



One Set of Standards for Florida's Four-Year-Olds



The Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) and the Florida Department of Education (DOE) are collaborating to create One Set of Standards for Florida's Four-Year-Olds. These Standards provide examples of what children should know and be able to do and supportive instructional strategies for teachers to use in the School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education programs.

AWI and DOE are pleased to provide a DRAFT copy of the Standards for public review and feedback. We ask that members of the public review the DRAFT document and complete the related survey to share feedback, comments, and suggestions on the document and the revision process.

Public comment should be submitted no later than **April 25, 2011**, in one of the following ways:

Online: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DRAFTOneSetofStandardsforFloridasFour-Year-Olds>

By fax: (850)245-5105

By mail: Florida Department of Education Office of Early Learning, 325 W. Gaines St., Suite 514, Tallahassee, FL 32399

This document contains the five domains:

- I. Physical Development
- II. Social and Emotional Development
- III. Approaches to Learning
- IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy
- V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge.

For each domain, the introduction and glossary are included. Additional elements, including explanation of the Standards, environmental considerations, teacher tips, and appendices will also be added to the final draft.

Questions about the One Set of Standards for Florida's Four-Year-Olds may be directed to AWI at 1-866-357-3239 or DOE at 1-866-447-1159.



One Set of Standards for Florida's Four-Year-Olds



Table of Contents

I. Physical Development	4
Physical Development Introduction.....	5
A. Health and Wellness	7
B. Self Help	13
C. Gross Motor Development	14
D. Fine Motor Development	15
Physical Development Glossary	17
II. Social and Emotional Development	18
Social and Emotional Development Introduction.....	19
A. Self-Regulation	21
a. Affective	21
b. Life/Adaptive	23
B. Relationships	25
a. Self	25
b. Peers	26
c. Adults.....	28
C. Social Problem Solving	29
Social and Emotional Development Glossary	31
III. Approaches to Learning	33
Approaches to Learning Introduction	34
A. Eagerness and Curiosity	36
B. Persistence	37
C. Creativity	38
D. Planning and Reflection	39
Approaches to Learning Glossary	40
IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy	41
Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Introduction.....	42
A. Listening and Understanding	45
B. Speaking	47
C. Vocabulary	48
D. Sentences and Structure	52
E. Conversation	55



One Set of Standards for Florida's Four-Year-Olds



Table of Contents (Continued)

F. Emergent Reading	58
G. Emergent Writing	67
Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Glossary	71
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge	74
Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Introduction	75
A. Mathematical Thinking	79
a. Number Sense	79
b. Number and Operations	86
c. Patterns and Seriation	89
d. Geometry	93
e. Spatial Relations	97
f. Measurement	100
B. Scientific Inquiry	104
a. Investigation and Inquiry	104
b. Physical Science	106
c. Life Science	107
d. Earth and Space	109
e. Environmental Awareness.....	110
C. Social Studies	111
a. Individual Development and Identity.....	111
b. People, Places, and <i>Environments</i>	113
c. Technology and Our World.....	114
d. <i>Civic Ideals</i> and Practices	115
D. Creative Expression Through The Arts	116
a. Visual Arts.....	116
b. Music	118
c. Creative Movement and Dance	120
d. Dramatic Play and Theatre.....	122
Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Glossary.....	125

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
I. Physical Development Domain

I. Physical Development

DRAFT

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

Physical Development Introduction

Physical development and overall good health is the foundation for every aspect of child development and learning. Physical health and mental wellness impact every aspect of development.

When four-year-olds are physically active and healthy, social well-being is enhanced. Their visual and auditory **skills** are refined in ways that facilitate language learning. Through the four components of physical development, four-year-olds are developing **skills** that enable them to be active partners in managing their health, safety, and physical fitness. These developing **skills** and medical evidence underscore the importance of health promotion in the prekindergarten classroom. A growing research base demonstrates that adult medical conditions (e.g., obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease), begin to develop during gestation and early childhood. Childhood is also when many health-related behaviors (e.g., eating preferences and exercise patterns), are developed. These findings leave little doubt that promoting good health habits in prekindergarten is one step toward promoting life-long health.

The first component is **health and wellness** and is demonstrated when children follow basic health and safety rules and habits, such as making good food choices, participating in physical activity, and performing **self-care** tasks independently. Four-year-old children, in their zest for independence, watch what adults do and are anxious to help and assume new “jobs.” The status and support of nutritional, mental, physical, dental, auditory, and visual health is included in this component.

Self-help is the second component and focuses to the child's capacity to accomplish health and **self-care** routines with increasing independence. This component also highlights the child's increasing role as a part of the classroom community, taking part in classroom routines.

Gross motor development, the third component, involves balance, control, and coordination of movements controlled by the body's large muscles. Four-year-olds run, hop, jump, swing, and climb, looking for challenges. Research and experience confirm that play alone is not sufficient for the development of gross motor **skills**. Planned movement activities are needed and require props and manipulatives (e.g., balls, scarves, hoops, ropes, and beanbags). Unstructured play and movement activities remain important and provide opportunities for four-year-olds to practice their developing movement **skills**.

The fourth component, fine motor development, focuses on the increase of four-year-old children's control, coordination, and grace, especially in the use of the hands. These small muscle **skills** typically lag behind gross motor **skills**. Four-year-olds can complete more complicated projects as their **eye-hand coordination** improves, and they develop a more conventional hand grasp that enables them to begin to control writing and drawing tools.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

Strategies to Support Inclusive Learning Environments

- Create frequent alterations in the classroom materials and activities to increase visual interest.
- Provide **eye-hand coordination** activities (e.g., puzzles, sorting games, lacing cards).
- Collaborate with health care professionals (e.g., developmental pediatrician, nurse, and audiologist).
- Pair visual and auditory materials to facilitate learning.
- Adapt child's clothing to increase independence (e.g., adding a tab or pull on a zipper, placing a red sticker on the right shoe).
- Assure that materials in indoor and outdoor environments are easily accessible (e.g., height, size, location).
- Use verbal, visual, and physical cues to help children know what to do.
- Assign a capable buddy to model the actions and help with materials and equipment.
- Provide physical guidance/support for children having difficulty with motor tasks.
- Modify materials so children can participate as independently as possible.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

A. Health and Wellness


1. Shows characteristics of good health to facilitate learning

Good **health and wellness** are necessary to optimize learning. Adults are responsible for facilitating good **health and wellness** in young children. In addition, four-year-old children are developing cognitive, language, motor and social-emotional **skills** that enable them to begin to take some responsibility for their own health practices.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- showing typical height and weight for their age
- participating actively in daily events and social interactions (e.g., playing on playground, listening to a story during circle time, or interacting in the housekeeping area)
- coordinating many eye-hand movements
- demonstrating gross motor **skills** such as jumping, hopping, and running.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Conduct **height and weight assessments** to ensure children have physical stature within the typical range for the appropriate age group (See Appendix  for more information.).
- Provide age-appropriate movement activities and equipment.
- Demonstrate proper hand washing and nose blowing techniques.
- Provide ongoing opportunities for children to make healthy food choices.

2. Shows visual abilities to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development

Four-year-old children are continuing to develop the visual abilities that are needed for success in school and in life. As they advance in school, children rely on their visual abilities to help them perform tasks such as reading and writing. **Vision screening** is important if caregivers begin to notice behaviors that might signal the presence of vision problems, such as squinting and rubbing eyes or bringing the book closer to the face in an attempt to see better.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- using both eyes in coordination
- holding materials at appropriate distance from eyes
- moving eyes rather than head to track objects
- focusing eyes on objects without squinting or straining.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Offer art experiences that require visual ability such as crayons, stickers, collage materials, and easel painting.
- Provide opportunities for outdoor play that require visual ability such as running, climbing, and catching balls.
- Observe to see that children are using both eyes during classroom activities (e.g., puzzles, pegboards, and lacing cards).
- Observe to see if children are squinting or face while looking at a big book or large pictures held by the teacher at circle time.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

3. Demonstrates auditory ability to facilitate learning and healthy growth and development

Children's ability to hear and discriminate sounds in the classroom environment is an important factor for many areas of development. It can impact their interactions with friends, their language and literacy development, and provide a challenge that teachers must be aware of and plan for.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- discriminating different sounds
- identifying animal sounds that are heard in nature or on a record or CD
- reproducing a finger play after listening to a teacher demonstration
- producing speech that is understandable
- participating interactively during classroom activities and orienting to a speaker when addressed by name (e.g., facing a friend who is speaking, turning to hear the teacher address the class).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Conduct **auditory screening** or seek community resources to ensure **auditory screenings** or children.
- Observe to see if children respond to different types and levels of sound in ongoing activities, including the volume at which children speak to others.
- Plan listening activities to assist children in refining attention and listening **skills** (e.g., have children listen to recordings of animal noises and match sounds with animal pictures, provide a listening center).
- Read daily and ask frequent, relevant questions to encourage and support the development of good listening **skills**.

4. Demonstrates characteristics of good oral health and performs oral hygiene routines

Children's **oral hygiene** and health can impact many areas of children's development if problems are not addressed. Some children may be self-conscious about these problems which can affect their social interactions with peers. Additionally, placement of teeth is critical to a four-year-old's development of speech and articulation. For children with **oral health** problems, a teacher's guidance in providing classroom activities and sharing local support services with the family can greatly improve the child's ability to learn and be successful in the learning environment.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- learning how to use dental hygiene tools (e.g., toothbrush, floss)
- performing daily tooth brushing in the classroom
- performing daily flossing with assistance
- showing a growing understanding of the relationship between nutritional choices and dental health.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

- Conduct screening of **oral health** or seek community resources to ensure screening of **oral health**.
- Observe children for indications they are having difficulty chewing, eating, or speaking.
- Observe children for indications of facial pain or mouth pain, and note any visual signs of decay or abnormalities.
- Provide learning opportunities related to **oral health** (e.g., reading a book, looking at teeth in a mirror) and **nutrition's** impact on dental health (e.g., talk about healthy foods and drinks during meals and snacks, grow or provide healthy food choices, use small group activities to explore how certain foods clean our teeth (apples) or make our teeth sticky/dirty (marshmallows)).
- Provide special classroom visitors, field trips, books, and circle time experiences to promote **oral health**.

5. Shows familiarity with health care providers in relation to health and wellness

Early learning practitioners play an important role in helping children learn about **health care providers** in relation to **health and wellness**. To promote healthy development and wellness, every child needs a source of continuous and accessible health care. Each child should visit a health care provider on a schedule of preventive and primary health care to ensure that **health and wellness** issues are identified and addressed.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- using instruments appropriately while playing the role of doctor or nurse in a play setting
- recognizing common medical screening (e.g., measurement of weight and height, blood pressure testing, and using a thermometer to check temperature)
- knowing roles of a variety of health care professionals
- naming most of the body parts that medical professionals inspect.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide book, circle time, and dramatic play activities to encourage good health routines.
- Use supplies, equipment, and vocabulary relevant to primary health care during circle time and small group activities (e.g., show a stethoscope and talk with children about its purpose).
- Provide written material to parents on community events that support wellness.
- Invite a health care provider or athletic trainer to visit classroom to discuss what they do and importance of good health.

6. Demonstrates self-control, interpersonal and social skills in relation to mental health

Behavioral health is as important as physical health. Four-year-old children need Teachers should model appropriate, positive behaviors and assist in promoting positive mental health. This includes developing appropriate coping behaviors and social **skills**, which can aid in the prevention of challenging behaviors.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

- using language to communicate frustration, rather than hitting or kicking, or to label emotions such as "I feel sad."
- adapting to changes in daily routines
- appropriately joining a group of peers in play
- initiating play with peers
- participating in learning activities without teacher prompting.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Follow a predictable routine, including a five-minute warning before changing activities.
- Provide opportunities which foster cooperation.
- Model language to express emotions.
- Provide information to families and children regarding primary and preventive physical and mental health care.

7. Shows basic physical needs are met

Despite their newly found **skills** and knowledge, four-year-olds must have their basic needs met in order to take advantage of learning opportunities. They develop wellness behaviors and **skills** modeled after the adults in their lives.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- being alert and participating in activities, showing energy typical for four-year-olds
- seeking appropriate interaction with other children and their teacher
- showing an understanding of hygiene (e.g., knowing to wash hands before eating a meal or after toileting)
- wearing clothing that is appropriate for the weather
- arriving at school with a clean body and clothing.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide book, center, and circle time activities related to **health and wellness** needs (e.g., use puppets to demonstrate someone with and without enough sleep).
- Communicate with child's family frequently regarding the child's **health and wellness**.
- Schedule ample time in the daily schedule to take care of physical **health and wellness** needs (e.g., hand washing, eating, and napping).

8. Actively takes part in basic health and safety routines

Four-year-olds are beginning to understand more about the health of their bodies. They are learning about healthy foods, good hygiene, and being safe. They are able to recognize harmful objects and can avoid them. Four-year-olds need continued support to remember safety rules. They are very interested in their growing bodies. They develop wellness behaviors and **skills** modeled after the adults in their lives.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- recognizing unsafe items such as a spray bottle of bleach solution on the table, and telling a teacher

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

- knowing that they need to put on a sweater or coat before going outside when the weather is cold
- telling an adult when they see another child doing something dangerous, like throwing rocks or sand
- using safe behaviors, such as walking in the classroom or wiping up spills under the water table, with guidance from the teacher
- demonstrating age-appropriate hygiene (e.g., washing hands or covering mouth when coughing).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide food preparation opportunities and cooking experiences using **nutritious** ingredients.
- Develop, discuss, and regularly review health and safety rules (e.g., carrying scissors with points down, walking in the classroom, and washing hands after using the toilet).
- Conduct regular fire and emergency drills.
- Discuss and demonstrate age-appropriate hygiene (e.g., hand washing, sneezing or coughing into the crook of the arm).

9. Participates in physical fitness activities

Four-year-old children need to move and participate in free play and planned movement activities consistent with their physical capabilities. Children who regularly participate in developmentally appropriate activities are more likely to be of an appropriate weight for their height and age. When teachers create opportunities and encourage exercise and movement, children are more likely to develop good physical fitness habits.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- running and jumping during free play playground activities
- participating in planned music and movement activities
- beginning to understand the importance of exercise
- choosing movement activities.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Include active outdoor free play in the daily schedule.
- Plan and provide movement activities daily (e.g., as a part of circle time, transitions, or outdoor play).
- Plan regularly scheduled activities that encourage physical fitness and movement with books, music, play equipment, and conversations (e.g., create an obstacle course on the playground incorporating different pieces of playground equipment and follow up the experience with a book and discussion of the importance of movement during circle time).

10. Makes healthy food choices

Good **nutrition** is essential to physical and mental wellness, and four-year-old children are beginning to understand the importance of eating healthy foods. When guided and modeled by adults, young children can identify and will choose healthy and **nutritious** foods.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- identifying healthy snacks
- participating in the preparation and sampling of *nutritious* foods
- naming many different healthy foods
- talking with classmates about healthy and unhealthy snack and lunch items.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Plan and provide opportunities for children to help prepare or sample healthy and *nutritious* foods.
- Invite families to bring in healthy foods for a class picnic, parties, or packed lunches.
- Create charts, collages, and bulletin boards of healthy foods, with each child contributing examples of healthy foods through words, photographs, or art work.

DRAFT

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

B. Self Help

1. Actively participates in *self-care*

Four-year-olds are increasingly independent in their *self-care*. They like to dress themselves, go to the bathroom on their own, and are able to follow rules for health routines such as washing their hands after using the toilet. Even with their growing abilities and independence, four-year-olds still need reminders about hygiene and *self-care*.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- using the toilet and hand washing procedures
- using child-sized utensils to eat
- drinking water from a child-sized water fountain with little or no assistance
- putting on shoes and clothes with minimal assistance including learning to zip, button, and tie
- covering the mouth when coughing and using a tissue to blow the nose.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Post visual and written reminders of *self-care* tasks (e.g., steps for hand washing, photos of children independently putting on jackets or using a fork to eat).
- Create opportunities in the schedule for children to help set up and clean up (e.g., a helper chart can be utilized for routine tasks such as setting the table or restocking tissues).
- Develop center activities that provide practice for dressing *skills* (e.g., zipping, buckling, and tying).

2. Helps carry out classroom routines

Children should be provided the opportunity to participate actively during familiar classroom routines and to engage in interaction with peers and adults during these routines.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- setting the table for snack or meals
- passing out snack, art materials, or other items
- participating in classroom helper jobs
- helping clean up toys and activities.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Post visual and written reminders about classroom routines.
- Create opportunities in the schedule for children to help set up and clean up (e.g., a helper chart can be utilized for routine tasks such as setting the table or restocking tissues).
- Develop classroom helper jobs and responsibilities.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

C. Gross Motor Development

1. Demonstrates increasing motor control and balance

Four-year-olds are gaining increasing control over gross motor **skills** and more complex movements such as walking, running, jumping, dancing, and climbing. As they practice, four-year-olds become more coordinated and confident in their physical abilities. They improve their **skills** through free-play activities where they can move as they wish and through structured, planned activities where they are challenged to develop new **skills** with adult guidance and support.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- jumping, galloping, or skipping
- climbing ladders on play equipment with alternating feet and increasing confidence
- running, stopping quickly, and running around obstacles
- pedaling consistently with alternating feet and navigating turns when riding a wheeled toy or tricycle.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide daily structured physical activities (e.g., obstacle course, dancing to music, class walk).
- Provide daily unstructured times for physical activity (e.g., free-play time) such as outdoor play with play ground equipment.
- Ensure all children are participating in developmentally appropriate gross-motor activities daily.

2. Demonstrates the ability to combine movements for gross motor **skills**

As four-year-olds develop increasing control of the muscles in their arms and legs, they are able to do more difficult physical activities. Providing activities that use one side of the body, such as hopping on one foot, and activities that require coordination of both sides, such as dancing to a beat, help children improve coordination and balance. Children improve these new **skills** through self-practice and with adult involvement.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- peddling a tricycle
- galloping and jumping
- throwing, catching, and kicking a ball.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Offer a variety of outdoor materials such as bikes, balls, parachutes, bean bags, hula hoops.
- Plan teacher directed movement activities (e.g., *Follow the Leader, Duck, Duck, Goose, Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes*), focusing on turn-taking rather than winning and losing.
- Provide a variety of music genres and opportunities for free rhythmic expression.
- Provide daily outdoor free play using gross motor equipment.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

D. Fine Motor Development

1. Demonstrates increasing control of small motor muscles to perform simple tasks

Fine motor development continues to progress, and four-year-olds are increasingly able to control the small muscles in their hands. Keeping in mind children continue to develop at their own pace, some four-year-olds may be able to cut accurately with scissors while others may still need instruction and practice. Caregivers should plan activities that strengthen the hand muscles, such as rolling play dough, using scissors, or a hole-punch.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- sorting and handling small objects such as tiny shells in the science center
- weaving long pieces of ribbon through the chain link fence on the playground, using the (pincer grasp) to push and pull the ribbon through the holes
- sliding paper clips* onto pieces of paper at the writing center (*Note: Teachers must assess the safety of using small objects with each group of students at a given point during the school year. Small objects could be used in small group teacher-directed experiences if deemed unsafe to leave in an independent-use center.)
- pulling and squeezing clay or play dough at the art table.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide children with daily opportunities to use a variety of writing tools such as pencils, crayons and markers including allowing children to pull the caps off of markers and putting them back firmly.
- Provide children with opportunities to use a variety of other age appropriate tools (e.g., kitchen tools including tongs, egg beaters, wooden spoon, and woodworking tools including wrench, screwdriver, and hammer).
- Provide daily opportunities for children to use scissors (e.g., to cut paper and tape).
- Display and store materials so that children have easy access and choice and allow children the opportunity to put things away.

2. Uses eye-hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks

Eye-hand coordination is becoming more refined in the four-year-old child. They continue to make progress through creative art opportunities, such as drawing and painting, and through construction activities such as building with blocks or hammering at a woodworking table. *Eye-hand coordination* is important in the development of writing, and four-year-olds benefit from supportive teacher scaffolding.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- building vertical towers using small cubes
- pouring water or sand through funnels at the sand and water table, or pouring juice from a pitcher at snack time
- putting together increasingly complicated puzzles
- cutting on a line or around a large shape with scissors
- stringing beads with holes on a length of yarn.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

- Encourage development of zipping, snapping, and buttoning **skills** by providing a variety of clothing for dolls in the dramatic play area.
- Add different materials to the art area on a regular basis (e.g., cotton swabs, cotton balls, paint rollers) to create renewed interest in **eye-hand coordination** activities.
- Enlist children's help in organizing office or center materials (e.g., putting paper clips* in a small container, picking up pebbles on a community walk to add to the science area) (*Note: Teachers must assess the safety of using small objects with each group of students at a given point during the school year. Small objects could be used in small group teacher-directed experiences if deemed unsafe to leave in an independent-use center.).
- Provide daily opportunities to use art materials, scissors, markers, and other writing implements.

3. Shows beginning control of writing by using various drawing and art tools with increasing coordination

Four-year-olds are continuing to strengthen the small muscles in their hands when they use tools for writing, drawing, and creating art. Fine motor control is still developing. Four-year-olds are progressing through the stages of drawing and writing from making marks and scribbles to eventually creating a realistic picture. Each child progresses differently, some may draw realistic pictures early and others may take much longer. Continued practice with creative art materials and tools is important for children this age.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- experimenting with different sized brushes at the painting easel
- drawing figures and shapes on paper, easels, erase boards and in the sand
- using cutters, molds, and other age appropriate tools when playing with clay
- using scissors with one hand independently
- writing recognizable letters or shapes using crayons or markers.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Encourage the use of writing, drawing, and art tools by planning age appropriate activities and changing materials on a regular basis including writing outside with chalk.
- Display children's writing, drawing, and art and direct parents' attention to the displays.
- Create writing folders or journals for each child that is accessible throughout the day.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

I. Physical Development Domain

Physical Development Glossary

auditory screening – evaluations that are conducted to determine how well a child can hear.

eye-hand coordination – the ability to coordinate movements between the eye and hand to complete a task (e.g., hitting a softball, or catching a bean bag).

health and wellness – understanding that regularly participating in physical activity, eating **nutritious** foods, and maintaining good hygiene promote good health and well-being (e.g., a child chooses to eat fruits or vegetables because they are healthy food choices, participates in games that involve movement, or washes his/her hands before lunch to remove dirt and germs).

health care providers – one's main physician and dentist, as well as other specialists who provide annual checkups and needed medical care.

height and weight assessments – evaluations to measure child's height and weight to determine whether they are within normal (healthy) limits.

nutrition – the process of absorbing nutrients from food and processing them in the body in order to stay healthy or to grow.

nutritious – containing the nutrients that are necessary for life and growth (e.g., raw fruits and vegetables are **nutritious** foods).

oral health – overall health of mouth, free of disease, defect, or pain. This translates to much more healthy teeth.

oral hygiene – keeping the mouth, tongue, teeth, and gums clean (e.g., brushing and flossing daily).

self-care – the capacity to take care of personal needs (e.g., drinking from a cup, getting dressed, washing hands, making choices, becoming independent).

skills – the ability to use knowledge effectively and readily in performance, the ability to transform knowledge into action.

vision screening – evaluations that are conducted to determine how well a child can see.

