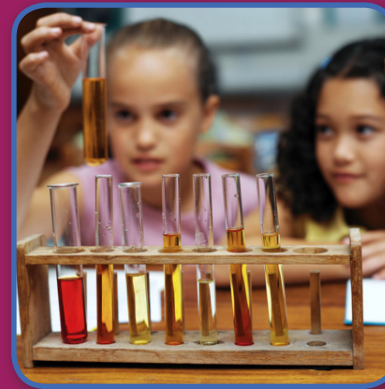


AFTERSCHOOL MATERIALS GUIDE



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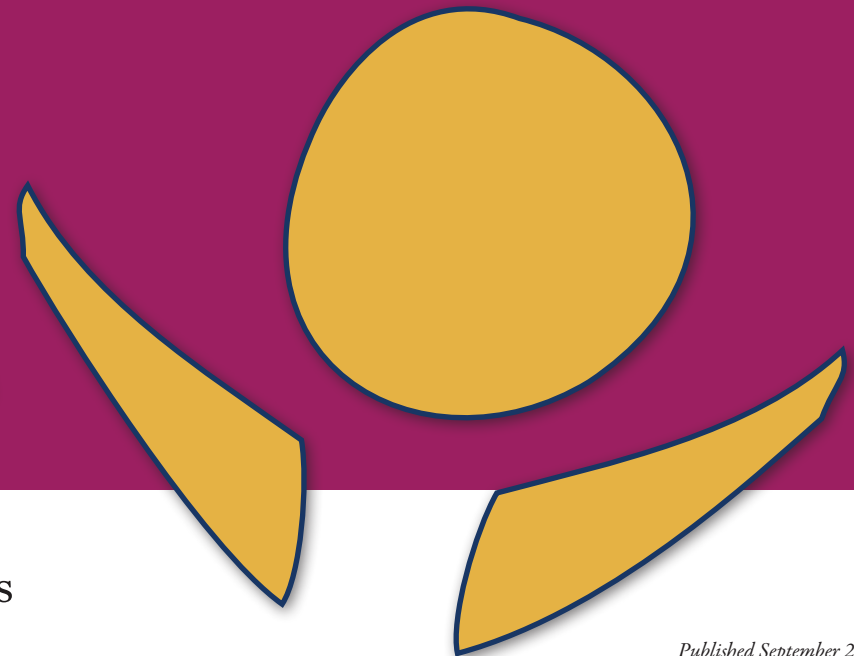


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APPENDIX I



This document is meant to support the thoughtful selection of equipment and materials as part of efforts to increase the quality of childcare programming experienced by young children in South Carolina. The document is being field-tested to solicit feedback from Early Childhood Professionals from across the state. Please send comments and suggestions to the:

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South Carolina is appreciative of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds that have made this initiative to upgrade the materials and equipment for South Carolina child care providers (centers, family homes, and group homes) a reality. The ARRA funds were made available to the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS), administrator for the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) under the leadership of Leigh W. Bolick. To assure the developmental appropriateness and quality of the Guide, SCDSS sought the early childhood leadership and management of the College of Education, University of South Carolina.

This Afterschool Materials Guide is designed to assist child care providers in selecting high quality materials for their classrooms, not only for the ARRA funded grants in the short term, but also for long-term planning to help guide and prioritize future purchases. It is a tool that can help make the most of current investments as well as those in the future.

The Afterschool Materials Guide is the result of careful consideration of South Carolina's child care regulatory standards, the South Carolina ABC Child Care Program Standards, and the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) used at the different quality levels of the South Carolina ABC Child Care Program. The South Carolina Good Start Grow Smart Early Learning Standards were reviewed and incorporated as well. The Afterschool Materials Guide was modeled after an ABC Child Care Program guide authored by the late Sandra V. Ground, M.Ed.

Review and comments by the following staff of the South Carolina ABC Child Care Program are greatly appreciated: Beverly B. Hunter, M.S.; Noelle P. McInerney, M.Ed.; Myrna S. Turner, M.Ed.; Cynthia P. Moyd, M.A.; Ginger Miller and Melissa Heston.

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Introduction

This guide provides afterschool providers with support in the selection of equipment and materials and encourages them to create attractive, exciting and more effective afterschool environments. Afterschool programs encompasses a wide range of offerings for school-age children that take place before school, after school, on weekends, and during the summer and other school breaks. Usually, these programs include a variety of enrichment activities that keep young people safe, provide opportunities for positive and consistent relationships with adults and peers, offer time for physical recreation and unstructured play, promote development of skills and exploration of interests, enhance positive character traits and life skills, and help strengthen academic skills. For sake of consistency, we will use “afterschool care” throughout this guide. The needs of school-age children differ from pre-school children, and their space should reflect those differences.

Afterschool programs are sometimes called “the new neighborhood” because of the role they play in families’ lives. Instead of going home and taking part in unstructured activities with children and adults who live near their homes, large numbers of children attend afterschool care. Because they may often attend the same program year round for five or more years, they may spend more time and have closer relationships with the staff at afterschool than with their elementary or middle school teachers.

This group can have as many as 20-24 children with two teachers. The space should include appropriately scaled furnishings and equipment, and a slightly more “clubhouse” atmosphere. School-age children should spend their time in afterschool programs involved in developmentally appropriate activities. They may eat or snack, do homework, enjoy audiovisual entertainment, play games, and

participate in active games and outdoor sports. They come to after school programs from a full-day school program and need space that is homelike and comfortable, that provides areas for both quiet activities and more active play.

The needs of school-age children can be accommodated by providing:

- Adequate space for storage of children’s personal belongings.
- Low shelving for teaching materials, toys, and manipulatives.
- Generous amounts of floor area.
- Interest and activity areas.
- A “place apart” for gathering of small groups
- Access to beautiful and inviting materials
- Exposure to natural materials and connection to the outdoors
- Reasonable accommodation to the needs of children with disabilities
- Space that accommodates the following activities:
 - A place where children can work alone
 - A place for productive group work
 - A place set aside to store projects
 - A place for physical activities and play
 - A place for quiet relaxation
 - A place for preparing and eating snacks
 - Music and pleasing sounds
 - Different levels and types of lighting

The choices for designing a quality childcare program can be overwhelming for a childcare professional, especially when working with a limited budget. This guide has been created to help you to design a high-quality environment for school-age children while making the best choices for your budget. While purchasing the correct materials



is important, sufficient supervision and interaction with interested adults is also necessary for children to make full use of them.

Through intentional teaching, materials can be used for both child-guided experiences and adult-guided experiences. Materials need to be: interesting to children, sturdy, age appropriate, offer variety and choice, and be arranged in such a way as to encourage independence and creativity.

How This Document is Organized

In this guide, we look at the whole classroom to identify and describe basic equipment and materials that should be in classrooms for school-age afterschool children. The following sections of this guide provide descriptions of common learning centers found in afterschool classrooms. The description of each learning center includes these features:

Development & Learning

This section describes the developmental domains that are likely to be addressed as a result of child and teacher engagements in the center. Notes have been included to help you connect children's learning with the South Carolina State Standards for Quality School-Age Care.

Materials List

This prioritized list includes the basic materials needed in the After-school center as well as accessories that will expand and extend children's discovery.

Brand names are sometimes used to describe items but are not meant to be exclusive. Generic “copies” of those items may be acceptable

with the following precaution: **materials should be durable enough for daily use by young exuberant learners.**

The Shopping List

Included at the end of this guide is a classroom inventory checklist that can be used to help you create and prioritize your materials and equipment shopping list. First you will use the list to conduct a classroom inventory, identifying all of the items on the list that you currently have and their present condition (like new, good, in need of repair). Then, review the list to determine if there are any materials that you either need to replace or add to your classroom. There are quantities listed for each item on the list. These are based on a class size of 20 children. Use your professional judgment when determining the quantities of materials you will need based on the number of children enrolled in your class.

Fundamentals

While this document focuses on the materials and equipment that should be in the learning environment, they are no replacement for high quality teacher/child interaction. The way in which caregivers make use of the items in their classrooms will have a significant impact on the overall quality of the learning experience for young children.

Teacher/child interaction is the most important aspect of a high-quality learning environment. Great teachers help children learn by observing how children use materials and then talking to the children about what they are doing to extend the learning experience. These intentional teachers work alongside children to ensure that the materials are used in health and safe ways while also making the



learning experience fun and educational.

In addition to attending to how materials are used in the environment it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that the learning environment is healthy and safe. Materials need to be kept clean to reduce the spread of illness, organized to facilitate meaningful child engagement and in good repair to reduce unnecessary frustration or child injury. The few minutes teachers spend throughout the day making sure things are clean, neat, and orderly help teach children to respect the materials in the environment. If things are accidentally broken or excessively worn, they should be immediately put aside for repair, recycled, or trashed.

