” square can be in the middle.

For sample choice boards, visit:

<http://www.decal.ga.gov/Prek/Teachers.aspx>

Simple Science Strategies

Young children are naturally curious, and science activities are perfect to promote exploring, questioning, investigating, and analyzing. Whether you are teaching virtually or traditionally, including opportunities for science experiences is important.

Teachers foster a child’s knowledge by thoughtfully preparing rich areas for exploring scientific concepts both inside and outside. When teaching virtually, the teacher may plan for simple experiments that may be completed at home, or record experiments to share with families for a later discussion.

Consider the following tips when planning for science instruction:

Advanced Vocabulary—Use new/rich vocabulary often and include self-talk (words and actions match).

Extended Activities—Plan science activities that take place over a period of time so children have more opportunities to observe, record, predict, compare. A page for recording observations could be sent to children learning virtually.

Tactile/Sensory—Young children relish tactile sensations. Explore the textures of different objects, such as smooth shells, fuzzy cattails, and rough pinecones, then record their observations with parent or teacher support. At home, textures such as sofa covers, carpeting, and furniture could be explored, as well as items from outside.

Set up a water table or plastic tub, and provide a variety of objects, such as different measuring containers, tubing, and items that children can use to explore sinking and floating. This could also take place at the kitchen sink. Remember to sanitize between uses.

Ask Questions—Parents or teachers should ask questions to model the inquiry process and support high-order thinking: “What will happen if/when? I wonder how we could find out...? How do you know? Tell me what is happening?”

Check out these great science ideas:

bestpractices.gsu.edu/resources/science-social-studies/

Ten Helpful Tips for Managing Work Sampling Online

- 1) Designate a set amount of time each day for data entry and updating Developmental Checklists.
- 2) Divide the class into half or thirds and focus on updating Developmental Checklists on a portion of the students each week. After implementing for two to three weeks, Developmental Checklists will be current and reflect ratings based on data that has been entered.
- 3) When planning for your students each week, start with which skills (WSO performance indicators) need to be assessed based on students’ needs and skill levels. Include activities in your lesson plans that will allow you to assess those specific skills.
- 4) Plan to assess one or two activities a day and enter the evidence at the end of the day. There will be additional data you collect that you have not planned for, such as observational notes to enter as well.
- 5) When taking observational notes, ask follow-up questions and include quotes from the children. This often makes for richer documentation that can be linked to more performance indicators.
- 6) Assessment should be a joint effort between the teaching team, although the lead teacher is ultimately responsible for the implementation. Work together and determine which task best fits your skills and preferences
- 7) Purposeful small group instruction: Start first with what skills/needs should be addressed and then look for activities to support the teaching of the skill/need. Small group activities do not always have to support the topic of study – this should provide a little more flexibility when you plan.
- 8) Another note taking strategy is to create a class grid. You can print each week to ensure that you collect at least one note for each child.
- 9) Photos with descriptors should be reserved for those instances where there is too much information to be described with just a note. Great for distance learning as well.
- 10) Ask the following questions prior to planning each week.
 - Who do you need to assess?
 - What do you need to assess?
 - When and where do you need to assess? (large group, small group, centers, etc.)
 - How are you going to assess? (notes, pictures, matrices, work samples)