II. Social and Emotional Development

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

Social and Emotional Development Introduction

Social and **emotional readiness** is critical to a child's successful kindergarten transition, early school success, and even later well-being. Studies indicate that young children who are able to understand and express their own feelings, understand the viewpoint and feelings of others, cooperate with peers and adults, and resolve conflicts are more likely to be successful in school. These skills are rooted in relationships with adults. Adults who are capable of creating positive relationships with children provide a secure foundation from which children can master new and expansive learning challenges. Positive relationships with adults also lead to positive relationships with peers as four-year-olds are developing important **interpersonal skills**. Four-year-olds construct knowledge by interacting with others and their environment, and they learn how to interact successfully with a variety of people and in different settings and circumstances.

Four-year-olds develop social and emotional skills through **self regulation**, **relationships**, and **social problem solving**, the three components of social and emotional development. The first component, **self regulation**, is the capacity to tolerate the sensations of distress that accompany an unmet need and enables four-year-olds as well as adults to engage in mindful, intentional, and thoughtful behaviors. It allows children to handle typical daily stressors (e.g., hunger, fatigue, the noise and activity levels of large group care, frustration from not getting their way, separation from parents) in progressively healthy ways with guidance from a self-regulated adult. **Self regulation** involves the child's ability to recognize his or her own emotions, label them accurately and respond to experiences with an appropriate range of immediate and delayed emotions. There are two areas included in this component; **affective** and **life/adaptive**. The first area, **affective**, is related to factors such as emotional regulation, child motivation, attitudes, perceptions and values. **Life/adaptive**, the second area, is related to age-appropriate behaviors necessary for children to move comfortably in a variety of social settings and to function safely and appropriately in daily life. Self-regulation allows both children and adults to regulate their thoughts, feelings and actions in order to be contributing, functioning members of a social group.

The second component, **relationships**, guides how four-year-olds learn about themselves, others, and the world and includes three areas; self, peers, and adults.. The first area is self relating to the child's ability to. The second area is peers.

Relationships with peers increase during prekindergarten, as four-year-olds are able to engage peers in conversations and participate in group activities. They also develop special friendships and show that they care for others. The third area is adults. As relationships with familiar adults retain their importance, four-year-olds increasingly ask questions, keep conversations going, seek assistance appropriately, and recognize feelings.

Skills associated with the third component, **social problem solving**, are evidenced as

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

four-year-olds begin to use physical means of solving problems less often and develop more positive strategies (e.g., waiting, taking turns, sharing, expressing needs, listening to the needs of others, negotiating, and seeking adult help). Four-year-olds begin to develop an initial awareness of what **bullying** means and anti-**bullying** strategies, with teacher support over time. Children are more likely to speak up for peers when they see an injustice (e.g., mistreatment or **bullying**), if supportive adults are consistently modeling effective strategies to help four-year-olds solve their social problems.

Strategies to Support Inclusive Learning Environments

- Separate skills and behaviors into smaller steps.
- Teach and model specific appropriate social skill behaviors.
- Carefully observe social interactions and provide opportunities that will promote positive interactions.
- Provide opportunities for social interactions with typically developing peers.
- Provide choices so children have more control over their environment.
- Provide environmental cues that make it easy for children to understand expectations and be successful in classroom routines.
- Use predictable and consistent schedules, routines, and activities and prepare children when changes are necessary.
- Limit the number of children in an area at any time to decrease overcrowding and conflict.
- Teach typically developing peers to initiate and persist in interacting with children with disabilities.
- Carefully select group members based on the goals of the group so that more competent peers are available to model skills.
- Comment on appropriate behavior, linking the behavior to classroom rules and expectations.
- Allow children with special needs to hold a stuffed animal or carry a fidget toy during circle time.
- Create class-made books that demonstrate and teach class routines for children with challenges or special needs.
- Create class-made books that demonstrate and teach class rules for children with challenges or special needs.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

A. Self-Regulation

a. Affective

1. **Demonstrates growing *autonomy* and independence, indicated by increasing self-care and willing participation in daily routines, when given a consistent and predictable environment**

Four-year-olds will show growing *autonomy* and independence, indicated by increasing self-care and willing participation in daily routines.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- participating easily in routine activities (e.g., meal time, snack time, rest time)
- engaging in personal care routines (e.g., washing hands after using the restroom), sometimes with a reminder, to the maximum extent possible (e.g., children with special health care needs)
- showing joy and excitement about daily activities

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Display clear visual reminders for all routines in the area in which they are used (e.g., lining up routine is posted by the door; hand washing routine is posted by the sink).
- Engage children in planning routines.
- Teach and help children practice self-care routines (e.g., washing hands, tying shoes, toileting, zipping and buttoning) just like you would any other skill.

2. **Begins to recognize, then internally manage and regulate the expression of emotions both positive and negative, with teacher support**

Children are beginning to identify their own emotions and to recognize the emotions of others. They can calm themselves after having strong emotions, with teacher support (e.g., Teachers lead active calming techniques and visually display them for the children to use).

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- showing ability to control impulses (e.g., stopping and listening to instructions before jumping into activity), with teacher support
- modifying behavior to different settings (e.g., adapts noise and movement level to indoor or outdoor environment)
- demonstrating ability to accurately identify and label own emotions (e.g., “I am so excited! Today is my birthday.”), with teacher support.

Supportive Instructional Strategies

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

- Model appropriate expression of emotions (e.g., “I’m feeling frustrated because I can’t find the book I wanted to read at circle time. I’m going to take three deep breaths to calm down, and then choose a different book so we can continue.”).
- Help children express their feelings (e.g., as they play with others, pretend with toys, listen to stories).
- Identify what triggers each child’s emotional state (e.g., happy or frustrated), what he or she does well and what he or she needs help doing.
- Create a “Safe Area” (e.g., a beanbag or big floor pillow) that a child may use for 10-15 minutes, as needed, and provide visual steps for regaining emotional control. Teach the behavioral expectations for the “Safe Area” like you would for all other learning centers.

DRAFT

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

b. Life/Adaptive

1. Follows simple rules, agreements, and familiar routines with teacher support

Simple rules based on safety and familiar routines help four-year-olds engage positively in activities and experiences. Teachers can lay a good foundation for rules by encouraging, supporting and reinforcing agreements and actively teaching routines. Having agreements with young children allows them to internalize what is it to make a promise to the group and practice keeping it with support and guidance.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- predicting what comes next in the day (e.g., rest time, snack time, dismissal)
- following simple rules without reminders (e.g., hands are for helping)
- explaining simple rules and routines to others.

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Keep classroom rules and routines positive, simple, short, and visual. Rules that are based on the concept of safety (e.g., “helpful” or “hurtful”) are more meaningful for young children.
- Model and practice daily routines (e.g., arrival, transitions, dismissal) just like you would any other skill (using visual cues, reminders, advance warning, and picture schedules).
- Engage children in setting appropriate rules and planning routines.
- Share information about rules and routines with families; discuss and reconcile differences about rules, as needed.

2. Begins to use materials with increasing care and safety

Four-year-old children are increasingly able to use materials appropriately and take care of their environment. They can care for materials and living things (e.g., plants or class pets) with increasing independence. This is especially true when teachers maintain consistent rules and routines.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- rolling all of the tricycles to the far end of the track and placing helmets in a box when cleaning up the playground
- caring for class pet(s) and plants
- demonstrating knowledge and increasing ability of how to use materials purposefully, safely, and respectfully (e.g., reminding a peer that walking around with scissors is dangerous)
- returning dress up clothes and props to the correct place when cleaning up after center time.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Introduce new materials and show children how to use them and where they will be stored.
- Model safe and respectful use of materials and equipment.
- Provide sufficient time in the daily schedule for clean-up routines.
- Assist children with using materials, as needed (e.g., if independently using the materials are beyond a child's developmental abilities).

3. Adapts to transitions with increasing independence

Four-year-olds need varying levels of adult support to manage transitions, though they are increasingly moving independently between activities and settings.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- easily separating from family member, teacher, or caregiver, with teacher support as needed
- returning to their place on the rug after dancing during a circle time activity
- cleaning up the playground and preparing to go inside when the teacher rings the bell, with little or no resistance.

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Use transition signals to help children manage changes (e.g., singing a clean-up song).
- Provide advance notice and anticipate how individual children will respond when changes occur in the schedule or routine.
- Create classroom helpers or jobs to involve children in transition process (e.g., line leader, mat helper, bell ringer).
- Allow children additional time to transition from one activity to another when needed.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

B. Relationships

a. Self

1. Shows increasing confidence in their abilities

Four-year-olds come to school with an emerging sense of self and an increasing awareness of their personal characteristics and preferences. Most four-year-olds readily participate in classroom activities. They are also eager to make choices, explore the classroom environment, and relate to others appropriately.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- identifying personal characteristics and preferences (e.g., the color of their hair or their favorite food)
- selecting activities to engage in
- being comfortable sharing how things are done in home or other environments (e.g., “At home we hang our clothes on the clothesline.”)
- relating appropriately to others by “using their words” (e.g., “I don’t like it when you grab things. If you ask first, I will let you have a turn.”), with teacher support.

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Allow children to “opt out” of some activities.
- Support and **scaffold** the children as they are learning new concepts and skills.
- Celebrate accomplishments with specific observation and feedback.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

b. Peers

1. Interacts with and develops positive relationship with peers

As four-year-olds' communication increases and perspective-taking skills begin to develop, they are improving their social skills, developing positive relationships, and engaging in peer groups. Peers are often of the same gender but not always. Four-year-olds are also beginning to utilize group entry and exit abilities appropriately.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- engaging in activities with peers (e.g., riding tricycles or dramatic play)
- understanding the difference between helpful and hurtful ways to get something or meet a need
- asking to join a group.

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Teach children how to be helpful instead of hurtful in difficult situations (e.g., "How could you be helpful instead of hurtful when someone calls you a name?").
- Teach children group entry skills using a variety of formats (e.g., verbal gestures, role play) and how they should respond when peers want to join their activity (e.g., "Only four people can play in this center so you have to wait.").
- Recognize power positions in peer groups. (e.g., Do the group leaders include and exclude particular students?)
- Address power positions in peer groups. (e.g., Allow for free group choice and also teacher chosen groups to minimize the exclusion of particular children. Teach group leaders skills for including other children and peer group members skills for saying, "No," to the group leader or skills to leave the group to play with other children.)

2. Develops special friendships

Four-year-old children continue to develop their friendship skills. They more frequently initiate activities with children they consider peers and play in complex ways. **Empathy** and caring for others takes place when children have the opportunity to develop friendships. Children who become friends are better at initiating and sustaining interactions and resolving conflicts with each other.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- talking with a peer to plan their play at the sand table
- noticing that a friend needs help putting away the blocks and going to help
- exhibiting appropriate behavior when placed in a group by the teacher (e.g., non-peers, mixed gender, mixed abilities)
- playing cooperative games with one or more friends.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Teach children how to make and be a friend.
- Role-play helpful and hurtful situations (e.g., taking turns, expressing frustration with a friend, asking someone to move).
- Build the classroom community based on cooperative activities and principles.

3. Shows care and concern for others

Four-year-olds continue to develop **empathy**, or caring and concern, for those around them. They are increasingly able to understand the feelings of others and are developing skills that allow them to respond to others in caring and helpful ways. Their cognitive development and social experience contributes to this increase in caring behaviors, but some four-year-olds may still need help becoming aware of the feelings and emotions of others.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- recognizing when a peer is upset and trying to comfort him/her (e.g., “It’s okay; I’ll be your friend until your daddy comes back, while patting the peer on the back.”)
- helping a classmate with a physical disability line up to go outside
- labeling emotions on peers’ faces (e.g., “You look sad.”)
- going to the teacher for help when a peer is hurt.

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Acknowledge and accept children’s range of emotions (e.g., “You were angry when you hit Charles, but he needs you to use words so that he can understand how you feel.”).
- Teacher(s) should model **empathy**.
- Teach children how to recognize emotions through the posture and facial expressions of peers.
- Recognize helpful interactions among the children and acknowledge how the behavior helped someone else (e.g., “You shared your blue crayon with Aaron so he could color the sky. That was helpful.”).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

c. Adults

1. Develops positive relationships and interacts comfortably with familiar adults

Four-year-olds continue to develop close social relationships with adults that are significant to them. Secure attachments with at least one primary caregiver support children as they begin experimenting with independence and initiative, giving them self-confidence to take risks and try new things. Four-year-olds need help learning how to interact when meeting new adults.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- entering the classroom and greeting the caregiver with increasing ease
- expressing affection to a teacher or caregiver with hugs or words and accepting affection in return
- cooperating with an adult who offers individualized instruction (e.g., a therapist)
- going to a specific teacher for assistance when distressed
- accepting guidance and redirection from adults with whom they have a mutually affectionate relationship.

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Introduce children to other adults in the facility (e.g., the cook, the principal or director, the nurse).
- Adults should make an effort to converse regularly with individual children and help each child in the classroom to build a secure attachment with at least one adult.
- Spend one-on-one time connecting with children throughout the week and let each child know that you are happy that he or she is a member of your classroom.
- Greet each child by name every morning and say goodbye to each child at the end of the day.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

C. Social Problem Solving

1. Shows developing ability to solve social problems with support from familiar adults

Four-year-olds are becoming better at working out conflicts on their own, but still need a good deal of help from trusted adults. They may show physical or verbal aggression in the form of hitting, pushing, or excluding peers when they have conflicts. As language and thinking skills continue to develop, however, four-year-olds are increasingly able to use words, negotiate, and offer ideas for solutions to their problems. Modeling how to compromise or share are effective strategies for helping four-year-olds solve their social problems.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- talking with a peer to decide who will get the first turn, with teacher support
- waiting for a peer to finish speaking before talking in conversations
- “scooting over” during circle time when a peer is sitting too close beside him/her
- calming down before attempting to solve a problem, with teacher support
- using helpful words to express frustration and anger (e.g., “I don’t like it when you push. Pay attention and walk around me.”).

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Role-play helpful and hurtful situations (e.g., taking turns, sharing, expressing frustration with a friend, asking someone to move).
- Teach **Initiation Skills** so children have multiple strategies when they want to play with others or join a group;
 - Common-ground activities with peers (e.g., “Let’s play with the blocks.” “Do you want to paint?”).
 - Identify similarities with other children (e.g., “We have on dinosaur shirts.” “I have shoes that tie too.” “We both like to play in the sand.”).
 - Observe what the group is doing and add something to the play (e.g., “I could be the elephant. You don’t have one in your zoo.”).
 - Ask again (e.g., most play episodes are short so teach children to ask again if they can play), and use the initiation skills learned.
- Become conscious of competitive events that pit children against each other for adult attention or rewards, and stop relying on these behaviors for compliance (e.g., Adults should stop saying, “The quietest table will get to line up first.” “The children being good will get a sticker.” “Let’s see who can clean their space up the best for Mrs. Mahoney.”).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

2. Develops an initial understanding of *bullying* with support from familiar adults

Through role-playing and teacher-led discussions over time, children begin to develop an initial understanding of what ***bullying*** means (e.g., the roles of the ***bully***, the ***target***, and the ***by-stander***), with teacher support.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- explaining to a peer why ***tattling*** is not helpful (e.g., “It’s not nice to try and get somebody in trouble.”)
- ***reporting*** to an adult when he or she sees a peer in danger (e.g., “Sally keeps pulling Sarah’s hair and making her cry.”)
- Speaking up for peers when they see an injustice (e.g., mistreatment or ***bullying*** of others) by offering assistance and teaching each other how to be helpful

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Discuss ***bullying*** behavior (e.g., physical, verbal, emotional) with class and teach anti-***bullying*** strategies (e.g., large group, small group, one-on-one).
- Role-play the roles of the ***bully***, the ***target***, and the ***by-stander***.
- Develop and model mutually respectful relationships with the families of children in your classroom and colleagues at work.
- Teach the difference between ***tattling*** and ***reporting***.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

Social and Emotional Development Glossary

affective –

autonomy –

bully – one or more children who repeatedly commit negative acts with a conscious intent to hurt another child.

bullying – repeated negative act(s) committed by one or more children with a conscious intent to hurt another child. These negative acts can be verbal (e.g., making threats, name-calling), psychological (e.g., excluding children, spreading rumors), or physical (e.g., hitting, pushing, taking a child's possessions).

by-stander – everyone — other than the bully and victim — who is present during a bullying incident.

emotional readiness – the ability to understand and express one's own feelings, understand the feelings of others, cooperate with peers/adults, and resolve conflicts.

empathy – understanding another's feelings.

interpersonal skills – the ability to get along with others.

Initiation Skills –

life/adaptive –

scaffold – to model and provide appropriate support to help a child acquire a skill or knowledge (e.g., giving clues, asking questions, and providing verbal prompts).

self regulation – a deep, internal mechanism that enables four-year-olds as well as adults to engage in mindful, intentional, and thoughtful behaviors. It involves the child's ability to recognize their own impulses and respond to experiences with an appropriate range of immediate and delayed emotions.

skills – the ability to use knowledge effectively and readily in performance, the ability to transform knowledge into action.

social problem solving – developing positive strategies to settle conflicts with others in social situations (e.g., asking questions, negotiating, and seeking adult help).

social readiness – the ability to cooperate with peers and adults to resolve conflicts.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
II. Social and Emotional Development Domain

tattling – trying to get a child or children “in trouble” when they aren’t hurting themselves or others.

target – the victim or focus of a bully.

temperament – a person’s characteristic style of approaching and responding to people and situations includes activity level, adaptability, regularity, approach-withdrawal, sensitivity, distractibility, intensity, quality of mood, and attention span.

reporting – trying to help keep a child or children out of danger because they may get hurt or they are being hurt (e.g., target/victim of a bully).

DRAFT

III. Approaches to Learning

DRAFT

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

III. Approaches to Learning Domain

Approaches to Learning Introduction

Approaches to Learning is a unique and critical domain of children’s development. Although each of the other domains of development reflects specific content knowledge that document what children know and do, Approaches to Learning is not about specific content knowledge. Instead, it addresses how children deal with new environments, interactions, and discoveries. Approaches to Learning describes children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning.

The four components of approaches to learning; **eagerness and curiosity, persistence, creativity, planning and reflection**, help direct the “how” of learning in all other domains of development where other domains often address the “how well.” Children learn best when **eagerness and curiosity, persistence, creativity, planning and reflection** are encouraged and supported in all domains of development through play. The role of adults includes providing opportunities for success for all styles of learning. In this way, all children, regardless of learning style or special needs, will learn and be successful. The degree to which they successfully employ approaches to learning components is highly dependent upon the quality and quantity of interactions with supportive adults and peers.

Eagerness and curiosity, the first component, is observed as children show interest in exploring their immediate environment, as well as solving the challenges of learning about the larger world. While **eagerness** and **curiosity** set the stage for learning, setbacks and obstacles are a normal part of the learning process. The second component, **persistence**, is necessary to sustain working on challenging tasks in the face of obstacles and setbacks which are a normal part of children’s development. A child’s first approach in a new learning situation may not result in success, and trying alternate solutions or asking for help may be necessary. **Creativity**, the third component, requires flexibility of thought and imagination while relying on four-year-olds’ increasing willingness to adapt familiar materials and activities in new situations and seek new ways to solve problems. The fourth component, **planning and reflection** plays an increasingly important role in a four-year-olds’ development. Their early attempts at trying alternate approaches are often simple trial and error. With increasing practice and support from adults, four-year-olds are able to reflect and think through the steps of their varied approaches to learning and begin to plan solutions with increasing competence.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
III. Approaches to Learning Domain

Strategies to Support Inclusive Learning Environments

- Use appropriate verbal, visual, and physical cues in interactions and activities to meet the special needs of individual children.
- Use **vocabulary** and phrases in the child's native language when introducing new ideas and concepts.
- Provide opportunities for interaction with typically developing peers.
- Observe the children, join in their play, and provide ideas or model to facilitate more complex play.
- Focus on children's strengths, preferences, interests, and emerging **skills** to encourage engagement.
- Use specialized equipment to increase access to activities and play areas.
- Modify instruction or activity when children lose interest.
- Assist children in selecting activities and materials and becoming actively engaged.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
III. Approaches to Learning Domain

A. Eagerness and Curiosity

1. Shows *curiosity* and is eager to learn new things and have new experiences

Four-year-olds are increasingly curious about their world and initiate exploration of their natural and social environment, such as family roles, plants, or animals. This interest in new things helps them make sense of the world around them, build a rich vocabulary, and begin using new strategies to solve problems.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- showing interest in investigating and experimenting with new materials in activity areas to see how the new materials work and what they can do
- sharing ideas by answering questions like “Why does that happen?” and “How can I do that?”
- asking an adult and/or peers for more information
- engaging with peers, adults, and materials to solve problems
- selecting or requesting their own activity, and eagerly participating in all activities.

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Make additions and alterations to classroom activities and materials on a regular basis to encourage *curiosity* and promote new ideas.
- Ask open-ended questions and encourage dialogue to promote further questions and deeper understanding by children.
- Further children’s thinking by posing questions that challenge their train of thought.
- Create opportunities by providing materials on a variety of levels and complexity for children to engage with peers, adults and materials in problem solving.
- Create opportunities to model problem solving by “thinking out loud”.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

III. Approaches to Learning Domain

B. Persistence

1. Attends to tasks for a brief period and seeks help when needed

Four-year-olds are developing the skills they need to complete tasks, but they are still only able to stay with a task for 10 to 20 minutes. If the activity is particularly interesting to them, they may pay attention and stay involved for longer periods of time. Four-year-olds may become frustrated when they are unable to solve a problem. However, they are becoming more internally motivated to persist and discover alternative solutions to problems. In addition, they may ask for help from a trusted adult or another child.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- attempting to complete a routine activity (e.g. zip a coat or tying their shoes) until they are successful
- working to complete a task despite interruptions and distractions (e.g. fit puzzle pieces together)
- continuing to work on self selecting activities which they may find difficult
- sustaining or initiating a new activity without the need for external approval.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Offer encouraging statements and suggestions when children are struggling with a problem (e.g. “Try turning the puzzle piece a little and see if it fits,” or “You are really working hard to figure that out!”).
- Provide ample time for children to engage in activities such as a minimum of one hour for free choice center time.
- Provide opportunities for children to work on activities over an extended period of time (days or weeks), such as block construction or gardening.
- Offer a variety of materials and choices of activities to encourage children to make their own choices based on their individual interests.
- Encourage children to perform routine tasks independently, such as hanging their coats and bags in their cubbies when they come to school, putting their own coats on when they go outside.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
III. Approaches to Learning Domain

C. Creativity

1. Approaches daily activities with creativity

Familiar, supportive people, and environments are comforting to young children as they are beginning to experiment with new ways of solving problems. **Creativity** is expressed in many ways such as movement, music, art, drama, and verbal expression.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- making up roles for themselves and friends in dramatic play and using imaginary props to support dramatic play
- responding to open-ended questions (e.g. “What would happen if...?” or “What could we...?”, adding creative details to a story)
- experimenting with open-ended materials such as recyclable objects, fabric, paint, paper, blocks, clay, etc. (e.g. experimenting with the cups and funnels at the water table, using various objects to create different shapes in molding clay)
- using trial-and-error in problem solving activities (e.g. testing for stability while building a tower using unit blocks)
- using creative movement and music to express themselves.

