



The Work Sampling System®

The Work Sampling System is an instructional assessment that is used in preschool through third grade. Its purpose is to document and assess children's skills, knowledge, behavior, and accomplishments across a wide variety of curriculum areas on multiple occasions in order to enhance teaching and learning.

The Work Sampling System consists of three complementary elements:

- 1) Developmental Guidelines
- 2) Developmental Checklists
- 3) Summary Reports

The Work Sampling System calls for ongoing assessment that is summarized three times per year. By reflecting classroom goals and objectives, it helps teachers monitor children's continuous progress and places children's work within a broad developmental perspective. Through documenting and evaluating individual performance of classroom-based tasks, Work Sampling strengthens student motivation, assists teachers in instructional decision making, and serves as an effective means for reporting children's progress to families, educators, and the community.

Preschool-4 Developmental Guidelines

5th Edition

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The Work Sampling System®



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Introduction

This volume presents the Work Sampling System Developmental Guidelines for Preschool-4 (age 4) in an edition designed for classroom use. For general reference use, the complete text of this edition, along with the Guidelines for five other grade levels, is included in the *Work Sampling System Omnibus Guidelines* (Preschool through Third Grade).

The Work Sampling System's Developmental Guidelines are designed to enhance the process of observation and to ensure the reliability and consistency of teachers' observations. The Guidelines incorporate research, expert advice, and state and national standards, including Common Core. All resources used in the formulation of the Guidelines are listed in the *Teacher's Manual*.

How to Read the Guidelines

The Guidelines present each specific skill, behavior, or academic accomplishment in the form of a one-sentence *performance indicator*. Each indicator is followed by a *rationale* and several specific *examples*. The rationale provides a context that explains the meaning and importance of the indicator and briefly outlines reasonable, end-of-the-year expectations for children of different ages. The examples show several ways children might demonstrate the skill, knowledge, or accomplishment represented by the indicator. These are intended to give teachers a concrete picture of the many different ways children might show their skill or ability in relation to the indicator. Examples are *not* attributes or behaviors that need to be checked off as necessary in order to demonstrate proficiency. Since different teachers may interpret the same indicator in different ways, the Guidelines promote consistency of interpretation and evaluation across children, teachers, and schools.

Although the examples provided for each indicator suggest a variety of ways that children show their skills and knowledge, they do not exhaust all the ways children demonstrate what they know and can do. The students in any particular classroom may show their knowledge in other ways, reflecting their unique backgrounds, interests, and classroom opportunities. We expect that our examples will serve as a catalyst to help teachers think of the range of situations in which children demonstrate specific skills and knowledge, and to understand and evaluate their students' performance within the context of their classrooms. Other examples that are more consistent with an individual teacher's curriculum approach can be added.

In the Guidelines, we have attempted to provide illustrations that are relevant to teachers who work with diverse groups of children. Examples that relate specifically to the development of children with special needs are included to suggest how teachers might assess children with disabilities who are included in regular classrooms. Rather than providing examples related to specific cultural or linguistic groups, we have tried to use inclusive or general language to accommodate children from various cultural, linguistic, economic, and social backgrounds. However, we have included performance indicators for English Language Learners to help measure an ELL's level of English language acquisition. These indicators are located within the Language and Literacy domain.

Developmental Checklist

To facilitate use of these Guidelines in classroom assessment, the Work Sampling System includes a companion Developmental Checklist, which lists the performance indicators and provides space to rate each child's performance three times during the school year. (A sample copy of the Checklist is bound in the center pages of this volume.)

I Personal and Social Development

Emotional and social competence are central to this domain. Teachers learn about children's sense of responsibility to themselves and others, and how they feel about themselves and view themselves as learners—their emotional development—through ongoing observation, conversations with children, and information from family members. Teachers acquire information about children's social competence and approaches to learning by interacting with them, observing their interactions with other adults and peers, and reflecting on how they make decisions and solve academic and social problems.

A Self-Concept

1 Demonstrates self-confidence.

Self-awareness and positive self-image emerge through interactions with others and through affirmative experiences. Many preschool children come to school with a positive sense of self, certain they will be liked. Others need time to observe and opportunities to learn how to play in a group setting. Confident 4-year-olds will participate in most classroom activities, express emotions, eagerly explore toys and materials, and interact with others in the classroom. They display a positive sense of self by:

- showing excitement when the teacher announces that they will be going on a field trip;
- teaching a word in sign language to a classmate;
- entering the dramatic play area and choosing a role that fits the play of others;
- sitting at the art table and exchanging ideas and thoughts, even when the discussion is unrelated to the artwork they are making;

- adapting to playground games and becoming part of the action;
- showing a new student how to play a favorite app or game.

2 Shows some self-direction.

Four-year-olds often seem self-directed because they want to do everything on their own. However, they still require encouragement to act independently in unfamiliar situations or when trying challenging tasks. Four-year-olds can make simple choices among activities but occasionally need support in trying new classroom activities. Examples of self-direction include:

- finding scissors, tape, markers, and cardboard rolls to make “binoculars” for bird watching;
- finding and putting on one's own jacket, mittens, and hat before going outdoors;
- deciding to build an airport with blocks, forming a plan, and then implementing it with others already working with the blocks;

- choosing one activity out of several and becoming involved with it;
- trying a new activity (e.g., soap painting or a cooking project), and pursuing it for a meaningful period of time;
- playing with different children rather than the same friend or friends every day.

B Self-Control

1 Follows simple classroom rules and routines.

Four-year-olds find established routines very comforting. They feel safer and better able to participate when rules are clear and followed consistently. They can follow simple rules and procedures with gentle reminders. They show their acceptance and understanding of rules and routines by:

- waiting patiently until someone leaves the water table when the rule is “only four children at a time;”
- independently going to the circle area after cleanup;

- clearing their place at the snack table by throwing away their napkin and leftovers with a simple reminder;
- turning off the audio player after listening to it;
- removing a finished painting from the easel and knowing where to hang it up to dry;
- putting blocks away in designated places when the teacher announces it is clean-up time.

2 Manages transitions.

Four-year-olds are sometimes upset when routines change or things are done differently. They manage transitions most successfully when they are told what to expect in advance. Children show they are learning to manage transitions by:

- using a routine, such as waving from the window or blowing a kiss goodbye, to manage the transition from home to school;
- pulling the dramatic play card from the class schedule when prompted by the teacher to transition from one activity to another;
- moving from choice time to cleanup with ease and purposefulness;
- cleaning up ahead of schedule because a visitor has come to lead a special group time;
- telling a new child or adult the sequences of activities during a typical classroom day;

- asking questions to better understand a change to the daily schedule.

C Approaches to Learning

1 Shows eagerness and curiosity as a learner.

Most 4-year-olds are naturally curious and continually ask questions about everything they encounter. They display growing maturity when they respond to answers to their questions by asking for clarification or additional information, rather than saying, “Why? Why?” Examples include:

- showing interest in stories and events related by other children;
- being excited and curious about new things in the classroom, such as a collection of fall leaves or shells from the sea shore;
- looking at a picture of a castle and trying to reproduce it with blocks;
- exploring the icons on a tablet screen to see if there is anything new;
- asking how water makes the wheel turn at the water table;
- expressing excitement about a connection between school and home activities (“I read that story at home with my dad!”).

2 Attends to tasks and seeks help when encountering a problem.

Four-year-olds attend to most tasks for short periods of time (10 to 20 minutes). They will persist longer when they have

chosen the activity. Learning to work until tasks are finished or problems are solved is often difficult for this age group. Ways that children show persistence and willingness to accept help in problem solving include:

- raising their hands or touching the teacher’s arm to indicate that they need help;
- trying to start the zippers on their coats repeatedly until they can do the task without help;
- following teacher or peer suggestions for solving a problem (e.g., understanding that putting another block at the base of the tower would make it more stable);
- refocusing attention on a movie when verbally redirected to do so;
- putting blocks away and asking for help to finish more quickly;
- accepting help from the teacher when putting together a difficult puzzle.

