



# Schedule Building

## Schedules

Examples of structure for work and play periods are included in this section. Structure suggestions range from the *most* structured (which will cause the most problems with keeping students on task and with transitions) to the *least* structured (which may be a teacher's personal goal set for the end of the year, if the first part of the year was extremely structured).

- Centers: Assigned and Rotated
- Work Times: Curriculum Directed
- Centers: Teacher Selected and Free Choice Activities
- Centers: Integrated Curriculum

Schedules for young children are structured enough to provide security, allow the child to know what is going to happen next and are flexible enough to meet the needs of various children at various times. Short, chopped-up periods of time do not allow

children the depth of involvement that they need. Long extended periods of time spent sitting and taking turns will only cause problems.

As children enter the room, give them time to adjust to the transition from home to school. They should know what is expected. They are allowed to socialize and must be ready to start the day's activities within a short time. Time elapsed from the start of school to the end of this activity should be five to 10 minutes, depending on the size of the group.

Children need time to get focused for the day. Some may remember from the day before where they want to start. Others need more direction. A group time at the beginning of the day to get focused helps most children. However, extended circle times which involve calendar, weather, counting, sequencing, milk count, attendance, etc., will only cause problems. This transition will not be smooth. Circle time should be over in 10 minutes or less.

Children should get right to work or play. About eight to 12 stations or centers provide ample opportunities for twenty-four children to have variety, choice and meaningful experiences in the classroom. Areas for reading, writing, listening, playing, building, constructing, creating, solving, predicting, testing, moving and singing, allow for integrated exploration of various themes and topics.



# Centers: Assigned and Rotated

Determine the number of children in the classroom and the number of centers available. Divide children into even groups. Set up a master schedule for the week that allows rotation to all centers. Try to allow at least 30 minutes per center.

Theoretically this does not allow for children's interest, choice, variety, etc. This method allows every child to experience every center each week, but groups remain the same, children cannot leave when they are finished or stay if they aren't. Because they cannot choose which center to go to, a variety of activities must be presented at each center.

	Mon.		Tues.		Wed.		Thurs.		Fri.	
	9:30	10:00	9:30	10:00	9:30	10:00	9:30	10:00	9:30	10:00
Alex	R	A	W	P	Sc	Sa	L	GM	M	C
Anwar	R	A	W	P	Sc	Sa	L	GM	M	C
Bonnie	R	A	W	P	Sc	Sa	L	GM	M	C
Brad	R	A	W	P	Sc	Sa	L	GM	M	C
Callie	W	P	Sc	Sa	L	GM	M	C	R	A
Cheyenne	W	P	Sc	Sa	L	GM	M	C	R	A
Dominick	W	P	Sc	Sa	L	GM	M	C	R	A
Donna	W	P	Sc	Sa	L	GM	M	C	R	A
Eduardo	S	Sa	L	GM	M	C	R	A	W	P
Ellie	S	Sa	L	GM	M	C	R	A	W	P
Fran	S	Sa	L	GM	M	C	R	A	W	P
Frank	S	Sa	L	GM	M	C	R	A	W	P

A-Art  
C-Crafts

GM-Gross Motor  
L-Listening

M-Math  
P-Puzzles

R-Reading  
Sc-Science

Sa-Sand  
W-Writing



# Work Times: Curriculum Directed

In the early grades of elementary school, teachers are often guided by the curriculum selected for the grade. The day seems to be directed by the curriculum. Teachers work hard to make sure all the material is covered.

Children meet curriculum requirements, but subjects are isolated and disjointed, not integrated and meaningful.

	8:00	8:30	10:00	10:30	11:30	1:00	2:00	3:00
Monday	O At LC PD	L R W Re	Rc Rs Wa	M	S Lu Rc SR	Li	Sc	SS
Tuesday	O At LC PD	L R W Re	Rc Rs Wa	M	S Lu Rc SR	PE	Sc	SS
Wednesday	O At LC PD	L R W Re	Rc Rs Wa	M	S Lu Rc SR	Mu	Sc	SS
Thursday	O At LC PD	L R W Re	Rc Rs Wa	M	S Lu Rc SR	PE	H	SS
Friday	O At LC PD	L R W Re	Rc Rs Wa	M	S Lu Rc SR	Ar	H	SS

At-Attendance

Ar-Art

H-Health

L-Language

LC-Lunch Count

Li-Library

Lu-Lunch

M-Math

Mu-Music

O-Opening

PD-Plan Day

PE-Physical

Education

R-Reading

Re-Research

Rs-Restroom

Rc-Recess

Sc-Science

S-Story

SS-Social Studies

SR-Silent Reading

Wa-Water

W-Writing



## Centers: Teacher Selected and Free Choice Activities (FCA)

Provide four to five activity centers each week where children choose from three to five developmentally appropriate activities to complete. Each student goes to one center a day for a specific amount of time. Adjust time to the children, starting with at least 10 minutes for the four-year-olds. At the end of a specific time, children may choose to stay where they are or go to another center. The only rule governing this schedule is that only children assigned to a center may be at the center. (The children are really not taking charge of their education, because teachers select the activities for placement in the centers and room.)

Using this process, children perform specific activities that may be skill or theme specific. Children try new things in a safe environment with friends there to guide or help them. They also have a free choice activity (FCA).

	Mon. (1 hr.)		Tues. (1 hr.)		Wed. (1 hr.)		Thurs. (1 hr.)		Fri. (1 hr.)	
	9:30	9:40	9:30	9:40	9:30	9:40	9:30	9:40	9:30	9:40
Alex	L	FCA	W	FCA	S	FCA	R	FCA	M	FCA
Anwar	L	FCA	W	FCA	S	FCA	R	FCA	M	FCA
Bonnie	L	FCA	W	FCA	S	FCA	R	FCA	M	FCA
Brad	L	FCA	W	FCA	S	FCA	R	FCA	M	FCA
Callie	W	FCA	S	FCA	L	FCA	M	FCA	R	FCA
Cheyenne	W	FCA	S	FCA	L	FCA	M	FCA	R	FCA
Dominick	W	FCA	S	FCA	L	FCA	M	FCA	R	FCA
Donna	W	FCA	S	FCA	L	FCA	M	FCA	R	FCA
Eduardo	S	FCA	L	FCA	M	FCA	R	FCA	W	FCA
Ellie	S	FCA	L	FCA	M	FCA	R	FCA	W	FCA
Fran	S	FCA	L	FCA	M	FCA	R	FCA	W	FCA
Frank	S	FCA	L	FCA	M	FCA	R	A	W	P

A-Art  
 FCA-Free Choice Activity  
 L-Listening

M-Math  
 P-Puzzles  
 R-Reading

S-Science  
 W-Writing



# Centers: Integrated Curriculum

The teacher plans integrated themes based on student interest and need. Work stations include necessary equipment, reference materials and supplies. Students contract to work on specific skills and to learn specific objectives. Work is documented in student portfolios with teacher-student conferences held one to three times weekly or as needed, during the work station time.

With this method, children are allowed extended work times to get involved with contracted subjects or skills. The teacher is free to work with individual children and small groups to determine what skills and concepts need to be addressed in the large group times. The transition at the beginning of the day allows children to enter the room and get right to work, allowing for few disruptions.

8:00	10:00	10:30	11:00	12:00	1:00	3:00
Children enter and go to work stations	Group Time Review or work completed	Break	Teacher-guided skill instruction or information seeking	Lunch Recess	Students return to work stations	Large group plans for next day
Teacher guides children to stations and with skills as needed		Children enter and go to work stations			Teacher guides and instructs	

