

PITC Learning Experience Template

☐ LEO (Outline) ☒ LEP (Plan)

Learning Experience Outline (LEO)

PITC MODULE AND TOPIC

Discoveries of Infancy: Cognitive Development and Perceptual and Motor Development

KEY CONCEPTS

Specify 2 to 3 PITC key concepts, as written in Canvas, for this topic that you will address in this two-hour learning experience. *The key concepts for each topic are found in the “Complete Your Learning Experience Outline” pages in Canvas.*

- Infants are active, curious, and motivated learners
- Importance of understanding early cognitive development and perceptual and motor development
- The holistic nature of early learning in the context of relationships
- Facilitating early learning, including setting up the environment, allowing uninterrupted time for play and experimentation, and scaffolding children’s learning

FORMAT

Briefly state when and where the event will occur (for example, at an infant and toddler center, in a resource and referral agency, during evening meetings, or at a weekend workshop).

Morning at the regional Child Care Resource and Referral agency office.

PARTICIPANTS

Specify the number and one role for the participants (for example, infant care teachers/providers, families, coaches, training and technical assistance providers, college students).

Approximately 20 participants, all of which are currently teachers of infants and toddlers for at least 20 hours per week at a licensed, state funded child care center.

ANTICIPATE THE LEARNING

Consider the content of this topic as it relates to the participants as detailed in the Learning Context Profile you created at the Launch.

- What do you need to keep in mind about the participants as you plan experiences and anticipate issues related to this topic?
- What strengths and level of interest might participants have in this topic?
- What common misconceptions might participants have about this topic?

Caregivers in our area bring valuable firsthand experience with young children and a strong sense of responsibility for maintaining an orderly environment. Many will resonate with the challenges of cleanup routines and may express frustration when children undo their efforts or resist participating. These feelings are valid and should be acknowledged, but it’s important to reframe cleanup as a shared, developmentally meaningful process rather than just an adult-imposed chore. Participants are likely to have a strong interest in practical strategies that make cleanup easier while also benefiting children’s cognitive growth.

Some common misconceptions may include the idea that cleanup is simply a task to be completed rather than a learning opportunity. Others may believe young children are too little to help or that oral exploration should always be discouraged in a group care setting. While it is crucial to emphasize that food cannot be used as a play material in the

- How will you create a Climate of Care considering the questions below:
 - What parts of this topic or training might be sensitive for some of the participants?
 - How will you create space and care for those who may disagree or be upset by the content?

classroom due to licensing standards, hygiene, and allergies, oral exploration remains an important developmental process.

For adult learners only, a safe way to engage with this concept is by introducing a material that is safe to eat but where flavors are difficult to distinguish, such as M&M's in disposable cups or containers. It is extremely important to check for food allergies before this activity.

Additionally, children with barriers to oral exploration may need alternative ways to engage with their environment, and caregivers should be mindful of these individual needs.

To create a Climate of Care, this training will validate participants' frustrations while encouraging open discussion about new approaches. Because perspectives on cleanup and learning may differ, it is important to frame the conversation in a way that respects participants' existing practices while offering alternative viewpoints. Discussions will be guided with empathy, ensuring that those who may initially disagree feel heard rather than dismissed. By emphasizing shared goals—supporting children's development, reducing stress, and fostering independence—caregivers can feel empowered to implement strategies that align with both their needs and those of the children they serve.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Describe the activities for a two-hour learning experience using the instructions provided.