3 Approaches tasks with flexibility and inventiveness.

Four-year-olds enjoy discovering how some materials are meant to be used while exploring alternative uses for other materials. They are beginning to understand that there are many possible ways to accomplish a task and solve problems. Children show flexibility and willingness to try new ideas by:

- using two short cardboard tubes as “binoculars” in the dramatic play area;

- trying to staple pieces of paper together after unsuccessfully trying to tape them together;
- using the camera on a tablet in inventive ways (e.g., taking a picture of a block structure that needs to be torn down at the end of clean-up time);
- trying several different ways to form Play-Doh® into a specific object such as a birthday cake or snowman;
- using prior experience to figure out what to do in present situations (e.g., asking the teacher for red paint to color the Play-Doh because last week the teacher made the Play-Doh green with green paint);
- experimenting with a brush to find ways to keep paint from dripping.

D Interaction With Others

1 Interacts easily with one or more children.

Knowing how to relate positively to peers and how to make friends is essential to children’s sense of competence. By age 4, preschoolers are beginning to make the transition to cooperative play. Taking turns, sharing, and conversing during play are new skills for many 4-year-olds. They are developing special friendships and starting to understand that it is possible to have more than one friend at a time. Examples of interaction skills include:

- playing with whomever is in the dramatic play area rather than only playing there when alone or with a special friend;
- making decisions with another child about who will put out the cups and napkins and how many they will need;
- working cooperatively with another child who is painting on the same side of the easel;
- searching for hidden objects in the context of an app where several children can work together;
- talking (or using alternative communication) with another child to plan ways to build a block structure;
- using rhythm instruments with several children to make a band.

2 Interacts easily with familiar adults.

When teachers build strong relationships with children, they set the stage for children’s openness to learning and academic success. Four-year-olds are learning how to interact with adults. They engage in conversations and follow directions given by familiar adults much more readily than with unfamiliar adults. Some children need explicit instruction about positive ways to say “hello,” respond to adults’ comments and questions, or gain an adult’s attention. Children show their skills in this area by:

- responding appropriately when an adult says, “Good morning;”
- answering a teacher’s question about who they played with on the playground;
- asking for attention by raising a hand, touching the teacher’s arm, or other reasonable actions;
- listening to and talking with adults;
- sharing the latest classroom news with the school secretary or custodian.

3 Participates in the group life of the class.

Children this age are beginning to show appreciation of group experiences and awareness of group expectations. However, they often need to be reminded of rules and routines. It is easier for them if group rules, such as how many children can play at the water table, are discussed with them in advance and if they have a part in establishing expectations. Four-year-olds are just beginning to play simple board and card games with rules. They show a growing ability to participate in the group life of the class by:

- readily joining circle times, participating in clean-up time, and going to snack time when it is ready;

- noticing that a friend needs help putting away the blocks and going over to help, even though they had not played in the block area;
- recognizing that a classmate is absent and asking the teacher about it;
- suggesting silly and funny ideas for open-ended songs such as “Aiken Drum” or suggesting the animals for choruses of “Old MacDonald Had a Farm;”
- playing simple “Lotto” games or board games, such as “Candy Land.”

4 Identifies some feelings and responds to those of others.

Learning to recognize your own feelings and those of others is an important life skill. At age 4, children can identify some of their own feelings. They are beginning to recognize the emotions of others from their actions and facial expressions. Generally, children this age are better able to show caring for real people or book characters than abstract ideas or situations. Examples of understanding and responding to emotion include:

- volunteering to sit next to a new child and help the child learn the procedures for snack time;
- expressing sadness to a friend whose pet has died;
- going over to a friend who has fallen and giving comfort;
- expressing appropriate feelings (e.g., joy, sadness, fear) for characters in a story;
- getting help for classmates who cannot get their boots on or cannot find their paintings to take home;
- helping a classmate who has a physical disability.

5 Begins to use simple strategies to resolve conflict.

Four-year-olds need a great deal of adult support and guidance in learning how to settle conflicts (e.g., how to share a limited amount of materials or deciding who will get to go outside first). Their initial responses are physical, such as hitting, grabbing, or pushing. They are beginning to learn alternatives from adults who suggest and model ways to use words and other simple problem-solving formulas. Children show they are gaining awareness of alternatives by:

- asking an adult to help when another child wants the same truck or when other children keep pushing in the line waiting for a turn on the slide;
- using words suggested by an adult to express anger, such as, “I don’t like it when you push me;”
- saying “no” when a classmate takes a toy or interrupts a play sequence;
- giving alternatives to friends, such as, “I’m playing with these, you play with those;”

- asking the teacher to use a timer to decide when one child’s turn on the tricycle ends and their own turn begins.

II Language and Literacy

The language and literacy skills needed to understand and convey meaning are presented in four components: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Students acquire proficiency in this domain through experience with language, print, and informational text and literature in a variety of contexts. Over time, students learn to construct meaning, make connections to their own lives, and gradually begin to analyze and interpret what they hear, observe, and read. They begin to communicate effectively orally and in writing for different audiences and varying purposes.

Language and Literacy for English Language Learners (ELLs) consists of three functional areas: Listening, Phonological Awareness, and Speaking. Depending on the grade level, these areas contain performance indicators such as Gains Meaning by Listening, Follows Directions, Develops Awareness of the Sounds of English, Speaks in Social Situations, and Communicates for a Variety of Purposes, Using Expanded Vocabulary. As with all other performance indicators, there are three ratings, although grade-level expectations of mastery for ELLs are not given since children can come to school at different ages with varying levels of English language acquisition.

A Listening

1 Gains meaning by listening.

Four-year-olds gain knowledge about their world by listening to adults and children. They can listen not only when they are spoken to one-on-one by adults and peers, but also in adult-led small groups. They ask questions about information they do not understand and talk about the connections between events in a story and their own lives. Listening with understanding is enhanced as children participate in singing and chanting activities. Examples include:

- conversing with another person and continuing the discussion about pets from the morning group time;

- answering the question “What comes next?” in a digital story before moving to the next screen;
- listening to recorded stories and showing understanding through body language or pointing to appropriate pictures;
- asking questions to further understand (e.g., “Where did the snow go when it melted?” or “Why did the snow melt?”);
- connecting a story or poem about snow to the big snowfall at their grandmother’s house;
- recalling an earlier part of a story read aloud in order to make sense of a later part.

2 Follows two- or three-step directions.

Four-year-olds are beginning to follow simple two- and three-step directions with relative ease

and even respond well to group instructions, especially if they are part of a classroom routine. They can follow a three-step direction that is new and not part of a classroom routine, however; adults need to emphasize the unfamiliarity of the directions and may need to repeat them. Examples include:

- responding to familiar routines and instructions given to the class (e.g., “Go get your coats and when you are dressed, sit down on the rug”);
- repeating an instruction to a friend;
- following directions on a CD to perform various movements;
- following a sequence of directions that begin with something familiar and include a new action;

- remembering simple, multi-step instructions about getting ready for outdoor time (e.g., “Clean up the table, put your materials on the shelf, and line up at the door.”).

B Speaking

1 Speaks clearly enough to be understood without contextual clues.

Four-year-olds speak with sufficient clarity so that it is easy to understand what they are saying without the help of additional information or gestures. They can ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood. Four-year-olds usually use correct syntax but sometimes overgeneralize grammatical rules. They begin to use longer and more complex sentences when speaking or answering a question. At the same time, they are beginning to converse about objects and events that are not physically present, are somewhat abstract, or that they remember from the past. Examples include:

- speaking clearly enough so that a classroom visitor knows what they are saying;
- accurately delivering a message from home to the teacher;
- communicating in a way that other children understand what is being said without constantly asking, “What did you say;”

- using sign language to indicate who they want to sit next to on a trip to the apple orchard;
- using some prepositions correctly (e.g., “I put the dolly in her bed,” or “My lunchbox is on the desk.”);
- announcing to the other children, “I’m going to build a movie theatre in the block area,” and sharing the plans for building.

2 Follows rules for conversation.

Four-year-olds begin to follow the social rules for conversation. They can take turns in conversations and discussions but sometimes continue to have difficulty staying on topic, especially with new and unfamiliar information. They need support to wait for their conversational turn. Their contributions can be long and complicated about topics they are interested in and have knowledge about. Examples include:

- waiting for their turn to speak before announcing that they got a new puppy;
- telling a classroom visitor, at great length, about the different types of trucks in the truck area;
- adding a relevant idea to another child’s comment;
- telling jokes and giggling even though they do not understand the significance of the word relationships in jokes and puns;

- asking the teacher a question, waiting for the response, and then following up with another question if needed;
- using common social conventions (e.g., “please,” “thank you”) with reminders.