Attending to Individual Child Needs

While this document will be helpful in identifying basic materials and equipment that should be included in an afterschool classroom environment for school-age children, thoughtful planning will also be necessary. All children have individual strengths, needs and interests and these should be taken into consideration when selecting and arranging materials in your classroom. When serving children with special needs, some environmental rearrangement might be necessary to adequately accommodate an individual child's needs. For example, a child who is easily over stimulated by loud noises might need an environment that includes sound-dampening furnishings. A child who uses a wheel chair to move around will need wide passageways through the classroom environment. In the case where a child may need specialized adaptive equipment to benefit from the general education curriculum (i.e. communication board, child positioning equipment, and/or specialized eating utensils) the teacher should contact and collaborate with the child's caseworker or IEP coordinator.

While it is far beyond the scope of this document to identify all possible modifications that might be needed to meet an individual child's, it is important to recognize that each particular group of children will be unique and thus will benefit from classroom customization to ensure that their needs are met.

The Afterschool Care Environment

The layout and design of afterschool space requires special planning. There are certain basic items required by either regulation or best practices or both, and there is a wide range of materials from which to choose. Considerations include developmental appropriateness, alignment with state standards, environment rating scales, as well as your budget.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) reminds us that developmentally appropriate practices have three qualifiers: appropriate to the child, appropriate to the group, and appropriate to the culture. Therefore, there can be no strict rule of thumb for what a well-equipped school-age afterschool space looks like. However, there are guidelines that can help you design a classroom to support the learning and play of school-age children.

An immediate goal in planning the afterschool-care space is to offer children a sense of place and an understanding of the values and customs in the program. The environment can have a powerful influence on the child's experience and attitudes and can support the learning and creativity process.



THE INDOOR ENVIRONMENT

- *Does the space welcome children of all abilities?*
- *Is it clean, bright, and well organized?*
- *Is there evidence and appreciation of children's work?*
- *Is the space easy to interpret, so that children know where to go?*
- *Is there a place for doing homework?*
- *Is there a place to relax?*
- *Is there a place to be alone?*
- *Are there images of children with their friends and with the staff?*
- *Is there a safe place to store personal belongings?*
- *Does it look like a place where it's fun to spend time?*
- *Does the space allow children to explore their interest?*
- *Is the space arranged so that various activities can go on at the same time?*
- *Is there is plenty of space for program activities?*
- *Do some areas have soft comfortable furniture on which children can relax?*

General Room Arrangement Guidelines

- *Classrooms should include a balance of areas for active play, quiet play and homework.*
- *Messy activity areas such as art, science, and meals should be near water access to aid in clean up.*
- *Furniture should be arranged to make it easy for children to get around.*
- *Private spaces for one or two children (to allow for times when a child needs to "be by myself"- not a Time Out space)*

- *Materials for children should be organized and stored to provide easy access for children.*
- *All child accessible materials should be age appropriate, clean, and in good condition.*
- *Each child should have an area for storage of personal items.*
- *Each classroom should include a Parent Communication Area to encourage parent/teacher communications.*
- *Each classroom should have a common area or open activity area.*
- *Each classroom should have a distinct and welcoming entrance.*
- *School-age children need to store outdoor clothing, books, and papers from school and other personal belongs in cubbies.*
- *Each classroom should have at least five learning centers, one of them a cozy place.*

In addition to the aforementioned guidelines, afterschool teachers should also consider several key questions to make sure that the room arrangement and selected materials are appropriate for the children and classroom:

- *What are the dimensions of the room?*
- *Where are the windows and the doors?*
- *Where are the sinks and toilets?*
- *How many children will occupy this space?*
- *What are the ages of the children in this room?*

Dividing a classroom into learning centers is like dividing the classroom into small rooms. Typically, low shelves are used to accomplish this. Child size shelves are needed in each center for two purposes:

- *Define the center (serve as dividers between centers)*

- *Provide child accessible storage space for materials*

When attempting to maximize the money that you are investing into classroom materials it is important to consider multiple uses for furnishing. For example, the carpet for the block area can be also used to hold group meetings. The tables used for meals and snacks can also be used as part of the art area. Furnishings should be easily cleaned, flexible and movable. They should also be stackable/hangable, if possible and should contain minimal amounts of chemicals which may affect children (particularly those with allergies) While reviewing each center and determining how they will fit in your curriculum remember to remain open to many uses for the materials listed.



CHECKLIST FOR PURCHASING FURNITURE	
DURABILITY	
Will the furniture last with daily use by school-age children?	
EASE OF MAINTENANCE	
Can it be cleaned and sanitized?	
Will it be easy to maintain and repair?	
Does the manufacturer provide replacement parts?	
QUALITY	
Is the furniture built with high-quality materials and finishes?	
What does the warranty cover and how long is it in effect?	
SAFETY	
Is the furniture stable and will it resist tipping?	
Will any of the materials in the furniture splinter or shatter?	
Are there any protrusions, pinch hazards, hard edges or sharp corners?	
Does it meet applicable fire codes, product liability, and licensing regulations?	
SCALE	
Does the furniture fit the space?	
Is it the correct size for the children in the program?	
Does it support children's developing skills?	
SUITABILITY	
Is it suitable for the planned use?	

The following table outlines general use equipment (materials that are not necessarily associated with a particular learning center) that should be included in an indoor and outdoor environment for school age children.

CLASSROOM ESSENTIALS	AMOUNT NEEDED
Child sized tables (so that seated children's elbows reach the tabletop)	At least 2
Child sized chairs (so that seated children's feet rest on the floor)	1 per child
Cubbies	1 per child
Mats or cots	1 per child
Dry-erase board	1
Adult chair	1
Lockable storage (for hazardous/toxic cleaning supplies as well as materials not in current use, and teachers' possessions)	
First-aid kit	1

COMPONENT AREAS OF AFTERSCHOOL SPACE

Entry Area: The center should have a point of entry that serves as a welcome and transition. The entry and the functions that take place near the entry are critical to the after school program, It should accommodate the following activities:

- *Signing children in and out*
- *Storing children's personal belongings*
- *Communicating with parents*
- *Posting notices and displays*
- *Directing children, parents, and visitors to the right location*

In addition to practical functions, the entry also sets the tone for the program, therefore a sign or banner with the name of the program is an opportunity to make a statement about the program. This is also a great place to hang children's work and feature information and photos about the staff to help parents get to know the staff. If possible there should be different doors for entering and exiting the space. Pathways can be created using furniture, colored tape on the floor, or small rugs.

Food Prep Area: An attractive area for meals and snacks can be created by:

- *Arranging tables for 4 to 6 children rather than large groups*
- *Posting a menu on a small chalk or white board*
- *Covering tables with vinyl cloth, which is bright and attractive. It is an in expensive way to brighten the space at mealtime.*



Storage: It is important to provide storage for children's personal belongings. In small spaces storage can be located near the entry area, but in large spaces storage can be located near each group's home base. Provide labeled individual storage for back packs, musical instruments, sports gear, outer wear, books, and lunch boxes as well as a space to store projects and works-in-progress. Rows of hooks for coats or back packs, boot trays for shoes or boots, and bins, plastic milk crates, or shelves can be used. Homework can be stored in folders near or (inside) school bags and backpacks so that it goes home with children at the end of the day.



Traditional cubbies may be perceived as too babyish by children over age six or seven. Provide one cubby per child. Coats should be hung so that they do not touch. Hats should be tucked into coat sleeves and coats should not be piled up.

Stacking wooden or metal lockers can be used for older children and are available in double units with or without doors. Each cubby or locker should be deep enough to hold a backpack.

Sick Bay: The sick bay, which must be supervised by an adult, is used for temporary isolation of ill children until they can be taken home. Typically a sick bay is a cot in an area adjacent to the center director's office. It should also be near a toilet and have simple, pleasant, cleanable finishes, and lockable storage for first aid supplies. A bookshelf for books and toys can be an added feature in the sick bay.

Family Communication Center: This area of the room provides a location for parents to leave and receive messages and/or talk with a teacher as he/she comes and goes. Teachers who made a point of having pleasant interactions daily build a collaborative partnership with each child's family. Teachers and parents use this area for sharing the children's milestones and accomplishments.

This area is important for smooth transactions between the home and the afterschool care center. Important communication between families and teachers is easy with the use of a message center, which may include a bulletin board, a 3-ring binder or a basket of folders for individual/private messages. Displaying photos of the children at play or their artwork can add to the welcoming atmosphere. If you place the family communication area at the entry it may draw parents in and encourage discussion and involvement in the program.

