

THE HIGH QUALITY EARLY LEARNING PROJECT

PRE-K GUIDING QUESTIONS “WALKING ALONGSIDE THE LEARNER: CURRICULUM IN YVONNE’S PRE-K CLASSROOM”

Consider these questions when viewing the videos:

Foundational Beliefs

1. Underlying Yvonne’s teaching practices are some foundational beliefs/values supported by research (if you are reviewing these videos in a group, see how many of the ideas below can be generated by the group in a discussion):
 - All humans have an innate desire to learn;
 - Interest is a motivating force for learning;
 - Learning is a process of constructing understandings - connecting new information with each individual’s unique prior understandings and experiences;
 - Children grow and develop at different paces and rates and have differing strengths/abilities;
 - Young children learn through experiences and relationships; and
 - Learning is enhanced when teachers believe and trust in the capacity of all to learn.

How do you see this reflected in Yvonne’s classroom? How are/can these ideas be incorporated in your work?

Classroom Environment

2. Yvonne’s classroom is organized into activity centers (blocks, sand/water, dramatic play, art projects, painting, playdough, cooking, manipulatives, library, sewing, animals, etc.) How would you explain what the children are learning in the different areas?
3. What do you think is the reason for providing opportunities for independent, small group, and large group activities? How might you do this in your classroom?
4. Yvonne’s classroom features a large segment of time each day for “worktime.” What do you think is the purpose for that?
5. What do you think is the purpose/benefit of offering children choices for the activities they want to do? How might you do this in your work?
6. Yvonne follows worktime with a “worktime meeting.” What do you think is the purpose/value of this? How might you incorporate this idea in your work?

Curriculum

7. What does Yvonne mean by “walking alongside the learner” as she develops curriculum?
8. The video highlights some of the learning experiences that are part of the curriculum theme of “Change.” What other experiences could you provide to continue/extend this study?
9. How is language/literacy supported in Yvonne’s classroom? How do you infuse language/literacy into classroom work?

The Teacher

10. What is the role of the teacher as modeled by Yvonne? What, if anything, about this role do you want to incorporate in your work?
11. In the video, Yvonne notes that life contexts and standards for learning continually change but how children learn remains constant. How do you think Yvonne’s teaching approach prepares children for the knowledge/skills called for in today’s standards?
12. What are Yvonne’s goals for her students? What do you think about these? What are yours? How do you incorporate your goals in your work?