3 Uses expanded vocabulary and language for a variety of purposes.

Four-year-olds are expanding their vocabulary daily through verbal interactions with adults and children and through exposure to books, trips, songs, and other classroom activities. They demonstrate curiosity, interest, comprehension of new words, and ask questions about unfamiliar words in a story or poem read aloud. They use language playfully, but also to give directions, provide explanations, and describe what they see. Examples include:

- telling a classroom visitor about the different trucks in the truck area using accurate terminology;
- drawing a picture of a house to try to show the meaning of a new word (e.g., construction) they learned;
- generating multiple words that are similar in meaning (e.g., angry/furious and big/large/huge);
- using sensory language to describe experiences (e.g., the Play-Doh felt sticky, the sandpaper felt scratchy);

- distinguishing shades of meaning between words (e.g., walk/run or gallop/skip);
- playing with verbal language to make an event larger or more dramatic (e.g., “My dog can run faster than the fastest rocket in the entire universe.”).

C Reading

1 Begins to develop knowledge of letters.

As 4-year-olds are exposed to books and other forms of writing, their interest in letters increases. They understand that speech can be written down and then read, and that the print on a page conveys the story. They have some awareness that reading is done from top to bottom and left to right. They recognize some letters, especially those in their names, and do not confuse letters with numerals or other symbols. Examples include:

- recognizing their name and one of their friends’ names in a list of profiles for a tablet-based game or app;
- guessing a word by recognizing its initial letter (“reads” all words beginning with “s” as “stop”);
- reciting letter names as they sing the alphabet song;
- recognizing and naming some uppercase letters of the alphabet and the lowercase letters in their own name;

- recognizing the letters in one’s own name when they appear in different contexts (e.g., seeing the “M” in Michelle on the label for the markers).

2 Demonstrates phonological awareness.

Phonological awareness refers to the ability to hear and discriminate the sounds of language. Phonemic awareness refers to the awareness of the smallest units of sounds within words, and has been identified as a prerequisite for decoding words when reading. Four-year-olds can attend to and distinguish these smaller units of sound within words. They can begin to hear and discriminate syllables, the beginning sounds of words, and rhyming sounds. Examples include:

- listening to the word the teacher says and then finding a word to rhyme with it;
- hearing the sound of the first letter in their own names and using this ability to sound out or “read” classmates’ names that begin with the same letter;
- jumping once for each syllable in a word;
- experimenting with words, giving them new beginning sounds;
- saying the first and last sounds they hear in a word;
- saying the sound of a letter when they see it in a new word because they recognize it from a familiar word (e.g., the “s” sound in “stop”).

3 Shows appreciation and understanding of books and reading.

Four-year-olds come to preschool with varying abilities to enjoy and understand books. They learn about authors, illustrators, and how to handle books carefully. Most 4-year-olds understand that books are read for enjoyment and to learn new information. Examples include:

- asking the teacher to help them find a book about earth movers;
- looking at books in an orderly fashion (e.g., turning one page at a time, going from front to back);
- pretending to read by pointing to words with one finger as they recite the text;
- identifying several books on a favorite topic or several books by a favorite author or illustrator and asking for one to be read at choice time;
- dictating details of a project to an adult using a computer that is displayed on a big screen, slowing down to be sure the adult captures each word, understanding that verbal language can be captured in print;
- asking whether they are the “author” of the story they dictated to the teacher.

4 Recounts some key ideas and details from text.

As 4-year-olds become involved with familiar stories and informational text, their comprehen-

sion grows. They begin retelling stories in a variety of ways (e.g., looking at the pictures and making up the text, acting out part of the story in dramatic play, telling the story using a flannel board) and repeating information and asking questions to better understand informational text. With teacher guidance, they can begin to guess or make predictions about what will happen next and to connect books to their own experiences. Examples include:

- retelling the main events of a story just read or told by the teacher;
- talking about when their family car was towed after hearing a story about a tow truck;
- guessing what will happen next by looking at the picture on the following page;
- looking at wordless picture books or nonfiction photographic books and creating stories to fit the illustrations;
- sharing facts learned from the illustrations or photographs in an informational (nonfiction) book (e.g., how a caterpillar turns into a butterfly);
- noticing incorrect or missing words in stories read aloud.

D Writing

1 Represents ideas and stories through pictures, dictation, and play.

Four-year-olds continue to investigate how symbols can stand for or represent other things. Before

they can learn to write, children must first realize that letters and words are symbols that represent spoken words and stories. They know that labels on toy shelves tell where to put the toys; that the print in books tells the teacher what to read; and that their own drawings can represent their feelings, ideas, and experiences. Examples include:

- pretending to be a doctor in the dramatic play area and “writing” on a patient’s chart;
- building a block structure to represent the fire station in a story and asking the teacher for help writing “Fire Station;”
- using various forms of media to record classroom activities and share them with others;
- representing concepts learned from hearing an informational book read aloud (e.g., after hearing a story about animals, showing how an elephant’s gait differs from a bunny’s hop);
- recognizing that putting their names on a product signifies that it was done by them;
- telling a story on a tablet or smartphone with a speech-to-text feature, seeing their language turn into print, then asking the teacher to read their story.

2 Uses letter-like shapes, symbols, and letters to convey meaning.

As children observe the teacher making lists and putting names on artwork, they often want to

write for themselves. Position of letters on the paper, actual formation of the letters, and correct order are not yet part of 4-year-olds’ repertoires. Most children become interested in writing their names and perhaps a few other significant words. Examples include:

- labeling a drawing with several randomly placed letter-like shapes;
- writing their own names from memory on their artwork or copying their name from a model (e.g., the teacher writes their name and they copy it);
- spontaneously writing upper- or lowercase letters they know;
- “signing in” to using an app that requires typing in their name;
- copying letters from signs and labels posted around the room, enjoying the power of doing “real writing;”
- typing out significant words (e.g., their name or the names of family and/or pets) writing several letters correctly.

3 Understands purposes for writing.

Although 4-year-olds do not write conventionally, their understanding of the power of writing is growing. Through repeated exposure to different types of writing and environmental print, they learn that writing can fulfill many different functions (e.g., telling stories, conveying messages in a letter, describing direc-

tions for a game), and that writing can be read for enjoyment as well as for information. Examples include:

- pretending to use a telephone book in the dramatic play area to find the phone number of a friend, then writing some numerals on a note pad;
- asking the teacher for help creating signs for the dramatic play area, (e.g., “Hospital” or “Stay out”);
- making grocery lists by writing lines across a note pad and taking the lists to the shopping center in the dramatic play area;
- helping to compose notes, invitations, greetings, or thank-you letters;
- explaining information about a topic using a combination of dictating and drawing.

Language and Literacy for English Language Learners

A Listening for English Language Learners

1 Gains meaning by listening.

Not Yet

At the very earliest stage, preschool and kindergarten children learning English are generally quiet and initially unresponsive to routine classroom activities and conversations (e.g., greetings or putting materials away), but may observe other children and copy their behaviors. They may not consistently attend to listening activities. They respond to oral encouragement only with frequent coaxing and modeling. They may or may not respond orally to questions with a prompted answer (e.g., the teacher says, “What is your name? Say, ‘Maria.’” The student responds, “Maria”).

In Process

Preschool and kindergarten children in the process of learning English begin to show under-

standing of simple language and express themselves in limited ways. To demonstrate comprehension, children may select or point to pictures or objects from oral descriptions, (e.g., “Where is the red truck?” or respond to listening activities by placing objects in the correct place “Put the book on the shelf”). After listening to a story, they may be able to put pictures of the story in the correct order. They begin to respond to yes/no questions and other simple questions with one word answers, but sometimes respond to questions in their native language. As their understanding and expressiveness increases, they begin to participate in singing activities.

Proficient

Children who have experience learning in a language-rich environment demonstrate their understanding of English in a variety of ways. They can understand most school conversations

and most grade-level vocabulary, and respond to verbal directions immediately without needing additional gestural cues or modeling (e.g., “Carlos, please return the homework papers to everyone”). In large groups, they follow discussions and respond voluntarily to questions. They appreciate stories read to the class and show comprehension of stories by identifying main ideas and supporting details, drawing pictures that illustrate a story, and retelling stories in short sentences.