	LEO (Outline) Instructions	LEP (Plan) Instructions
Activity	Name and describe your facilitation learning activity and the approximate time needed	<p>Add a detailed description of what learners will experience in this activity and revise the time allocations, if needed.</p> <p>Specify the facilitation strategies you will use to support collaborative, reflective, and self-directed learning.</p> <p>Describe any pre-work or follow-up work, if relevant.</p>
Resources	Name the PITC resources you plan to use for this activity. Include the full title.	Revise as necessary.
Key Concepts	List 1-3 PITC key concept(s) that pertain to this activity.	Revise as necessary.
Rationale	Draft learning goal(s) for this activity. What do you hope participants will know and do after participating in this learning activity?	<p>Explain how the design of this activity will help support meaningful and engaging learning.</p> <p>Specify the Adult Learning Design Principle(s) (for example, community of learners, application of knowledge, self-reflection, and continuous learning) that inform this activity.</p>

Activity	<p>Name: In the shoes of the child</p> <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Before the session, review the handouts Topic Overview: Discoveries of Infancy: Cognitive Development and Perceptual and Motor Development, Creativity, Shared Meaning, and Relationships, and Discoveries of Infancy: Opening Activity. Prepare the space by arranging tables for appropriate small groups. Collect and set out materials such as markers and chart paper. Double check AV equipment. <p>The facilitator will begin by writing on a whiteboard or piece of large chart paper, "I believe: _____," leaving a blank space.</p> <p>Referencing material from the PITC resource Creativity, Shared Meaning, and Relationships, prompt participants to share their feelings on how they would fill in this blank. Then, the facilitator will briefly discuss how they would personally fill in the blank for this statement and write it on the blank. Lead a brief discussion on personal philosophies of respect for children, honoring children's questions and interests. Provide participants with a printout or small notebook for recording their thoughts, reflections, and discoveries during the session. Ask participants to write down how they fill in the blank inside the notebook. (5 minutes)</p> <p>Move on to content from the PITC resource Topic Overview: Discoveries of Infancy: Cognitive Development and Perceptual and Motor Development. Summarize content with a mini-lecture, explaining key concepts such as: infants' exploration of the world through sensorimotor investigations. emphasize that infants and toddlers explore their surroundings and objects through mouthing and chewing and that placing items in their mouth is developmentally</p>
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	<p>appropriate. explore the various ways that infants and toddlers investigate- “observe, reach, grasp, pat, mouth, drop, carry, test.” (5 minutes).</p> <p>Next, display one or more objects that are new, foreign, and novel for participants. Give the opportunity for hands-on exploration. As participants are exploring the new objects, prompt deeper thinking about how children are active participants in their own learning rather than passive. What thoughts pop into participants' minds as they explore the new object? How does this object inspire them for further learning or exploration? Ask participants to jot down notes on their thoughts and feelings during this activity to reflect on later. (10 minutes)</p> <p>Using the PITC resource Discoveries of Infancy: Opening Activity, refer back to the first activity in which participants filled in the blank, drafting a short belief statement in their provided notebook. Ask participants to use the same notebook for this task, first working individually and then sharing with the person sitting next to them before asking if volunteers would like to share with the larger group. Individually, ask participants to write the word ‘Discovery’ at the top of the page in their notebook. Direct participants to reflect on the word discovery, and then underneath where they’ve written it, write down their ideas and thoughts on their own definition of the word.</p> <p>Give about 2 minutes for participants to think individually, then ask participants to turn to the person next to them and share their thoughts and reflections. After another 2 or so minutes, refocus attention and ask if any participants would like to share with the larger group. As participants are sharing, write down any ideas or definitions that are especially relevant or poignant to revisit later in the training.</p> <p>Prepare to transition to the next activity by briefly summarizing how the previous segments connect to the need for sensitive, attuned caregivers with developmentally appropriate expectations to set the stage for respectful and encouraging interactions to promote cognitive development and the discoveries of infancy. (10 minutes)</p> <p>Time: 30 minutes</p>
Resources	<p>Topic Overview: Discoveries of Infancy: Cognitive Development and Perceptual and Motor Development</p> <p>Creativity, Shared Meaning, and Relationships</p> <p>Discoveries of Infancy: Opening Activity</p>
Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infants are active, curious, and motivated learners • Importance of understanding early cognitive development and perceptual and motor development • The holistic nature of early learning in the context of relationships
Rationale	<p>Describe your hopes for the learners as a result of participating in this activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will know: the discoveries of infancy, the importance of the caregiver-child relationship in supporting cognitive development • What will participants do in their work with children, families, and/or each other: reflect on personal beliefs and attitudes toward discovery and exploration in themselves and with children <p>Adult Learning Design Principle(s) in this activity (required for LEPs only):</p> <p>Self-reflection: Participants have the opportunity to reflect on their own beliefs about children, exploration, and learning.</p>

