

Area One: Approaches to Play and Learning

CURIOSITY AND INITIATIVE APL1

1 Being curious learners APL1.1

(Early Infancy 0-8 months)

- a Shows awareness of what is going on around them by turning their head and looking around. APL1.1A
- b Shows excitement with facial expressions, vocalizations, or physical movements. APL1.1B

Later Infancy 6-14 months

- c Shows interest in new experiences such as reaching out to touch rain, hearing a new song, or examining new items APL1.1C

Early Toddler 12-24 months

- d Participates in new experiences, begins to ask questions, and experiments with new materials APL1.1D

Later Toddler 22-36 months

- e Asks questions about materials and how they are used APL1.1E
- f Shows interest and awareness in changes in the environment APL1.1F

Early Preschool 34-48 months

- g Seeks out new information, asks “Why?” (Early Preschool 34-48 months) APL1.1G

Later Preschool 44-60 months

- h Shows curiosity by saying things like, “I wonder what will happen next.” (Later Preschool 44-60 months) APL1.1H
- i Seeks out new information by asking, “How does that work?” (Later Preschool 44-60 months) APL1.1I
- j Shows eagerness to learn about a variety of topics APL1.1J

2 Taking initiative [APL1.2](#)

Early Infancy 0-8 months

- a Explores their own body by mouthing and clapping hands and by kicking and touching feet [APL1.2A](#)
- b Reaches, stretches, or works to crawl towards a desired object or person [APL1.2B](#)
- c Repeats actions to get same reaction from an adult (e.g., smiling, laughing, verbalizing) [APL1.2C](#)
- d Repeats actions on objects to get same reaction from the object (e.g., kicking items on mobile, moving arms to sound rattle or bell noise on wrist) [APL1.2D](#)

Later Infancy 6-14 months

- e Explores objects using their senses and by manipulating them in a variety of ways (e.g., bangs, shakes, throws) [APL1.2E](#)
- f Moves toward interesting people, sounds, objects, and activities [APL1.2F](#)
- g Seeks out objects that an adult hides [APL1.2G](#)
- h Plays with one object for a few minutes before focusing on a different object [APL1.2H](#)
- i Initiates turn-taking with familiar adults (e.g., gives parent a toy and parent offers a new toy) [APL1.2I](#)

Early Toddler 12-24 months

- j Initiates activities of interest and tries to get others involved [APL1.2J](#)
- k Uses toys to make things happen (e.g., pushes a button on a toy to create a sound) [APL1.2K](#)

Later Toddler 22-36 months

- l Tries out different ways of using new materials [APL1.2L](#)

Early Preschool 34-48 months

- m Purposely tries different ways of doing things to see what happens (e.g., builds ramps with different blocks to make their cars go faster and farther) [APL1.2M](#)
- n Makes attempts at new and challenging activities (e.g., climbs a new, higher slide) [APL1.2N](#)

Later Preschool 44-60 months

- o Chooses different ways to explore the environment based on prior experiences with tools or actions [APL1.2O](#)
 - p Suggests new ideas for play activities and follows through with self-direction and independence [APL1.2P](#)
 - q Seeks new challenges with familiar materials and activities independently (e.g., climbs up the slide) [APL1.2Q](#)
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CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION APL2

1 Showing creativity and imagination APL2.1

Early Infancy 0-8 months

- a Explores toys and safe objects with hands and mouth APL2.1A

Later Infancy 6-14 months

- b Observes other people's use of objects APL2.1B
- c Imitates simple actions (e.g., claps hands together, covers eyes with hands) APL2.1C
- d Uses everyday objects for a variety of purposes APL2.1D

Early Toddler 12-24 months

- e Uses realistic objects in pretend play (e.g., pretends to fit toy keys into a door lock) APL2.1E
- f Plays with stuffed animals as though they were real APL2.1F
- g Shows imagination by using objects to stand-in for other objects (e.g., uses a block to represent a phone or a car) APL2.1G
- h Reenacts familiar events using props (e.g., pats a doll on the back, says, "night, night" and puts it in the toy bed) APL2.1H

Later Toddler 22-36 months

- i Creates three dimensional structures using blocks and found materials (e.g., stones or sticks) APL2.1I
- j Incorporates props while talking about actions (e.g., takes play dough to the housekeeping area to fill muffin tins before putting them in the play oven) APL2.1J
- k Creates new words or rhymes APL2.1K

Early Preschool 34-48 months

- l Transitions between reality and imagination in cooperative play, dramatic play, or during guided drama experience APL2.1L
- m Begins to sequence actions in dramatic play (e.g., gathers pots, spoons, and plastic vegetables to "make soup") APL2.1M
- n Connects dramatic play to story (e.g., acts as a familiar character) APL2.1N