Supportive Instructional Strategies

- Provide a variety of open ended materials (e.g., blank paper, modeling clay, ribbons, musical instruments, stencils) and allow children to create instead of replicating a teacher-directed project.
- Observe children carefully as they are trying to solve problems in order to **scaffold** their development.
- Provide ample time for children to engage in activities so they can use try different ways to approach a project.
- Create opportunities for children to role play characters and try on roles of community workers.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
III. Approaches to Learning Domain

D. Planning and Reflection

1. Shows initial signs of **planning** and learning from their experiences

Four-year-old children demonstrate an increasing ability to set goals and develop plans to reach their goals. They begin to organize their actions and materials into steps toward accomplishing a task and following through with their plans by making choices independently. After completing their task, they are able to reflect and think about what worked and what did not work. Four-year-olds' everyday experiences help them learn skills for **planning** activities and looking back at what has happened in the past. Cooperative play experiences provide opportunities for children to plan together and reflect.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- brainstorming ideas and multiple solutions for a task (e.g. when preparing for a field trip they may help the teacher brainstorm what they need to take with them before they leave and then share details about the experience afterward)
- responding to guiding questions (e.g. "What would happen if...?"; telling what they plan to build at the block center before they start to build at center time)
- testing their multiple solutions (e.g. choosing clothes to fit a doll)
- verbalizing the steps to accomplish a task either before or during the activity (e.g. Telling a friend "I will be the mommy, you be the daddy, and we are taking our baby to the doctor" in dramatic play; as they fill the bird feeder with seeds, saying "First I take the top off...")
- reflecting on and evaluating their experiences during the activity (e.g. after watching their block tower fall over, talking about why the blocks fell and suggesting different size blocks on the bottom; after painting a picture, talking about how the colors mixed).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Introduce new equipment and materials before adding them to an interest area and discuss possible uses.
- Ask children what they plan to do in centers during free play or make use of a **planning** board, then evaluate experience afterwards; remind children of their chosen plans if they stray.
- Include children in **planning** (e.g., a family picnic at school, a Thanksgiving program, what activity they will do during center time).
- Provide opportunities for children to discuss, review, and document what they did (e.g., reflect on a field trip, talk about activity choices, document activities in a picture journal).
- During the reflecting process, help children identify the cause and effect relationships in activities such as when mixing red and yellow paint (cause) it becomes orange (effect).
- Allow time during the day for children to make a plan for their activity choices and allow time for children to reflect on the implementation of their plan. (e.g.: Ask child, "Where do you want to work during center time?" "What did you do during center time?"

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
III. Approaches to Learning Domain

Approaches to Learning Glossary

creativity – individuality expressed by creating something new or original (e.g., creating a new representation of a flower).

curiosity – a strong interest in learning about something; children demonstrate **curiosity** when they ask questions about or show interest in activities within the classroom and the world around them (e.g., a child asks questions about new materials in the art center or a bug he/she discovers on the playground).

eagerness – energy and excitement about learning; wanting to learn (e.g., a child desires to participate in an activity).

persistence – the patience and endurance to finish a task (e.g., a child works at completing a puzzle until all of the pieces are correctly placed).

planning – the process of mental preparation and problem-solving in order to accomplish an act (e.g., a child tells the teacher what he/she will do during center time).

reflection – the process of reviewing and critiquing one's actions or one's work (e.g., the child shares with the teacher what he/she did during center time).

scaffolding – the teacher's ability to model and provide appropriate support to help a child acquire a skill or knowledge (e.g., giving clues, asking questions, and providing verbal prompts).

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Introduction

All children's **oral language** development, including listening and speaking **skills**, proceeds at an individual pace. However, for most children, the prekindergarten period is one of rapid growth and expansion of understanding, interest, and **expressive language skills**. When immersed in environments rich in language, novel experiences, and conversation, children make dramatic gains in their **comprehension** of spoken language and in their ability to effectively use **oral language** to communicate their own ideas and experiences.

Social and emotional **skills**, including developing friendships, interacting appropriately with peers and adults in the classroom setting, and expressing needs and feelings, are enhanced in children who have larger vocabularies and greater **oral language skills**. Four-year-olds who can readily describe an experience, ask for help, and express excitement and curiosity adapt more easily to the challenges, expectations, and new situations in the classroom setting in prekindergarten and beyond.

Four-year-olds advance their language and communication development through learning opportunities in seven primary components; listening, speaking, vocabulary, sentences and structure, conversation, **emergent reading**, and **emergent writing**. Listening, **or receptive language**, the first component, is demonstrated by the way a child verbally and behaviorally responds to oral communication. The second component, **speaking**, or **expressive language**, refers to the child's own skill at clearly expressing himself or herself in words. The third component, **vocabulary**, includes a huge expansion in the words that a child understands, especially words related to a growing knowledge of the world and the ways that people describe objects and actions, as well as substantial growth in the words children use in their own verbal expression. The fourth component is sentences and structure. During the prekindergarten period, four-year-olds expand their use of complete sentences and demonstrate growing mastery of correct structure in the way they arrange the words they use to communicate. Four-year-olds also gain a more sophisticated understanding of **conversation**, the fifth component, including how to initiate, participate appropriately, and modify their speaking patterns for different contexts and settings.

For many four-year-olds, the VPK program may be the first time that they have been regularly exposed to children and adults different from their relatives and community members. These new experiences also bring exposure to a broader and more varied language environment. Children bring with them, and share with one another, the language knowledge and **skills** acquired from their unique home experiences.

The VPK experience also allows four-year-olds from diverse cultural and language backgrounds to learn the **language of school**, including **vocabulary**, **sentence structure**, and **content** which are key parts of the educational experience in the United States. Understanding these concepts is a first step toward success in the school environment. In addition, children learn

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

words and concepts related to the wide variety of activities, books, and materials in prekindergarten classrooms. This expanded **vocabulary** allows children to gain a deeper and broader understanding of the world in which they live. Every additional word in their **oral language vocabulary** will also later help children **comprehend** and create written text.

Learning to read and learning to write are among the most important tasks, and achievements, of young children today. These **skills** open the door to a world of learning, **discovery**, and **creativity** found in written texts and in the writings of the children themselves. Research shows that children who learn to read early and well in their elementary school education read more independently; achieve more in content area classes, (e.g., math, social studies, and science); and are more likely to graduate from high school and pursue higher education. Children who learn to read early in their education benefit from the huge increase in the number of new words they come across each year. These experiences enrich their own **oral vocabulary**, their **reading comprehension**, and their writing. Prekindergarten provides children with experiences that help them get ready to read once they reach elementary school.

The prekindergarten period is one of increased motivation for reading among most four-year-olds, especially those who have been exposed to reading, writing, and various forms of print in their home environments. Four-year-olds who come to prekindergarten with fewer of these experiences can benefit immensely from the chance to develop an understanding of and appreciation for written language. When given ample opportunities to interact with books and other forms of print, as well as some instruction in **emergent literacy**, children can learn much more about the purposes and concepts of written language, and about the sounds and letters that combine to form print. Four-year-olds learn best through experiences that are meaningful and interesting to them and through repetition over time, rather than through drill.

Emergent literacy includes the development of the knowledge, conceptual understanding, and **skills** that form the basis for later reading and writing. In the sixth component, **emergent reading**, four-year-olds show increasing motivation for reading, demonstrated by interest in being read to and told what written words mean, and development in the appropriate use of books and other printed materials. Four-year-olds also develop age-appropriate **phonological awareness**, demonstrated by their growing capacity to recognize that words are made up of smaller units of sound, and that they can **blend** sounds together to form words, or break words apart into smaller pieces. **Alphabetic knowledge** refers to children's growing recognition of and ability to name the letters and the sounds they make. As four-year-olds are growing in their ability to **comprehend** spoken language, they also are developing their understanding of text read aloud, as demonstrated by their correct reenactment or retelling of stories read to them, and by their ability to ask and answer factual and abstract questions about the texts. These are **oral language skills** that emerge with adult support; children who are four-years-old typically are not reading text.

In **emergent writing**, the seventh component, four-year-olds develop motivation for written expression and learn the concept that print conveys meaning. Just as children grow in their

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

ability to name and recognize alphabet letters, they also gain **skills** in using letter-like shapes, symbols, and letters to convey meaning, and age-appropriate skill at writing letters.

Four-year-olds' knowledge of the structure of written composition is demonstrated in their dictated stories and their own beginning forms of written expression.

A vast amount of research accumulated across the last several decades tells us that the **emergent literacy** knowledge and **skills** that children can develop during prekindergarten are the key foundations upon which much of their later reading, writing, and content learning capabilities are built. These **skills** allow children to easily break the code of reading, especially once their formal reading instruction begins in kindergarten. Together with a growing mastery of **oral language** and an expanding **vocabulary**, the print-related **skills** learned early on pave the way toward success at creative and clear writing **skills** and reading **comprehension**.

Note: Benchmarks for development are included in this domain. Benchmarks are more precise than the standards and are set to reflect the level of skill and knowledge that should be demonstrated by a child at the end of their VPK experience (when most, if not all, of the children would be five years of age).

Strategies to Support Inclusive Learning Environments

- Provide good models of communication, including sign language and other alternative methods.
- Use special or adaptive devices and/or processes to increase the level of communication and/or participation.
- Use a favorite toy, activity, or person to encourage communication and/or participation.
- Use peers to provide specific language models.
- Use alternative strategies when communicating with children who are nonverbal, have language delays, or are English language learners.
- Provide alternate versions of texts (e.g., books on tape, books in Braille).
- Use assistive technology so that children can interact with literacy materials.
- Separate **skills** and behaviors into smaller steps.
- Use alternate methods of communication for response.
- Encourage and welcome support personnel (e.g., speech therapist) to work in the classroom modeling instructional strategies and problem-solving with the child's teachers.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

A. Listening and Understanding

1. **Increases knowledge through listening**

Four-year-olds are eager to communicate with others. During the prekindergarten year, their listening **skills** are becoming further refined through experiences in the classroom setting, which can include peer interactions one-on-one or in small groups, teacher-child interaction, and whole group activities, such as circle time. Over the course of the prekindergarten year, with teacher support, the children's ability to sustain a conversation and listen for longer periods should increase.

Benchmark a: Child shows understanding by asking and answering relevant questions, adding comments relevant to the topic, and reacting appropriately to what is said.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- responding to a friend appropriately (e.g., Jeremy says, "Let's put the gorillas in the jungle next." Addie responds, "Yeah, I think the gorillas should live in this part over here.")
- singing/chanting during group time, and adding hand and body motions to the song/chant at the appropriate time
- acting appropriately in response to a game, such as *Simon Says*
- providing ideas relevant to context, when the teacher asks "What will happen next?" while reading a book during circle time.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Ask children **recall** and **expansion** questions during show and tell, **read alouds** and similar large group discussions about their experiences.
- Ask children who, what, where, and why questions during shared reading.
- Engage in daily conversations with children on theme, content-related topics, or social conversations where children take multiple turns listening and responding.
- Create an environment where teachers and children listen attentively to all ideas expressed.
- Use props and modeling to demonstrate and reinforce active listening (e.g., talking stick, giant ear prop).

2. **Follows multi-step directions.**

The group life of preschool and later school years requires that young children be able to listen to, understand and follow directions. As they develop these **skills**, four-year-olds become more independent and need less individual guidance from adults

Benchmark a: With teacher support and multiple experiences over time, children achieve mastery of two-step directions and usually follow three-step directions.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- following directions for washing hands (e.g., wet hands, apply soap, scrub, rinse.)
- "reading" and following directions for getting a snack (e.g., a Rebus chart that indicates each child should get one napkin, 11 pretzels, and two pieces of cheese)
- responding to instructions given to the class (e.g., "Please get your jackets, put them on and sit down on the rug.")

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- following directions on a tape or CD to perform.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Instruct children in setting tables for meals and snacks by giving two- and three-step directions.
- Provide two- and three-step directions for children to complete tasks during clean up and learning activities. (e.g. make a pattern with the beads, copy it one time on the same string, and show your pattern to me (teacher).
- Play or sing songs requiring children to act out multiple behaviors and multi-step directions (e.g., *Going on a Bear Hunt*, or *Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes*).

DRAFT

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

B. Speaking

1. Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult.

Children's language becomes more understandable with experience talking and interacting with peers and teachers. With experience, four-year-olds typically refine their **articulation** and grammar, applying rules of language.

Benchmark a: Child's speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar adult.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- showing willingness and desire to talk with classmates and teachers, without showing frustration
- being understood by the teacher and their parents and peers
- being understood by other individuals who do not regularly interact with the child.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model clear speech at a comfortable pace (not too fast or too slow) and an easily heard volume inside and outdoors.
- Encourage children to use language when making requests, rather than only pointing or gesturing. (e.g. ask the child "Do you want milk or orange juice?" indirectly encouraging the child to use language to express his/her wants or needs).
- When children mispronounce a word or speech sound, repeat back to them using clear and correct pronunciation. (e.g., "You would like to paint next?").

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

C. Vocabulary

1. Shows an understanding of words and their meanings

Four-year-old children develop their **vocabulary** through a wealth of opportunities as they interact with their families, teachers and peers and the resources available. Children's interactive experiences in all settings provide opportunities to practice using their new **vocabulary** and applying these new words in appropriate ways.

Benchmark a: Child has age appropriate vocabulary across many topic areas and demonstrates a wide variety of words and their meanings within each area (e.g., world knowledge: names of body parts, feelings, colors, shapes, jobs, tools, plants, animals and their habitats, and foods; words that describe: adjectives, verbs and adverbs).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- following directions that use descriptive words (e.g., run fast, draw a big circle, eat slowly)
- uses appropriate labels to describe a classroom activity (e.g. cooking, art activity, pretending to be a veterinarian)
- describing a feeling to a friend (e.g., "I was so angry that I felt like a volcano erupting!").

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide and read to children a variety of concept-related books (e.g., farm animals, vegetables, the body, fiction and nonfiction).
- Add new words to children's **vocabulary** by using a synonym for a commonly used word.
- Describe children's actions with varied descriptive words.
- Use puppets and props to model expressions of emotions.
- Provide daily experiences that introduce new **vocabulary**. (e.g., demonstrate the concept of stability and use the word when discussing how to keep block structures from falling down).

Benchmark b: Child has mastery of functional, organizational language of the classroom (e.g., same and different, in front of and behind, next to, opposite, below).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- following teacher's directions when listening to music (e.g., "Put the scarf over your head, then move it behind you.")
- understanding directions given at **center** time to identify which items are the same and which are different
- retelling what they heard or pointing to appropriate pictures
- Play games indoors and outdoors using positional words. (e.g., "Hold the parachute over your head." "Stand on top of the scarf.").

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- Provide directions to children using very specific language for locations, sizes, shapes, and relationships (e.g., “Look for the big red teddy bear inside the cabinet.”).
- Play *Simon Says* and scavenger hunt games using specific location, action, and descriptor words (e.g., “Find two blocks that are the same and one that is different.”).
- Include language about position and descriptive characteristics of things and actions when interacting with children or commenting on their play (e.g., “Look at the ladybug on top of the leaf.”).
- Read both fiction and non-fiction books that contain **functional** and **organization language**.

Benchmark c: Child understands or knows the meaning of many thousands of words including *disciplinary* words, (e.g., science, social studies, math and literacy) many more than he or she routinely uses (*receptive language*).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- using a new word when describing a trip to the museum or from another experience
- demonstrating understanding of new words and information by restating words in context or reproducing the appropriate actions
- responding to a teacher’s request to “return to the table,” when “return” may not be a word the child has used before
- responding correctly to a teacher’s directive.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Use and discuss new words daily when speaking with children.
- Teach and discuss new word meanings before, during, and after book reading.
- When creating a bulletin board or mural for a new theme, identify, label, and discuss the meaning and function of the pictures and objects.
- During an interactive science activity model the use of relevant specific science terms (e.g., experiment rather than project, beaker rather than cup, hypothesis rather than guess).
- Use words like, architect, engineer, columns and skyscraper to describe their roles, actions and product while children are creating a structure in the block **center**.

2. Shows increased *vocabulary* to describe many objects, actions, and events

At this age children are using more complex words in their language, particularly if they have been exposed to a rich **vocabulary**.

Benchmark a: Child uses a large speaking *vocabulary*, adding new words weekly.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- using descriptive words (e.g., “My turtle crawls slowly.” “That’s a silly picture.”)
- trying out new words when talking to their friends
- during story time, asking questions to clarify concept and build word knowledge
- describing the process of how eggs and an incubator were used together to hatch baby chicks.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- Provide numerous daily opportunities for children to talk with peers and adults in the classroom.
- Encourage children's verbal input during shared book reading (e.g., in response to questions or to relate the book to their own experiences)
- Teach children to play *Go Fish* and other card games that require verbal labeling of and request of picture card.
- Develop child friendly definitions for important words related to an upcoming lesson.
- Build your own background knowledge and expanded **vocabulary** related to an upcoming thematic unit to share with the children.
- Create a bulletin board or other spotlight area to highlight new words children discover during on-going classroom experiences.
- Create and regularly add to a classroom dictionary that includes new words, child friendly definitions and illustrations or photographs.

Benchmark b: Child uses category labels (e.g., fruit, vegetable, animal, transportation, tools)

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- answering questions at circle time about forms of transportation
- labeling and describing fruits and vegetables
- identifying which objects are kitchen items and which are not
- describing an apple as a fruit and a jacket as a piece of clothing.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Call attention to category labels that appear in story books and other written text.
- Model use of and teach children category group labels (e.g., vehicles, clothing, and furniture).
- Provide opportunities for children to make category collages of items, and have children share their collages by orally labeling each item and naming the category.

Benchmark c: Child uses a variety of word meaning relationships (e.g., part-whole, object-function, object-location)

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- naming parts of a familiar object (e.g., naming parts of a car such as hood, window, trunk)
- answering questions about what a familiar object is used for (e.g., pencil is for writing, pot is for cooking)
- sorting play animals according to typical habitat (e.g., jungle animals vs. farm animals vs. house animals).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Use real objects, manipulatives, or photographs to help children practice using the concepts of part whole (e.g., identifying the tires, steering wheel, trunk of a vehicle).
- Before taking a fieldtrip hold a class discussion about what you might see and experience at the location.(e.g., sheep, tractor, cows at a farm).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- After taking the fieldtrip, hold a discussion about what the children saw at the location and compare with the earlier prediction.
- Discuss the necessary tools and their functions when planning a cooking experience. (e.g., spoon for stirring, whisk for whipping and oven for baking).
- Use props, manipulatives, charts and photos to support children's understanding of associations among word concepts (e.g., matching pictures of car parts to the picture of a car.).

DRAFT

D. Sentences and Structure

1. Uses *age-appropriate grammar* in conversations and increasingly complex phrases and sentences

Four-year-old children increase their use of sentences and varied sentence structures (e.g., greater length and complexity). Although errors may continue to occur, (e.g., over generalization of rules) they demonstrate understanding of many structure and grammar rules.

Benchmark a: Child typically uses complete sentences of four or more words, usually with subject, verb, and object order.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- telling a story about a family trip using long and **complex sentences**
- participating in a long conversation about pets with a friend
- asking questions and adding ideas using complete sentences during a presentation by a special visitor
- sharing an experience (e.g., “We went to the park in my grandmother’s car.”).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Play a word substitution game that expects each child to repeat the sentence with a different ending (e.g., “I went to the store to buy a _____.”).
- Help children tell one sentence about their drawings or favorite objects (e.g., “My dinosaur sleeps with me.” “Here’s a picture of my family.”).
- Model how and encourage children to describe a familiar object that is hidden in a cloth bag in order to guess its identity (e.g., “I feel something soft. It has four legs. It has two ears.”).
- Reply and expand when a child responds with a simple phrase. (e.g., when child says “Here is a dinosaur.” expand by saying “Yes, that is a dinosaur called a Tyrannosaurus Rex.”).

Benchmark b: Child uses regular and irregular plurals, regular past tense, personal and possessive pronouns, and subject-verb agreement.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- using the correct tense when describing something they did the night before (e.g., “My family went to the ice cream store last night.”)
- saying “feet” although a younger classmate says “foots”
- identifying all the art objects that belong to them, using “my” and “mine,” and those that belong to their friends, using “his” or “her.”

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model and help children describe pictures of multiple and single objects to practice the use of correct subject-verb agreement.
- Use picture prompts to encourage children to say phrases and sentences with irregular plurals (e.g., foot/feet, mouse/mice, ox/oxen, child/children).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- Demonstrate how to tell about one's own picture and about the next child's picture, beginning with the words "my picture," "his picture," or "her picture."
- When child says something with a grammatical error respond using the correct terminology. (e.g., child says "I runned to the swings" respond with "Yes you **ran** to the swings", modeling the correct grammar).

2. Connects phrases and sentences to build ideas

As prekindergarten children explore their environments, they demonstrate their growing knowledge by sharing information in longer and more **complex sentences** that provide relevant details about a specific topic. Four-year-old children are generally understood by listeners and able to stay on topic.

Benchmark a: Child uses sentences with more than one phrase.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- talking with a friend as they play, using sentences with more than one phrase (e.g., "Let's build a road next to this building and put a bridge in it.")
- participating in a circle time discussion, adding information in multiple phrases (e.g., "Lizards like to crawl under things and change colors.")
- describing a family trip, combining phrases (e.g., "We went on a hike where we saw a waterfall.").