Activity

Name: Exploring With All Five Senses

Description:

- ★ Before the session, review content from the PITC resource Perceptual and Motor Development. Go over the speaker notes for the mini-lecture. Gather necessary materials (edible material such as M&Ms, disposable cups), being cognizant of any dietary restrictions due to allergies or religious observations. Have cups of food items mixed and ready to go, arranged for pick up on a table.

(Extremely important- check for food allergies prior to this activity!)

The facilitator will open by summarizing content from the PITC resource Perceptual and Motor Development, and provide a short mini-lecture explaining that infants take in new information through the five senses. Explain the concept of perception- “the process of taking in, organizing, and interpreting sensory information.” Explain the concept of motor development- “children’s ability to control their body’s movements,” including gross motor (large muscle groups) and fine motor (small muscle groups).

Then, the facilitator will provide a more in-depth discussion on the concept of classification- an important cognitive skill that infants and toddlers develop through sensorimotor exploration. Define classification as grouping, sorting, categorizing, and connecting relationships. Prompt participants thinking by asking: how do infants perform the cognitive task of classification? **(10 minutes)**

Next, introduce a material that is safe to eat but difficult to tell various flavors apart (for example, M&M’s) in disposable cups/containers.

(Extremely important- check for food allergies prior to this activity!)

Provide several cups/containers of the material for participants to explore. Ask participants to work in pairs and encourage participants to explore the material using as many of the five senses as possible.

1. What does the material sound like? Can you shake it? Is it loud? Is it quiet?
2. What does the material smell like? Does it have a pleasant smell? Does it stink?
3. What does the material look like? Are there a variety of colors? Does the material come in different shapes?
4. What does the material taste like? Does it taste good? Do all the pieces taste the same? Can the pieces be sorted by flavor?
5. What does the material feel like? Are the pieces soft or hard? Do they have different textures, or are they all the same?

In their pairs, ask participants to make notes on their discoveries, jotting down some quick thoughts on the various attributes they are able to identify that they can use to classify the material. Following the sensory exploration of the material, engage participants in a discussion linking motor skills, taking in information through sensory perception, and the growing infant brain. Re-emphasize the importance of developmentally appropriate and safe avenues of exploration with materials that can be engaged with all five senses. **(10 minutes)**

Time: 20 minutes

Resources

Perceptual Motor Development and Learning, P. 89-93

Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of understanding early cognitive development and perceptual and motor development
Rationale	<p>Describe your hopes for the learners as a result of participating in this activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants will know: the importance of engaging in developmentally appropriate exploration through all five senses What will participants do in their work with children, families, and/or each other: provide opportunities for sensorimotor exploration to children in their care <p>Adult Learning Design Principle(s) in this activity (required for LEPs only):</p> <p>Application of Knowledge: Participants are given the opportunity to experience learning through sensory integration, mimicking the same experience of children.</p> <p>Continuous Learning: Express curiosity during the learning experience by developing and asking questions and exploring various methods of learning.</p>