Later Preschool 44-60 months

- o Represents reality through the arts and with art materials (e.g., by creating stories, drawing, or enacting experiences in dramatic play) APL2.1O
 - p Utilizes realistic and open-ended materials in cooperative play APL2.1P
 - q Shows purpose and inventiveness in play (e.g., collects different shapes of blocks to build a castle) APL2.1Q
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**EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS
AND COGNITIVE SELF-
REGULATION** APL3

1 Focusing and paying attention APL3.1

Early Infancy 0-8 months

- a With adult support, starts to filter distractions to focus on people or objects in environment APL3.1A
- b Limits sensory input by breaking gaze and shifting attention APL3.1B

Later Infancy 6-14 months

- c Demonstrates increasing ability to attend to people, objects, and activities (e.g., quiets motor movements and shows intense concentration) APL3.1C
- d Notices when something expected does not happen APL3.1D
- e Kicks a toy repeatedly and notices the movement of the toy APL3.1E

Early Toddler 12-24 months

- f Participates in activities with people and materials that require attention like listening to simple stories as they are read APL3.1F

Later Toddler 22-36 months

- g Focuses on self-initiated activities for a short amount of time (e.g., works on a puzzle) APL3.1G
- h Sustains interest with one or two tasks that engage them (e.g., plays at the sensory table for 5-10 minutes) APL3.1H

Early Preschool 34-48 months

- i With adult prompts and support, focuses attention on activities like listening to stories read to a group for short periods of time in spite of interruptions or distraction APL3.1I
- j Stays with a variety of tasks that interest them (e.g., plays in the dramatic play and block areas for 10 minutes) APL3.1J

Later Preschool 44-60 months

- k Focuses attention on tasks and activities like painting or block building for longer periods of time with increasing independence APL3.1K
- l Sustains engagement with a task that interests them for long periods of time (e.g., works in the art center creating watercolor paintings for 30 minutes) APL3.1L
- m Begins to attend to adult-initiated tasks that are not based on their interests (e.g., participates in a teacher-led small or large group) APL3.1M

2 Building working memory APL3.2

Early Infancy 0-8 months

- a Shows recognition of familiar faces and voices by attending to that person APL3.2A
- b Develops expectations of what will happen based on prior experiences (e.g., caregiver will come when baby cries) APL3.2B

Later Infancy 6-14 months

- c Shows recognition and memory of familiar faces and objects over longer periods of time since last seen APL3.2C
- d Correctly looks and reaches toward a toy's hiding place when the place has been changed from one location to another APL3.2D

Early Toddler 12-24 months

- e Points to and names parents, siblings, body parts, and familiar objects APL3.2E
- f Sings some of the words to a favorite song APL3.2F
- g Follows simple 1-step verbal directions like “put your spare clothes in your cubby” APL3.2G

Later Toddler 22-36 months

- h Practices remembering by recounting a story or verbally describing a picture no longer in view APL3.2H
- i Remembers where materials are kept in familiar environments (e.g., can retrieve spare clothes from cubby) APL3.2I

Early Preschool 34-48 months

- j Repeats a list of items needed for self-care or play APL3.2J
- k Plays simple memory and matching games APL3.2K
- l Remembers and follows 2-step directions to complete simple tasks (e.g., “wash your hands then help prepare or eat a snack”) APL3.2L

Later Preschool 44-60 months

- m Remembers several steps in sequence to complete multi-step directions (e.g., complete a puzzle, return it to the shelf, and join the group at the rug) APL3.2M
- n Remembers actions that go with stories or songs APL3.2N
- o Teaches another child the steps taken for a given action (e.g., shows a peer how to use soap to wash hands before snack) APL3.2O

3 Thinking flexibly and adapting APL3.3

Early Infancy 0-8 months

- a Explores objects by putting in the mouth and then rattling or shaking APL3.3A
- b Modifies expressions and actions based on others' responses (e.g., begins to smile in response to caregiver's smiling face) APL3.3B

Later Infancy 6-14 months

- c Shows ability to shift focus to attend to something else APL3.3C
- d Participates in a new activity or tries new ways to solve a problem with little protest APL3.3D
- e Allows caregiver to interrupt an activity to perform a routine as long as the caregiver notifies in advance (e.g., child playing with toy allows caregiver to wipe face) APL3.3E

Early Toddler 12-24 months

- f Tries a variety of approaches to get what is wanted APL3.3F
- g Modifies actions or behavior in social situations, daily routines, to problem solve APL3.3G

Later Toddler 22-36 months

- h Adjusts to changes in routines when informed in advance APL3.3H
- i Identifies signals for changes between activities APL3.3I
- j Makes transitions that are part of a daily schedule APL3.3J

Early Preschool 34-48 months

- k Demonstrates "cognitive flexibility" by trying another approach, with adult support, when something does not work the first time (e.g., tries a different way to climb a structure when the first effort does not work or uses a tool or another person to get an item out of reach) APL3.3K
- l Shows ability to shift attention from one task or activity to another when necessary APL3.3L