Learning Centers: When designing developmentally appropriate curriculum for school-age children, learning centers are a major consideration. Rooms are commonly divided into learning centers that provide for a variety of learning opportunities for children to maximize interest and engagement. Each child has an opportunity to solve problems, to exchange ideas with peers, and to learn appropriate social behaviors.

Learning centers should provide opportunities for children to work at their own interest level and at their own pace. An effective teacher is ever-present to bring about individual learning through teacher-guided interactions and activities. Most activities are typically child initiated (the child decides which center to work in, how long, what materials he/she will use and what the activity will be) while some planned activities may require more teacher involvement to take advantage of teachable moments or develop interest among children.

While many of the materials in learning centers will remain consistent throughout the year, some may be rotated regularly to maintain child interest. Based on the planned curriculum, teachers may select specific activities to support children's learning. These should be planned ahead of time based on children's interest and ability levels.

Learning centers provide children with:

- *Flexibility in the time spent on an activity*
- *Freedom to participate in a variety of self-selected activities*

Common Learning Centers: There are several common learning centers often seen in afterschool programs. The list below includes these learning centers and provides a structure for the rest of this document. The size of your classroom and numbers of children enrolled will inform the number of centers you might include. While there should be a minimum of five learning centers, classrooms with more space ought to have as many centers as possible to offer children a variety of self-selected activities.

Blocks/Building
Dramatic Play
Arts & Crafts/Creative Construction
Puzzles & Games
Library/Quiet Area
Science/Discovery
Music & Movement
Homework
Outdoor Play

When deciding which centers you will include, take care to address the needs of children identified below.

Children should have:

- *Opportunities for independent and collaborative play*
- *Opportunities for quiet play that is separated from active play*
- *Opportunities to grow in all developmental domains*

Supervising Learning Centers: During center time, each child selects a center to work in. Teachers should set limits on the maximum number of children who may work in a center at one time to avoid clusters of children gathering in just one or two learning centers. These limits should be based on the size of the learning center and the amount of materials available in that center. There should be more available spaces across centers than there are children enrolled in the classroom. This allows children to move between centers without having to wait for another child to move.

To select a learning center activity, children need to know how many children are allowed in the learning center at one time. This will require a planned system that the children can manage and is likely to include some form of visual aid. Posting a number at the entrance to the center that represents the maximum number of children allowed at one time is one strategy to accomplish this. Another is to hang the number of clothespins at the entrance to represent the number of children allowed in the center. As children enter the learning center they are instructed to take a clothespin and clip it to their shirt. When all of the clothespins are used, the children know that the center is full.

In a classroom where there is a teacher and an assistant, both are responsible for supporting children's activities and work in the learning centers while also monitoring children and encouraging supportive friendship behaviors. In this setting, teachers move from

center to center assisting where needed and observing children at play to learn about individual developmental progress, and to seek out opportunities to engage with children to support growth and learning. Teachers should relate to youth in positive ways by treating them with respect, listening to what they say and responding with acceptance.

When children are in the learning centers, the teacher's role is to:

- *Encourage children to share ideas and experiences with other children as well as the teacher.*
- *Engage children in conversation and by asking open-ended questions (questions that require more than yes or no answers).*
- *Extend children's learning by introducing new ideas and materials.*
- *Model pro-social behavior.*
- *Use positive techniques to guide the behavior of children.*
- *Support children's problem solving efforts.*
- *Observe children's skills, development and interest.*
- *Record observations to use in planning and documentation*



BLOCK/BUILDING AREA

Development and Learning in the Block Center

“When children construct, create, and represent their experiences with blocks, they grow in each area of development:

- **Social/Emotional:** *Children negotiate for materials they want to use, determine how many children can work in the area, care for materials, and follow the rules for building safely. They also exchange ideas. Since one child’s idea of how to build a zoo, for instance, may differ from another’s, children expand their knowledge and learn to respect viewpoints different from their own.*
- **Physical:** *Children’s small muscles develop when they carry and carefully place blocks together to form a bridge or make an intricate design. They gain strength in their large muscles using hollow blocks, and improve eye-hand coordination when they carefully balance blocks so they won’t tumble.*
- **Cognitive:** *As children experience the world around them, they form mental pictures of what they see. Playing with blocks gives them an opportunity to recreate these pictures in concrete form. The ability to create these representations of their experiences is the basis for abstract thinking. Moreover, block play promotes a concrete understanding of concepts essential to logical thinking. Children learn about sizes, shapes, numbers, order, area, length, patterns, and weight as they select, build with, and put away blocks.*
- **Language:** *Children are very willing to talk about their constructions when adults ask questions and show genuine interest.*

They increase their vocabularies when adults give them new words to describe what they are doing, and develop their writing skills by making signs for their buildings.”

(Dodge 2002, p. 243)

The intentional teacher will recognize the value of block play to meet Good Start Grow Smart Guidelines: APPROACHES TO LEARNING 1–5, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1–4, MATHEMATICS 1–5, LANGUAGE & LITERACY 5, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH 1 & 2.

Considerations for Block Play

It is important to have a sufficient quantity of blocks (200-300) in various sizes to allow for three or more children to build. Carpet helps to muffle the crash of blocks falling.

You may find it helpful with younger children to begin the year with only a few shapes from the set (half-unit or square, unit, & double unit, perhaps triangles) and add additional shapes over the first few weeks of school. This will allow you to teach the sorting process at cleanup time that allows the children to put the blocks away neatly.

Block Play Accessories/Enhancements

Because block play provides children with an opportunity for creative and imaginative play, it is helpful to present a wide assortment of accessories and enhancements to support and/or prompt this creativity. Adding or replacing accessories throughout the year

provides additional challenges to children that promote learning and development, particularly if you include items that reflect children's interests and/or community events (e.g., road construction equipment). Particular classroom themes can also be reflected in the accessories and enhancements you provide.

As additional items are included, an additional shelf may be required. Sturdy containers to keep materials organized facilitate cleanup, as do shelves labeled with pictures and words. It is recommended that you rotate these sets of figures, animals, signs, and vehicles. Avoid keeping too many materials in the block center at the same time as this may be over stimulating for children and limit your ability to introduce novelty. Be sure to include materials that are appropriate for your community (i.e. things that children often see in the world around them).

BLOCKS/BUILDING	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage Shelves	As needed
Containers for Storage	As needed
Blocks (large hollow wooden)	1 set (18 -20 pieces per set)
Blocks (unit building blocks) Intermediate set	1 sets (118 -200 pieces per set)
Carpet Square/Rug	1
Cars	1 set (at least 10 pieces)
Trucks	1 set (at least 10 pieces)
Traffic Signs	1 set (at least 10 pieces)
Lincoln Logs	1 set

BLOCKS/BUILDING	AMOUNT NEEDED
Large Sheets or Canvas for creating caves or tents	
Specialized blocks (tabletop blocks, door and window blocks, colored blocks, etc.)	2 sets
Family Figures (Multi-Ethnic)	1 set
Community Workers or Career People (Multi-Ethnic)	1 set
People with Physical Impairments	1 set
Community Vehicles	1 set
Animals (Jungle, Forest, Domesticated, Farm, or Wild): large &/or small	3-4 sets
Dinosaurs	1 set
Wooden Train & Track	1 set
Specialized blocks (large hollow blocks, see through blocks)	1 set
Specialized blocks (large hollow blocks, see through blocks)	1 set
Pulleys, "S" hooks and Clamps	2 sets

DRAMATIC PLAY AREA

Development and Learning in the Dramatic Play Area

“When children engage in dramatic play they deepen their understanding of the world and develop skills that will serve them throughout their lives:

- **Social/Emotional:** *To engage in dramatic play with others, children have to negotiate roles, agree on a topic, and cooperate to portray different situations. They recreate life experiences and try to cope with their fears by acting out roles and situations that worry them. For example, a child who anticipates going to the hospital for an operation can pretend to be the doctor. By assuming this role, the child can switch from feeling out of control to being in charge. Research shows that children who engage in dramatic play tend to demonstrate more empathy toward others because they have tried out being someone else for a while. They have the skills to cooperate with peers, control impulses, and are less aggressive than children who do not engage in this type of play.*
- **Physical:** *Children develop small muscle skills when they button and snap dress-up clothes and dress the dolls. They practice hand-eye coordination and visual discriminations skills when they put away props and materials.*
- **Cognitive:** *When they pretend, children create pictures in their minds about past experiences and the situations they imagine. These images are a form of abstract thinking. When children set the table for a meal for two or use play money to purchase food at their grocery store, they explore math concepts. They also learn from one another*

as they share ideas and solve problems together.