2 Follows directions.

Not Yet

As young children begin to learn English, they show no understanding of entirely verbal teacher directions. They will complete tasks only if a teacher intervenes, models, and encourages them. They remain quiet and make no attempt to respond orally or through actions. They sometimes model the behavior of other children after observing them.

In Process

With more experience in school, English language learners begin to follow directions under certain circumstances. At times, they show a desire to participate by responding immediately to directions; other times they watch others for clarification about what to do. As their confidence increases, they may ask for repetition of directions (e.g., “Teacher, please say again.”) or complete one or two steps of a multistep direction. Taking additional time to understand directions before being expected to respond, hearing a story again, and listening to a description for the second time all help English language learners follow directions successfully.

Proficient

English language learners proficient at following directions can understand, respond, and restate directions. After being given a set of directions, children can explain the directions to a classmate, although sometimes they use their native language to do so. They can listen to instructions for making a product and then restate the directions for themselves and others (e.g., “First, we collect the pieces. Then we put them in order. Then we glue them together.”). At this point, they can easily complete classroom tasks given only verbal directions.

B Phonological Awareness for English Language Learners**1 Develops awareness of the sounds of English.*****Not Yet***

Initially, children learning English may have difficulty distinguishing the sounds of English. They may confuse sounds in English and may substitute one sound for another, frequently one from their native language. For example, they may substitute /b/ for /p/ and say ‘ben’ instead of ‘pen.’ When repeating words that they hear, they commonly omit the final sounds. If children are given a word and asked to choose the picture that matches the word, they may select an incorrect picture or seem confused (e.g., when asked to point to the cat, they may choose ‘cap’). When given choices of words that rhyme, children may guess, or select words that do not rhyme or not respond at all.

In Process

As English language learners begin to hear and recognize the sounds of English, they make progress in many areas. They may enjoy songs and try to sing along, but substitute incorrect words or sounds for unknown lyrics (e.g., may sing “Ole Macdona had a farm. . .”). Most of the time, they can identify rhyming words. They begin to distinguish some sounds such as /t/ and

/d/, but others such as /l/ or /r/ may be more challenging. When given a task involving sounds, they often respond with a non-sense word (e.g., when asked for a word beginning with the /p/ sound, they might respond with ‘pob’). When given a word and asked to select the corresponding picture, they may select the picture without regard to sound carrying meaning (e.g., given the word ‘giraffes,’ they may choose a picture of one giraffe, ignoring the final ‘s’ sound).

Proficient

At this level, English language learners can recognize and manipulate sounds in a variety of different situations. They can identify the number of syllables in words by clapping them out and select rhyming words from an oral list. They can create new words from a given word by replacing the first sound with a different one (e.g., replace the /b/ in ball with a /t/ to make tall). They can identify the sound three words have in common (e.g., sun, salt, seen), and find things in the environment that begin with the same sound (e.g., cup, coat, cubby).

C Speaking for English Language Learners

1 Speaks in social situations.

Not Yet

Children new to English initially speak in their native language as well as when conversing with others of the same language background. They can be quiet and unresponsive when the teacher asks them to repeat a new word or inconsistently attempt to say new words.

In Process

As children spend more time in English language environments, their first sentences are often formulaic speech, words used frequently in the classroom and in social situations such as, “Good morning,” “Hi,” or “How are you?” With more experience, they use known phrases in appropriate situations (e.g., saying “thank you” when given something or “good-bye” when leaving). Children sometimes use a variety of language “chunks,” unanalyzed phrases or sentences (e.g., “Gimme that,” “I go,” or “What’s that?”).

At this stage, children may speak to their peers in comprehensible language but not respond to the teacher. When they do respond to questions, they usually use one or two words. They may combine languages, often in one sentence when they substitute a word from their native language into an English phrase or sentence (e.g., “I live in una casa.”).

Proficient

Children are considered proficient when they greet others, ask for help, respond voluntarily to questions, willingly participate in whole- and small-group discussions, and understand and participate in conversations with classmates. At this level, they can use language to demonstrate comprehension (e.g., they can retell stories in short sentences that may not be grammatically correct, but that demonstrate an accurate understanding of the main events and key details of the story).

The Work Sampling System

III Mathematical Thinking

This domain's focus is on children's approaches to mathematical thinking and problem solving. Emphasis is on how students acquire and use strategies to perceive, understand, and solve mathematical problems. Mathematics is about patterns and relationships and about seeking multiple solutions to problems. The content of mathematics (concepts and procedures) is stressed in this domain, but the larger context of understanding and appreciating (knowing and doing) how mathematical processes can be used is also of great importance.

A Processes and Practices

1 Begins to make sense of problems and uses simple strategies to solve them.

Four-year-olds encounter real-life mathematical problems throughout their day. They begin to make sense of problems by acting out situations, using materials, and interacting with peers and adults in everyday experiences. With guidance and support for inquiry, 4-year-olds begin to solve simple mathematical problems in concrete ways. Examples include:

- figuring out how many small cups it takes to fill the pitcher at the water table;
- wondering aloud how they can make a ball of Play-Doh so that it rolls "like a sphere;"
- matching cookies to children to see if they have enough for everyone to have two;
- figuring out how to share pieces of candy so each person gets the same amount;
- building towers of rectangular prisms and cylinders so they don't fall over;
- solving simple joining and separating problems.

2 Reasons quantitatively and begins to use some tools.

With experience and support, 4-year-olds can reason quantitatively with numbers from one to five. They can answer questions like, "How many?", "How many more?", "How many less?", "How many total/all together?", and "How many are missing?" They often use counters to solve quantitative problems and with guidance, can use a five- or ten-frame to compare and add on to "fill the frame" or take away to "clear the board." Examples include:

- saying, "I need three more to fill it up!" pointing to each of the three empty spaces on the five-frame;
- counting the counters left when given a separating problem, (e.g., "Jon had four apples. He gave two to his friend. How many does he have now?");
- using apps to pop balloons or catch bugs to match a set, asking, "How many more do I need to make 5;"

- asking a peer, "How many am I hiding?" while showing a closed fist filled with two counters;
- identifying if there are more girls or boys by comparing (and matching) two lines of children;
- rearranging five counters on a ten-frame and saying, "It's still five!"

3 Uses words and representations to describe mathematical ideas.

Four-year-olds express their thinking about mathematical ideas by using materials, drawing pictures, and using simple vocabulary. Examples include:

- telling a friend to put four napkins on the table;
- drawing the characters in a story and saying, "I put the three brothers in my picture;"
- explaining why some blocks are separated from the pile by saying, "Because they are yellow;"
- describing a puzzle and saying, "This is an easy one. It only has four pieces;"

- representing the solution to a separating problem with a picture (e.g., “There were three sleeping kittens in the basket. One kitten woke up and ran away. How many are there in the basket now?”);
- singing a song with fingers that has a “minus 1” pattern (e.g., “Five Little Monkeys Jumping on a Bed”) and modeling it with fingers or other manipulatives.

4 Begins to recognize patterns and makes simple generalizations.

Four-year-olds recognize simple patterns and extend them. With guidance, they begin to make simple generalizations about numbers and shapes. For example, after extensive experience playing with many different shapes, a 4-year-old might notice that the ones with “three pointy sides” are triangles. Examples include:

- generalizing that counting can be done in any order (e.g., “I always get the same number.”);
- identifying repeating patterns in numbers (e.g., noticing “There are lots of ones in the numbers 11, 12, 13, 14, 15,…”);
- saying, “The shapes that look like balls don’t stay on the block tower. They keep rolling;”
- recognizing that triangle and square shapes repeat over and over again on the cafeteria wall;
- extending simple repeating counting patterns like 21, 22, 23, 24, … etc;
- using an app to complete a pattern (e.g., out of train cars).