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Have children work in pairs, with one child telling the first part of a sentence and the other child adding a real or silly phrase to it (e.g., "The dog jumped over the fence...to get the big bone.").
- Provide opportunities for children to tell the group a simple story about a favorite personal experience (e.g., telling the class about a visit to a friend's house during *Show and Tell*).
- Model and give children opportunities to ask and respond to questions in more than one phrase (e.g., "Where would you find a frying pan in a house? A frying pan is found in the kitchen.").
- Provide opportunities at meal times for children to engage in conversations with the teacher and other children.

Benchmark b: Child combines more than one idea using *complex sentences*.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- describing cause and effect, (e.g., "My hands are dirty because I was playing in the dirt.")
- predicting what will happen next ("If I don't water the plants they may die.")
- describing events in a logical time sequence (e.g., "This morning I got up, brushed my teeth and came to school").

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide simple science experiments (e.g., objects that sink and float) and encourage children to tell what happened (e.g., "The flower floated when it fell in the water." "I think the block will sink because it is heavy like a stone.").

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- Help children use complex phrases when retelling familiar stories (e.g., “When the clock struck midnight, Cinderella ran away.”).
- Encourage children to describe their art using **complex sentences** (e.g., “After I mixed blue and red paint, it turned purple.”).
- Model how to combine two simple related phrases into one coherent sentence. (e.g., “This is a pen. It writes in purple ink”, “This is a pen that writes in purple ink.”).

Benchmark c: Child combines sentences that give lots of detail, stick to the topic, and clearly communicate intended meaning.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- describing a family event, combining sentences and giving lots of detail
- participating in a circle time discussion of birds and building on the information by talking with a teacher as they watch birds outside later in the day
- asking many questions about fire engines when the firefighter is a special visitor at the school
- maintaining the focus of the conversation in response to a listener's comment or question. (e.g., Child says, “I played in the snow.” The listener says, “There’s no snow here!” Child says, “I was at my grandmother’s house where there was snow”).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide an interesting picture and relevant verbal prompts to help the children describe what they see (e.g., “What is the large object in the middle of this picture?” “How did you know it was a ___?” “Tell us what is behind this ____.”).
- Ask questions and make comments to guide the children in describing a common routine within the classroom (e.g., “After I use the bathroom, I flush the toilet and wash my hands.”).
- Model and use guiding questions to help children tell about a personal event, organizing the details into an understandable sequence (e.g., “What did you do first?” “What did you do after that?” and “How did it end?”).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

E. Conversation

1. Uses language to express needs and feelings, share experiences, predict outcomes and resolve problems

Four-year-old children become increasingly able to use language appropriately and effectively in different social contexts. They share information, feelings, desires, and experiences in ways that help them get their needs met, solve problems, and/or engage other people.

Benchmark a: Child demonstrates varied uses of language (e.g., requesting, commenting, using *manner words*, problem-solving).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- requesting help from a teacher to get a ball that went over the playground fence
- telling a friend that they are angry about being pushed
- responding with “thank you” when a friend hands them a cookie; saying “excuse me” when they accidentally bump into another child
- participating in a discussion about magnets, making predictions about what things the magnet will attract.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model appropriate language usage (e.g., During lunch the teacher says “Please pass the napkins.”).
- Engage children verbally in **center** activities by role playing and modeling desired language **skills**.
- Provide daily experiences that require children to talk and work cooperatively. (e.g., assembling a puzzle with a classmate, role playing in the dramatic play area, putting on a puppet show with classmates).

2. Initiates, ask questions, and responds to adults and peers in a variety of settings

Four-year-old children appropriately use conversations to engage adults and peers, and understand that asking questions is one way to keep a conversation going. They also understand what types of topics to talk about with different people in different settings.

Benchmark a: Child follows another’s conversational lead, appropriately initiates or terminates conversations, or appropriately introduces new content.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- joining in appropriately during a conversation in progress in the dramatic play area
- telling about their pet bird after the teacher asks, “Who has a pet?”
- ending a telephone conversation after saying “Goodbye”
- explaining or elaborating and staying on topic when a listener, ask a question or makes a comment.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Greet each child daily and reply to each child’s response.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- Engage children in conversation by asking open ended questions, expanding on their comments and providing opportunities for children to take the lead during conversation.
- Encourage an unengaged child to initiate a conversation with another child.
- Use puppets to model ways of initiating and continuing conversation about a topic.
- Put on a skit with co-teachers to demonstrate how to ask a friend to share a toy.
- Model and encourage conversations during meal time.

Benchmark b: Child provides appropriate information for the setting (e.g., introduces him or herself; requests assistance such as asking for help; answers questions such as providing name and address to a police officer or other appropriate adult).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- answering questions asked by the visiting nurse
- asking the teacher for help after unsuccessfully trying to solve a problem with a friend
- introducing themselves to a new classmate.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Use appropriate language to model classroom expectations for responses (e.g., when first meeting the child, the teacher says, "Hello, I am Ms. Manning.").
- Teach children to ask for help as needed ("Will you help me tie my shoe?").
- Use puppets, books, and discussions to help children understand appropriate questions and answers with visiting community helpers.
- Create a classroom greeter/guide as one of your daily classroom jobs.

3. Uses appropriate language and style for context

Four-year-old children are becoming quite good at following conversational rules, using appropriate verbal and nonverbal expressions. They are also learning to change their language to match different contexts.

Benchmark a: Child demonstrates knowledge of verbal conversational rules (e.g., appropriately takes turns, does not interrupt, uses appropriate verbal expressions, and uses appropriate *intonation*).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- participating in a conversation with an adult or special visitor, taking turns talking and not interrupting
- waiting until a teacher finishes a conversation with a parent before requesting help with the art supplies
- showing excitement by using a raised voice when talking about a family trip.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model conversational etiquette during *Show and Tell* (e.g., "Susie is sharing now. Your turn is next.").

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- Model conversational etiquette during meal time (e.g. “Please pass the green beans, Charlie”).
- Model and explain when and how to use the phrase, “Excuse me,” when a child needs to interrupt an ongoing conversation.
- Provide a talking stick for children to learn to take turns speaking (e.g., whoever has the talking stick is permitted to speak).
- Encourage active listening by asking children to maintain eye contact, nod, and ask questions to clarify understanding.

Benchmark b: Child demonstrates knowledge of nonverbal conversational rules (e.g., appropriate eye contact, appropriate facial expressions, maintaining a comfortable distance in conversation).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- looking at a classmate as they share about their pets
- showing excitement by displaying wide open eyes and a smile when talking about a new pet
- standing at a comfortable distance from a friend as they talk.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Read parts of a book using different facial expressions and discuss how this affects the story.
- Model and explain different nonverbal conversational rules (e.g., “When you look at me, it shows me that you are listening.”).
- Role-play conversations using appropriate nonverbal behaviors.
- Encourage active listening by asking children to maintain eye contact, nod, and ask questions to clarify understanding.

Benchmark c: Child matches language to social and academic contexts (e.g., uses volume appropriate to context, addresses adults more formally than he or she addresses other children, and uses the more formal *academic language* of the classroom).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- speaking quietly to a teacher as classmates settle down for a nap
- using the title “Mr.” or “Ms.” before a teacher’s name and referring to classmates by first names
- making statements such as “I am the door holder for the week” or “I am working in the science *center* today”

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model communication in different social situations (e.g., using different indoor and outdoor voices).
- Provide varying social situations (e.g., tea parties, assemblies, field trips).
- Remind children in the dramatic play area to use a quiet voice when the dolls are napping.
- Role play introducing visitors to classroom during circle time or in dramatic play area.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

F. Emergent Reading

1. Shows motivation for reading

Families and teachers are powerful influences on children's developing motivation to read. Attitudes, beliefs, and levels of **literacy** in the home, as well as opportunities in prekindergarten, determine children's exposure to and interest in reading. Four-year-old children continue to enjoy interactive language activities and are developing an increasing interest in "reading" on their own. A love of books and the enjoyment of reading move them toward reading on their own.

Benchmark a: Child enjoys reading and reading-related activities (e.g., selects reading and reading-related activities when given a choice, pretends to read to others).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- selecting the reading **center** during free play or listens attentively during a read aloud
- reenacting a favorite story with felt board characters
- "reading" a book to a doll during dramatic play
- using props like menus and phone books in the dramatic play area.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Use a variety of fiction and non-fiction books to supplement **center** and project activities (e.g., books on building and architecture in the block area, books on the class theme, menus in dramatic play, and books on plants in the science **center**).
- Provide books on audio tape or CD that children can listen to while following along in the printed text.
- Create, use and refresh a classroom library, that reflects gender, cultural and linguistic diversity (story, alphabet, non-fiction, fiction, computer based story books, big books, poetry, fairy tales and fables, plays, magazines, newspapers and class created books).
- Encourage families to bring or suggest examples of books or printed materials that represent their home and culture.

Benchmark b: Child interacts appropriately with books and other materials in a print rich environment.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- picking a book from the shelf, **pretending to read** and returning it to the shelf when they are finished
- looking at an e-reader, magazines and news papers in an orderly fashion, turns one page at a time, progressing from front to back
- selecting and playing a specific audio book from the MP3 player.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model appropriate book handling on a daily basis.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- Teach children to use technology-based text materials and provide opportunities for use.
- Demonstrate appropriate use of written materials (e.g., lists, menus, songs, signs, and charts).
- Encourage children to return materials to their appropriate place in the classroom by using information on the labels.
- Ensure that materials are accessible so children can explore and use them independently.
- Encourage children to experiment using **literacy** materials in novel ways (e.g., pretending to use a magazine as a cookbook in the dramatic play **center**; use stickers as stamps and note cards as envelopes to mail letters).

Benchmark c: Child asks to be read to or asks the meaning of written text.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- selecting a favorite book for an adult to read before rest time
- showing the teacher a note from home and asking what it says
- asking the meaning of the writing on the side of a delivery van.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model getting meaning from text in books and other print in the classroom. (e.g., using **think-alouds**, comments and questions as you are reading).
- Encourage children to ask questions about meaning and purposes of written language.
- Discuss meanings of words and passages before and after reading text.(e.g., before reading the story “The Princess and the Pea” teacher provides a definition of the word “mattress”, following the reading of the book, children and teacher discuss revisit the term “mattress”).
- Encourage children to make suggestions and request for books and other related materials about topics of interest and then make an effort to provide them. (e.g., check them out from the public library or download from the internet).
- Listen and respond positively to children’s comments, questions and interest in written materials. (e.g., asking follow-up questions, finding materials for the child related to the topic, reading a book related to the topic, encouraging the child to re-read the book.).

2. Shows age-appropriate *phonological awareness*

Phonological awareness is an auditory skill and is the ability to recognize and manipulate speech sounds within spoken language. Developing **phonological awareness** in preschool leads to success in reading and writing in the school years. Development of **phonological awareness** is enhanced with consistent and intentional instruction. With teacher support children are increasingly aware of and can differentiate the units of sound within spoken words.

Benchmark a: Child can distinguish individual words within spoken phrases or sentences.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- placing one block for each word spoken by the teacher
- taking a step forward for each word heard in a familiar nursery *rhyme*

- participating in the reciting poems and singing of songs during whole group setting.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Make obvious pauses between words to emphasize the separation of words within the phrases and help children differentiate each word.
- Model stomping your feet, once for each word in a phrase or sentence.
- Play games that help children distinguish individual words within spoken phrases or sentences (e.g. Clapping hands together once for each word.).

Benchmark b: Child combines words to make a compound word (e.g., “foot” + “ball” = “football”)

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- experimenting with the creation of compound words
- using picture cards to create compound words
- creating compound words by adding a second part to the first part provided by the teacher.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide and demonstrate the use of compound word puzzles and picture cards for children to use when practicing blending compound words they say aloud.
- Play a word game, saying the first part of a compound word and asking children to provide a variety of second halves that make real compound words (e.g., say “sun” and encourage responses such as “flower,” “shine,” and “burn”).
- Provide pictures or oral examples of multi-syllabic words that are and are not compound word and ask children to identify compound words. (e.g., Show or say doghouse, catfish, camel, starfish, horse. Ask child to identify the compound words).

Benchmark c: Child deletes a word from a compound word (e.g., “starfish” – “star” = “fish”).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- experimenting with the separation of compound words
- using picture cards to separate compound words
- breaking apart compound words by removing the second part from the compound word provided by the teacher.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide and demonstrate the use of compound word puzzles and picture cards for children to use when practicing taking apart compound words they say aloud.
- Say compound words and then leave off first or second part of the compound words (e.g., Teacher says “say backpack” child responds, “backpack” teacher says, “now say backpack without back” child says “pack” Teacher says “say watermelon” child

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- responds, “watermelon” teacher says, “now say watermelon without melon” child says “water”).
- Play a word game, saying a compound word and asking children to say the first or second part of a compound word (e.g., say “sunshine” and encourage responses of “sun” or “shine”).
 - Provide additional practice opportunities and appropriate corrective feedback, if a child responds incorrectly. Provide the correct response if necessary. (e.g., “that’s not quite right”, “let’s try again”, “listen carefully”, “that’s just right”).

Benchmark d: Child combines syllables into words (e.g., “sis” + “ter” = “sister”).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- providing the second **syllable** of familiar words when the teacher says the first **syllable** (e.g., says “cil” when teacher says “pen”)
- identifying the number of syllables in familiar word and names
- hearing a familiar word and identifying whether it has one, two, or three syllables.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Play a clapping game, clapping once while saying each **syllable** in children’s names, and encourage children to join in. (e.g., Lin-da gets two claps, Pat gets one clap, and Mar-ga-ret gets three claps).
- Provide pictures of familiar two-**syllable** words cut into two pieces. First model, then encourage the children to practice putting the pictures together while saying the word aloud.
- Say the first **syllable** in a familiar two-**syllable** word and have children provide the second **syllable**.
- Model and then ask children to repeat the correct response individually or as a group, occasionally.
- Provide pictures, objects and non-verbal gestures to support children’s understanding and demonstration of the blending task.
- In a small group, designate each child to represent the first or second syllable in a two-syllable word using color coded syllable cards. Ask them to find their matching partner. (e.g., child with yellow card that says “wa” finds the partner with the yellow card that says “ter”)

Benchmark e: Child can delete a syllable from a word (e.g., “trumpet” – “trum” = “pet” or “candy” – “dy” = “can”).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- hearing the sounds of two syllables and providing the remaining **syllable** when the teacher asks what is left when the first **syllable** is removed (e.g., teacher says “spoon what do you hear if I take away sp?”).
- with prompting with a picture cut in half, pointing to the portion of the picture that represents the remaining syllable
- with prompting with a spoken 2- syllable word saying the first syllable. (e.g., “pencil / pen, picture / pic, slipper / slip”)

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- Play word games (e.g., say a child's name, then say the name without the first **syllable** and encourage children to repeat with their own name and the names of their friends).
- Provide pictures of familiar three-**syllable** words cut into three pieces. First model, then encourage children to practice taking the pictures apart while saying the word aloud without the first or last **syllable**.
- Play a game in which children say two-**syllable** words and then say the words with the syllables reversed (e.g., say, "monkey," then "keymon").
- In a small group, designate each child to represent the first or second syllable in a two-syllable word and stand with their partner. Children will squat or hide to model being deleted from the word.
- To provide additional instructional support, say two-syllable words more slowly with emphasis on each syllable and with deliberate and obvious pauses between syllables.
- Provide a basket with several real items that are two or three syllables. Ask child to select one item and move the item up and down to indicate the syllables. (e.g., helicopter -"he" "li" "cop" "tor". tractor -"trac" "tor").

Benchmark f: Child combines onset and rime to form a familiar one-syllable word with and without pictorial support (e.g., when shown several pictures, and adult says /c/ + "at", child can select the picture of the cat).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- saying the name of familiar one-**syllable** words when the teacher says the word with a pause between the **onset** (first sound) and the **rime** (vowel sound to the end of the word)
- picking up all the toys in the room that begin with the /b/ sound, like baby, blocks, and books
- saying their own names with a separation between the first sound and the rest of the sounds
- identifying which two of three words **rhyme** and which does not.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Say familiar words with clear separation between the **onset** and the **rime** (e.g., say, "Let's read the b—ook." Or "Go get the c—up.").
- Provide pictures of familiar one-**syllable** words cut into two pieces for children to put together and separate while orally blending together and taking apart the words into **onset/rime** segments.
- Give children sets of four picture cards and help them to say the name of each picture aloud. Have the children find the card that does not start with the same sound as the other three.
- Select word carefully for use in these activities. Words with **blends** (e.g., /bl/, blocks/st/ street) or **digraphs** (e.g., /sh/, shoes /ch/ chair are more challenging for children to manipulate.).
- Pronounce isolated sounds without an /uh/ sound when articulating individual sounds. (e.g., /b/ instead of /buh/)

3. Shows Alphabetic Knowledge

Letters are the written “code” of spoken language that are critical for the development of reading **skills**. Four-year-old children encounter letters and words in their everyday environment. Children encounter letters in a variety of **context** (e.g., book **center**, block **center**, dramatic play **center** and art **center**). They begin to identify letters by name, especially when a letter is meaningful to them. Teacher **scaffolding** and support over the course of the prekindergarten year is important to ensure that all letters are introduced to children. **Alphabet knowledge** is enhanced with consistent and intentional instruction. With multiple experiences over time, children will begin to identify some letter sounds as well, especially letter sounds that are similar to the letter’s name (e.g., the letter “M” says “mmmm”).

Benchmark a: Child recognizes almost all letters when named (e.g., when shown a group of letters, can accurately identify the letter that is named).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- pointing to a letter, rather than an entire word, in print when asked to identify a letter
- pointing correctly to letters said by the teacher
- identifying the letters in their names.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Ask children to point to a specific letter within a printed word that is part of a poem, song, sign, book, or other written text.
- Give children a set of three to five letters and ask them to find a target letter.
- Print letters in multiple fonts, cut them out, and help children sort them into same letter piles.
- Provide child’s name in multiple places within the classroom. Have child point to the letter that begins his/her name.
- Provide computer letter naming games/activities that allow child to see letter(s) when the letter(s) is named.

Benchmark b: Child names most letters (e.g., when shown an upper case or lower case letter, can accurately say its name).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- identifying several of the letters in a foam board alphabet puzzle
- naming letters on a sign in the classroom
- participating in circle time alphabet identification games.

Instructional Strategies:

- Give children frequent opportunities to say aloud the name of letters when shown them on cards, posters, or alphabet manipulatives.
- Ask children to name the first letter in a word or to find a target letter when reading books.
- Have children match magnetic letters on a magnetic board and have them say each letter name aloud as it is matched.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- Model appropriate use of upper case and lower case letters in classroom written materials.
- Provide children with exposure and activities using both upper case and lower case letters.

Benchmark c: Child recognizes some letter sounds (e.g., when shown a group of letters, can accurately identify the letter of the sound given).

Prekindergarten children demonstrate *alphabetic knowledge* by:

- naming the correct letter when the teacher says the sound of a letter from a group of letters
- identifying the correct letter associated with the first sound in familiar words
- naming the correct letter when the teacher says the corresponding letter sound.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Using manipulatives instruct children in matching letter sounds to the letter name and the printed letter shape.
- Play game matching children to the large printed letter representing the first sound in each of their names.
- Provide a variety of familiar objects for children to sort into first sound piles.
- Introduce the most common letter sound first (e.g., the sound “g” makes in “goat” rather than “giants” or the sound “c” makes in “cat” rather than “circle”).

Benchmark d: Child names some letter sounds (e.g., when shown a letter, can accurately say the sound the letter makes).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- naming the letter sounds in their first name as they attempt to write them
- saying the correct letter sound while pointing to a letter in a book
- saying the correct sound for the first letter(s) of familiar words.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Ask children to say the sound of a letter within a word written in a poem, song, sign, book, or other printed text.
- Give children a set of three to five letters and ask them to say the sound each letter makes.
- Pronounce isolated sounds without an /uh/, when articulating individual sounds (e.g., /b/ instead of /buh/).
- Model spelling children’s names aloud using letter sounds instead of letter names, and provide children with opportunities to practice this with their own and each other’s names.
- Highlight for children instances when certain letters may represent less common sounds in words (e.g., Juan, Phillip, xylophone, giraffe).

4. Demonstrates *comprehension* of text read aloud

Children build understanding (***comprehension***) by linking new information to things they already know. Increasing experiences, help them understand more ideas, connect new

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

words, phrases and concepts to their own life. Children’s attention grows through daily story time and meaningful experiences with books and other forms of literature. They ask and respond appropriately to questions about the story. Children begin requesting favorite books and can retell stories by placing events in the correct order. They may also begin to relate their own personal experiences or fantasies to those heard in stories and predict the next event.

Benchmark a: Child retells or reenacts story after it is read aloud.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- guessing correctly what food *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* will eat next
- use puppets or flannel board pieces to retell a familiar story
- relating what happened to a character in a book to something similar that happened to them, saying “One time I got scared about going to school” after reading Froggy Goes to School
- recalling information from a story and using the information in retellings and dramatic play.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide dramatic play props for children to use when reenacting a fairy tale or familiar short story read aloud.
- Help children retell a story with a clear beginning, middle, and end, sometimes using picture sequence cards of stories.
- Provide flannel board materials and/or hand puppets for children to use when retelling a familiar story aloud with peers.
- Provide an environment where children’s initiative to modify the environment to extend the learning is encouraged (e.g., child independently takes or creates props from the classroom to the outside in order to turn the sandbox into a pirate ship.).

Benchmark b: Child asks and answers appropriate questions about the story (e.g., “What just happened?” “What might happen next?” “What would happen if...?” “What was so silly about...?” “How would you feel if you...?”).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- responding to open-ended questions about a story, (e.g., “What do you think will happen next?” or “Why do you think he did that?”)
- proposing a new title or a new event to include in the story
- responding appropriately to a teacher’s question while reading a book
- relating an event in their own life to what happened in the story
- Describing how they might respond to story events (e.g., “what would you say to the Big Bad Wolf?”).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model asking questions or making predictions related to story events (e.g., “I wonder what Goldilocks was thinking when she ran away from the bear’s house?”).
- Activate and connect children’s background knowledge to stories.
- Provide experiences that relate to specific aspects of a story plot.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- Encourage children to make predictions by stopping at strategic points in a story and having children discuss or draw pictures.
- Help children create new endings to familiar stories using props, puppets, and dictation.

DRAFT

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

G. Emergent Writing

1. Shows motivation to engage in written expression

Through writing experiences children realize that writing is a way to express their thoughts and ideas to others. Children are often eager to share their experiences through writing. They attempt to write by scribbling, drawing, and creating pictographs and enjoy sharing these expressions with adults and peers. When asked about a drawing, prekindergarten children often tell a story and take pride in the words written down by the teacher. As children continue to experiment with writing, they make important letter-sound connections that build reading **skills** while they are refining their fine motor control.