- **Language:** *To engage with others in dramatic play, children use language to explain what they are doing and ask and answer questions. They choose the language that fits the role they have selected. They use reading and writing skills when literacy props are included in the Dramatic Play Area.”*

(Dodge, 2002, p. 271)

Good Start, Grow Smart Guidelines that can be addressed through intentional teaching in the Dramatic Play Area include: APPROACHES TO LEARNING 1–5, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1–4, MATHEMATICS 1–5, LANGUAGE & LITERACY 1, 2, & 5, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH 1–3.

Considerations for the Dramatic Play Area

Standard practice in early childhood classrooms is to provide children the opportunity to reenact real life experiences, beginning with their home. Therefore, equipment & materials for pretending to be mommy and daddy are among the first things to include. Prop boxes to facilitate other pretend play (such as doctor, grocery store, & firefighter) can be rotated according to the children’s interests.

Alternative sources of dress-up clothes and pretend food containers will stretch the budget while still providing items to spur imagination and creativity. Clothing slightly large for preschoolers can be donated or found at places such as Goodwill; it will not be as difficult to put on as adult sized clothes. Empty food-packages (e.g. rice boxes, oatmeal containers, and cereal boxes) carefully opened and re-taped provide familiar environmental print that facilitates literacy development. As

you consider real life items to be included in the dramatic play area keep two main considerations in mind: 1) The items must be child safe and 2) items should promote healthy food choices through the representation of nutritious food items.

Dramatic Play Accessories/Enhancements

Only your imagination and that of the children in the class limit dramatic play. It can be re-equipped as often as children's interests change, while keeping the original materials available. Just as in blocks, all of the scenarios are not made available at the same time, but stored in separate theme-related bins commonly referred to as prop-boxes. Often, materials supplied in the dramatic play area reflect classroom themes or allow children to re-create events in their lives (e.g. a fire in the community would prompt a great deal of firefighter play).

Materials in prop boxes are collected over time and often consist of recycled items. For example, an old thick rope makes an acceptable fire hose and raincoats can be fire coats. Fire companies often give away children's fire hats, which you can keep, in your prop box. Parents can also be sources of items for prop boxes or material on loan for the duration of a particular play theme.

Prop-Box Collection Examples:

- **Zoo:** *stuffed animals, empty pet food boxes, pet toys, food bowls, boxes cut to resemble cages, child-sized broom, animal books*
- **Grocery Store:** *calculator/cash register, bags/sacks, empty food containers (boxes and cans) coupons, play money, signs/newspaper ads, plastic food, baskets*
- **Fire Station:** *raincoats, boots, rubber hose (thick rope or pieces of old garden hose), hats, telephone, wagon*

- **Shoe Store:** *lots of shoes of various sizes and types, shoe boxes, play money, rules, purses, socks, sacks, cash register/calculator, small stool, mirror, footies (feet of panty hose)*
- **Office:** *paper, pens, stapler, calculator, tote bags/briefcase, typewriter, stamp pads, paper clips, telephone, envelopes, file folders, scissors, tape*
- **Post Office:** *envelopes, junk mail, small boxes for packages, stamps/stickers, shoulder bags, play money, rubber stamps, shoe boxes for mail boxes, paper/index cards, hat*
- **Doctor/Nurse:** *white/pastel shirts for uniforms, paper and clipboard, band-aids, cotton balls, empty small bottles, scale, tape measure or height chart, flashlight, blankets, tongue depressors/popsicle sticks, tape, cloth or elastic for bandages*

Reading material found in the home can be replicated in the dramatic play area, including newspapers and magazines in addition to children's books, especially when a living room area is added.

DRAMATIC PLAY	AMOUNT NEEDED
Containers to keep materials in	As needed
Costumes/dress-up clothes	6
Mirror	1
Prop boxes such as beauty parlor, restaurant, doctor, grocery store, office, hospital, pet store/veterinarian, firefighter, post office/mail carrier, etc.	4 or more
Table and chairs	Seating for 4
Dishes and flatware	1 place setting for each child allowed in the center
Pots and pans	1 set
Pretend food	1 set
Cooking utensils	1 set of 4-5 pieces
Kitchen set	4 separate pieces
Phones	1 TO 3
Multi-ethnic dolls (w/ removable clothing or diapers, bibs, and bottles as appropriate)	2 ea. gender
Doll bed and bedding	At least 1
Doll high chair	1
Wooden rocking chair (child-size)	1
Pretend iron and ironing board (child-size)	1
Child-size sofa and/or chair(s)	1

DRAMATIC PLAY	AMOUNT NEEDED
House cleaning tools (e.g., broom, dust pan, brush, vacuum, mop, duster)	1 set
Newspapers and magazines	



ARTS & CRAFTS/ CREATIVE CONSTRUCTION

Development and Learning in the Art Center

“The art area is a studio for children’s development and learning:

- **Social/Emotional:** *Art is a natural vehicle for children to express their feelings. Children reflect their thoughts and emotions through their choices of color, texture, and media. For example, when happy or excited a child might use bright colors. When sad or upset, a child may choose darker tones. Children also express their originality and individuality in their art. Who says the pumpkins they paint have to be orange? A child may prefer having a purple one simply because it will stand out better in a patch.*
- **Physical:** *As children tear paper for a collage or use scissors to cut, they refine small muscle movements. Making lines and shapes with markers and crayons or hitting a nail on the head with a hammer are activities that help children develop the fine motor control they need for writing. Art is all about fine motor skills.*
- **Cognitive:** *Children draw, paint, and sculpt what they know. As they translate their ideas and feelings into art, they use thinking skills to plan, organize, select media, and represent their impressions. When children draw, paint, and make collages, they experiment with color, line, shape, and size. Using paints, fabrics, and woodworking tools they make choices, try out ideas, plan, and experiment. They learn about cause and effect when they mix colors. Through trial and error, they learn how to balance a mobile and weave yarn.*

- **Language:** *Children often talk about what they are doing and respond to questions about their creations as they engage in art. Teachers can write down what children say about their artwork as a permanent record of the experience. Art also fosters vocabulary development as children learn and use related technical vocabulary: sculpture, palette, and clamp, to name just a few terms.”*

(Dodge 2002, p. 317)

Children working in the art area can demonstrate skills appropriate to the following Good Start Grow Smart Guidelines: APPROACHES TO LEARNING 1–5, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1–4, MATHEMATICS 1–5, LANGUAGE & LITERACY 4, 5, & 6, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH 1 & 2.

Considerations for the Art Center

In preschool, art needs to be process oriented with less focus on the finished product. Because skill development is the main goal, high-quality tools, particularly scissors, are important. For example, metal scissors are preferable to plastic scissors because they are more effective at actually cutting things and are likely to be more durable.

Thematic projects, which are often produced in the art area, are more truly crafts. While craft activities are helpful in teaching skills such as following directions and fine motor development, they are not considered Art. To be considered an Art activity, children need to have creative license to represent what they are thinking in their own unique way. As a general rule if all of the children’s products look the same it is a craft. Crafts tend to limit children’s opportunity for creative expression and higher order thinking, thus should be limited.

Art Center Accessories/Enhancements: Consumable Supplies

Many art projects require paper (e.g. newsprint, plain copy paper, construction paper, card stock, etc.). Check with local printing companies to see if they will donate their scraps.

A variety of drawing implements are needed (e.g. crayons, pencils, colored pencils, and pencil sharpeners, and markers). Chalk can be used on paper as well as chalkboards; dry erase markers will be needed when you obtain white boards.

Tempera paints (untreated) have a tendency to stain children's clothing. To aid in wash-ability add a squirt of dish detergent (not too much or you'll have bubbles) to the paint cups before giving to children. When you distribute paint for the children to use put a half-cup at a time in the children's paint cups to limit the amount of leftover paint. As you select paintbrushes for the children to use consider selecting a variety of brush shapes and sizes for children to experiment with.

You may purchase commercial play dough or you may make your own and store it in an airtight container. Clay is a similar medium more appropriate for older children and is beneficial in supporting fine motor development as children knead the clay.

Paste, glue sticks, and white glue are standard collage fixatives. The choice you offer depends on the collage materials you provide; some things will only adhere with glue. Top quality scissors will facilitate the development of cutting skills.

Be sure that all materials are non-toxic. Children *will* experiment with taste and texture.