B Number

1 Counts with understanding.

Four-year-olds can count five to 10 objects meaningfully in organized arrangements using one-to-one correspondence on a ten-frame (two rows of five), dice, dominoes, and tallies. They can count out or produce objects to five and they can count verbally up to 20 or 30. Most 4-year-olds understand that the last number named in the collection represents the last object as well as the total number of objects. Examples include:

- pointing to each object in a row and assigning the appropriate number to it;
- filling in the next number as they complete the second row of a ten-frame arranged in two rows of five, saying, “6, 7, 8, etc;”
- counting footsteps, jumps, or repetitions of exercises;
- telling a friend who is first in line, “You’re first;”
- showing the correct number of fingers when asked, “How many on the dominoes;”
- counting and giving the correct number when asked, “How many legs does a spider have?”

2 Shows beginning understanding of number and quantity.

Four-year-olds can explore the meaning of more and less by matching and naming the quantity of small sets of one to six objects. With experience, they begin to understand that a set of objects equals the same number regardless of the position, shape, or order of the objects. Four-year-olds can instantly recognize collections up to four briefly shown and say the number without counting. This is called *subitizing*. Examples include:

- identifying the pips on a die as four without counting;
- comparing a group of six red cubes and four blue cubes and saying, “Red has more;”
- comparing three counters and five counters by putting them on two matched five-frames and identifying five as more and three as fewer or less;
- ordering quantities and numerals one to five;
- using fingers to represent the solution to a joining problem (e.g., “Tasha has two red crayons. Sherri has two blue crayons. How many crayons would they have if they put them together?”);
- using their fingers to touch a screen to make larger or smaller sets to match a target numeral.

C Operations and Algebraic Thinking

1 Understands and begins to apply addition and subtraction to problems.

Four-year-olds can understand and solve simple joining and separating problems using objects and direct modeling. They can add one or two objects to one, two, or three objects and they can count how many objects they have all together. In a similar way, they can begin with three, four, or five objects, take away one or two objects and then count how many they have left. Examples include:

- saying, “I have four beads,” when they add a friend’s two yellow beads to their own two yellow beads;
- counting four blocks in a tower and putting one block on top and saying, “Now I have five blocks in my building;”
- responding to pattern counting questions such as, “What would one more than five be?... One more than six...one more than seven...;”
- responding to “take away one” questions beginning with five counters (e.g., “How many are there now?”) until there is only one counter left;
- modeling $3 + 2$ by combining three objects with two objects and saying, “Now I have five!”

D Measurement

1 Orders, compares, and describes objects according to a single attribute.

Grouping or ordering things based on a single attribute that changes systematically (small to large, short to long, soft to loud) is called *seriation*. Seriation requires children to observe and distinguish slight differences among two or three objects. Four-year-olds begin to directly compare and seriate according to size, length, height, and weight as they explore the properties of things and decide which things are bigger, longer, shorter, or heavier. Examples include:

- placing three crayons on the table, from the shortest to the longest, or the fattest to the thinnest;
- taking leaves brought in from a class walk and arranging them from biggest to smallest;
- touching or moving items on a tablet to sequence them by size, length, or height;
- noticing which children in the class are taller and which are shorter;
- “measuring” with a friend to find out who has the longer string of beads;
- figuring out with a classmate who has the bigger cookie.

2 Participates in measuring activities.

Four-year-olds explore length, height, and weight, although understanding weight is still difficult for them. They have limited awareness of time, although many 4-year-olds recognize that events are sequenced (e.g., first we eat snack, then we have free time, then we go to the gym). Four-year-olds are curious and interested in the measuring tools that adults use and are eager to explore them. Examples include:

- measuring the table with unit blocks and noting that it is four blocks long;
- noting that they can fill the large bowl in the sand table with three small cups of sand;
- trying to balance the scale by putting various objects on each side;
- holding their hands about a foot apart to show how long their Play-Doh snakes are;
- measuring the length of a block road or the height of a block tower;
- using a camera to take pictures to compare the area of two block projects.

F Geometry

1 Shows understanding of and uses several positional words.

Four-year-olds continue to develop spatial sense, the awareness of themselves in relation to people and objects around them. They acquire the vocabulary of posi-

tion and begin to understand direction (which way?), distance (how far?), and location (where?). By age 4, children understand a number of positional and directional words (e.g., above, below, under, beside, behind). Examples include:

- knowing where to stand if asked to stand behind a classmate in the line;
- putting the dollhouse bedroom furniture in the same arrangement as the furniture in their apartments;
- using distance words (e.g., near and far);
- verbalizing their positions as they work and play;
- placing felt cutouts of trees, a sandbox, swing, and slide to make a map of the playground;
- putting the ball under the chair when asked to do so.

2 Begins to recognize and describe the attributes of shapes.

Four-year-olds begin to notice similarities and differences in the attributes of different shapes when prompted to observe shapes in the classroom and environment. With encouragement, 4-year-olds can recognize different variations of shapes (e.g., equilateral triangles and isosceles triangles are all triangles), identify particular shapes in different orientations as being the same shape, and label shapes and discuss their characteristics. Examples include:

- pointing out a triangle and counting its sides;
- labeling shapes by their feel rather than appearance (e.g., identifying shape blocks in a “feely box”);
- locating individual shapes in pictures composed of overlapping shapes;
- announcing that a shape on a poster looks like “a triangle with its head cut off;”
- recognizing an isosceles triangle as a triangle even when it is shown without a horizontal base;
- finding all the triangles that are exactly the same size.

3 Composes and decomposes shapes.

Four-year-olds begin to put 3-D shapes together and understand that the result will make a new 3-D shape. They can also make a 3-D structure that matches a 2-D picture of a 3-D structure. Four-year-olds can make pictures using 2-D shapes and fill simple shape puzzles using trial and error. Examples include:

- identifying a “big box” when two congruent rectangular prisms are stacked together;
- creating a building that looks like a house using a rectangular and triangular prism;
- completing an outlined clown picture with pattern blocks;

- making a 3-D structure that contains two cylinders and a rectangular prism and matches a photo of a structure with the same blocks;
- creating a picture of an animal using 2-D shapes;
- creating symmetrical patterns with apps with split screen features.

IV Scientific Thinking

The central areas of scientific investigation—*inquiry skills and practices; physical, life, and earth sciences*—are addressed in this domain. Also emphasized are the processes of scientific investigation because process skills are embedded in and fundamental to all scientific inquiry, instruction, and content. The focus in this domain is on how children actively investigate through observing, recording, describing, questioning, forming explanations, and ultimately drawing conclusions.

A Inquiry Skills and Practices

1 Asks questions and begins to solve problems that arise during explorations.

Four-year-olds verbalize their ideas and questions to an increasing extent. Many of their questions (“Where did those bubbles come from?” or “What will happen if I lift up this log?”) can be directly investigated, while others cannot (“Why is the sky blue?” or “Why do leaves drop off trees in the fall?”). When 4-year-olds are immersed in an exploration, they may be quiet, and even appear to ignore teacher interactions. However, their behavior provides clues to the questions and problems they find most intriguing. A girl rolling a ball down a ramp over and over again, continuously readjusting the ramp’s steepness, might ask, “How does the steepness of the ramp affect how far the ball rolls?” With teacher guidance, children can be led to answer questions through further observation and questioning, making charts, or otherwise organizing observations. Teachers can also encourage children to

describe investigable questions through modeling (“I’m wondering which ball would go farther on the rug. What are you wondering?”) Examples include:

- taking apart a flashlight to see what is inside;
- wondering where the frost that appears on windows after cold nights comes from;
- exploring at the water or sand table, letting the sand or water run through their fingers, commenting on the way it feels, and noting how fast or slow it flows;
- observing ice cubes or snow at room temperature to see what happens;
- listening to sounds from outside and identifying the sources (e.g., “That’s a truck, that’s an airplane, that’s a dog barking”);
- noticing that a device is running low on batteries and needs to be charged.

2 Uses senses and simple tools to explore solutions to problems.

Four-year-olds tend to approach familiar tasks in new ways. They enjoy figuring things out, such as how to make a block building

stand up or get a rock to float, and finding new solutions to old problems. They are masters of trial and error, and discard strategies quickly that don’t work. Mysteries (e.g., tracking unfamiliar footprints in the snow to their source) excite them, and they are more confident about describing their observations and ideas verbally and in representations (e.g., drawing, painting, and making 3-D structures). With teacher support, 4-year-olds come to view their senses as tools for exploration. Examples include:

- using different sized spoons to scoop out a pumpkin and figuring out which spoon works best;
- solving the problem of the falling tower of blocks by saying, “Let’s ‘stick’ the tower of blocks together using tape;”
- using tape to make a “spider web” outside (with teacher support) and then seeing how the wind blows things into it;
- trying to sift a variety of materials through a sieve to see what will go through and what will not;

- using a hand lens to look at ridges on an earthworm;
- observing objects through a hand lens and then through a simple microscope.