Activity	<p>Name: Facilitating Learning with Treasure Baskets</p> <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Before the session, collect all necessary materials for treasure baskets and arrange in attractive, logical display on tables at the front of the presentation space. Place markers and paper on tables for participants. Review content from PITC resource PITC Discoveries of Infancy: Facilitating Learning Scenario and develop adaptations to better align to the context of the current group of participants, so that it is more relevant to them. <p>Description:</p> <p>Begin by asking participants if they have ever had a parent or other person make a comment about a “lack of structure for learning” or similar comment. Verbally note the amount of people who respond or raise their hand in response. Direct participants to work in groups at their tables (4 to 5 people). Provide each table with a piece of large chart paper and several markers. Using the PITC resource <u>Discoveries of Infancy: Facilitating Learning Scenario</u>, read the (adapted) prompt out loud.</p> <p>“A group of parents at your center approach your director to discuss their concerns. Although they feel the center provides a safe and warm environment for their children, they are concerned about “the lack of structure for learning.” After all, they selected this center because they thought children would be learning. Instead, they feel children only roam around the room, just doing what they please. Your director comes to you later to discuss the concerns of the parents, asking for your input.”</p> <p>Once the prompt has been read, direct participants to work in their groups to brainstorm possible responses to the scenario. Move around the room and provide additional prompts to stimulate deeper thinking, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What home values does this situation communicate to participants? What classroom values do participants prioritize to respond to parents? How might participants plan to address the issue raised by parents? How might participants respond to the feelings that this issue raises in parents and in themselves? <p>After enough time has passed, have participants share their responses with the larger group. These will be revisited later in the training. (10 minutes)</p>
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	<p>Explain that in this session, participants will have the opportunity to practice one approach to learning that facilitates cognitive development and that they will have more opportunities to explore ways to communicate the importance of free, unstructured play. The specific approach being explored is treasure baskets, which are collections of carefully selected, everyday items designed to engage infants and toddlers in open-ended exploration.</p> <p>Show participants a preassembled treasure basket- a container made of natural materials (such as fabric or wood) and filled with developmentally appropriate items (such as wooden spoons, swatches of fabric, soft balls, natural sponges, etc). Note that items in a treasure basket will vary depending on the age and development of the children in the participant's care.</p> <p>Encourage participants to explore materials the way a child would, using as many senses as they are comfortable utilizing. Refer back to the previous activity and encourage participants to think a little deeper than before:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do these objects differ? • How could these objects be categorized into groups? • How would an infant naturally be inspired to sort and classify these objects? <p>Using the same groups as before, provide each group with the opportunity to select from various materials to fill their own treasure basket.</p> <p>As participants are selecting items, encourage them to brainstorm as a group and curate a themed treasure basket for a specific cognitive skill (e.g., texture exploration, sound differentiation, or grasping practice).</p> <p>Groups will have the opportunity to share their designs and explain how they support cognitive development and facilitate learning. (20 minutes)</p> <p>Revisit the responses that were given to the earlier scenario about facilitating learning. Guide participants in a new, retrospective discussion on the prompt after the opportunity to practice with treasure baskets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would participants change their responses? • How would they add to their responses? • How could incorporating specific strategies, such as treasure baskets, into their classrooms support their ability to communicate learning to families? (10 minutes) <p>Time: 40 minutes</p>
Resources	Facilitating Learning Scenario
Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating early learning, including setting up the environment, allowing uninterrupted time for play and experimentation, and scaffolding children's learning
Rationale	<p>Describe your hopes for the learners as a result of participating in this activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will know: how free, unstructured play supports cognitive development • What will participants do in their work with children, families, and/or each other: Explain the connection between classroom materials and activities and cognitive development to families <p>Adult Learning Design Principle(s) in this activity (required for LEPs only):</p> <p>Application of Knowledge: Participants have the opportunity to apply principles of child development and discoveries of infancy to develop treasure baskets and explain benefits of play.</p>

Self-reflection: Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their attitudes and beliefs on the value of play.

Activity

Name: Cleaning Up as a Cognitive Task

Description:

- ★ Review the content of the PITC handout *Creativity, Shared Meaning, and Relationships*. Prepare the presentation space, collecting the materials needed and arranging them on a table.

Prompt a brief discussion, observing that many infant and toddler caregivers find picking up and cleanup routines challenging or that sometimes children come behind them and dump. Exercising a community of care, giving participants a moment to provide input, recognizing that their frustrations are valid, and giving a safe and accepting space to vent.