ARTS & CRAFTS/ CREATIVE CONSTRUCTION	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage shelves	As needed
Containers for storage	As needed
Table (counts towards room essentials)	1
Chairs (count towards room essentials)	6
Double easel w/clips to hold paper	1
12" paint brushes (six 1" wide bristles, six ½" wide bristles, six ¼" wide bristles)	1-1/2 doz.
Paint cups	1 doz.
Paint cover-ups (can be old shirts provided by donation)	6
Paint drying rack	1
Blunt point scissors (Fiskars or the like – sharp scissors are crucial)	1 doz.
Large scissors (adult use)	1
Lap chalkboards or whiteboards w/erasers	4
Stamps (assorted)	1 set (approx. 20)
Playdough tools (i.e. rolling pins and cookie cutters)	At least 1 tool per child
Scissors (crinkle-cut Craft)	12
White paper for painting	3 packs

ARTS & CRAFTS/ CREATIVE CONSTRUCTION	AMOUNT NEEDED
Construction paper (assorted colors)	3 packs
Paint (assorted colors)	6 (different colors)
Markers	3 boxes
Crayons	3 boxes
Stamper pad	1 set (approx. 9)
Glue	6
Tape and dispenser	2
Stapler and staples	2
Hole puncher	2
Magazines	Variety
Playdough	Assorted colors
Craft items (such as pom poms, textured collage shapes, fun foam sheets, pipe stems, etc.)	Variety (6 items)
Trays for finger painting (1 per child)	1 set
Paper punches	4 to 6
Alternative painting utensils	1 doz.
Modeling clay	
Paper cutter	1
Glitter	6 assorted colors
Camera and film	1

PUZZLES & GAMES CENTER

Development & Learning in the Puzzles & Games Center

“Children strengthen all areas of their development as they play with toys and games:

- **Social/Emotional:** *Children learn to cooperate with one another by sharing and taking turns as they play a game or build an intricate design. They develop confidence when they complete a task successfully using self-correcting toys such as puzzles, sorting boards, and stacking rings.*
- **Physical:** *Children practice eye-hand coordination while lacing cards or placing pegs in a pegboard. When children string beads or construct with interlocking cubes, they refine small muscle skills.*
- **Cognitive:** *As children build with Duplo or make designs with pattern blocks and parquetry blocks, they experiment with construction and invention and use creative problem-solving skills. They also expand their emerging math skills such as counting, seriation, matching, patterning, and classification. In fact, this area often serves as the math hub in your classroom.*
- **Language:** *Children use words to describe how they are putting together a puzzle or sorting a collection of objects. They compare the size, shape, and color of objects as they play. While using beads, pegboards, puzzles, dominoes, and collectibles, they develop reading skills such as left-to-right progression, visual discrimination, and matching similar objects. As they use magnetic letters and alphabet*

blocks, children explore letters, then arrange and rearrange them to form words.”

(Dodge, 2002, p. 295)

Good Start Grow Smart Guidelines MATHEMATICS 1–5 are particularly applicable in this area; however, growth in other areas may also be demonstrated: APPROACHES TO LEARNING 1–5, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1–4, LANGUAGE & LITERACY 1, 2, & 6, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH 2.

Considerations for the Puzzles & Games Center

Materials in this area allow children to develop their fine motor skills as well as their math skills (e.g. counting, measuring, comparing quantities, recognizing shapes and written numbers). Shelves should be stocked with a variety of objects in three separate categories: small building toys, manipulatives to sort and classify, and puzzles and games with varying degrees of difficulty. At any one time, three-five examples of each type will offer children ample choice. Rotate materials periodically; it is sometimes possible to trade between classrooms, but some materials suitable for five-year-olds are not appropriate for three-year-olds.

This list is divided into the three categories. You should have at least three items per category to ensure that children have variety. Although brand names are used in some places, comparable toys are acceptable; the key is to have a variety of fine motor experiences available for children’s choice.

PUZZLES/GAMES/ MANIPULATIVES	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage shelves	As needed
Table	1
Chairs	4 to 6
Containers for storage	1 for each set of materials
SMALL BUILDING TOYS	
Lego or Duplo Blocks (larger size for younger children)	1 set
Counting cubes	1 set
Unifix cubes	1 set
Tower building set	1
Snap blocks	1 set
Tinker toys or K'Nex	1 set
Magna-tiles	1 set
Thistle blocks	1 set
Ring Construction Set	1
Tall Stacker pegs	1 set
Jumbo connecting disks	1 set
Pipes to connect	1 set
MANIPULATIVES	
Assorted math counters (bears, dinosaurs, vehicles, etc.)	1 set
Sorting trays	2 or more
Beads and buttons (various shapes/colors) and laces (larger size for younger children)	1 set
Plastic/wood Nuts and bolts	1 set

PUZZLES/GAMES/ MANIPULATIVES	AMOUNT NEEDED
Gears	1 set
Weaving Frame	2
Soft counters	1 set
Locks and latches	1 set
Triolo workshop	1
Spirograph	2
PUZZLES & GAMES	
Shape puzzles (assorted) varying difficulty	1 set
Jigsaw puzzles (assorted) varying difficulty	6
Number puzzles (assorted) varying difficulty	1 set
Games (e.g. Memory, Checker, Dominos, etc.)	1 set ea.
Math-related tools: calculators, abacas, protractors, compasses	2 of each type
Tools for measuring: cups, spoons, containers, scales, rulers, tape measurers, yardsticks, etc.	A variety of these items
Time-awareness materials: clocks, kitchen timers, sand timers, timelines, etc.	A variety of these items
Floor Puzzles (assorted) varying difficulty	2 or more
Play Money	2 sets

PUZZLES/GAMES/ MANIPULATIVES	AMOUNT NEEDED
Cash Register	1
Patterning materials: pattern blocks w/picture cards, pegs and pegboards, cut-out shapes, geoboards)	A variety of these items
Board games of varying levels of difficulty such as: Candy Land, Chutes and Ladders, Sorry, Connect Four, Monopoly, Scrabble, Jenga, Checkers, Pick Up Sticks, Jacks, Marbles	8
Playing cards (standard deck and specialized games such as Uno, Concentration, Guess Who, Old Maid, Go Fish, Crazy Eights)	3 or more



LIBRARY/QUIET AREA

Development & Learning in the Library/Quiet Area

“In the library area children develop the motivation and skills necessary to read and write. They also have many opportunities to grow in all areas of development:

- **Social/Emotional:** *From books, children learn about people who are like them and who are different. They feel comforted learning that others have had experiences or fears similar to their own and managed them. They develop empathy for those who have challenges and struggles that make life difficult. Children develop social skills when they share books together, [or] re-enact a story ...*
- **Physical:** *Children strengthen the small muscles in their hands when they [turn pages in books]. They use their eye muscles as they follow the pictures and words in a book.*
- **Cognitive:** *Books help children gain a better understanding of the world around them. They develop an understanding of symbols (relating the picture of a boy to the written word “boy”). They learn to make predictions and think about cause and effect (“If the pig builds his house of straw, the wolf will blow it down.”) When they hear a story, children make connections between the story and things they already know. When they retell stories, they learn to sequence as they relate the events in a story in order. Children also can learn basic skills such as counting, number recognition, colors, and shapes through books.*

- **Language:** *All aspects of literacy – reading, writing, listening, and speaking – can be strengthened in the library area. When children hear stories, they learn new words and their meaning, and their comprehension grows. Children develop phonological awareness when they hear and explore the sounds and rhythms of language in books. They learn how to follow the flow of print on a page, left to right and top to bottom ...”*

(Dodge, 2002, p. 351)

This area is primarily concerned with Good Start Grow Smart Guidelines LANGUAGE AND LITERACY 1–6; however children can also be observed exhibiting evidence of: APPROACHES TO LEARNING 2–5, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1–4, MATHEMATICS 2, 4, & 5, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH 2.

Considerations for the Library/Quiet Area

It is important to include books from a variety of genres on the bookshelf: fantasy, factual information, nature and science, and stories about real life with characters of different races, cultures, and abilities. They must be kept in good repair. Display books with the covers visible in sufficient quantity (at least one for each child in the room). This area lends itself to coziness where children can snuggle into pillows to look at books or sit with a caregiver to hear a story. It might be where you locate the adult chair in the room.

Public libraries are excellent sources of books associated with classroom themes and often offer extended lending policies to child care centers. As with other areas of the classroom, books need to be rotated, possibly keeping class favorites on the shelf. Class written

books, such as experience stories, can be put on the shelves here also.

