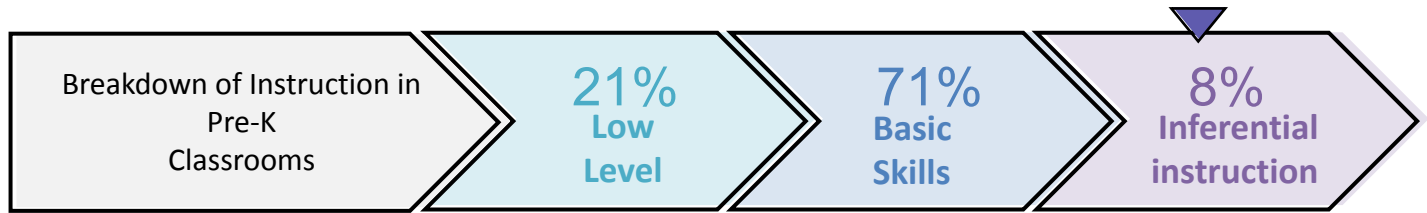


Improving Level of Instruction

Moving Beyond Basic Skill Instruction

Some Basic Skills instruction is necessary in preschool, but research shows that young minds also thrive when they have opportunities to think more deeply. **The goal for improving level of instruction is to provide more of these important opportunities.**



BASIC SKILLS INSTRUCTION	INFERENTIAL INSTRUCTION
Requires children to...	
Give the right answer (e.g., recite facts, identify objects)	Draw from experiences, background knowledge, context clues
Sit quietly and take in new information (e.g., listen to a story)	Actively construct links between experiences and ideas, past/present content; interact with peers and teachers

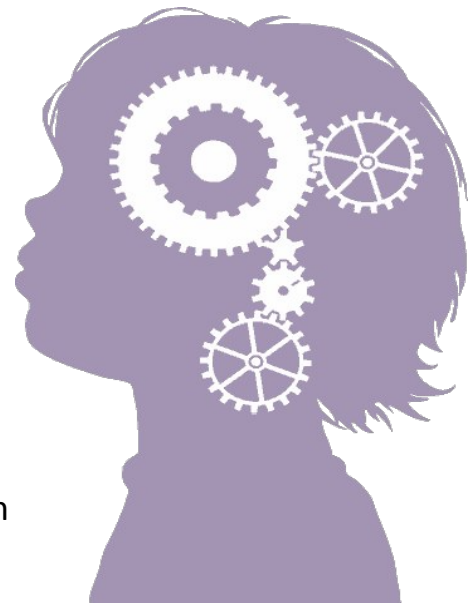
The key to moving beyond Basic Skills instruction is to **help children make inferences.**

Inferential questions are open-ended and have **more than one possible answer.**

Try asking children to...

- Explain** their thought process to a teacher or peer
- Predict** based on context clues or prior knowledge
- Connect** content with personal experiences
- Reflect** back on parts of previous activities or lessons

Achieving a higher level of instruction is not only about asking the right questions. Teachers must also build upon children's responses to deepen their understanding.



Tips for Leveraging Children's Responses

- Ask authentic, open-ended questions
- Allow wait time for responses
- Positively acknowledge contributions
- Extend and elaborate responses
- Encourage conversations among peers
- Provide scaffolds for low-language children



Improving Level of Instruction

Importance of Instructional Quality

In a preschool classroom, instruction can happen throughout the day as teachers engage in conversations with children in various settings. The *level* of that instruction depends on the richness of the interaction between children and teachers and the amount of inference required for the child to participate.

Children in classrooms with teachers who engage in higher levels of instruction demonstrate greater gains in:

That's an interesting prediction! Why do you think that?



Vocabulary

Math

Self-Regulation

Letters & Sight Words

Early Writing

Inferential Instruction

Exploring a topic using authentic, open-ended questioning with several turns.



Who remembers what happened next?

Basic Skills Instruction

Asking questions with predetermined answers, with the goal of having children learn or recite the correct response.



Low Level Instruction

Assisting with developmental demands of fine motor and gross motor activities.



I'll help you spread the glue for your collage!