Benchmark a: Child demonstrates their understanding of the connections among their ideas, experiences, and written expression.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- solving problems using written expression (e.g., helping the teacher to write classroom rules)
- creating an alternate ending to a story
- describing feelings about an experience through written expression (e.g., drawing pictures or writing)
- asking for assistance in documenting a recent experience.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Create charts and graphs to capture children's ideas.
- Provide time and materials for children to create and dictate a story or play.
- Encourage children to illustrate and dictate their thoughts and ideas (e.g., teacher writes child's description of their drawing).
- Work as a group to compose a song or poem about the current events or classroom event.

Benchmark b: Child intentionally uses scribbles/writing to convey meaning (e.g., signing artwork, captioning, labeling, creating lists, making notes).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- signing their name to a drawing
- writing a few letters or mock letters as a caption under a drawing
- writing a "recipe" on a pad of paper when playing in the dramatic play **center** set up like a kitchen
- using the writing desk in the house keeping area to write notes, prescriptions, letters, and drawings. (stock desk with pencils, markers, crayons, paper, envelopes and stickers)
- tracing letters in the sand at the sand table
- building a block structure to represent the fire station in a story and asking the teacher for help writing "fire station"
- responding "This is my house and my dog. My dog is yellow" when asked to describe their drawing.

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Include writing materials in all areas of the classroom; model and encourage their use.
- Encourage children to create signs for dramatic play or block play.
- Model signing name to art work or writing a shopping list for the grocery store and encourage children to do the same.
- Allow children to “sign-in” each morning to record their attendance.

2. Uses scribbling, letter-like shapes, and letters that are clearly different from drawing to represent thoughts and ideas

Emergent literacy skills include the ability to write letters and letter-like shapes to convey meaning. As four-year-olds continue to refine their fine motor **skills** and learn to recognize letters and symbols, they begin to practice forming the letters. They are especially motivated to write their name and other meaningful words because of their personal attachment to “their” letters. Children who have had experiences with various writing tools (e.g., paintbrush, marker, pencil) are developing more control using these tools. They begin clearly identifying their “writing” from their drawings, even though their writing may not yet resemble standard letter forms.

Benchmark a: Child independently uses letter-like shapes or letters to write words or parts of words.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- filling a paper with random marks and then “reading” the marks to the teacher or a peer
- making letter shapes using paint and brushes at the easel
- using a stick to make letters in wet sand on the playground
- writing a “story” that has distinctively different symbols for drawings (illustrations) and scribbling or letter-like shapes (text)
- using markers and pencils at the art table to label their drawing, writing an “r” next to a rainbow and their initial next to a figure.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide opportunities for children to use rubber alphabet stamps to print their own names.
- Create journals and regular opportunities for children to write in and “read” from their journals.
- Provide children opportunities to match magnetic letters to printed words on picture cards.
- Provide children various opportunities to write letters in different media (e.g., sand, paint, buttons, shaving cream, chalk and clay).

Benchmark b: Child writes own name (e.g., first name, last name, or frequent nickname), not necessarily with full correct spelling or well-formed letters.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- signing in using their first name on classroom attendance sheet

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

- labeling belongings with their initials
- practicing writing their first and last names.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide children with a model of their name in writing to encourage independent identification and production.
- Provide sign-in sheets on which children can print their names.
- Post a two-part chart daily with a question and picture symbols on which children must sign their name under their choice (e.g., “Do you want white or chocolate milk at lunch?” “Which do you like better—chocolate chip cookies or oatmeal cookies?”).
- Have children sign their name to artwork and other creations, including dictations, photographs, and charts.

3. Demonstrates age-appropriate ability to write letters

Most four-year-old children begin writing letters upon request, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time. Beginning with the letters of their names and familiar environmental signs, and other meaningful words children quickly add other letters that have meaning to them.

Benchmark: Child independently writes some letters on request.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- writing their names on request
- writing recognizable letters (e.g., “m” and “p”) in the sand or on the sidewalk with chalk
- using magnetic letters to write a friend’s name.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model formation of letters and provide opportunities for children to practice writing letters.
- Provide a variety of materials to practice letter writing (e.g., sand, shaving cream, and finger paint).
- Create a class newsletter, having children dictate stories and ideas, contribute drawings and writings, and make headings or captions.

4. Demonstrates knowledge of purposes, functions, and structure of written composition

Children are beginning to understand the ways and reasons for writing. They become familiar with writing to tell stories, as well as writing to give information. Through multiple experiences and support from the teacher, children learn conventions used by writers. They begin to understand that writing has different purposes and that the form may vary with the purpose (e.g., signs, notes, lists, stories, invitations). They also begin to understand that writing has conventions (e.g. proceeds from left to right, top to bottom, and uses punctuation.)

Benchmark: When writing or dictating, child uses appropriate *writing conventions* (e.g., a letter starts with “Dear” or the idea that a story has a beginning, middle, and end).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- scribbling a list starting at the top of the page
- dictating a story and, when finished, saying, “the end”
- writing their first and last names and leaving a space between the two names
- composing an email to a friend on a computer
- using a sticky pad in the art area to make an invitation for a friend to eat beside them at lunch
- writing letters on an envelope, putting a sticker on it and “mailing” a letter to the teacher when playing at the writing table.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Write thank you letters along with the children after field trips to the fire station, zoo, or bakery.
- Write a to-do list and encourage children to write their own.
- Prompt children to provide a clear beginning, middle, and end to their stories when taking dictation.

DRAFT

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Glossary

academic language- language used in the classroom setting.(e.g.,line leader, center time, circle time)

age-appropriate grammar – oral formation of sentences with some errors, but an understanding of some grammatical rules (e.g., “She runned across the playground.”).

alphabetic knowledge – knowing that words are composed of letters; the understanding that letters and letter combinations represent individual phonemes in words and written language (e.g., a child says the letters in some words, a child tells a teacher or a friend the letters in his/her name).

articulation errors – a mispronunciation of one or more sounds within a word (e.g., a child says “ellow” for the word yellow or “ish” for the word fish).

articulation- the correct pronunciation of one or more sounds within a word (e.g., a child says “ellow” for the word yellow or “ish” for the word fish).

blend – to combine sounds rapidly, in order to accurately represent the word.

blends – the combining of two letter sounds to make one sound (e.g.,/ bl/, blocks/st/ street).

center(s) – areas within the classroom arranged so that children are able to participate in a variety of learning experiences relating to art, science, reading, dramatic play, blocks, etc. (e.g., an art center, a reading center, a science center, a block center, a dramatic play center, or a writing center).

complex sentence – a sentence that includes at least one *independent clause*, and at least one *dependent clause* (part of a sentence has a subject and predicate but cannot stand on it’s own as a separate sentence). In the sentence, “After the children went out to the playground, the teacher put the snacks on the tables, “the first phrase is a dependent clause.).

comprehension – understanding what one has heard or what one has read (e.g., a child is able to answer questions or make comments about a story that someone has read to them).

content- information contained in a story or lesson

creativity – individuality expressed by creating something new or original (e.g., new way to paint a flower).

digraphs- two separate sounds joined together creating an new sound. (e.g., /sh/, shoes /ch/ chair).

disciplinary words- words used to describe content areas. (e.g., science, social studies, math and literacy)

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

discovery - engaging students in learning through discovery promoting "deep" learning, problem-solving skills, creativity, and student engagement.

emergent literacy – the range of a child’s developmental skills, knowledge, and attitudes beginning at birth, that combine with a variety of experiences related to written language; these experiences produce behaviors that change over time and result in conventional literacy during middle childhood.

emergent reading – reading-related experiences and actions that occur before a child reaches the conventional literacy stage in middle childhood (e.g., a child shows interest in being read to and told what written words mean, and develops an understanding of how to use the books and other printed materials appropriately).

emergent writing – writing-related experiences and actions that occur before a child reaches the conventional literacy stage in middle childhood (e.g., a child draws pictures or symbols to represent words).

expansion questions- questions asked in order to extend the thought process of the student. (e.g., “what do you think will happen next?”)

expressive language – the ability to communicate with words; refers to what a child says, not how it is said.

functional language- vocabulary used to communicate the description of, use of, and/or directions pertaining an item or task. (e.g., same different)

intonation – the normal rise and fall in pitch that occurs as people speak. Changes in intonation typically occur when certain words are stressed, or at the end of sentences, (e.g., the upswing when a question is being asked, or the drop that marks the end of a complete sentence or thought.

invented spelling- a child's attempt at spelling a word using what they know about the English spelling system

language of school – the vocabulary, sentence structure, and content of language that is a key part of the educational experience.

literacy – being literate; possessing language, reading, and writing skills.

manner words- words used to express appreciation, gratitude or notice of an error. (e.g., please, thank you, excuse me)

onset (first sound) and the **rime** (vowel sound to the end of the word)

oral language – spoken language.

organizational language - vocabulary used to communicate placement of an item and or provides direction towards an item.(e.g., in front of and behind, next to, opposite, below).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

IV. Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy Domain

phonemes- one of a small set of speech sounds that are distinguished by the speakers of a particular language

phonological awareness – the awareness that language is composed of sounds and the understanding of the relationship of these sounds

read aloud – setting when the teacher reads to the whole class, building on students' existing skills while introducing different types of literature and new concepts.

recall questions- questions asked of students recounting the events of a story or event.

receptive language – the understanding of language that is heard (e.g., a child gets in line after the teacher says, “It’s time to line up.”).

rhyme- A word that has the same sound as another (e.g., spoon, moon)

scaffolding – the provision of sufficient support to promote learning when concepts and skills are being first introduced to students

skills – the ability to use knowledge effectively and readily in performance, the ability to transform knowledge into action.

syllable- a unit of spoken language consisting of a single uninterrupted sound formed by a vowel, diphthong, or syllabic consonant alone, or by any of these sounds preceded, followed, or surrounded by one or more consonants.

think alouds – prompting students to say out loud what they are thinking about when reading, solving problems, or simply responding to questions posed by teachers or other students.

vocabulary – all of the words of a language. There are two types of vocabulary: receptive and expressive.

writing conventions – practices that include beginning a letter with a greeting such as “Dear” or “To Whom it May Concern,” ending a story with “the end,” and similar regularly used practices.

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge

DRAFT

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Introduction

The cognitive development of four-year-olds is not limited to specified “learning times.” It happens through daily activities, routines, play, and interactions with adults and other children. Four-year-olds are assured of many opportunities throughout the day and year to grow and develop new cognitive **skills** when family members and teachers provide stimulating **environments** and new experiences, and encourage them to make connections. Process skills and discovery ways of exploring multiple solutions; there is no right or wrong in the process of discovery. There are opportunities for children to take risks and make mistakes in the **exploration** of new discoveries. Learning is built on the child’s interests and potential interests, and facilitated by the teacher who introduces concepts integrating all content areas so as not to teach concepts in isolation but using one concept as a bridge to another.

The cognitive development and general knowledge domain consists of process & life skills which support learning across four components: **Mathematical Thinking, Scientific Inquiry, Social Studies, and Creative Expression Through the Arts**. Throughout this domain, there are examples that show the interrelatedness among the four components listed. Additionally, there are several interrelated process and life skills that support all four of these components, including:

- Making connections through classification, patterning, comparing and contrasting
- Inquiry, questioning, and reasoning
- **Observing** and collecting data
- Solving problems and predicting outcomes
- Communicating, reflecting, representing thoughts, and applying this to daily life
- Using technology as a tool for learning and representing understanding
- Using play and **dramatic play** as an avenue for cognitive development.

.....

Mathematical Thinking is the first component, and refers to the study of quantities and their relationships. There are six areas in which four-year-olds demonstrate mathematical skills: **Number Sense, Number and Operations, Patterns and Seriation, Geometry, Spatial Relations, and Measurement**. Children are naturally curious about number and mathematic concepts, and through rich experiences, their foundational knowledge can grow quickly in the year before kindergarten. Through meaningful experiences and discussion, children can share their understanding of mathematical concepts (e.g., making patterns with colored blocks, commenting about the heights of different plants growing in the vegetable garden outside, counting the number of pegs needed to fill a pegboard, matching the number of napkins needed to the number of children seated for snack).

The first area, **Number Sense**, involves the four-year-old child’s ability to count and construct **sets** of objects, use **one-to-one correspondence**, and understand whether two **sets** are equal

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

or one **set** has more or less. **Number and Operations**, the second area, focuses on developing children’s skills in manipulating **sets** of numbers (e.g., combining **sets** of concrete objects and taking objects away from a **set**). The third area, **Patterns and Seriation**, outlines the four-year-olds’ skills in recognizing and creating patterns, as well as ordering objects in a series (**seriation**). **Geometry**, the fourth area, identifies children’s growing abilities to recognize, manipulate, and compare two-dimensional shapes that are common in their world, using a variety of concrete objects. Children also begin to identify and compare three-dimensional shapes and to explore symmetry as they build with blocks and other concrete objects. The fifth area, **Spatial Relations**, focuses on language, such as positional words, that helps children to understand and describe their world as they become more proficient in relating to others. **Measurement**, the sixth area, helps children to understand and make sense of their world as they compare quantities using length, weight, and height and represent and **analyze** data.

Note: Benchmarks for development are included in the mathematical thinking component. Benchmarks are more precise than the standards and are set to reflect the level of skill and knowledge that should be demonstrated by a child **at the end of their VPK experience**, (when most, if not all, of the children would be five years of age).

.....

Scientific Inquiry is the second component and is composed of five areas in which four-year-olds demonstrate scientific **inquiry** skills: **Investigation and Inquiry, Physical Science, Life Science, Earth and Space**, and **Environmental Awareness**. Children are natural investigators and their levels of understanding deepen over time with varied experiences. Teachers should capitalize on children’s curiosity during play and encourage discussion and expression of their ideas as they examine scientific activities (e.g., rolling a ball or car, water table **explorations**, engineering and building during block play, and small group cooking activities).

The first area, **Investigation and Inquiry** is demonstrated when children ask questions, use simple tools, and make comparisons. When adults respond to children’s questions, inquisitiveness and scientific thinking are fostered. The natural world and physical events are fascinating to four-year-olds. **Physical Science**, the second area, helps children to understand and make sense of their world. **Life Science**, the third area, identifies children’s growing abilities to explore growth and change of living things. The fourth area, **Earth and Space**, focuses on understanding things naturally found in our environment. Knowledge of **Environmental Awareness**, the fifth area, is demonstrated as four-year-olds begin to show awareness of their environment.

.....

Social Studies is the third component and includes four areas in which four-year-olds demonstrate their knowledge of this component: **Individual Development and Identity, People and Places, Technology and Our World**, and **Civic Ideals and Practices**. Children’s experiences in social studies begin from birth, as we are social beings who innately interact with

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

others. In the four year old year, children's social experiences include themselves and their families as well as their classroom community and the local community that they have interactions with (e.g., firefighters, the park, grocery store).

Individual development and identity, the first area, is demonstrated as children begin to recognize and appreciate similarities and differences in people and understand the roles of the family. Four-year-olds demonstrate knowledge of **People, Places, and Environments**, the second area, as they are identifying attributes of familiar people, understanding family roles and relationships, and developing new ways of examining and noticing places and the environment. **Technology and Our World**, the third area is demonstrated as children are building awareness, learning how to interact with technology, and understanding how technology affects life. In the fourth area, **Civic Ideals and Practices**, group rules are becoming easier to understand and follow, and four-year-olds have a beginning understanding of leadership.

.....

The fourth component, **Creative Expression Through The Arts**, provides children with opportunities to express ideas and feelings, use words, manipulate tools and media, and solve problems in four areas: **Visual Arts, Music, Creative Movement and Dance**, and **Dramatic play and Theatre**. Through the arts, children learn to express what they know, pursue their own interests and abilities, and appreciate the contributions of others. They begin to understand that others can be creative in different ways and show appreciation for these differences by asking questions and commenting.

The first area, **Visual Arts** is demonstrated when children are able to stay involved in creative visual art activities, which allow children opportunities to share their understanding and knowledge through use visual art media (e.g., paint, clay, markers on paper, watercolor painting, photography, etc.). **Music**, the second area, is demonstrated by recognizing and creating patterns through **music**. Singing, chanting and rhyming enhances vocabulary and oral language development. **Creative Movement and Dance**, the third area involves children enjoying dancing and exploring the different ways they can move. This is especially effective as they are refining gross motor skills and can do more and more each day. The fourth area, **Dramatic play and Theatre**, focuses on experiences that help children develop fluency of language, movement, originality, elaborations of ideas, vocabulary, imitation, and self-expression.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

Strategies to Support Inclusive Learning Environments

- Simplify a complicated task by breaking it into smaller parts or reducing the number of steps.
- Use shorter but more frequent activities and routines.
- Use special or adaptive devices to increase a child's level of participation.
- Encourage hands-on and sensory experiences (e.g., touching, holding, exploring, tasting, smelling, and manipulating).
- Provide physical guidance/support in using materials when needed.
- Structure the environment so that materials are easily accessible to encourage participation.
- Adapt the environment to promote participation, engagement, and learning using a variety of textures.
- Use specialized equipment to increase access to activities and play areas.
- Provide opportunities to experiment with new tasks, materials, and activities.
- Provide activities and materials that appeal to the interests and abilities of the entire range of children in a class.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

A. Mathematical Thinking

a. Number Sense

1. Demonstrates understanding of *one-to-one correspondence*

Four-year-old children are able to demonstrate their knowledge of *one-to-one correspondence* while counting and comparing objects. Children this age enjoy helping out in the classroom (e.g., handing out a napkin to each child at snack time or passing a rest mat out to each child), and these types of activities help them gain further understanding of *one-to-one correspondence*. They are learning that *numerals* represent a number of objects, for instance that the *numeral* three represents three cookies, and need practice with concrete materials to reinforce this skill. At the same time, they are able to count many objects using *one-to-one correspondence*, though they may still count an object more than once.

Benchmark a: Child demonstrates *one-to-one correspondence* when counting.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- passing out a napkin, a cup, a snack, or utensil to each child at snack time
- counting toys in a pile while keeping track of which toys have already been counted
- pointing to each object as they count and assigning the appropriate number to each object.
- drawing four figures to represent their family of four people.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- When preparing for rest time, choose a different child each day to pass out one blanket for each rest mat.
- Create opportunities for children to count objects while placing them into individual containers (e.g., counting eggs while putting them back into the carton).
- Choose a different snack helper each day to count out one napkin and/or one snack for each child.
- When setting up the easel, ask a child to make sure that each paint cup has one brush.

Benchmark b: Child demonstrates *one-to-one correspondence* to determine if two sets are equal.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- saying that they will need more hangers, while hanging a pile of shirts on hangers, given the number of shirts remaining in the pile
- counting two groups of (e.g., children, coins, crayons) to determine if they are equal

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide materials that may be used for one-to-one matching activities (e.g., pegs and peg boards, nuts and bolts).
- At snack time, assist the children in counting the napkins and snacks to see if the two *sets* are equal.
- In the *dramatic play* area, provide the children with an equal number of doll dresses and dolls. Ask the children if there are enough dresses to clothe the dolls.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- Count the number of boys and then girls in the group and compare the **sets** to determine if they are equal. Pictures can be drawn to notate each child on paper or a dry erase board, or the **sets** can stand side-by-side to compare.

2. Shows understanding of how to count and construct sets

Four-year-old children have the ability to count objects. Most children this age understand that the last number named when counting a **set** represents the last object as well as the total number of objects (**cardinal number**). Constructing **sets** engages children in a meaningful counting experience using concrete objects found in the classroom or outdoors.

Benchmark a: Child counts sets in the range of 10 to 15 objects.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- counting 13 boats and placing them in a group in the water table
- counting the correct number of grapes during snack time (e.g., The teacher says, “Everyone may have 12 oyster crackers for snack today.”)
- counting and creating a pile of 14 of sand toys in the sand box.
- counting the 15 blocks used to build a tower.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Plan activities everyday that incorporate counting **sets** (e.g., counting the number of markers in a box, the number of pictures in a book, or the number of children in a line).
- Model counting **sets** of concrete objects (e.g., blocks in a tower or bears in a row).
- During circle time, model counting **sets** of objects (e.g., the total number of shoes with laces).
- Incorporate the counting of objects and **sets** of objects into projects, displaying evidence of counting activities in multiple ways (e.g., documentation panels, charts, photos, drawings)

Benchmark b: Child constructs sets in the range of 10 to 15 objects.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- sorting the markers and crayons into the appropriate baskets and telling how many markers and how many crayons there are in each basket
- counting the miniature people and the toy cars in the block area, and saying how many are in each group
- counting a pile of rocks and a pile of leaves while on the playground and telling how many are in each pile.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Display a variety of common objects throughout the classroom that can be used to construct **sets** (e.g., paper clips, crayons, hats, pencils, and markers).
- Model constructing **sets** of concrete objects (e.g., raisins in snack bags).
- Incorporate constructing **sets** into everyday activities (e.g., asking a child to count 12 cups and give one to each child at the lunch table).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

3. Shows understanding by participating in the comparison of quantities

With the ability to count 10 to 15 objects, children can build on this concept by counting two different **sets** of objects and determining which **set** has more, which has less, or if the two **sets** are equal. Four-year-old children are just learning that the next number in the counting sequence is one more than the number just named and continue to explore the meaning of “more” and “less.”

Benchmark a: Child compares two sets to determine if they are equal.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- recognizing that two different trains have an equal number of boxcars
- saying that two children have the same number of crayons
- noticing that each child received an equal number of crackers for snack.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- During small group, provide two **sets** of objects for children to compare.
- After reading relevant books, use props or animal figures, chart paper & markers to visually compare **sets** of characters in these books (e.g., compare number of bears in *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* to the number of pigs in *The Three Little Pigs*).
- Go on a nature walk with the children and collect small objects that can be used to create and compare two **sets** and to determine if the **sets** are equal (e.g., acorns, pinecones, small sticks and rocks).
-

Benchmark b: Child compares two sets to determine if one set has more.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- recognizing that one child has more cotton balls than another child
- saying that there are more pretzels than crackers on the tray
- **observing** that there are more boys than girls at school on a particular day.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- During small group, provide two **sets** of objects for children to compare and determine which **set** has more.
- During circle time, allow children opportunities to compare two **sets** of objects to determine if one **set** has more (e.g., comparing the number of boys and girls in the class).
- During center time, model comparing two **sets** of objects by counting to determine if one **set** has more.

Benchmark c: Child compares two sets to determine if one set has less.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- **observing** that one child has less popsicle sticks than another child
- recognizing that one group of children is less than another
- noticing that one child has less **cubes** than another child
- saying that there are fewer (less) markers in one box than another box.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- During circle time, include opportunities to compare two **sets** of objects to determine if one **set** has less (e.g., comparing the number of children wearing jeans the number of children wearing shorts in the class).
- Provide opportunities for children to compare two **sets** of objects to compare and determine if one **set** has less, each day.
- During center time, model comparing two **sets** of objects by counting to determine if one **set** has less.