When selecting books, consider the following:

- *Children’s books should contain interesting illustrations*
- *Choose books that reflect the diverse groups of people in the world. This helps children learn to develop respect for self and others.*
- *Choose stories that illustrate the concept that people from diverse groups can play and work together, solve problems, and overcome obstacles.*
- *Select stories that mirror children’s lives and experiences including issues children often face (fears, separation, starting school).*
- *Avoid books that include violence, gender bias, or cultural stereotypes.*



LIBRARY/QUIET AREA	AMOUNT NEEDED
Book display shelf	1
Storage shelves	As needed
Soft items such as bean bag, big cushions	2
Carpet square/rug	1
CD player (equipped with headphones)	1
Assorted books (for ages 5 and up) in the following categories: fantasy, factual, stories about people, animals and nature/science, differing cultures and abilities	At least 1 book for every child; and at least 1 book from each category
Puppets	4
Magnetic write & wipe board with markers	1
Word magnets	1
Magazines (age appropriate for children such as Stone Soup: The Magazine for Children, Highlights for Children, National Geographic, Children's Digest, Kreative Kids. Age appropriate for teens such as: Young Miss, Boys Life, Girls Life, Teen)	3 or more
Flannel board	1
Flannel board story sets	2 to 3
Book and CD	2-3 sets

LIBRARY/QUIET AREA	AMOUNT NEEDED
Big books	2 to 3
Assorted puppets (family, animals, community helpers, etc.)	4 to 6
Couch or loveseat or rocking chairs	1 to 2

SCIENCE/DISCOVERY CENTER

Development & Learning in the Science/Discovery Center

In the discovery area, children can be scientists. "All areas of development can be enhanced:

- **Social/Emotional:** *Children learn to work together as they explore, make discoveries, and solve problems. They take care of living things such as classroom pets and plants, and they learn classroom rules for using materials safely and responsibly.*
- **Physical:** *Children develop their fine motor skills when they use eyedroppers to squeeze colored water onto wax paper or pick up a dead insect with tweezers. They develop dexterity and eye-hand coordination as they turn gears, take apart a broken toy, and pick up paper clips with a magnet. When they measure ingredients to make silly putty and then squeeze, pull, stretch, and bounce it, children practice many different fine motor skills. They strengthen their gross motor skills as they pull the rope on a pulley, create shadows on the wall using their bodies, or run in place to feel their pulse.*

• **Cognitive:** *Children use all the process skills when they observe and ask questions about the world around them. They watch plants and animals with great curiosity and make predictions about how they change, move, and react to different conditions. Children organize their thoughts by classifying, comparing, measuring, counting, and graphing objects. They represent their findings in drawing, writing, and by creating models.*

• **Language:** *When children make discoveries, they are eager to share their excitement with others. They want to talk about their investigations, ask questions, and share experiences. They use new words to describe how things look, touch, taste, smell, and sound. Using books and other texts, children find out about topics that are beyond the classroom walls.”*

(Dodge, 2002, p. 381-382)

Through Science/Discovery, children can work towards the following Good Start Grow Smart Guidelines: APPROACHES TO LEARNING 1–5, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1, 2, & 4, MATHEMATICS 1–6, LANGUAGE & LITERACY 1, 2, 3, 4, & 6, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH 1–3.

Considerations for the Science/ Discovery Center

Categories of materials in the Science/Discovery learning center include living things (plants and animals), collections of natural objects (e.g. seashells, leaves, pinecones), and tools for examining them. In addition, books, games, and toys can contribute to nature and science knowledge, whether in this learning center or in the

library or manipulatives centers, in this way there may be some overlap in materials across learning centers. For instance, a puzzle can have a nature theme, a building set can use magnets as connectors, and books on scientific topics can be part of your collection (and should be). Also, teacher guided activities such as cooking extend children’s knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. The intentional teacher also takes advantage of teachable moments, such as asking questions to guide children’s exploration when they find an insect outside or discover frost on the slide.



SCIENCE/DISCOVERY	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage/display shelf	As needed
Table (may count towards room essentials)	1
Chairs (may count towards room essentials)	2-4
Open storage containers	1 for each set of materials
Trays to hold collections for examination	2-3
Mirror trays	1 set
Kaleidoscopes	2
Color paddles	1 set
Living things to take care of – plants, small animals, garden	1 or more
Microscope and magnifiers	1
Collection of natural objects	1
Magnets	2
Thermometer (alcohol only)	1
Aquarium and/or terrarium	1
Ant farm	1
Balancing scale	1
Butterfly catcher	2
Sink and float items	6
Outdoor thermometer	1
Classroom safe science specimens	1 set (4)
Greenhouse kit	1
Prisms	3

SCIENCE/DISCOVERY	AMOUNT NEEDED
Gardening tools	2 sets
Rain gauge	1
Eye droppers, tweezers, sifters, funnels	2 or more of each
Weather chart	1
Maps and globe	1 or more of each
Books, magazines, field guides about nature/science	Variety



MUSIC AND MOVEMENT CENTER

Development and Learning in the Music and Movement Center

“Music and movement experiences help develop both sides of the brain – an important finding in recent brain research – and contribute to children’s development:

- **Social/Emotional:** *Music and movement activities can be shared experiences that make children feel part of a group. Different kinds of music evoke different feelings and actions in children. Lively music can lift children’s spirits and make them want to get up and move their bodies. Quiet, soothing music calms and relaxes children. Children use their bodies to express different kinds of emotions – excitement, anger, sadness. Sharing a song or a dance learned at home helps children to feel good about themselves and their culture. They develop social skills playing musical games requiring simple cooperation such as “Ring Around the Rosy,” or progress to those requiring more complex cooperation such as “Farmer in the Dell.”*

- **Physical:** *Children work on gross motor development (moving to the music and participating in other movement activities) and explore the many ways their bodies can move (finding different ways to get to the other side of a line without stepping on it). Through movement activities (playing “Follow the Leader”), they can improve large muscle skills, balance, and coordination. They strengthen small muscle skills as they learn fingerplays and play musical instruments.*

- **Cognitive:** *Children solve problems while engaged in music and movement activities. They use logic and reasoning to figure out how to make a scarf fly like the wind or which instrument can be used to make a sound like thunder. They create patterns with the words they sing or chant, with the motions they make with their bodies, and with musical instruments. Children learn about number concepts as they clap their hands and stomp their feet four times or as they sing number songs. They think symbolically when they pretend to walk like an elephant or hop like a bunny.*

- **Language:** *Children develop and refine their listening skills as they notice changes in tempo or pitch of music and adapt their dancing or clapping accordingly. They learn new words (and concepts) through songs and movement (singing “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes,” or “I’m Being Swallowed by a Boa Constrictor”). Responding to chants and songs, they practice following directions (“balance a beanbag on your head and walk around the circle”). They develop phonological awareness as they play with the sounds and rhythms of language (“Fe-Fi-Fiddly-I-O” or “Bibbity-Bobbity-Boo”) and learn concepts about print as they look at the words of their favorite song on a chart or in a book.”*

(Dodge, 2002, p. 423-424)

Good Start Grow Smart Guidelines being met in the Music & Movement Center are: APPROACHES TO LEARNING 1–5, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1–4, MATHEMATICS 1–6, LANGUAGE & LITERACY 1–6, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH 1–3.

Considerations for the Music and Movement Center

Music should be an integral part of everyone's life, and therefore should be experienced every day in your classroom. Music experiences should provide for children's active participation in singing, dancing, and/or playing instruments. When selecting music the teacher should consider including a variety of music types (e.g. classical, folk, children's rock and rap, world music, etc.) Before their use in the classroom, make sure CDs are appropriate for use with children, containing no violent or sexually explicit lyrics.

A tape recorder or digital recording device will allow you to tape the children's singing or playing, or your rendition of one of their favorite books, which will allow the children to listen to their recordings.



MUSIC AND MOVEMENT	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage shelf	As needed
Open storage containers	1 for each set of materials
CD Player (equipped with headphones)	1
CD's (assorted styles of music: classical, multicultural, folk, as well as children's music)	6 or more
Headphones w/adaptor plug to use both at the same time	2
Digital voice recorder	1
Movement & activity CD's for children	3
Dance items such as scarves, ribbons, streamers	At least 1 for each child
Rhythm instruments (sticks, bells, shakers, drums)	At least 1 for each child
Xylophone	1

COMPUTER CENTER

Development & Learning in the Computer Center

“Computers are pervasive in our society, and young children “use computers to investigate questions, solve problems and explore and manipulate objects on a screen. This work supports development in all areas:

- **Social/Emotional:** *Computers are a way for children to demonstrate self-direction and independence. At the same time, they offer children opportunities to work with other children to solve problems, as they jointly maneuver their way through a program. For some children, becoming computer “experts” provides them with a valued leadership role in the classroom they might not have otherwise.*
- **Physical:** *Children works on fine motor skills as they use a keyboard, put a CD-ROM in the drive, and coordinate the cursor with the movement of the mouse. In fact, every action on a computer involves fine motor development and eye-hand coordination.*
- **Cognitive:** *Computers contribute to children’s intellectual development and bridge the gap between concrete and abstract thinking. As children explore cause and effect, create patterns, solve problems, and discover solutions, they learn to do on a screen what they already have mastered through hands-on learning. Creativity flourishes, too, as children create art, arrange objects in unique ways, and experiment with graphics.*

• **Language:** *As children learn to identify and use computer-related terms such as icon, cursor, or CD-ROM, they gain a technical vocabulary. With practice, they begin to identify the letters of the alphabet on the keyboard and in programs. As they use software that can read and highlight spoken text, they make connections between speech and print.”*

(Dodge, 2002, p. 471)

Good Start Grow Smart Guidelines also apply to the computer center: APPROACHES TO LEARNING 1–5, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1–4, MATHEMATICS 1–6, LANGUAGE & LITERACY 1–6, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH 2.