3 Makes meaning from explorations, and generates ideas and solutions based on their own observations of the natural and human-made worlds.

Four-year-olds readily describe their observations of objects, materials, and organisms. They can compare characteristics and organize things based on color, size, weight, and shape (although these concepts are still emerging). Evidence from their experiences and observations may still result in ideas that adults find amusing (e.g., “shaking leaves cause the wind” or “trees can’t be living because they don’t move”). They are beginning to understand that other people may have experiences, observations, and ideas that differ from their own. Examples include:

- noticing that there are plants indoors and out, and commenting, “plants can grow anywhere;”
- sharing their science experiences, observations, and ideas in small group conversations;
- reflecting on previous ideas and considering new evidence, saying, “When I press the small lever the top moves, I wonder what will happen when I press the big lever;”

- noticing differences collaboratively, with a group, using apps like LittleThings® or I SPY®, displayed on a large clear screen during group time;
- collecting rocks that have pink flecks for use in a classroom experiment.

4 Communicates experiences, observations, and ideas with others through conversations, representations, and/or behavior.

Four-year-olds love to share and talk about what they are doing, learning, and thinking about. As they begin to learn that other children have different experiences than they do, they become increasingly interested in listening to the observations and ideas of their peers. They can participate in conversations about science for 5 to 10 minutes. They enjoy collaborating with other children in active physical science investigations, and these may include lots of laughter as children jointly test their ideas and solutions, and observe results. Examples include:

- discussing with peers what they will see on the museum field trip;
- talking about how their observations of a turtle differ from their peers’ with teacher prompting;
- explaining, with teacher support, how the real turtle at the zoo differed from the turtle they read about;

- making 3-D sculptures of plants they observed, carefully comparing the real plant and their sculpture;
- charting their ideas about what shapes will slide and/or roll on a ramp;
- drawing an animal to show what it looks like, even if the drawing does not quite look like the animal.

B Physical Science

1 Explores the properties of objects and materials, and how they change.

Four-year-olds begin to choose objects and materials for play based on their properties. They build complex structures with a variety of blocks; create artwork using paints, glue, and collage materials; investigate sand, water, goop, Play-Doh, and clay; and participate in cooking and freezing/melting activities. Examples include:

- choosing blocks for building based on their size, shape, texture, or the material they are made from, and describing them using more sophisticated descriptive and mathematical vocabulary like “bigger,” “smaller,” “rough,” and “smooth;”
- comparing and classifying objects based on their attributes, and/or their uses (e.g., how are a car and a truck the same and different?);

- beginning to distinguish between natural and human-made objects;
- feeling different objects' textures to understand their properties, when movement is limited;
- describing from experience an example of how an object or material can change when it is broken (e.g., a glass), mixed (e.g., water and flour to make Play-Doh), heated (e.g., an egg), or frozen (e.g., water);
- using tools such as a magnifying glass or a digital camera to enhance exploration.

2 Explores how objects and materials move in different circumstances.

Four-year-olds are increasingly able to move, control, and balance their own bodies in different ways. They benefit from having a wide variety of building materials, different types of balls, and water exploration materials (e.g., clear basters, squeeze bottles, funnels, and lengths of tubing) to investigate movement. Children use simple engineering skills as they plan and build structures, and systems for moving balls or water. Examples include:

- describing a plan for building, repeating successful building strategies, and/or extending a building experience over several days;

- moving their bodies in different ways, when asked to move like a grasshopper, move like the wind during a storm, move like water on a still summer day;
- describing the way objects and materials can move using terms like "back and forth," "zigzag," and "round and round;"
- generating ideas about how and why things stand or move the way they do (e.g., "The spikes in the rug stop the ball.");
- recording or representing information from building or movement explorations like the design of their building or how far a ball traveled.

3 Explores and describes light and sound.

Four-year-olds love to explore light and sound, and are fascinated by experiences that allow them to observe familiar things in new or novel ways. When children investigate light and sound, they are connected to technology and engineering as they design and assemble simple instruments, and make puppets for shadow play. Examples include:

- comparing and describing sound volume and pitch using words (e.g., "louder," "softer," "higher," "lower," "brighter," and "darker;")
- identifying sounds that are the same or different;

- generating ideas about the direction a familiar sound is coming from, and whether the source is close or far away;
- investigating shadows outside (e.g., trying to separate from their shadow, or coordinate its movements with a friend's shadow) or inside using a computer projector and solid colored wall as a backdrop for experimenting with shadows;
- beginning to construct relationships about how shadows change as a result of their actions (e.g., when the object casting the shadow moves closer to the light, the shadow gets bigger);
- making different sounds (e.g., loud, soft, high, low, repeated, whispers) with one hand on their larynx and noting whether or not the vibrations change.

C Life Science

1 Explores the characteristics of living things.

Four-year-olds continue to construct their understanding of what kinds of things are living and what are not (e.g., they often think trees are not living). They use tools such as hand lenses and drawing tools to enhance and record their observations of various characteristics of living things. Examples include:

- talking about how they use their five senses to explore and identify the related sense organs;

- studying both sides of leaves collected on a nature walk and attempting to draw what they see;
- observing and describing the characteristics and behavior of an animal or plant (e.g., observing a worm and using terms like “wiggly,” “fat,” and “shaped like an S;” making body movements to demonstrate how it moves; and rolling “worms” out of brown Play-Doh);
- using books and apps to explore one type of animal or insect in depth;
- generating ideas about how a living thing’s characteristics help it (e.g., a bird’s wings help it fly around the tree).
- investigating a tree or other large plant in the immediate environment, and observing, describing, and/or drawing the animals that live in, on, and around it;
- planning and participating in setting up a terrarium for plants and/or animals using natural objects and materials from their environment;
- making connections between the needs of plants and animals and the environment where they are found (e.g., many birds live in trees where they can make nests in the branches, hide from cats, and eat insects that live in the tree);
- making comparisons between how they get their needs met in their own homes (e.g., eating meals, staying warm and dry, having a bed) and how other animals get their needs met in their homes;
- reminding the teacher that the classroom pet needs to be fed because it is hungry.

2 Explores the needs of living things.

Over time and after many experiences, four-year-olds will construct an understanding of needs versus wants and the needs shared by all living things (including plants). They may suggest that animals have the same needs, interests, and wants that they do. These explorations connect to technology and engineering as children create homes for living things in the classroom and make comparisons between human-made and animal-made structures. Examples include:

D Earth Science

1 Observes the sky and the natural and human-made objects in it.

Four-year-old children are very interested in the sky and the living and nonliving things they observe there, including the sun, stars, clouds, birds, and human-made objects like airplanes, helicopters, and kites. They benefit from many facilitated opportunities to observe the sky during the

day (and at night, if possible). Examples include:

- describing the differences between the day and night sky; stating the different shapes of the moon when asked;
- counting the number of stars at night;
- describing the shapes of clouds in detail and comparing them to other things (e.g., “That cloud looks like a jelly bean”);
- asking how a kite flies in the sky;
- asking why it is still dark on some winter mornings;
- asking where the sun goes at night;
- noticing the sun feels warm on their skin.

2 Explores rocks, water, soil, and sand.

Four-year-olds observe natural objects and materials in the environment with increasing interest and focus. They explore rocks, water, soil, and sand by looking, touching, lifting, and listening. They can generate ideas about how these materials might be used for making things (e.g., mud pies or houses for small creatures), and can use a variety of digging and collecting tools to enhance their explorations. Examples include:

- collecting, observing, describing, and sorting natural objects and materials according to their physical characteristics (e.g., sorting rocks by color, size, or shape);

- beginning to investigate wind through weather explorations;
- investigating the natural and human-made environment, including rock walls and local bodies of water (e.g., ponds, streams, and puddles), and raising questions about how they might provide homes for living things;
- building structures using natural materials like soil and water to make mud, or sand and water to make sand structures;
- experimenting with different amounts of sand and water to find the optimal mixture.
- describing and applying their ideas about seasonal activities to their play (e.g., describing the kinds of clothing they wear in the winter versus the summer, and why);
- saying they can't go outside to play because it's raining;
- asking if they need sunscreen on a sunny day.