Benchmark d: Child determines one set of objects is a lot more than another set of objects.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- figuring out that the amount of keys in a jar is a lot more than the amount of keys on the teacher's keychain
- commenting that there are only a couple trees on the playground and a lot more in the woods
- deciding who has a lot more if one child has five crayons and another child has twenty crayons.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- On the playground, provide two quantities of objects for children to compare to determine if one quantity is a lot more than another quantity (e.g., one group of ten objects and one group of 30 objects).
- Take a nature walk to observe existing **sets** for children to compare (e.g., "We found 10 ants and only one butterfly on our walk today. We found a lot more ants than butterflies.").
- Assist children in determining if one **set** of objects contains a lot more than another **set** of objects (e.g., during a field trip to the library, ask the children if they can guess how many books are in the entire library. Following their guesses, ask if there are more children in the class or more books in the library. After their responses, explicitly say, "The number of books in the library is certainly a lot more than the number of children in our class!").

4. Assigns and relates numerical representations among *numerals* (written), *sets* of objects, and number names (spoken) in the range of five to ten

As four-year-old children learn about counting objects, they begin to assign number words to **numerals** and **sets**. These number words add to the children's expanding vocabulary with daily exposure to counting **sets** and objects through meaningful experiences.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- counting each object in a group of objects on a flannel board to determine the total number of objects then placing the correct **numeral** (written) next to the group
- pointing to each block in a tower and assigning a number to each block to determine the total number of blocks
- pointing to each snack and assigning a number to each snack to determine the total number of snacks.

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Incorporate counting into everyday activities (e.g., counting the number of boys and the number of girls then identifying which **numeral** (written) represents that amount).
- Model counting and using the appropriate number names (spoken) for the children during everyday activities (e.g., counting napkins for each during snack time).
- Encourage children to count objects (e.g., their fingers, toes, buttons on their shirt, and stripes on a flag) and point out **numerals** (written) in the world around them.

5. Counts and knows the sequence of number names (spoken)

As they become more skilled at verbal/rote counting, Four-year-olds are beginning to understand that numbers represent quantity. Most four-year-old children are able to count numbers orally up to ten. As four-year-old children begin to understand the concept of a pattern, they can also begin to recognize patterns that occur in counting. Numbers from one to twelve must be memorized, since there is no pattern. Numbers thirteen through nineteen have a pattern (thirteen=three & ten, fourteen=four & ten...), but it is opposite of the pattern used after nineteen (twenty=two & ten, twenty-one=twenty & one). Children begin to understand this pattern that can help them count larger quantities later, so counting through at least 31 shows they are beginning to understand the pattern of how numbers grow.

Benchmark a: Child counts and recognizes number names (spoken) in the range of 10 to 15.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- counting aloud up to 15 using the correct number names
- chanting along with poems that count forward (e.g., *One, Two, Buckle My Shoe*)
- Singing theme-related songs to the tune of *Ten Little Indians* (e.g., In fall, sing, “One little, two little, three little pumpkins....”).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model for children how to count and correctly use number names throughout daily routines and experiences.
- Teach counting songs, finger plays, and simple games.

Benchmark b: Child counts up through 31 by understanding the pattern of adding by one, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- counting aloud through at least 31, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Count with the children as they string objects through a hole; counting through 31 (e.g., cereal, beads).
- Incorporate counting books (purchased or made with the children) into the classroom and classroom activities.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- During small group or center time, provide materials for children to count through 31, with teacher support (e.g., large pegboards and a lot of pegs).
- 6. Shows understanding of and uses appropriate terms to describe *ordinal* positions**
Ordinal numbers allow children to describe the position of an object. Children demonstrate their ability to do this by naming the *ordinal* positions for people or objects in a line and by placing objects in a certain position (e.g., first, second, third). Children may begin to name up to five *ordinal* positions as their understanding increases.

Benchmark a: Child demonstrates the concept of *ordinal* position with concrete objects (e.g., children or objects).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- identifying which child is first in line
- going to the appropriate place in line based on teacher directions (e.g., first, second, third)
- placing an item in the appropriate position based on another child's instructions (e.g., "Put the papa bear first, then mama bear second, and baby bear third.").

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- When lining up to go outside, tell the children you are going to count them in a special way (e.g., As you touch each child gently on the shoulder say, "First, second, third, fourth, fifth.").
- Play I Spy using *ordinal* positions with objects lined up on a table (e.g., "I Spy the fifth marker in the row. Can you find it and show me which one is fifth?").
- During cooking activities, discuss the order that ingredients should be added to the recipe (e.g., "First, we will add the flour. Second, we need one cup of milk. Third, we must stir in the eggs. Fourth, we will add . . .").

Benchmark b: Child names *ordinal* positions (e.g., first, second, third, fourth, fifth).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- creating a row of animals in the block area and naming the position of each (e.g., first, second, third)
- naming the position of each train car after lining them up on the track (e.g., first, second, third)
- telling a friend the order of a routine task using *ordinal* positions
- responding to the teacher's questions about a book that was read (e.g., "Who was the first bear to come back in the house? Who was second? Who was third?").

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- When lining up for lunch, ask the children to help you count the class in a special way (e.g., "As I touch each child gently on the shoulder, repeat what I say." Then count each child using *ordinal* positions (e.g., first, second, third).
- Model a song, finger play, or poem using *ordinal* position words instead of number names (e.g., "Five little monkeys jumping on the bed. The first one fell off and bumped his head.").

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- Create opportunities for children to follow directions that include **ordinal** position words and encourage children to repeat the directions using the **ordinal** position words (e.g., “Simon says touch your head first, your mouth second, and your eyes third.”).

DRAFT

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

b. Number and Operations

1. Shows understanding of how to combine sets and remove from a concrete set of objects (receptive knowledge)

Once children have developed the ability to count 10 to 15 objects, they can begin to combine (add) **sets** of objects together and remove (subtract) objects from **sets**. Their understanding of counting will assist them to determine if there are more or less objects than before the adding or subtracting took place.

Benchmark a: Child indicates there are more when they combine (add) sets of objects together.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- commenting that there are more cars in line for the car wash after another child added some toy cars to the line
- explaining that there are more crayons now that the teacher added two new boxes to the art area
- stating that there are now more toy animals after a friend added four toy horses to the group.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Assist children in combining two separate **sets** of objects and ask if there are more (e.g., “If we start with three blocks and then combine them with two more blocks, do we have the same amount we started with, or more?”).
- Invite two children to join the class and ask if there are more or less than before.
- Look for opportunities to model combining two **sets** of objects and ask if there are more or less than before.

Benchmark b: Child indicates there are less when they remove (subtract) objects from a set.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- telling a friend that there are less blocks to play with now that the teacher removed the blue ones
- recognizing that there are less children at school today because three children are out sick
- singing *Five Green and Speckled Frogs* and noting that each time one of the frogs jumps into the pool, that there are less in the **set**.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Show the children a stack of objects. Then remove some of the objects from the stack and ask if there are more or less than before.
- Ask one child to hide in another area of the classroom then ask the other children if there are more or less children in the group than before.
- Remove some books from the book shelf and ask if there are more or less books than before.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- Incorporate songs, finger plays, and games that focus on removing objects from a **set** (e.g., Five Green and Speckled Frogs).
- 2. Shows understanding of addition and subtraction using a concrete set of objects (expressive knowledge) or story problems found in everyday classroom activities**
Using real-world meaningful experiences, children are guided through basic stories that tell about objects being added or subtracted. Through the story line, adults are able to guide children in determining the answer to these basic addition and subtraction questions. With guidance, and in a classroom that supports asking questions, Four-year-olds can begin to solve simple mathematical problems in concrete ways and offer basic explanations for their solutions.

Benchmark a: Child combines sets of objects to equal a set no larger than ten.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- commenting that the train has five cars, after watching a friend connect a train with two cars to a second train with three cars
- giving a friend with two grapes, three more grapes and saying, “Now you have five grapes.” (*Note: Teachers must assess the safety of using small objects with each group of students at a given point during the school year. Small objects could be used in small group teacher-directed experiences if deemed unsafe to leave in an independent-use center.)
- building a stack of five blocks and saying, “I have seven blocks” after adding two blocks to the **set** of five blocks.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Incorporate songs, finger plays, and games that focus on adding **sets** of objects to equal a **set** no larger than ten.
- Talk with children about combining **sets** of objects to equal a **set** no larger than ten (e.g., While playing in the sand table, the teacher says, “Look, I found five white shells and two brown shells. How many shells do I have altogether?”).
- Combine two **sets** of objects to equal a set no larger than ten (e.g., combine (add) two markers to five markers and count the total number of markers).

Benchmark b: Child removes objects from a set no larger than ten.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- removing two boats from a group of five boats and saying, “One, two, three – three boats left,” while playing with friends
- commenting that there are only three flowers left after removing one flower from a group of four flowers on a flannel board
- telling a friend, “I have four cookies. I’m eating one. Now I have three cookies.”

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Incorporate songs, finger plays, and games that focus on removing objects from a **set** no larger than ten (e.g., Ten in a Bed, Five Little Birdies).
- Talk with children about removing objects from a **set** no larger than ten (e.g., while playing in the sand table. Say, “Look, I found five shells in the sand table. Then I gave two shells to a friend. How many shells do I have left?”).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

Benchmark c: Child uses concrete objects to solve complex problems (e.g., fingers, blocks).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- recognizing that there are nine eggs after adding five eggs to the carton that already has four in it
- combining the number of cracker packages (six) and the number of juice boxes (six) and realizing that there are a total of 12 items for snack.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Encourage children to ask questions.
- Uses charts, pictures and other displays to show problem-solving steps and efforts.
- Draw ten hopscotch squares and have the children count them. Then draw three more squares and ask the children to count how many total squares there are now. Ask the children if they would like to make the hopscotch bigger or smaller. Discuss how many you should combine (add) or remove (subtract) to change the hopscotch.
- Counting the number of days it was sunny in a week, and then continue counting the number of days it was cloudy in the week to name how many days it was either sunny or cloudy.

3. Begins to develop an understanding of separating a *set* into a maximum of four parts, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time

Four-year-old children are beginning to learn how to share. While developing their interpersonal skills, the mathematical concept of simple division becomes important. Separating a *set* into equal parts is easier for children when this skill is combined with ***one-to-one correspondence*** (e.g., If there are four pieces of pizza and four friends, each friend gets one piece of pizza.).

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- separating a *set* of four cookies into four equal parts by giving three friends one cookie
- taking four books from the bookshelf and passing them out to four friends in the book area.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model separating a *set* (e.g., tennis balls, cars), into four parts during small group time.
- Look for opportunities throughout the day to support children as they attempt to separate a *set* into four parts (e.g., during snack time or centers, on the playground).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

c. Patterns and Seriation

1. Understands characteristics of patterns and non-patterns and begins to reproduce them with at least two elements (e.g., red/blue, red/blue versus a non-pattern such as rainbow)

Recognizing and creating patterns introduces children to the concept of order in the world. Identifying and working with patterns helps children see relationships between objects. They can be encouraged to find patterns in nature and in the classroom. Patterns, designs and repeating arrangements of objects provide the opportunity for children to explore relationships between objects. As four-year-olds learn to recognize, “read”, and recreate patterns they are exploring concepts in math, science, the arts & literacy. Noticing and commenting on patterns helps children learn to extend a pattern by figuring out what comes next.

Benchmark a: Child recognizes patterns and non-patterns.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- noticing a friend’s shirt has a pattern of a blue stripe, then a white stripe, then another blue stripe and look around the room for other patterns of stripes;
- participate in movement and *music* games that make patterns with claps and sounds
- recognizing the pattern in a predictable book and saying the next line before turning the page
- Sing songs, recite poems (e.g., *B-I-N-G-O*, *Old McDonald*, *Tooty-Ta*).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Use rhythm instruments to create a pattern (e.g. Using rhythm sticks and tambourines, help children to alternate (sticks/tambourine/sticks/tambourine) to create a musical pattern. Then, have children create a non-pattern.)
- Draw attention to patterns in nature (e.g., ridges in tree bark, veins in leaves).
- Show children examples of patterns and non-patterns (e.g., beads, pegs, leaves, block structures).
- Explicitly point out the pattern for children as you read picture books with predictable patterns and include them in the book area (e.g., *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*).

Benchmark b: Duplicates identical patterns with at least two elements

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- duplicating the teachers model of a pattern with linking *cubes* (e.g., yellow, green, yellow, green)
- copying a sound pattern of two claps and a pause, then one clap and a pause

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Play auditory pattern games beginning with two-part patterns then increasing complexity (e.g., using hand claps or leg slaps).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- Sing songs, recite poems, read stories with predictable patterns that children can repeat (e.g., *The Gingerbread Man*, *The Three Bears*, and *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*).
- Provide opportunities for children to duplicate patterns with at least two elements indoors and outdoors with a variety of materials (e.g., multicolored leaves on the playground, seashells in the sand table, trucks in the block area, shoes and hats in the **dramatic play** area).

Benchmark c: Recognizes *pattern units* (e.g., red/blue is the *pattern unit* of a red/blue/red/blue/red/blue pattern; dog/cat/cow is the *pattern unit* of a dog/cat/cow/dog/cat/cow pattern)

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- explaining the ***pattern unit*** they are working with (e.g., red/blue)
- repeating the pattern in a predictable story (e.g., *The Gingerbread Man*)
- putting popsicle sticks between ***pattern units*** in a repeating pattern of a chain of links.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Create a display of visual patterns with children's arrangements of beads or pegs and ask, "What is the pattern?"
- Model separating one ***pattern unit*** from the rest (e.g., After reading *The Gingerbread Man*, ask the children, "What did the gingerbread boy say over and over again to everyone who was chasing him? That's right, he said, 'Run, run, as fast as you can. You can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread man.'").
- Model how to separate one ***pattern unit*** from the rest by isolating one unit of a pattern (e.g., using fingers, beads, or sticks).

Benchmark d: Child begins to independently produce patterns with at least two elements (e.g., red/blue, red/blue), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- creating a row of cars in the block area and indicating that it is a pattern (e.g., red car, blue car, red car, blue car)
- playing together with a friend to create a two-part clapping patterns (e.g., Children clap hands together, then clap with their friend's hands, then clap together, then clap with their friend's hands.).
- Lacing two sizes of beads to make a necklace (e.g. big bead, small bead, big bead, small bead, big bead, small bead)

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide opportunities for children to duplicate patterns with at least two elements indoors and outdoors with a variety of materials (e.g., multicolored leaves on the playground, seashells in the sand table, trucks in the block area, shoes and hats in the **dramatic play** area).
- Display patterns and non-patterns the children have created with a variety of materials (e.g., beads, pegs, leaves, photographs of block structures).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

2. Sorts, orders, compares, and describes objects according characteristics or attribute(s) (*seriation*)

Four-year-old children enjoy ordering objects because these activities help them gain control of their world by organizing it. After learning to order objects by one attribute or characteristic, some four-year-old children begin to explain why they placed objects in a certain order. Ordering and comparing objects introduces children to the logic of mathematical thinking. Four-year-olds are now able to understand the concept of one object being bigger, smaller, heavier or lighter compared to another object. Making comparisons is a big part of math and science, the arts, social studies and literacy. The growing expressive vocabulary of the four-year-old allows them to use terms like “more”, “bigger”, “softer”, and “heavier” to describe the differences between objects. Putting objects in order based on their characteristics is a difficult skill, and children need many opportunities to experiment, problem-solve and explore objects in this way independently and with teacher involvement.

Benchmark a: Child places objects in increasing order of size where the increasing *unit* is constant (e.g., *unit* blocks).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- ordering their block buildings according to height (e.g., tall, taller, tallest)
- comparing several pieces of yarn in increasing order of size (e.g., short, shorter, shortest)
- describing three train tracks as long, longer, and longest.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide like objects for children to place in increasing order according to size (e.g., small, medium, large counting bears or frogs).
- Help children find objects in the classroom and in nature to place in increasing order according to size (e.g., shoes, blocks, books, cars, balls, flowers, leaves, seashells).
- Model appropriate math language as you place objects in increasing order of size where the increasing *unit* is constant (e.g., tall, taller, tallest; short, shorter, shortest; small, medium, large).

Benchmark b: Child verbalizes why objects were placed in order (e.g., describes process of how and why), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- explaining how they ordered the tall, taller and tallest block buildings by height
- telling how they compared the short, shorter and shortest pieces of yarn and put them in order
- describing how they ordered three train tracks as long, longer and longest.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model for children how to explain why objects were placed in order.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- Read picture books that order, compare, or describe objects according to a single attribute and include them in the book area (e.g., Goldilocks and the Three Bears).

DRAFT

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

d. Geometry

1. Understands various two-dimensional shapes, including *circle, triangle, square, rectangle, oval*, and other less common shapes (e.g., *trapezoid, rhombus*)

Four-year-old children are able to sort and name the shapes in their daily life experiences, as teachers and parents draw attention to shapes. As children become more familiar with shapes, they are able to construct shapes and begin to **analyze** details about shapes (e.g., how many sides each shape has).

Benchmark a: Child categorizes (sorts) examples of two-dimensional shapes.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- placing the correct shape in its container
- sorting cutout shapes into groups and describing the ways they have sorted the shapes (e.g., by color, shape, number of sides, texture)
- creating various piles for different shapes while playing in the construction area
- putting blocks away by size and shape.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Model sorting manipulatives of different sizes by shape.
- Create a large **circle**, **square**, and **triangle** on the floor out of string or masking tape; instruct children to find examples of those shapes and place them inside the appropriate large shape on the floor.
- Provide containers that are labeled with pictures of various shapes, ask the children to sort a variety of shapes from a pile by placing them in the correct container.

Benchmark b: Child names two-dimensional shapes.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- searching for paper **circles** to represent balls for artwork (e.g., “I need **circles** because I am juggling balls in this picture.”)
- pointing out and naming shapes found while on a walk around the neighborhood (e.g., a building’s face that is **square**, a yield sign that is triangular, a brick walkway made up of rectangular surfaces).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide a variety of two-dimensional shapes in the classroom and many opportunities for children to play with them.
- Display two-dimensional shapes in the classroom and describe how they are the same and different.
- Play *I Spy* in the classroom and on the playground with children by naming a shape and having children find it.

Benchmark c: Child constructs examples of two-dimensional shapes.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- making various shapes from popsicle sticks

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- using clay to construct shapes of different sizes.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide clay with which children can create shapes.
- Demonstrate making a **triangle** (and other shapes with sides) using popsicle sticks, straws or toothpicks, and encourage children to make their own.
- Use colored masking tape to create shapes on the floor, or use sidewalk chalk outside to do the same, encouraging children to create shapes as well.

Benchmark d: Child identifies the number of sides of two-dimensional shapes.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- determining that a **square** has four sides by examining the shape
- counting the sides of a **triangle**
- telling a friend that a **circle** doesn't have any sides
- telling the teacher, "Look, we used three friends to make a life size **triangle!**"

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide round objects for children to examine.
- Provide triangular objects, and other two-dimensional shapes, for children to examine and count the number of sides.
- Create large shapes using tape or chalk and have children position their bodies on each line to represent the sides of each shape. Let the children count the number of sides and the number of children each shape took to construct.
- Provide a "feely box" with a variety of different shaped objects and have the children choose one and identify the shape and the number of sides.

2. Shows understanding that two-dimensional shapes are *equivalent* (remain the same) in different *orientations*

A shape always remains the same shape and keeps the same name regardless of how it is positioned, unlike letters or **numerals** (written). Four-year-old children are beginning to understand this, but need a lot of teacher guidance.

Benchmark a: Child slides shapes, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- sliding a shape across the floor or table, with teacher support, and recognizing that the shape remains the same.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Play *Simon Says* with children and provide instructions that have children slide shapes and then state the name of the shape.
- Demonstrate sliding a **triangle** across the table and stating that the **triangle** is still a **triangle** no matter where it is on the table.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

Benchmark b: Child flips shapes, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- flipping a shape, with teacher support, and recognizes that the shape remains the same.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Play *Simon Says* with children and provide instructions that have children flip shapes and then name the shape.
- Demonstrate flipping a shape and stating that it remains the same shape no matter which way it is flipped.

Benchmark c: Child rotates shapes, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- rotating a **square** and commenting that it is still a **square**.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Demonstrate rotating various shapes and noting that they are the same shape after rotating.
- Play *Simon Says* with children and provide instructions that have children rotate shapes and then name the shape.

3. Understands various three-dimensional shapes, including *sphere, cube, cone,* and other less common shapes (e.g., *cylinder, pyramid*)

Four-year-old children are able to sort and name three-dimensional shapes through their daily life experiences and rich, hands-on play in the block area. As children become more familiar with three-dimensional shapes, they are able to identify them in the **environment**.

Benchmark a: Child categorizes (sorts) examples of three-dimensional shapes.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- placing all **spheres** in a basket and all **cubes** in a bag
- finding objects on the playground with three-dimensional shapes and sorting them
- sorting shapes by straight sides and curved sides.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Label three-dimensional shapes in classroom and describe how they are the same and different.
- Provide children with different three-dimensional shapes for them to sort.
- Show children a three-dimensional model of the earth or other planets. Explain to the children that planets are **spheres**.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

Benchmark b: Child names three-dimensional shapes.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- correctly labeling a **sphere** and other three-dimensional shapes
- naming shapes as teacher picks them up
- telling a friend that his ice cream is in a **cone** (e.g., **cone**-shaped).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Introduce children to three-dimensional shapes through everyday experiences (e.g., cans (**cylinders**), balls (**spheres**), and playground **cones**).
- Provide a variety of three-dimensional shapes in the classroom and many opportunities to play with them.
- Place three-dimensional shapes in a bag, pass the bag around to children as they guess what shape it is.

4. Analyzes and constructs examples of simple symmetry and non-symmetry in two-dimensions, using concrete objects

Four-year-olds have a lot of knowledge about their bodies, which have **symmetry**. Through hands-on experiences with concrete objects, children begin to understand that they can use various shapes to create **symmetry**.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- cutting a snowflake shape on a coffee filter, opening it, and determining that the design is symmetrical
- sorting various pictures of people, animals, nature, and buildings according to **symmetry** and non-**symmetry**
- creating symmetrical figures using **pattern** blocks or parquetry blocks.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Ask children to place their palms together and then open their hands side by side to demonstrate **symmetry**.
- Place a mirror beside a picture that a child drew to demonstrate **symmetry**.
- Show pictures of a butterfly and talk about how the two sides of their bodies are the same.
- Have children construct a form using blocks then reconstruct the form to make it symmetrical.

e. Spatial Relations

1. Shows understanding of spatial relationships and uses position words (e.g., in front of, behind, between, over, through, under)

Understanding positional words is very important for a four-year-old's ability to communicate and understand others in the classroom. Teachers can use the classroom and playground to infuse these words into daily conversations with children. Concepts of **spatial sense** and vocabulary development are closely connected. As four-year-olds continue to develop a sense of their position in relation to objects and people around them, they are increasingly able to describe their position using language. They can understand "in front of", "behind", "under" and "above" and are beginning to use these and other positional words in their language. Further examples include:

- Playing movement games that incorporate position words, such as "Hokey Pokey" and "Simon Says";
- Arranging doll furniture in a doll house and describing what they are doing, saying "I am putting the bed next to the rocking chair";
- Building block structures that are enclosed and then putting animal figures "inside the zoo cages";
- Telling friends, "put the shovels and scoops into the basket" or "put the lid on top of the water table" when cleaning up the playground.