Considerations for the Computer Center

Computers are expensive, but they can be good learning tools and are used commonly in schools. Software must be screened for violence, cultural sensitivity, and developmental appropriateness. Programs should encourage children to think and make decisions, solve problems, and be creative in other ways. Allowing two children to sit together at the computer station encourages social interaction.

Close supervision is recommended, especially in the early stages of use. Screen-time for children should be monitored closely to ensure that children aren’t overexposed to the computer at the expense of other worthwhile hands-on activities. Timers and lists of “who’s next” are often necessary in this high interest center. Classrooms of five-year-olds should have higher priority for a computer center than classrooms of three-year-olds.

COMPUTER CENTER	AMOUNT NEEDED
Computer, monitor, keyboard, mouse, mouse pad	2
Earphones	1 for each set of materials
Computer desk – child sized	2
Chairs – child sized, or bench seating for two with one additional chair	At least 1 for each child
Software programs	Variety
Printer	1



HOMWORK AREA

The homework area is an area that is particularly unique for programs serving children after their school day. This area of the classroom should be set-up near the activity tables that are used by the children, but should be structured so that children have the autonomy to move to a comfortable and quiet place in the environment to complete their homework assignments. It is suggested that the children have access to clipboards and comfortable seating to provide the resources necessary for children to find a quiet place, free from distractions to complete their work. During the time of the day that children are engaged in completing their homework it is absolutely essential for the childcare provider to be available to provide assistance to children when necessary and appropriate.

HOMWORK AREA	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage shelf	1
Paper & pencils	Variety
Dictionary	1
Thesaurus	1
Clip boards	20
Extra textbooks	1 per subject/grade

OUTDOOR PLAY

Development & Learning in Outdoor Play

“The outdoors offers many ways to enrich the curriculum and support children’s development and learning:

- **Social/Emotional:** *Children experience a sense of accomplishment and growing competence when they spend time outdoors every day engaged in purposeful activities. You can see the sense of pride a child feels when she can keep a swing going on her own, climb to new heights, throw and catch a ball, and complete an obstacle course. Social skills grow as children share equipment such as tricycles and shovels, work together to build a tunnel in the sandbox, and follow safety rules.*
- **Physical:** *Many reports suggest that the number of children who are overweight is increasing steadily. One factor contributing to the problem is that children do not get the large muscle activity essential for their healthy development. Part of the problem is that in many places it is not safe for children to play outdoors and children spend too much time watching TV. Thus, it’s even more important to make the most of outdoor time while children are at school. Children develop their gross motor skills as they run, leap, hop, jump, swing, slide, and climb. These activities allow children to take risks and try out new skills. Children also use their fine motor skills outdoors to weed a garden, collect bugs, and pour sand through a funnel.*
- **Cognitive:** *The outdoors is a natural laboratory for scientific explorations as children observe and explore nature firsthand. They find and study bugs and butterflies, plant seeds and watch vegetables*

grow, observe leaves change color, taste snow, touch the bark of a tree, hear crickets, and smell the air after a rain shower. They count the seeds they plant and the number of petals on a flower; measure how tall a sunflower grows and calculate how long it takes for a flower to appear; note patterns on the bodies of caterpillars and butterflies; and solve problems, for instance, how to make water or sand run through a plastic rain gutter.

- **Language:** *Children expand their vocabularies when they learn the names of insects and plants and use words to describe the characteristics of each – fuzzy, fast, shiny, hard, colorful, striped, slimy. They learn to read traffic signs and use field guides to identify the leaves, birds, or spiders they find.”*

(Dodge, 2002, p. 493-494)

Children at play outdoors can meet the following Good Start Grow Smart Guidelines: APPROACHES TO LEARNING 1–5, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1–4, MATHEMATICS 1–5, LANGUAGE & LITERACY 1–6, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH 1–3.

Considerations for the Outdoor Play Area

Outside is the main site for gross motor development, and equipment provided in this area is categorized as stationary or portable. This materials list only applies to portable equipment.

Many learning centers can be extended to the outdoors. Science is particularly well suited as an outdoor experience with a study of nature and natural events. Sand and water play are also well suited for the outdoors and may encourage the children to experiment

with natural objects in the sand and water. Children often create dramatic play scenarios outdoors and teachers can support such play by allowing children to bring dramatic play materials outdoors. Providing books in the outdoor environment is important to ensure there are some quiet activities available to children who may want a break from active play.

Outdoor playtime is primarily an opportunity to engage children in an exuberant and expansive release of energy. It is also important to be vigilant regarding safety. Therefore, it is not appropriate to sit on a bench to the side and have conversations with other adults.



OUTDOOR AREA	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage	As needed
Wagon	1
Tricycles, or riding toys without pedals	2
Balls	4 – 6
Plastic hand shovels	2 – 3
Parachute	1
Jump ropes	2 – 3
Hoops	2 – 3
Riding toys (additional tricycles, scooters, wagon)	1 – 2
Large traffic signs, traffic cones	1 set
Balance beam	1
Water table	1
Gigantic building materials	1 set
Rocking boat	1
Air pump	1

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AFTERSCHOOL MATERIALS GUIDE



Appendix I

CLASSROOM INVENTORY



All items purchased for use in your classroom should be age appropriate and used as the manufacturer recommends. Use your professional judgment when determining the quantity of materials you will need based on the number of children enrolled in your class.

Check One: Center-Based Family Child Care Group Home Care

Program Name: _____

Program Phone #: _____

FEIN #: _____

Center-Based Only

Classroom Name (centers-based): _____

Age Group: _____

Family Child Care/Group Home Care Only

Number of children enrolled in your program who are school-age:



Please indicate the quantity of each item you have in each condition (Like New, Good, In Need of Repair). If you don't have a particular item enter a zero. Next, enter the number of each item you need under the column titled, Amount Needed.

CLASSROOM ESSENTIALS					
	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Child sized tables (so that seated children's elbows reach the tabletop)	At least 2				
Child sized chairs (so that seated children's feet rest on the floor)	1 per child				
Cubbies	1 per child				
Mats or cots	1 per child				
Dry-erase board	1				
Adult chair	1				
Lockable storage (for hazardous/toxic cleaning supplies as well as materials not in current use, and teachers' possessions)					
First-aid kit	1				



BLOCKS/BUILDING					
	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage shelves	As needed				
Containers for storage	As needed				
Blocks (large hollow wooden)	1 set (18 -20 pieces per set)				
Blocks (unit building blocks) intermediate set	1 set (118 -200 pieces per set)				
Carpet square/rug	1				
Cars	1 set (at least 10 pieces)				
Trucks	1 set (at least 10 pieces)				
Traffic signs	1 set (at least 10 pieces)				
Lincoln logs	1 set				
Large sheets or canvas for creating caves or tents					
Specialized blocks (tabletop blocks, door and window blocks, colored blocks, etc.)	2 sets				
Family figures (multi-ethnic)	1 set				
Community workers or career people (multi-ethnic)	1 set				
People with physical impairments	1 set				
Community vehicles	1 set				
Animals (jungle, forest, domesticated, farm, or wild): large &/or small	3-4 sets				
Dinosaurs	1 set				
Wooden train and track	1 set				
Specialized blocks (large hollow blocks, see through blocks)	1 set				
Pulleys, "S" hooks and clamps	2 sets				