Later Preschool 44-60 months

- m Adapts to new rules in game or activity (e.g., sorting cards by color and then by shape) APL3.3M
- n Considers ideas from adults and other children in finding a solution or strategy APL3.3N
- o Demonstrates flexibility and adaptability with less adult prompting (e.g., sharing toys or trying out new materials) APL3.3O
- p Responds consistently to adult suggestions to try out different activities APL3.3P

4 Inhibiting responses APL3.4

Later Toddler 22-36 months

- a Begins to take turns and waits in line for short periods of time with adult support APL3.4A

Early Preschool 34-48 months

- b Seeks adult help when distressed with behavior of or interaction with a peer APL3.4B
- c With adult support, begins to use words, signs or gestures to express distress with peers (instead of biting or pushing) APL3.4C
- d Begins to inhibit impulsive behaviors with adult support (e.g., inhibits initial response to call out an answer to a question during story time with educator's reminder) APL3.4D

Later Preschool 44-60 months

- e Controls impulses with more independence (e.g., walks instead of runs; asks for a turn with a toy instead of grabbing; waits to share out instead of calling out) APL3.4E
- f Uses strategies to help control own actions more frequently such as creating physical distance or finding an alternative toy or activity APL3.4F

5 Persisting and problem-solving APL3.5

Early Infancy 0-8 months

- a Cries persistently until needs are met APL3.5A
- b Repeats attempts to reach a desired object by looking at or moving toward the object APL3.5B
- c Uses more than one strategy to get what they want (e.g., vocalizing as well as reaching or moving toward) APL3.5C

Later Infancy 6-14 months

- d Repeats attempts to communicate or repeats actions to get desired action or object APL3.5D
- e Persists in looking to find things that are hidden APL3.5E
- f Uses trial and error to solve problems (e.g., pressing a lever to make a particular toy pop up) APL3.5F

Early Toddler 12-24 months

- g Shows increasing ability to stay engaged and complete task (e.g., putting all shapes in a shape sorter) APL3.5G
- h Repeats preferred activities and gestures, signs, or asks for “more” APL3.5H
- i Turns puzzle pieces different ways to complete a puzzle APL3.5I
- j Begins to use different strategies to solve a problem when one approach does not work APL3.5J
- k Uses language to request help APL3.5K

Later Toddler 22-36 months

- l Practices a skill or activity many times, even with difficulty (e.g., building a taller block tower or balancing on a log or balance beam) APL3.5L
- m Alters approach to tasks when initial approach does not work (e.g., tries different techniques when assembling a shape puzzle) APL3.5M
- n Responds to adult’s verbal encouragement to try a new object or experience or try again after an unsuccessful attempt at an activity APL3.5N

Early Preschool 34-48 months

- o Persists in preferred tasks that may be challenging, with or without adult support APL3.5O
- p Remembers solutions discovered before and uses them (e.g., uses a spoon to mix flour and water for playdough when fingers get sticky from using hands) APL3.5P
- q Responds to adult’s positive feedback for effort to continue trying or practicing a new skill APL3.5Q

Later Preschool 44-60 months

- r Sometimes persists in less preferred activities with or without adult support [APL3.5R](#)
 - s Figures out more than one solution to a problem (e.g., using packing tape with strings to hold cardboard pieces together when masking tape doesn't work) [APL3.5S](#)
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BEHAVIORAL SELF-REGULATION [APL4](#)

1 Managing actions and behaviors [APL4.1](#)

Early Infancy 0-8 months

- a Responds to caregivers' attempts at regulation (e.g., by rocking, talking to child) [APL4.1A](#)

Later Infancy 6-14 months

- b Looks to adult for guidance before acting in novel situations (e.g., looks at adults' facial cues) [APL4.1B](#)

Early Toddler 12-24 months

- c Follows simple routines established by adults (e.g., eating, napping, playing) [APL4.1C](#)
- d Follows simple instructions from adult (e.g., puts toy in a specified location) [APL4.1D](#)

Later Toddler 22-36 months

- e Participates in simple routines with adult support (e.g., hand washing before eating, clean up after eating) [APL4.1E](#)
- f Becomes familiar with basic safety rules (e.g., hold an adult's hand when crossing the street) [APL4.1F](#)

Early Preschool 34-48 months

- g Follows classroom rules and routines with prompting and reminders from adults (e.g., uses visual aids to meet behavioral expectations) [APL4.1G](#)
- h Uses classroom materials with adult support (e.g., how to handle appropriately, how to properly store) [APL4.1H](#)

Later Preschool 44-60 months

- i Follows classroom rules and routines more independently (e.g., morning arrival) [APL4.1I](#)
- j Uses classroom materials appropriately [APL4.1J](#)
- k Manages actions, words, and behavior with increasing independence (e.g., matches behavior to context and expectations) [APL4.1K](#)