Benchmark a: Child shows understanding of positional words (receptive knowledge).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- following directions requested by the teacher
- following directions in the songs, games, and chants by mimicking the actions.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Use position words when giving children directions (e.g., "Stand beside me," or "Put the cup under the cabinet.").
- Give the children a task using positional words (e.g., "Go below the table," or, "sit beside your friend.").
- Teach songs, games (e.g., Simon Says) and chants that include positional words (e.g., "Put your finger in the air, on your head, behind your back, and then on top of your head.").

Benchmark b: Child uses the positional terms verbally (expressive knowledge) (e.g., in front of, behind, between, over, through, under), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- identifying the location of their friend when asked by the teacher
- using positional words to ask for something (e.g., "May I get the blocks that are on top of the shelf?")
- accurately telling friends where to place objects using positional words (e.g., "Put the blocks beside the linking **cubes**.").

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Ask child where a specific object is and prompt child to use positional words in their answer.
- Create obstacle courses inside and outside that involve moving in different directions and locations and have the children use words to describe their position.
- Encourage children to use positional words when giving directions to each other (e.g., “Walk behind me.”).

2. Describes *relative position from different perspectives* (e.g., “I am on top of the climber and you are below me.”)

Once four-year-old children have receptive knowledge of positional words, they can begin to use them in interactions with their friends (e.g., to describe play, describe what they would like their friend to do, or explain things).

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- telling a friend that they hid the treasure beneath the wagon
- verbalizing positions as they work and play with others
- explaining that they are below the slide and their friend is on top of the slide.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- During recess, observe and/or prompt the children to explain the *relative position from different perspectives* when they are climbing on the equipment.
- While transitioning to centers, ask a child to incorporate *relative position from different perspectives* (e.g., “I am sitting next to Blake and he is beside Monique.”).
- Play *Simon Says* with children and provide instructions that have children get on top of the slide or walk under the slide.

3. Understands and can tell the difference between *orientation* terms such as horizontal, diagonal, and vertical

Exposure to rich words is important in developing a four-year-old’s vocabulary. These terms help children to be more descriptive, and they are important in developing spatial knowledge.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- making their arms or bodies represent *orientation* terms (e.g., horizontal, diagonal, vertical), in a game of *Simon Says*
- using materials (e.g., yarn, popsicle sticks, paper and crayons) to replicate *orientation* terms (e.g., horizontal, diagonal, vertical) while working on an art project.
- describing a block structure using *orientation* terms while building
- indicating that the letter T has a horizontal line and a vertical line while attempting to write the letter.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- Ask a child if they want their easel paper hung horizontally, diagonally, or vertically, while demonstrating each with the paper to be hung.
- When outdoors, have the group of children lie down horizontally, stand up vertically, and lean against something to make their body diagonal.
- Point out signs that have diagonal lines (e.g., a railroad crossing sign).
- Discuss the kinds of lines being used when introducing how to write a letter (e.g., horizontal, diagonal, or vertical lines).

4. **Uses directions to move through space and find places in space (e.g., obstacle courses, Simon Says, Mother May I?, hop scotch, giving simple directions)**

Four-year-old children can readily learn to follow basic directions when directions are a part of something they are interested in (e.g., a game or other exciting activity).

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- knowing where to stand if asked to stand behind a classmate in line
- going over to sit beside (or in front of) a classmate when asked to do so
- telling a new classmate how to get to the playground using directional words.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Create obstacle courses inside and outside that involve moving in different locations and directions.
- Play *Mother May I?*, encouraging children to ask to go certain places.
- Plan activities that require children to find places in space (e.g., the block area or sink).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

f. Measurement

1. Engages in activities that explore measurement

Four-year-old children sort and categorize all sorts of things, and measurement is an extension of that categorizing. They begin to compare differences in the quantity of what is being measured through interesting, hands-on activities. Measurement skills are important for preschoolers to develop, and four-year-olds enjoy experimenting with standard and non-standard measurement tools. For example, they love to use rulers, large tape measure and balance scales, but also use their hands or feet to measure. Both child-initiated and adult-led experiences with measurement activities support the development of this math concept.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- Walking heel-to-toe across the circle time rug and exclaiming “This rug is 14 feet long!”;
- Using measuring cups and spoons in the sand box to count how many scoops it takes to fill a bowl;
- Laying cut outs of their hand shape end-to-end to measure the height of objects around the classroom;
- Exploring a sand timer the teacher is using to time clean-up activities.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

2. Compares continuous quantities using length, weight, and height

Four-year-old children sort and categorize all sorts of things, and measurement is an extension of that categorizing. They begin to compare differences in the quantity of what is being measured through interesting, hands-on activities.

Benchmark a: Child measures or compares the length of one or more objects using a non-standard reference (e.g., paper clips), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- measuring the length of the classroom using blocks
- measuring the length of a table using their hands
- comparing the length of a shoe with another child’s shoe.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Demonstrate how to measure the length of a piece of paper using pencils.
- Show children how to measure length by using blocks to measure the bookshelf.
- Provide plastic links or paper clips and items to measure (e.g., shoe, friend’s hand, baby doll, spoon, block).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

Benchmark b: Child measures or compares the weight of one or more objects using non-standard reference (e.g., beans), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- exclaiming that the book the child is carrying is much heavier than the ball a friend is carrying
- talking about how light the bag of cotton balls is compared to a bag of marbles*. (*Note: Teachers must assess the safety of using small objects with each group of students at a given point during the school year. Small objects could be used in small group teacher-directed experiences if deemed unsafe to leave in an independent-use center.)

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Make a simple scale using a suspended hanger with a string and a bucket on each side. Show children how to measure weight with non-standard items.
- Provide a balance scale and items for children to weigh.

Benchmark c: Child measures or compares the height of one or more objects using non-standard reference (e.g., pencils), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- measuring the height of the table using *cubes* or plastic links to determine height
- measuring the height of a friend and the height of a tricycle using paper chain links and then saying, "I am 16 links tall, and the tricycle is 11 links tall." "I am taller than the tricycle."

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Measure children's height on a wall chart monthly, and talk about how much growth each child grew from one month to the next.
- Show children how to measure height with nonstandard items.
- Use open-ended questions when discussing measurement (e.g., "I wonder how many blocks we need to stack to make our tower as tall as the bookshelf.").

Benchmark d: Child uses measurement vocabulary (e.g., length, weight, height) and comparative terminology (e.g., more, less, shorter, longer, heaviest, lightest), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- using a length of string to measure two slides on the playground and noting which is longer and which is shorter
- using a simple scale with a basket on either side, a cotton ball is added to one side and a ball of play dough is added to the other side and noting that the play dough is heavier
- measuring the height of a friend and the height of a bookshelf using paper chain links and noting which is taller and which is shorter.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Using yarn, measure common objects in the classroom with a small group of children (e.g., table, water table, crib, sink). Label each piece of yarn with a picture of what is measured. Then put the objects in order and discuss differences using measurement terminology.
- Using a simple scale with a basket on either side, put different classroom objects in either side. Use vocabulary to describe which is heavier and lighter. After practice, ask children to predict which object will be heavier.

3. Represents and *analyzes* data

As four-year-olds become more skilled at sorting based on attributes (e.g., type, color, shape), they are ready for experiences that help them learn ways that we categorize information (e.g., charts and graphs). By choosing things to chart that are meaningful to children, we stimulate their interest in analyzing the differences, with the teacher's support.

Benchmark a: Child assists with collecting and sorting materials to be graphed.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- collecting and sorting leaves by color (and then by color and shape as they become more skilled)
- collecting and sorting toy cars by size
- collecting blocks and sorting them by shape (and then by shape and color as they become more skilled).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Take a nature walk to note and collect nature items during different seasons that can be sorted by type (e.g., leaves, pine needles, pinecones, acorns).
- Plan an activity where each child brings in a favorite toy. Then, talk about how the toys can be grouped together (e.g., stuffed animals, cars, dolls, books, toys that make noise).

Benchmark b: Child works, with teacher and small groups, to represent mathematical relations in charts and graphs.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- assisting in making a bar graph depicting the number of children at school each day
- creating a graph depicting number of cars collected by each child, with teacher support
- helping to create a graph of favorite types of foods by placing picture of food under the correct column.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Work with a small group of children to sort blocks by color and then create a bar graph to show how many blocks of each color there are.
- Display information in graph form so children can compare activities and experiences (e.g., favorite things to do at the beach, or how I get to school).
- Provide experiences with different types of graphs (e.g., vertical and horizontal bar graphs) and charts (e.g., pie charts) by charting and graphing regularly (e.g.,

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

favorite foods, voting on a class pet's name, the first letter that each person's name starts with, the number of people in your immediate family, the number of boys and girls at school today) .

Benchmark c: Child *analyzes*, with teacher and small groups, the relationship between items/objects represented by charts and graphs.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- determining, with teacher support, which color of leaves found was the largest amount
- determining, through discussions with friends, if they had the most small, medium or large cars
- recognizing, with teacher support, that they have the least number of **square** blocks by “reading” the chart.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Encourage children to make **predictions** by asking questions about a chart or graph made.
- Create a chart that shows the favorite insect of each child, and discuss which insect is the favorite and which insect is the least favorite.
- Ask children questions about data in a graph once it is complete to determine their level of understanding (e.g., Are there more boys here, or more girls here today? How do you know?).

4. Child predicts the results of a data collection, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Examples illustrating this benchmark include:

- predicting that they collected less gold leaves than any other color before counting each color collected
- predicting that they have more red cars before counting each color collected
- saying to a friend, “I bet red will have the most votes,” before the class makes a chart of favorite colors.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Ask children what shape of blocks they think they have the least of before analyzing a collection of blocks.
- Have children predict which items they think will sink or float in water, then chart actual results in two columns, sink and float.
- Encourage children to predict which type of shoe is worn by more children in the classroom before creating a graph of shoes worn in the classroom.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

B. Scientific *Inquiry*

a. Investigation and Inquiry

1. Demonstrates the use of simple tools and equipment for **observing** and **investigating**

At four-years-old, children are able to use simple tools in their **explorations**. Magnifiers, balance scales, rulers and tweezers help children investigate objects more closely. When these tools are incorporated into various areas of the classroom, children incorporate them naturally into their play.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- seek out a pair of binoculars to look at a bird on the playground;
- use a magnifying glass to look at the differences in rocks or leaves
- use a dropper to drop water on a paper towel and observe how the water is absorbed.
- use a magnet to find out which objects have magnetic attraction
- use a funnel in a water bottle to pour water from a cup into the bottle

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide opportunities to examine how tools work (e.g., looking at and discussing pulleys).
- Have items in discovery areas to give children opportunities to work with woodworking tools
- Provide soft pieces of wood, small hammers, and a variety of nails that can be used to create three dimensional structures.
- Choose interesting science-related experiments that use tools during small group instruction (e.g., tie-dye butterflies using coffee filters, colored water, and droppers; provide magnifying glasses to look closely at things collected from a nature walk, such as leaves, rocks, sticks, or a caterpillar).

2. Examines objects and makes comparisons

Scientific **inquiry** involves asking questions, **observing** and making comparisons. Four-year-olds engage in making comparisons when they notice how objects and events are related and use their growing language skills to describe a relationship they observe. Experiences with varied materials, trying things out and seeing how things work help preschoolers understand concepts of same and different, and draw comparisons among objects in their world.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- using **comparative terminology**, verbally or by signing, to compare two or more objects (e.g., “This bucket is heavier than that one.”; “This ball is bigger than that these other two balls.”; “A rock is heavier than a feather.”)
- using descriptive terminology, verbally or by signing, to describe objects (e.g., “This rock is hard and smooth, and that rock is hard and very bumpy.” “Cotton is soft and a wooden block is hard.”)
- discussing and comparing which items sink and which items float in the water table.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide a variety of nature objects (e.g., shells, rocks, seeds) to examine and compare using all the senses.
 - Use every day events (e.g., weather, birds gathering at the bird feeder) to help children learn about nature.
 - Prepare for special visitors or field trips by generating questions beforehand and charting answers after the event.
- Start an herb garden in pots to compare how the leaves look, smell, feel, and tastes.

DRAFT

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

b. Physical Science

1. Explores the physical properties and creative use of objects or matter (all objects are matter)

Children are naturally curious and like to explore their surroundings. Through simple experiments and play with everyday natural and recycled materials, children begin to learn about the properties of items in their environment.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- make gelatin to show that matter changes from a liquid to a solid
- melt ice to show how solids change to a liquid
- shake different items in empty water bottles (rice, macaroni, beans, cotton, cut straws, pennies, water, sand) and have children listen to different sounds
- play with recycled objects and create new uses for the objects

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

c. Life Science

1. Explores growth and change of living things

Four-year-olds understand that they are growing and becoming bigger. They also understand that other living things, plants and animals, grow and have a life cycle. Experiences with home or classroom pets, plants or a classroom garden, as well as with other ages of children and adults are excellent opportunities to compare and discuss how living things change over time.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- **observing** similarities and differences when viewing pictures of themselves, beginning in infancy.
- **investigating** and comparing a variety of living things to determine their needs and how they change over time
- exploring and comparing a variety of plants to observe and measure how quickly they grow and change over specific time periods
- commenting on the changes they **observe** as caterpillars grow, change into chrysalises, and emerge as butterflies.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide numerous plants and animals to be housed in the science center of the classroom to allow children to have natural observations of changes over time.
- Provide opportunities for children to explore and focus on a few specific living things that will allow them to note changes that occur (bring in baby pictures/compare with current pictures; record height and weight of children and compare to when they were babies, keep mealworms, caterpillars, or other living things in the classroom and observe changes over time, visit a farm to see baby animals and adult animals)
- Use classroom experiences such as reading books and poetry to allow children to communicate their understandings of how living things grow and change.
- Create dramatizations of books and poems depicting how living things grow and change.

2. Identifies the characteristics of living things

Studying **life science** offers personal fulfillment and excitement—benefits that should be shared by everyone. Exploring living things, what they look like, how they move, sounds they make strengthens love of nature and helps develop a desire to care for nature's gifts to us.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- **observing** similarities and differences of living things, including plants, animals, and humans (e.g., discussing different parts of plants, kinds of insects, comparing animals with fur and feathers, identifying parts of the human body)
- **investigating** and comparing the needs of living things (e.g., discussing what plants need to thrive, the different kinds of **environments**)
- exploring and comparing the effects of sunlight and/or water on plants (e.g., **observing** plants and the way they grow).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- Grow vegetables or herbs from seeds (e.g. Place a lima bean in a plastic sandwich bag with a wet paper towel. Tape the bag on a window or clipped across a string and have children observe the bag daily. Observe how the roots grow down to anchor the plant in the ground and how the stems grow up toward the sun. Have children use a dropper to keep the paper towel moist.).
- Observe the life cycle and metamorphosis of animals over time in the classroom (e.g., a caterpillar changes to a butterfly, a tadpole changes to a frog, and a mealworm changes to a beetle).
- Use pictures or stories that illustrate animals and their babies to discuss that living things grow and change.
- Provide opportunities for children to investigate the characteristics of plants and animals in their natural habitat and in the classroom over time, to help children develop respect and a caring attitude toward living things.

3. Children will identify their five senses and explore functions of each

Children enjoy learning through hands-on experiences that involve their senses. Through engaging opportunities, children begin to identify their five senses (e.g., sight, taste, touch, hearing, smell) and which sense(s) are used for different tasks.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- tasting a piece of orange and lemon and talking about sweet and sour, understanding that the tongue is the organ involved in taste
- with eyes closed, smelling different items to experience the sense of smell (e.g., cinnamon, fresh-cut grass, oranges, lotions, peppermint)
- discussing textures felt through the sense of touch (e.g., using play dough, marbles* in water, glue, felt, feathers, sandpaper) (*Note: Teachers must assess the safety of using small objects with each group of students at a given point during the school year. Small objects could be used in small group teacher-directed experiences if deemed unsafe to leave in an independent-use center.)
- making various sounds (e.g., bells, chimes, symbols, blocks, door closing, stomping, whistle) and using the sense of hearing to distinguish differences

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Challenge children to use their senses to complete specific tasks (e.g., Use your sense of sight to locate something pink in the classroom. Use your sense of smell to show where the scented candle is. Use your sense of taste to determine your favorite food at lunch. Use your sense of hearing to know when to clean up. Use your sense of touch to find a specific toy without looking.).
- Provide a discovery box of various materials that allow children to explore their five senses (smelling jars, blindfolds, touch boxes, Braille books). PP
- Provide a discovery box of various materials that would allow children to explore their five senses (e.g., smelling jars, blindfolds, touch boxes, Braille books).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

d. Earth and Space

1. Explores the outdoor *environment* and begins to recognizes changes (e.g., weather conditions) in the *environment*, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time

Children notice changes to the outdoor environment, but teachers can help support their growing understanding by collecting information about daily changes and involving children through observing, discussing, and hypothesizing the impact of change.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Have a weather chart to record the weather each day (e.g., hot, cold, sunny, rainy, windy, foggy), utilizing children as helpers in filling out the chart.
- On a rainy day, collect rainwater in a cup and measure how much rain was collected.
- Place an outdoor thermometer where it can be easily seen. Record the daily temperature, making a graph over time.
- Provide opportunities for children to explore natural energy of sunlight and its connection with living and non-living things. (e.g., Heat is generated by sunlight. Plants need sunlight and water to live. Shadows can affect living things.)

2. Discovers and explores objects (e.g., rocks, twigs, leaves, sea shells) that are naturally found in the *environment*

Children have unique opportunities to explore objects in the natural environment. Sand, pebbles, rocks, leaves, Spanish moss, shells, and other artifacts provide a context for interesting conversation and comparisons of naturally occurring items.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- going on a rock hunt and comparing the sizes, shapes and weights of the rocks, as children describe the physical properties (e.g., size, shape, color, texture) of the rocks
- adding water to sand and discussing how the physical properties change
- exploring practical, creative, and real life ways that objects from nature (e.g., rocks, sticks, leaves, acorns, pinecones, sand, shells, water items) found in our *environment* can be used in daily classroom life.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- During a nature walk, work with the class to collect, natural things in the *environment* (e.g., leaves, rocks, dirt, pinecones, shells).
- Ask children to compare natural items (e.g., leaves, rocks, dirt, pinecones, shells), and describe how the objects look and how they feel.
- Hide natural objects in a sandbox or sand table and have children find then sort by specified categories (e.g., smooth/rough, hard/soft, light/dark).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

e. Environmental Awareness

1. Demonstrates ongoing *environmental awareness* and responsibility (e.g., reduce, reuse, recycle) with teacher support and multiple experiences over time

Four-year-old children are interested in the world around them, this includes the natural world. Their curiosity about plants, animals, and the general *environment* (e.g., water, soil, shells, weather) can be used to introduce children to *environmental awareness*.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- showing an interest in environmental projects such as recycling
- putting trash in the garbage rather than throwing it on the ground
- helping to keep the playground clean as a way to take care of their personal *environment*.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Discuss conserving energy and water and encourage children to turn off the water while brushing their teeth and to turn off the lights when leaving the classroom.
- Explore environmental issues in your own area and your own school. Create environmental projects that may include recycling and gardening.
- Discuss where garbage goes after it is discarded and invite guest speakers or go on fieldtrips to learn more about recycling and waste management. Discuss how items are recycled at home.
- If food is served for snack or meals, help create a compost area and allow the children place the appropriate food in a container to take to the compost site. Use the composted dirt for the garden or plants in the classroom.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

C. Social Studies

a. Individual Development and Identity

1. Begins to recognize and appreciate similarities and differences in people

Families and early learning *environments* are two of the first experiences of community for young children. Four-year-olds are becoming more aware of similarities and differences among people, and focus mostly on how people are different or the same as themselves.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- dressing in clothing from different cultures in the dress up area after reading a story about that culture
- talking to peers about different types of family structures and that while all families have some similarities, not all families are alike
- noticing a child using a walker or wheelchair and asking questions about why it is needed
- choosing playdough or paint that matches his/her skin color
- showing an interest in stories about children who live in kinds of houses different from themselves or eat different types of food.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- In the classroom, display photographs of the children and their families as well as children and families from other cultural groups around the world.
- Incorporate cultural and ethnic activities and materials (e.g., books, clothes, paint, crayons, *music*, food, papers, and micro-play figures of different cultures and ethnicities) into the curriculum on a daily basis.
- Provide people from different cultures in the micro-play materials in the block area.
- Provide paint and playdough in colors that represent the different skin tones found among peoples of the world.

2. Begins to understand family characteristics, roles, and functions

Four-year-olds continue to enjoy playing out family roles in *dramatic play*. They are exploring people's roles and how they live, the jobs family members have within the family, and how to get along. Preschoolers are encountering diversity when they learn about different characteristics of families and family structures.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- assigning family roles to themselves and friends saying "I am the daddy and you are the granddaddy and we are taking the baby to the store"
- bringing a family picture to school and talking about their family during a small group activity with an adult

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- Invite a familiar member of the family to share a song, story, or special snack with the class.
- Provide opportunities for the children to tell stories about their family's special occasions (e.g., a birthday celebration for grandma) or a special holiday.
- Make family trees so children can share who is a part of their family and what makes their family special.
- Read stories about different families and their homes, clothing, and jobs.

