

Syllabus

Approaches to Making Art in the Early Childhood Classroom: Exploring Line, Shape, and Color

Course Description:

This course introduces early childhood educators to developmentally appropriate strategies for fostering creativity and self-expression in young children through the visual arts. Participants will explore routines for setting up an engaging Art Center, implement the Three-Part Lesson (Engagement, Work Time, Reflection), and develop activities centered on collage and painting for children aged 3-5 through inquiry, exploration, and discovery.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will:

- Understand the value of process-based art making.
- Implement the Three-Part Lesson (Engagement, Work Time, Reflection) effectively in art-based activities.
- Set up and activate an Art Center that promotes independence and creativity.
- Facilitate children's creative exploration and self-expression in collage and painting.
- Foster children's fine motor and problem-solving skills through art making.

Materials:

- Construction paper
- Liquid glue
- Tempera paint
- Paintbrush
- Heavyweight white paper

Module 1: Process-Based Art Making

Overview:

This module introduces process-based art making, highlighting the importance of exploration over product. Educators will reflect on their own experiences and understand how this approach nurtures children's developmental growth and creativity.

Objectives:

- Reflect on personal early art-making experiences.
- Understand the differences between process-oriented and product-oriented art.
- Describe how process-based art supports children's development in areas such as creativity, fine motor skills, and critical thinking.

Key Activities:

- Watch a video of children engaged in process-oriented art making.
- Read an article about the development of creativity in young children.
- Reflect on the connection between process-based art and children's development.
- Write a process-oriented art-making lesson plan.

Module 2: The Art Center

Overview:

This module focuses on creating an Art Center that encourages children to access and explore materials independently. Educators will learn how to organize materials and establish routines to foster creativity.

Objectives:

- Understand the role of the Art Center in promoting creativity and independence.
- Learn how to organize materials using a "less is more" approach that supports children's exploration.
- Plan and implement an Art Center that engages young children.

Key Activities:

- Read an overview of the Art Center and its benefits.
- Analyze photos of well-organized Art Centers.

- Write a plan for setting up your own Art Center with accessible materials.

Module 3: The Three Part Lesson: Engagement—Exploring Marks and Lines

Overview:

This module introduces the Three-Part Lesson structure (Engagement, Work Time, Reflection) focusing on the Engagement section. Educators will explore how to guide children in making marks and lines through painting.

Objectives:

- Understand the components of the Three-Part Lesson structure.
- Explore strategies for engaging children through inquiry, exploration, and discovery.
- Practice teaching the Engagement portion of a lesson.

Key Activities:

- Watch videos on the Three-Part Lesson and “Exploring Marks and Lines.”
- Read about the structure of the Three-Part Lesson.
- Practice teaching an Engagement focused on mark-making and lines.

Module 4: The Three-Part Lesson: Work Time—Exploring Tearing Shapes

Overview:

This module focuses on the Engagement and Work Time segments of the Three-Part Lesson. Educators will learn how to guide children in a collage activity that develops both creativity and fine motor skills through tearing shapes from paper.

Objectives:

- Understand the Work Time component of the Three-Part Lesson.
- Facilitate a collage lesson that supports children’s individual approaches.
- Create an Engagement plan for a torn paper activity.

Key Activities:

- Explore the process of tearing paper to create shapes.
- Write and practice teaching an Engagement for the torn paper lesson.
- Record yourself teaching the Engagement and reflect on your teaching through video review.
- Consider how you would support the Work Time section of this lesson.

Module 5: The Three-Part Lesson: Reflection—Exploring Mixing Colors

Overview:

In the final module, participants will focus on the Reflection segment of the Three-Part Lesson, using a painting activity centered around color mixing to encourage curiosity, perseverance, and problem-solving.

Objectives:

- Develop reflection questions that encourage children to reflect on their process.
- Implement a color-mixing activity.
- Guide children through the Reflection phase of the Three-Part Lesson, promoting thoughtful discussion about their work.

Key Activities:

- Watch a video on color mixing.
- Write and teach a color-mixing lesson using tempera paint.
- Engage children in reflection using open-ended questions.

This syllabus provides an overview of the course content and expectations. Participants will complete the course with practical tools and strategies for integrating art into early childhood education, fostering creativity and independence in young children.