3 Observes weather and seasonal changes.

Four-year-olds enjoy going outdoors frequently, although they need guidance about when it is appropriate to be outdoors. They can describe many weather conditions and draw conclusions about the type of clothing they should wear and the kinds of activities available to them. They also observe seasonal changes and their impact on human activities. Examples include:

- investigating and describing the current weather (e.g., how sunny or cloudy it is, whether there is wind, if it is raining or snowing, and whether it is hot or cold);
- participating in recording weather conditions daily and looking for patterns;

The Work Sampling System

V Social Studies

This domain includes a broad array of theoretical ideas from anthropology, sociology, history, political science, geography, economics, and psychology. In early childhood, these themes are explored through play, personal interactions, literacy activities, projects, data collection and analysis, and report presentation beginning with the study of self, family, and community. In the primary grades, content areas are broadened to include local and state history, economics, political science, and geography. The exploration of social issues and their underlying theoretical constructs permit young children an opportunity to use meaningful content that helps prepare them as life-long learners.

A People, Past and Present

1 Identifies similarities and differences in personal and family characteristics.

Four-year-olds notice similarities and differences among themselves and others. Initially they focus on physical characteristics and family habits. With teacher guidance, they begin to show awareness that people are members of different cultural groups and have different habits, traditions, and customs. Examples include:

- painting an outline of themselves (body tracing) with colors of clothing and hair and eyes that match their own;
- looking at each person's skin and exploring the different colors and shades;
- noticing that some people speak differently than others and helping the teacher make a chart showing names of objects in two or three different languages;

- noting, "Tasha's family is different because she has two mommies and I only have one;"
- talking about grandparents and discussing how they look different from children;
- inquiring about the legs of a student who uses a wheelchair.

2 Demonstrates beginning awareness of community, city, and state.

Four-year-olds begin to identify characteristics and symbols of their community, city, and state as they hear stories and have conversations. They show awareness of the holidays that are celebrated in their communities and recognize the symbols associated with them. Examples include:

- drawing and writing about Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday in the writing center;
- dressing up for "founders' day" in dramatic play;
- pointing out the post office as they take a neighborhood walk;
- attempting to add the flag to their painting and talking about the colors;

- saying, "I know that July 4 is when we watch fireworks for our country;"
- recognizing a handicap parking sign in the school parking lot.

B Human Interdependence

1 Begins to understand family needs, roles, and relationships.

Four-year-olds are very interested in learning about family roles and relationships. Through dramatic play and conversation they actively investigate the jobs family members perform to meet the family's needs (e.g., working, preparing dinner, driving the car, taking care of children). When they realize that a classmate's family structure differs from theirs, they want to find out more about those differences. Examples include:

- role-playing a variety of family members in the dramatic play area using words and/or actions;
- talking with the teacher or each other about when their mommies or grandpas go to work and what they do there;

- bringing in props from family members' work, such as hard hats, briefcases, or guitars and using them during dramatic play;
- contributing to a class chart that lists each child, their family members, and the jobs each person does to help the rest of the family (e.g., shopping, cooking, cleaning, reading bedtime stories, washing clothes, taking out the trash).
- playing with books and apps that explore family relationships;
- creating an animated drawing that illustrates the members of a family, including pets.

2 Identifies some people's jobs and what is required to perform them.

Four-year-olds can identify a variety of jobs at home and in the community. They can give simple explanations about what workers do and identify some tools used to perform specific jobs. With experience, their knowledge expands beyond firefighters and police officers to include storekeepers, postal workers, nurses, doctors, garbage collectors, road builders, mechanics, and others. Examples include:

- experimenting with a cash scanning machine, postal scale, or hoses and squeegees;
- acting out a trip to a big box store, choosing new clothes and buying groceries;

- using the flannel board to recall a trip to an orchard, and showing how apples are picked and packed;
- looking at apps, sites, and books to identify the various machines used for road construction;
- using props to role play a community worker (e.g., a firefighter's hat, the doctor's stethoscope).

3 Begins to be aware of how technology affects their life.

Four-year-olds are active explorers of various forms of technology in their environment. Children can begin to appreciate that they would not know about events in other places without phones, the Internet, or large screen displays, and could not talk to or visit distant relatives so easily without phones, video conferencing, tablets, texting, cars, or planes. Examples include:

- recording a story or a video using a digital camera or a tablet;
- understanding that most devices use batteries that need to be charged in order to work;
- describing the nature program about giraffes in Africa that they watched on the Internet or podcast;
- sharing during circle time that, "Grandma video conferenced from Puerto Rico to say happy birthday;"

- role playing with technology props (e.g., old cell phones, computers) in the dramatic play area;
- listening to stories and other narrative-driven interactive media on tablets.

C Citizenship and Government

1 Demonstrates awareness of rules.

Four-year-olds can be very strict about adhering to classroom rules. They like having clear rules and prefer that rules be followed. They can begin to understand, with guidance, why rules are important for cooperative living. Examples include:

- helping to make the rules for choice time (e.g., only two people at the sand table because there's not enough room);
- following rules on the playground, such as no bumping into people when you are on the tricycle or your "license" will be taken away;
- accepting that they have to wait before painting because the easels are full;
- explaining to a classmate why the hamster cannot be taken out of its cage;
- stating the rule about how we treat our friends.

2 Shows awareness of what it means to be a leader.

Four-year-olds think about leadership only in the context of firsthand experience (e.g., the

teacher’s role, the principal’s role, or director’s role). Four-year-olds may also show some awareness of the leadership qualities that parents or caregivers exhibit. Examples include:

- pretending to be the band director or conductor when playing with musical instruments;
- acting out the teacher’s role during dramatic play;
- saying, “I’m the boss of the building we’re making, so I’ll tell you what blocks to use;”
- trying to figure out who is in charge of the firehouse or the police station after a visit;
- talking to the principal or the director about his or her job;
- showing some leadership qualities as they pretend to be parents or caretakers during dramatic play.

D People and Where They Live

1 Describes the location of things in the environment.

Understanding the concept of location provides the foundation for geographic thinking. Four-year-olds show they understand location by placing objects in specific positions in the surrounding environment or commenting on how objects are spatially related to one another. (“The yellow house is very far away.”) They can match objects to their

usual geographic locations (e.g., a toaster in the kitchen, a bed in the bedroom, a tree in the park). Examples include:

- placing pictures of common household items in the proper rooms of a prepared house floor plan and explaining why they go there;
- using the teacher’s clue that “The markers are below the pencils” to locate the markers on the shelf;
- creating the grocery store in the block area and then adding props to show where the cashiers and food scanning machines are located;
- using a flannel board, SMART Board®, or tablet to show the order of stores on a main street;
- creating a simple drawing and saying, “Here’s my map of the playground;”
- following a simple treasure hunt map within the classroom.

2 Shows awareness of the environment.

Interest in the environment is very concrete for 4-year-old children. They notice objects and features in their environment and how the environment changes. Examples include:

- noticing new displays or materials in the classroom;
- sharing information about the progress of the road repairs they saw on their way to school;

- commenting on a seasonal change and saying, “Now that it’s summer, we don’t have to wear coats;”
- drawing a favorite part of the story they heard and including the river and people fishing;
- pointing out the steps to the library and saying, “Look how high the library is. There are so many steps to climb.”

3 Shows some awareness of ways people affect their environment.

With teacher support, 4-year-olds begin to understand how people affect the environment by relating it to the classroom and to their own yards and neighborhoods. Examples include:

- discussing reasons for not picking flowers on the walk they recently took;
- explaining to a classmate why a passageway must be kept uncluttered for classmates with visual or physical impairments;
- pointing to the tissues on the floor and then making a sign to remind classmates to throw them away;
- talking about why it would be hard to play with the blocks if they were all over the classroom, rather than stored in one place;
- taking a before/after photo with a tablet to show the effects of clean-up time.