DRAMATIC PLAY					
	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Containers to keep materials in	As needed				
Costumes/dress up clothes	6				
Mirror	1				
Prop boxes such as beauty parlor, restaurant, doctor, grocery store, office, hospital, pet store/veterinarian, firefighter, post office/mail carrier, etc.	4 or more				
Table and chairs	Seating for 4				
Dishes and flatware	1 place setting for each child allowed in the center				
Pots and Pans	1 set				
Pretend Food	1 set				
Cooking Utensils	1 set of 4-5 pieces				
Kitchen set	4 separate pieces				
Phones	1 - 3				
Multi-ethnic dolls (w/removable clothing or diapers, bibs, and bottles as appropriate)	2 ea. gender				
Doll bed and bedding	At least 1				
Doll high chair	1				
Wooden rocking chair (child-size)	1				
Pretend iron and ironing board (child-size)	1				
Child-size sofa and/or chair(s)	1				
House cleaning tools (e.g., broom, dust pan, brush, vacuum, mop, duster)	1 set				
Newspapers and magazines					

ARTS AND CRAFTS/CREATIVE CONSTRUCTION

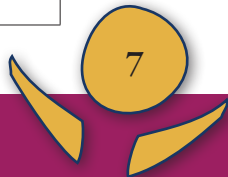
	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage shelves	As needed				
Containers for storage	As needed				
Table (counts towards room essentials)	1				
Chairs (count towards room essentials)	6				
Double easel w/clips to hold paper	1				
12" paint brushes (six 1" wide bristles, six ½" wide bristles, six ¼" wide bristles)	1-1/2 doz.				
Paint cups	1 doz.				
Paint cover-ups (can be old shirts provided by donation)	6				
Paint drying rack	1				
Blunt point scissors (Fiskars or the like – sharp scissors are crucial)	1 doz.				
Large scissors (adult use)	1				
Lap chalkboards or whiteboards w/erasers	4				
Stamps (assorted)	1 set (approx. 20)				
Playdough tools (i.e. rolling pins and cookie cutters)	(at least 1 tool per child)				
Scissors (crinkle-cut Craft)	12				
White Paper for painting	3 pks.				
Construction paper (assorted colors)	3 pks.				
Paint (assorted colors)	6 (different colors)				
Markers	3 boxes				
Crayons	3 boxes				
Stamper Pad	1 set (approx 9)				
Glue	6				
Tape and dispenser	2				

ARTS AND CRAFTS/CREATIVE CONSTRUCTION

	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Stapler and staples	2				
Hole puncher	2				
Magazines	Variety				
Playdough	Assorted colors				
Craft Items (such as pom poms, textured collage shapes, fun foam sheets, pipe stems, etc.)	Variety (6 items)				
Trays for finger painting (1 per child)	1 set				
Paper punches	4 to 6				
Alternative painting utensils	1 doz.				
Modeling clay					
Paper cutter	1				
Glitter	6 assorted colors				
Camera and film	1				

MATH/MANIPULATIVES/PUZZLES/GAMES					
	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage shelves	As needed				
Table	1				
Chairs	4 to 6				
Containers for storage	1 for each set of materials				
Small Building Toys					
Lego or Duplo blocks (larger size for younger children)	1 set				
Counting cubes	1 set				
Unifix cubes	1 set				
Tower building set	1				
Snap blocks	1 set				
Tinkertoys or K'Nex	1 set				
Magna-tiles	1 set				
Thistle blocks	1 set				
Ring construction set	1				
Tall stacker pegs	1 set				
Jumbo connecting disks	1 set				
Pipes to connect	1 set				
Manipulatives					
Assorted math counters (bears, dinosaurs, vehicles, etc.)	1 set				
Sorting trays	2 or more				
Beads and buttons (various shapes/colors) and laces (larger size for younger children)	1 set				
Plastic/wood nuts and bolts	1 set				
Gears	1 set				
Weaving frame	2				

MATH/MANIPULATIVES/PUZZLES/GAMES					
	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Soft counters	1 set				
Locks and latches	1 set				
Triolo workshop	1				
Spirograph	2				
Puzzles & Games					
Shape puzzles (assorted) varying difficulty	1 set				
Jigsaw puzzles (assorted) varying difficulty	6				
Number puzzles (assorted) varying difficulty	1 set				
Games (e.g. Memory, Checkers, Dominos, etc)	1 set ea				
Math-related tools: calculators, abacas, protractors, compasses	2 of each type				
Tools for measuring: cups, spoons, containers, scales, rulers, tape measurers, yardsticks, etc.	A variety of these items				
Time-awareness materials: clocks, kitchen timers, sand timers, timelines, etc.	A variety of these items				
Floor puzzles (assorted) varying difficulty	2 or more				
Play money	2 sets				
Cash register	1				
Patterning materials: pattern blocks w/picture cards, pegs and pegboards, cut-out shapes, geoboards)	A variety of these items				
Board games of varying levels of difficulty such as: Candy Land, Chutes and Ladders, Sorry, Connect Four, Monopoly, Scrabble, Jenga, Checkers, Pick Up Sticks, Jacks, Marbles	8				
Playing cards (standard deck and specialized games such as Uno, Concentration, Guess Who, Old Maid, Go Fish, Crazy Eights)	3 or more				



SCIENCE/DISCOVERY					
	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage/display shelf	As needed				
Table (may count towards room essentials)	1				
Chairs (may count towards room essentials)	2 to 4				
Open storage containers	1 for each set of materials				
Trays to hold collections for examination	2 to 3				
Mirror trays	1 set				
Kaleidoscopes	2				
Color paddles	1 set				
Living things to take care of – plants, small animals, garden	1 or more				
Microscope and magnifiers	1				
Collection of natural objects	1				
Magnets	2				
Thermometer (alcohol only)	1				
Aquarium and/or terrarium	1				
Ant farm	1				
Balancing scale	1				
Butterfly catcher	2				
Sink and float items	6				
Outdoor thermometer	1				
Classroom safe science specimens	1 set (4)				
Greenhouse kit	1				
Prisms	3				
Gardening tools	2 sets				
Rain gauge	1				

SCIENCE/DISCOVERY

	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Eye droppers, tweezers, sifters, funnels	2 or more of each				
Weather chart	1				
Maps and globe	1 or more of each				
Books, magazines, field guides about nature/science	Variety				

LIBRARY/QUIET AREA					
	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Book display shelf	1				
Storage shelves	As needed				
Soft items such as bean bags, big cushions	2				
Carpet square/rug	1				
CD player (equipped with head phones)	1				
Assorted books (for ages 5 and up) in the following categories: fantasy, factual, stories about people, animals and nature/science, differing cultures and abilities	At least 1 book for every child; and at least 1 book from each category				
Puppets	4				
Magnetic write & wipe board with markers	1				
Word magnets	1				
Magazines (age appropriate for CHILDREN such as Stone Soup: The Magazine for Children, Highlights for Children, National Geographic, Children's Digest, Kreative Kids. Age appropriate for TEENS such as: Young Miss, Boys Life, Girls Life, Teen)	3 or more				
Flannel board	1				
Flannel board story sets	2 to 3				
Book and CD	2-3 sets				
Big books	2 to 3				
Assorted puppets (family, animals, community helpers, etc.)	4 to 6				
Couch, loveseat or rocking chairs	1 to 2				

MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage shelf	As needed				
Open storage containers	1 for each set of materials				
CD player (equipped with head phones)	1				
CD's (assorted styles of music: classical, multicultural, folk, as well as children's music)	6 or more				
Headphones w/adapter plug to use both at the same time	2				
Digital voice recorder	1				
Movement and activity CD's for children	3				
Dance items such as scarves, ribbons, streamers	At least 1 for each child				
Rhythm instruments (sticks, bells, shakers, drums)	At least 1 for each child				
Xylophone	1				

HOMEWORK AREA					
	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage shelf	1				
Paper and pencils	Variety				
Dictionary	1				
Thesaurus	1				
Clip boards	20				
Extra textbooks	1 per subject/grade				

COMPUTER AREA					
	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Computer, monitor, keyboard, mouse, mouse pad	2				
Earphones	1 for each set of materials				
Computer desk – child sized	2				
Chairs – child sized, or bench seating for two with one additional chair	At least 1 for each child				
Software programs	variety				
Printer	1				

OUTDOOR AREA					
	AMOUNT RECOMMENDED	LIKE NEW	GOOD	IN NEED OF REPAIR	AMOUNT NEEDED
Storage	As needed				
Wagon	1				
Tricycles, or riding toys without pedals	2				
Balls	4 to 6				
Plastic hand shovels	2 to 3				
Parachute	1				
Jump ropes	2 – 3				
Hoops	2 – 3				
Riding toys (additional tricycles, scooters, wagon)	1 – 2				
Large traffic signs, traffic cones	1 set				
Balance beam	1				
Water table	1				
Gigantic building materials	1 set				
Rocking boat	1				
Air pump	1				

AFTERSCHOOL MATERIALS GUIDE

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