Explain that cleanup routines are opportunities for building relationships and developing skills in classification and cognitive organization rather than just chores.

Connecting to the PITC resource *Creativity, Shared Meaning, and Relationships*, revisit the belief statements drafted during the first activity.

- How do participants' personal belief statements support children's cognitive development?
- How does cleanup relate to cognitive development? (**10 minutes**)

Provide a mix of objects (e.g., toy blocks, stuffed animals, books, and wooden spoons) and various storage bins labeled with pictures. In small groups, participants will sort the items into appropriate bins, reflecting on how an infant or toddler would approach the task.

Ask participants to think from a child's perspective:

- How would a toddler differentiate where objects belong?
- What cues can caregivers provide to help with classification?
- How do these thoughts relate to caregiving?

After participants have completed their treasure basket, engage them in a brief discussion of strategies to support classification in cleanup:

- What strategies are participants already using?
- Where do they need more support?

Provide suggestions such as:

- Best practice is to use clear bins for storage so that children can identify what is inside without pulling every bin out or dumping
- Using matching picture labels on bins and shelves.
- Encouraging color sorting (e.g., "Can you put all the blue toys in this bin?")
- Narrating the process: "You are putting all the big blocks in this bin and the small ones in that bin!" (**15 minutes**)

In addition, the facilitator should relate this content to communicating with families. For example, caregivers can share that cleanup is an early math and categorization skill, as well as practicing an important life skill. Finally, ask participants to reflect on how they will frame play and cleanup as cognitive learning. Connect this back to the parent concerns scenario, emphasizing how caregivers can help families recognize everyday moments as learning opportunities. (**5 minutes**)

Time: 30 minutes

Resources

Creativity, Shared Meaning, and Relationships

Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The holistic nature of early learning in the context of relationships • Facilitating early learning, including setting up the environment, allowing uninterrupted time for play and experimentation, and scaffolding children's learning
Rationale	<p>Describe your hopes for the learners as a result of participating in this activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will know: How to incorporate cognitive development skills into everyday routines, relationship-based strategies for supporting cognitive development • What will participants do in their work with children, families, and/or each other: encourage infants and toddlers to use cognitive skills during everyday routines such as cleanup <p>Adult Learning Design Principle(s) in this activity (required for LEPs only):</p> <p>Application of Knowledge: Participants will have the opportunity to practice the cognitive task of sorting, mimicking the skills of the child.</p> <p>Self-reflection: Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their feelings and attitudes and beliefs on routines and struggles in the classroom.</p> <p>Community of Learners: Participants will have the opportunity to share experiences and suggestions with peers and learn from one another.</p>

Detailed Learning Experience Plan (LEP)

LEARNING CHECK

How will you know participants have increased their understanding of the key concepts and/or have effective ideas for how to apply them during this learning experience?

Participants will communicate their understanding through discussion and checks for understanding. They will produce examples of understanding through hands-on application.

FEEDBACK

How will you collect feedback from your participants about the effectiveness of the learning experience you have designed? What open-ended questions or prompts might you use?

Emails are distributed to participants with the agency survey to complete anonymously. This survey is then sent to the facilitator with the responses. The survey includes, appropriate length of training, opportunities to participate, opportunities for hands-on activities, preparedness of trainer, format of training, optional comments, optional requests for future training, and things the participant might change.

PREPARATION

Briefly describe how you will prepare for the learning experience. List the necessary supplies, materials, and audio/visual tools.

Register class on State Training System.

Include training in R&R newsletter.

Print the roster for sign-in.

Remind the participants of training by email one week in advance.

Copy all handouts.

Review notes the night before.

Check projector, video, and audio before the training.

Set up the room into four rows of even participants based on the roster.

Have a selection of fidgets for the participants to choose from.

Set out welcome sign and signs pointing to the training room.