The Work Sampling System

VI The Arts

This domain focuses on children's engagement with the arts (dance, dramatics, music, and visual arts), both actively and receptively. Two ideas are emphasized: how children use the arts to express, represent, and integrate their experiences; and how children develop an understanding and appreciation for the arts. Opportunities to use a variety of materials, guidance in the use of those materials, and communication with adults and peers about process and product enable children to demonstrate what they know, expand their thinking, and make connections among the arts, culture, history, and other domains.

A Expression and Representation

1 Participates in group music experiences.

Four-year-olds quickly become involved in singing, finger plays, chants, musical instruments, and moving to music. They are usually quite unself-conscious when participating in music activities and can gain a sense of mastery if there are no expected outcomes or performances. Examples of involvement include:

- participating in finger plays and musical games;
- listening to music on tapes, CDs, and other forms of audio recordings during choice time;
- starting and stopping playing their instruments when the piano or recording starts or stops;
- knowing the words of oft-repeated songs, humming or singing them during other parts of the day;
- using rhythm sticks or other instruments in time to a beat;

- using a piano keyboard to experiment with pitch and rhythm.

2 Participates in creative movement, dance, and drama.

Four-year-olds can participate with abandon in dancing and creative movement. Their imaginations are overflowing with images and ideas that they can express with movement. They pantomime movement of familiar things, act out stories, and reenact events from their own lives in dramatic play. Examples include:

- dramatizing a story read aloud during circle time;
- using movement to interpret or imitate feelings, animals, plants growing, or a rain storm;
- dancing to a variety of different kinds of music, such as jazz, rock, ethnic, classical;
- galloping, twirling, and “flying,” or performing almost any other imaginative movement in response to music;
- acting out the role of a mother in dramatic play;

- creating innovative movements to accompany recorded or group singing.

3 Uses a variety of art materials for tactile experience and exploration.

Four-year-olds are very active, and can sustain attention to art activities for only limited periods of time. They engage in the artistic process with great enthusiasm, but show little desire to produce a product. This enables them to explore various media with freedom. They demonstrate exploration by:

- trying a variety of materials and ways of using them (e.g., using a big brush to paint broad strokes, single lines going this way and that, or combining colors);
- experimenting with Play-Doh by rolling and patting it, cutting it with cookie cutters, sticking things into it, or sometimes making it into an object;
- drawing or otherwise creating backdrops for puppet shows or signs for block structures;

- using new implements (e.g., cotton swabs, straws) to paint a picture;
- using stamps or other objects to print with paint or ink;
- “playing back” a digital sketch or drawing at different speeds (e.g., 2x or 4x time).
- closely watching a magician or musician who is performing for the class;
- using a tablet’s camera to capture photos or video of a performance.

B Understanding and Appreciation

1 Responds to artistic creations or events.

Many children express their interest in the arts as observers rather than producers. With teacher guidance, children can begin to comment on each other’s work, asking questions about methods used, showing interest in the feelings being expressed, or noticing details. With teacher support, 4-year-olds can attend to and appreciate children’s concerts, dance performances, and theater productions. Examples include:

- listening to music during choice time, indicating appreciation through body language and facial expressions;
- watching classmates as they engage in creative movement activities;
- imitating the voice a classmate used to play Papa Bear;
- exclaiming about the skill a classmate displays in painting, modeling with Play-Doh, or building with LEGO®;

VII Physical Development, Health, and Safety

The emphasis in this domain is on physical development, health, and safety as integral parts of a child's well being and educational growth. The functional components address gross motor skills, fine motor skills, and personal health, nutrition, and safety. In gross motor, the focus is on a child's ability to move in ways that demonstrate control, balance, and coordination. Fine motor skills include strength, coordination, and eye-hand skills. These skills are important in building the foundation upon which self-care skills, handwriting, and artistic expression mature. The third component addresses a child's growing ability to understand his/her personal health, including self-care, nutrition, and physical safety.

A Gross Motor Development

1 Moves with increased balance and control.

Four-year-olds are actively refining their gross motor control. They enjoy practicing skills and challenging themselves to jump farther or run faster than their friends. They can run more smoothly than at younger ages, hop on each foot several times, and climb up and down stairs using a more adult-like form. Four-year-olds show their emerging skills by:

- maintaining balance on a 2 x 4 balance beam that is close to the ground;
- moving around the classroom on narrow paths between furniture without bumping into things;
- developing mastery over running skills (e.g., quick stops, full circle turns, short 180° turns, speeding up and slowing down);

- going up and down stairs alternating feet without holding onto the rail or the wall;
- hopping several times on each foot;
- galloping with a smooth gait and relative ease.

2 Coordinates combined movement patterns to perform simple tasks.

Four-year-olds are able to combine movements to accomplish increasingly challenging physical tasks. They can now kick balls, aim and throw bean bags, climb and swing on jungle gyms, and ride tricycles with increasing control. They love to practice these new skills in games, especially with adult companions. Ways they show increasing coordination include:

- throwing a ball in the right direction, aiming at a target with reasonable accuracy;
- catching a ball by moving their arms or bodies to adjust for the direction the ball is traveling;
- kicking a large ball with a two-step start;

- riding a tricycle on a path around the playground;
- using the slide, seesaw, or swings;
- hitting a stationary target with an overhand throw.

B Fine Motor Development

1 Uses emerging strength and control to perform simple tasks.

Four-year-olds continue to develop fine motor skills through their participation in classroom activities. By using many different classroom materials (e.g., art materials and tools, manipulatives, a workbench), they improve their hand and finger strength and control. Examples of their efforts include:

- pulling the caps off markers and putting them back on firmly;
- using the paper punch to make holes;
- twisting the cap off a glue stick;
- cutting off tape with scissors or using the tape dispenser's serrated edge;

- using the mouse to move a cursor on a screen, while coordinating up and down mouse clicks to drag and drop objects;
- fastening snaps and zippers on their coats.

2 Uses eye–hand coordination to perform tasks.

Four-year-olds demonstrate their eye–hand coordination skills as they start to construct with blocks, Tinker Toys®, and LEGO blocks; put together puzzles; and experiment at the sand and water tables. Their artwork tends to become more complicated as they use newly mastered skills to create products. Examples of eye–hand coordination include:

- zipping coats;
- cutting on a line or around a large picture with scissors;
- stringing beads onto yarn;
- dressing dolls using snaps and buttons;
- constructing or copying buildings and roads with table blocks;
- assembling digital puzzles with smaller parts.

3 Shows beginning control of writing, drawing, and art tools.

Four-year-olds are interested in the process of drawing and writing; however, the finished product is not as important to them as the process of creation. At this age, children begin to use a more conventional grasp and practice making some letters for their names or for signs. Four-year-

olds show their growing control over writing and drawing tools by:

- drawing with markers and then deciding that the picture is a dog, a monster, or “me;”
- using markers on a whiteboard, writing letters or numbers (or approximations);
- holding a pencil in a pincer grasp;
- using glue sticks to paste a variety of items on a collage;
- trying a variety of ways to make brush strokes at the easel;
- switching easily between different tools, such as an air brush, marker, paint brush or pencil, using digital creativity apps.

C Self-Care, Health, and Safety

1 Performs some self-care tasks independently.

Four-year-olds love performing self-care tasks and daily routines on their own. Sometimes they need guidance to avoid becoming silly and to stay on task. They forget rules easily because they are busy with other thoughts, but they can usually meet expectations after verbal reminders. They can begin to learn about their need for food, water, and shelter. They show growing self-care skills by:

- using the toilet independently;
- brushing their teeth with minimal guidance;

- managing dressing tasks independently (e.g., putting on coats, pants, and boots);
- taking apple slices from the snack platter and telling a friend that this is a healthy snack;
- pouring juice or milk from a small pitcher without spilling;
- mastering zippers, buttons, and some buckles (tying shoes is not yet expected).

2 Follows basic safety rules with reminders.

Four-year-olds are becoming aware of some safety issues and how to keep themselves safe. They show their beginning understanding of safety rules by:

- acting out fire safety procedures (e.g., stop, drop, and roll);
- carrying scissors and pencils with points down to avoid accidents;
- standing far enough away from swings in use to avoid injury;
- following the teacher’s directions during an emergency event or practice drill;
- knowing to hold an adult’s or partner’s hand when crossing the street;
- playing with apps that provide a context for discussing pedestrian or bike safety.