3. Shows awareness and describes some social roles and jobs that people do

Children this age are interested in people and how they live. As their life experiences grow and they come into contact with a greater variety of people in their community, they develop a better understanding of jobs and social roles. They learn what it takes to perform certain jobs, what tools are needed and how jobs are done. Four-year-olds explore common jobs in **dramatic play** and through stories, exploring varied roles such as cooks, storekeepers, crossing guards, office workers and others.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- acting out different roles during play (e.g., Use shovels and scoops to “build a road” while wearing a hard hat and vest in the sand box, or commenting that “My uncle builds houses, and it is hard work!” after the teacher reads *How a House is Built*.)
- naming many community workers and knowing their jobs and responsibilities.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Take a walk around the community and look for evidence of jobs people have done.
- Invite family members to share information and materials from their jobs.
- Introduce different jobs through books, special visitors, field trips, and job tools and props.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

b. People, Places, and *Environments*

1. Demonstrates awareness of *geographic thinking*

As with other learning areas, Social Studies is related closely to the preschooler's developing social skills. Four-year-olds show that they are increasing their awareness of the location of things they care about in their ***environment***. For example, they know that the park they enjoy is close to their house but the store is far away. This beginning ***geography*** skill shows up in their play as well as during spontaneous and facilitated conversations.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- looking at simple maps and diagrams, such as a picture map of the classroom
- commenting on the diagram of how mats are arranged during nap time, saying "See, I knew Kendra napped next to me."
- playing games that give practice in directionality like *Candy Land* or *Chutes and Ladders*
- noticing landmarks within the context of the neighborhood (e.g., noticing that school is close to a train track on a nature walk through the neighborhood).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Take walking trips around the neighborhood and note different geographic features and landmarks.
- Make maps of classrooms, playgrounds, and neighborhood stores and features.
- Use blocks and ***dramatic play*** items to create representations of neighborhood features.
- Take digital photographs of landmarks (natural and manmade) from around the school and neighborhood to use in classroom activities (e.g., storytelling, bookmaking, props for the block area).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

c. Technology and Our World

1. Shows awareness of technology and its impact on how people live

Technology is more than computers and cell phones. It includes machines and tools that make life easier and help us solve problems. For the preschooler, interacting with technology means building awareness, learning how to interact with technology, and understanding how technology affects our lives.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- making sounds into a tape recorder in the *music* area and then listening when their sounds are played back
- exploring simple drawing programs on a class or home computer
- using a digital camera to take pictures (e.g., of friends, *environment*, or their work, such as
- understanding how community services impact their daily lives (e.g., How does food get to the grocery store? How is mail delivered? Where does trash go after it leaves your home?)

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Invite special guests to share how they use technology (e.g., doctors, dentists, cooks, graphic artists).
- Introduce new technologies (e.g., computer programs), to one or two children at a time to ensure safe and proper use.
- Discuss advantages and disadvantages of technology in everyday lives (stairs versus escalator or elevator, walking versus driving, solar cooking versus conventional ovens, candles versus electricity, fireplaces versus mechanical heating systems).
- Ask questions such as, “How does food get to the grocery store? How is mail delivered? Where does trash go after it leaves your home?” during appropriate play activities.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

d. Civic Ideals and Practices

1. Demonstrates awareness of group rules (*civics*)

Group rules help to create a safe classroom community where children can explore and interact without fear of physical or emotional harm. Four-year-olds have a better understanding of what a rule is, but still need concrete examples and gentle adult guidance to follow them. At this age, children enjoy helping to create rules for their community, and are more likely to understand and follow them when they take part in deciding on rules.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- asking permission when appropriate (leaving the room, performing a job)
- listening to others and joining in conversations at appropriate times
- taking a fair share of snack when allowed to self-serve

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide frequent reminders of rules (e.g., verbal, pictorial, role play).
- Keep rules simple and easy to remember; continually model appropriate use of rules
- Suggest class rules during a group discussion and why they are important.
- Discuss why rules are important and what would happen if we have no rules (e.g., look both ways before crossing the street, not running inside, sharing with others).

2. Begins to understand and take on leadership roles

Each child has unique gifts and talents that lend themselves to the development of leadership skills. When appropriate, teachers give opportunities for each child to be recognized as a leader. The opportunity to be a leader helps Four-year-olds develop their sense of competence as well as their understanding of social roles. They know that their teacher or their parent, for example, is a decision maker and has a great amount of control. When they are given the chance to lead they see themselves as capable and in control. At this age, they are just beginning to understand the qualities of a leader and need many chances to practice their budding leadership abilities.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- assuming a leadership role as a helper in passing out plates, cups, and spoons for snack
- assisting a friend who is having trouble fastening their shoes
- pretending to be the conductor of the train in the **dramatic play** center
- stopping the line and waiting for the teacher to catch up.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Discuss classroom responsibilities and assign roles to each child for particular jobs.
- Use books to highlight different leadership roles.
- Introduce children to community leaders (e.g., police officers, principals, judges) through special visitors and field trips.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

D. Creative Expression Through The Arts

a. Visual Arts

1. Explores *visual arts*

As their attention span grows, four-year-olds are able to stay involved in creative art activities for longer periods of time. Four-year olds experiment enthusiastically with arts materials and investigate their ideas through drawing, painting, sculpture, and design. They exhibit a sense of joy and excitement as they make and share their artwork with others.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- experimenting with different materials to see what happens (e.g. painting with a dry brush, wet brush, a stick, or fingers; manipulating clay in different ways such as patting, rolling, dropping, pinching)
- touching different textures
- tracing and creating *patterns*
- making and combining different shapes, marks, forms and textures
- mixing colors.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Introduce different materials, tools, and supplies for art making on a regular basis (e.g. recyclables, string, straws, wire, clay, rollers, buttons, scissors, cotton swabs, cotton balls, aluminum foil, felt, feathers, etc.)
- Ask open-ended questions to stimulate children’s imaginations about the use of materials (e.g. “What happens when you mix two colors?”, “What else might you use to paint with?”)
- Model how to combine basic shapes, lines and forms to create pictures (e.g., combining a *triangle* and *square* to make a house, or an *oval* and *triangle* to make a fish)
- Discuss how the use of color can express a mood or feeling in an artwork.

2. Children create visual art to communicate an idea

A rich variety of creative art materials and experiences help hold a four-year-old’s interest and allows him to explore and discover how different materials, images, movements, sounds, and words can help him create, present, and reflect upon his ideas. Creation is at the heart of their instruction. Children learn to work with various tools, processes and media. They learn to coordinate their hands and minds in *exploration* of the visual world. They learn to make choices that enhance their communication of ideas. Their natural inquisitiveness is promoted and they learn the value of perseverance.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- building a large structure from different sized boxes, painting it with rollers and brushes, and describing to the teacher (e.g., castle, clubhouse, grandparents’ house)
- creating an artwork to express an emotion (e.g., happy, sad, scared, angry)
- smearing orange paint around and around on a large cookie tray and calling it a pumpkin

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- using collage materials to create an idea for a climber they wish was on the playground.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Read a story to the children and have them draw a portrait of the main character.
- Play *music* and have students create a two-dimensional artwork that describes what they heard.
- Have children depict their favorite part of a story using a variety of materials provided for them.
- Talk with children about the art making process (e.g., What did they like best and why? How did they make a *pattern*? A color? What would happen if they had chosen a different material?).

3. Discusses and responds to the feelings caused by an artwork

As four-year-olds gain more experience working in the *visual arts*, they are able to discuss artworks with friends and teachers. This may include works by famous artists, classmates, or art in the local community. The child becomes better able to express in words how an artwork feels, the design qualities, or type of artwork.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- talking about their work with their classmates
- responding to prompts and questions by the teacher
- talking about another child's art product in a positive manner and asking questions about how they made it
- discussing how working with art materials makes them feel.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Ask children questions about what they see in an artwork or picture.
- Show and discuss with children a picture of an object, a model of an object and the actual object to help them relate pictures and photographs to real places and things.
- Showcase children's art work in a manner that reinforces the context in which it was created (e.g., if they drew pictures of characters in a book, also display the book).
- Have children write or dictate what is happening in their artwork (e.g., describe the action, mood, image, or idea).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

b. Music

1. Explores *music*

Music can set the tone for all activities and enrich children's learning experiences. Making and responding to music contributes to learning across many domains. Four-year-olds can recognize and create **patterns** through music. Singing, chanting and rhyming enhances vocabulary and oral language development. Music can be soothing or stimulating and can be used in group experiences as well as independent **explorations**.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- playing various instruments and discovering the different types of sounds that each instrument can make
- using the voice as an instrument
- discovering the different types of sounds that found objects can make
- distinguishing the difference between loud, soft, high and low pitched sounds
- making sounds at different rates of speed (tempo) (e.g., fast, slow).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Introduce many types of **music** (e.g., jazz, hip hop, folk, classical, reggae) through tapes, CDs, instruments, and special visitors, and ask children to move to different tempos and styles of **music**.
- Introduce **music** as a way to portray characters within a story, play or movie. (e.g. assign a different sound to each character).
- Take a nature walk outside the classroom to find possible objects to become instruments (e.g. scrap wood, heavy sticks, broken branch with leaves , gourds, large seed pods, pebbles, stones).
- Invite local musicians, perhaps parents, to share their **music** and instruments with the children.

2. Creates *music* to communicate an idea

After exploring qualities of musical instruments (including voice), children are better able to create their own music to share an idea, an emotion, or a story. Children may work independently to create music, or with classmates. They may choose particular instruments or styles of music to communicate a particular idea.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- making musical sounds with instruments with a classroom visitor who plays a guitar and sings songs
- singing independently, on pitch, in rhythm while maintaining a steady tempo
- singing expressively with appropriate meaning and feeling
- singing from memory a varied repertoire of songs representing rhyme and styles from diverse cultures.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Use **music** that requires group singing, movement, and cooperation to help children feel part of the class.
- Set up a **music** center with instruments to create melodies (e.g., keyboard, xylophone, bells) and encourage children to create their own songs.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- Have children replace a word or phrase in a song with something they come up with (e.g., “Row, row, row your boat....” can become “fly, fly, fly your kite....” or “drive, drive, drive your car....”)
- Invite a child with a hearing impairment to put their hand on the speaker of a cd player to feel the beat of the *music*.

3. Discusses and responds to the feelings caused by *music*

Through experiences with music, children become better able to talk about various elements of music (e.g., styles (genres) or music, types of instruments, voice). They become familiar with various styles of music, including their favorites. Children become more experienced at expressing how particular music makes them feel, including music by famous artists, themselves, classmates, or others from the local community.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- listening and responding to music from another culture during a circle time activity
- discussing their favorite instrument and why
- comparing and contrasting different instruments and songs
- describing the background songs they might hear in a cartoon or movie and how it makes them feel or adds to the story.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Encourage discussion about musical experience (e.g., animal sounds, sounds in nature, songs they know).
- After watching a short, appropriate movie, discuss with children their favorite character in the story and important musical elements (e.g., How did you know, through the *music*, that a character was entering the story? or How did you know, from listening to the *music*, if the end was going to be good or bad for the characters?).
- Encourage children to talk about and describe the instruments they made from objects found during a nature walk and what types of sound each can make (e.g., soft, loud, rattling, sharp).
- Give children crayons and paper and invite the child to draw what they hear as *music* is played.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

c. Creative Movement and Dance

1. Explores *creative movement and dance*

Using their body to express themselves and respond to music is satisfying and engaging for preschoolers. They enjoy dancing and exploring the different ways they can move. This is especially effective as they are refining gross motor skills and can do more and more each day.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- imitating animal movements
- galloping, twirling, and performing imaginative movements in response to **music**
- dancing and moving in front of a mirror
- dancing to different kinds of **music** (e.g., jazz, rock, blues, reggae, country, classical, folk)
- exploring and demonstrating different postures.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Show children how they can make big movements like arm **circles** or small movements like shoulder shrugs, and demonstrate to children that they can move at different levels in space (e.g., low to the ground, up high as if they are reaching for the sky, or in the middle).
- Have children isolate movements to a specific body part (e.g., make **circles** with their wrists, move their heads slowly from side to side, move just their hips) and get creative thinking about other body parts (e.g., opening and closing their mouths, flexing or pointing their feet, or wiggling their fingers).
- Help children listen for the beat of the **music** and count out different movements.
- Have children move to different areas in the room using a specific ways to travel (e.g. hop to the door, crawl to the circle time rug, skip to the gate).

2. Creates *creative movement and dance to communicate an idea*

Creative movement and dance can also be a terrific way for children to communicate their ideas and feelings. Through experimentation, modeling, and experience, children become skilled at many movement skills that can be used to create specific dances. Teachers should model movements and ideas through actions and by adding vocabulary to maximize each child's experience.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- using scarves, fabric and ribbons to make up **creative movement** to different paced **music**
- demonstrating and combining basic movements (e.g., walking, running, hopping, jumping, leaping, galloping, sliding, and skipping) with directional movements (e.g., traveling forward, backward, sideward, diagonally, turning)
- demonstrating movements in straight and curved pathways
- demonstrating accuracy in moving to a musical beat and responding to changes in tempo (speed)

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- sequencing a **dance phrase** to have a beginning, middle and end of consecutive movements (e.g., two hops to start, a shoulder shrug in the middle, and one twirl to end).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- invite children to imitate the movement of animals, insects and/or reptiles (e.g., wiggle, slither, stretch, fly, move slowly or move quickly, stretch, crouch, sway, run, hop, jump)
- Show children how to combine different movements to create a sequence through a **dance phrase**. (e.g. two steps forward, one turn, two hops) or make up movements through improvisation.
- Explain and show that **dance** can communicate an idea or story by having the children create a movement to describe how a character may feel at the beginning, middle, and end of a favorite book.
- Invite children to create movements that depict the growth of a seed into a flower, taking time needed to demonstrate this life cycle (e.g., seed under the dirt, seed is watered, feels sunshine, begins to grow, grows taller, blooms).

3. Discusses and responds to the feelings caused by *creative movement and dance*

As children gain more experience with creative movement and dance, they become more skilled at trying different movement and dance elements. They can begin to recognize others' dance and creative movement skills as well. Teachers should expose children to various movement and dance opportunities in the classroom, as well as through dance opportunities in the local community or online (e.g., going to the ballet, inviting a children's dance troupe to come perform, watching a video of famous tap dancer Savion Glover). With experience, children can verbally express how a dancer's movements make them feel, how various styles are different, and how certain types of music may evoke certain styles of movement.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- **observing** and discussing how **dance** is similar and different from other forms of human movement (such as sports, everyday gestures)
- actively participating in a discussion about their feelings and reactions to a **dance** or how they feel when they **dance**
- presenting their own **dances** or movements to peers and discussing their meanings
- **observing** and accurately describing and identifying the action or movement (e.g., hop, jump, skip, gallop) and movement elements (e.g., levels, directions).

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Talk with children about their animal inspired movements (e.g., How does a monkey move? How does an elephant move? How does an eagle move? How do humans move differently?).
- Ask children to move to different tempos and styles of **music** ask them how they feel after they have moved.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

d. Dramatic Play and Theatre

1. Explores *dramatic play* and theatre

Four-year-olds explore ***dramatic play*** and theatre, indoors and outdoors, in engaging ***environments***. ***Dramatic play*** and Theatre can include story enactment, imagination journeys, and theatre games. For children beginning to explore, a variety of child-size props (e.g., costumes), puppets, and micro-play toys (e.g., cars, people, and animals from the block area) are needed. The emphasis in ***dramatic play*** is process rather than product.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- using different voices (sound effects), movements, facial expressions, and materials to portray characters and story events
- playing with toys in the toy area and acting out the traditional roles according to the toys (e.g., truck driver, police officer, surgeon, farmer, doctor) or using the toys to come up with unique roles
- pretending to be animals or role-playing about friendship, family, or daily activities
- creating costumes for a character in a story or for a person in a specific career
- identifying a story's beginning, middle and end

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Provide creative and spontaneous play opportunities by having simple, inexpensive materials on hand (e.g., old clothes, large pieces of fabric, old household items, a microphone, various sizes of cardboard boxes and recyclables).
- Explain that role-play is pretending to be someone else other than yourself, and model for children how to become a character in a role-play (e.g., voice, facial expressions, props, costumes).
- Introduce different types of puppets (e.g. finger, string, spoon, sock, shadow, paper bag, marionettes, etc.) and have the children create their own puppet characters.
- Present different community helpers and professions of interest to four-year olds. Explore the concepts of work and growing up (jobs or careers) and have them role-play.

2. Creates *dramatic play* and theatre to communicate an idea

Dramatic play and Theatre experiences help children develop fluency of language, movement, originality, elaborations of ideas, vocabulary, imitation, and self-expression. Through experience independently and with friends, children become skilled at taking on various roles and enacting a story. Their stories may be replications of books (e.g., *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*), their own experiences (e.g., reenacting a trip on an airplane after recently returning from an airplane trip), or their imagination.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- creating a story that uses reality and/or fantasy
- expressing thoughts and feelings about a family member, friend, or character in a story or rhyme

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- working with other children to establish play spaces for classroom dramatizations; selecting and safely organizing available materials that suggest scenery, props, lighting, sound, costumes, and makeup
- creating puppets or masks to portray a character or feeling for a puppet show
- demonstrating variation in movement, vocal pitch, tempo and tone for different characters.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Read familiar stories or rhymes and have children develop a voice for their favorite character, dramatize a section of the story, or provide children the option to extend the story with a surprise moment or ending.
- Use a story or rhyme to create, plan, and produce a puppet show where children can have individual roles or share roles, and document the puppet show (e.g., videotape or photos).
- Talk with children about what makes them feel happy, sad, scared and angry, and ask them to create a puppet show about their feelings.
- Lead children in developing an impromptu story by starting with “Once upon a time...” and using a talking stick as a tool to pass around for each child’s turn to contribute to the story.

3. Discusses and responds to the feelings caused by *dramatic play* and theatre

The classroom should provide rich opportunities and time for children’s involvement in *dramatic play* and theatre. Through experience, children become skilled at taking on roles personally and with props (e.g., puppets, marionettes, flannel board characters, block area props). Teachers should plan for opportunities outside of the classroom, including the local community and online (e.g., taking a field trip to a local child-appropriate theatre production, inviting a puppeteer to the classroom, viewing another class’ rendition of *The Three Little Pigs*). With experience and modeling by the teacher, children can express how a story makes them feel or how various styles of theatre and role-play are different.

Examples illustrating this standard include:

- using imagination to describe characters, puppets, and their relationships, circumstances and **environments**
- expressing feelings about a character, costume or story
- sharing feelings after participating in **pantomime**, role-playing and/or **tableaux**
- expressing thoughts and feelings about sound effects
- discussing the reason for selecting a particular movement, gesture, voice or sound effect.

Supportive Instructional Strategies:

- Have children talk about their puppet (e.g., What story would you like your puppet to tell? What does your puppet like to do?), and after role-playing, ask children what they liked best about creating a puppet and puppet show.
- Discuss with children how different events cause different emotions and responses when doing mime or role-playing, and ask open-ended questions (e.g., What was it

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds

V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

- like to be a mime? What did you like about it? What did you find difficult? Did you find it hard not to talk?).
- After a role-playing activity, ask children what they learned about conflict and about friendship.
 - Discuss with children how the process of **tableaux** reveals what happened in the story (e.g., beginning, middle and end).

DRAFT

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Glossary

analyze – to study and think of solutions for mathematical problems (e.g., The teacher asks a child to tell how many bears there are all together. The child counts the three green bears and the two red bears and discovers there are five bears.).

cardinal number – a number used to express quantity but not order.

circle – a round two-dimensional figure that resembles a ring.

civic ideals – the rights and responsibilities of citizens of a democracy.

civics – the study of rights and duties of citizenship.

comparative terminology – statements children make comparing two items as the same or different that eventually help them draw conclusions (e.g., A child holds two sticks up and says, “This stick is long and this stick is short.” Eventually the child would say, “This stick is longer than that stick.”).

cone – a solid figure or body having a circular base and tapering to a point.

creative movement – moving in a new and/or unusual way that isn’t directed by the teacher (e.g., a child dances to **music** played by the teacher).

cube – a three-dimensional solid figure with six equal **square** faces and right angles; three-dimensional **square**.

cylinder – a solid with circular ends and straight sides.

dance – moving in a choreographed way or way that is directed by the genre of **music** (e.g., line dancing, ballet, hip hop).

dance phrase – a repeated sequence in a dance (e.g., shoulder shrug, two hops, clap), similar to a **pattern unit**.

dramatic play – expressive and spontaneous play.

environment – the circumstances, objects, or conditions by which one is surrounded.

environmental awareness – an understanding of the **environment** and surroundings.

equivalent – equal (e.g., a **square** has four **equivalent** sides).

exploration – the act of studying something new to better understand it.

geographic thinking – **observing** and interacting with geography and making geographic decisions based on those encounters.

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

geography – the study of the Earth and the human and physical phenomena that can be classified into five areas: location, place, human-**environment** interaction, movement, and region.

inquiry – processes of science (e.g., observe, sort, classify, describe, and communicate).

investigating – to observe or inquire into in detail.

investigation – systematic examination.

life science – the study of living organisms

music – sound in time that expresses ideas and emotions in significant forms through the elements of rhythm, melody, harmony.

numeral – a symbol or set of symbols used to represent a number (e.g., the number *five* is represented by the symbol or **numeral** 5).

observing – regarding attentively or watching.

one-to-one correspondence – pairing or matching objects in a one-to-one relationship (e.g., giving one apple to each child at snack time).

ordinal – showing the relative position in a sequence of numbers (e.g., first, second, third).

orientation – the position of a shape or figure (e.g., on top of, below, behind, in front of).

oval – a two-dimensional egg-shaped figure; an elongated ring.

pantomime – using gestures and facial expressions to tell a story, role-play without speaking (e.g., pouting, smiling, or pretending to fly).

pattern – a repeating series of units.

pattern unit – the portion of a pattern that is repeated (e.g., in a red, blue, red, blue, red, blue pattern, the **pattern unit** is red, blue).

physical science – science of non-living things in the physical world around us.

prediction – an idea (opinion) stated about what may happen in the future (e.g., a child may predict that the caterpillar will turn into a butterfly).

rectangle – a two-dimensional figure with two sets of parallel lines and four right angles.

relative position from different perspectives – concept of the same object being in different positions based on the observer's, point of view (e.g., an upside down **triangle** and a right side up **triangle**; they are the same object but in different positions).

One Set of Standards for Four-Year-Olds
V. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge Domain

rhombus – A four-sided shape where all sides have equal length and opposite sides are parallel and opposite angles are equal.

seriation – arrangement in rows or a series by an attribute.

set – a group of objects.

spatial sense – the ability to build and manipulate mental representations of two- and three-dimensional objects and ideas.

sphere – a three-dimensional figure with a round body (e.g., a ball, marble, or globe).

square – a two-dimensional figure with four equal sides and four right angles.

symmetry – the property of having exactly similar parts on both sides of a central dividing line. The correspondence in the position of pairs of points of a geometric object that are equally positioned about a point, line, or plane that divides the object.

tableaux – a scene presented on stage.

trapezoid – a four-sided shape with one pair of opposite sides parallel.

triangle – a two-dimensional figure with three sides and three angles.

unit – what you measure something by (e.g., cm, ft, in, yd).

visual arts – art work, such as painting, photography, or sculpture.