



KINDERGARTEN CONNECTIONS



Welcome back to the second volume of WCDSB Kindergarten Connections. We would love to highlight some of the amazing things that are happening in kindergarten classrooms across WCDSB. Please email kimberly.namespetrasullivan@wcdsb.ca with anything you'd like included in the next volume.



FEATURE READ ALOUD

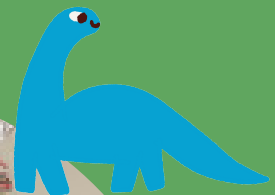


The '**Garden of Lost Socks**' by award winning novelist, Esi Eduguan is available now in every school Learning Commons. Part of the Blue Spruce books for 2024, not only is this picture book chock full of beautiful illustrations, but also a story that can spark inquiry. Read it once for the story and then read it again for all the math. Challenge yourself and your students to use the ideas to develop new play provocations and explorations.



Kindergarten classes at **Christ the King** jumped on board an idea that came from the Joyful Math Book Club discussion to invite families to come to school and '**STAY AND PLAY**'! It was a success all round and families enjoyed learning more about how learning happens through play and inquiry.

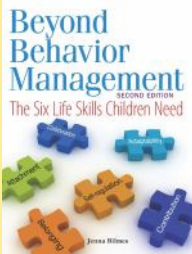
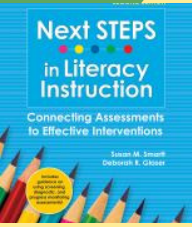
STAY AND PLAY PILOT PROJECT



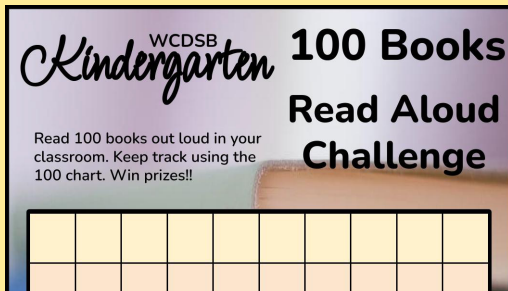
PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES



So you've completed the Acadience screener with your students. What's next? This professional resource will help you with all the details for planning intentional whole and small group activities that are tailored to the exact needs of your students.



Explore the virtual learning commons or visit your school library to find this second notable professional resource. If you're looking for some new and creative ideas for helping with classroom behaviour, this might be the book for you. Learn how to help children self-regulate by developing the essential skills of collaboration, adaptability, contribution and belonging.



There is still time! Read at least 100 books aloud in your classroom this year! Email kimberly.namespetrasullivan@wcdsb.ca to choose a free hard copy picture book to add to your classroom library.

Math For Young Children

Working collaboratively with kindergarten classrooms at Sir Edgar Bauer and St Joseph and researchers from Trent University in the project M4YC (Math for Young Children), a longstanding research partnership (since 2012) during the month of April. This work continued investigating a Spatial Approach to Fractions in the Early Years: Foundations for 4-7-Year-old Children. A big thank you to both educators and students who made this possible. Stay tuned for how the results of this project may come into all WCDSB kindergarten classrooms in the future.



www.rare.org

Learn about the life cycles of butterflies, dragonflies, frogs, and birds. Participate in hands-on activities including catching butterflies and other insects, and bird watching using binoculars.



FIELD TRIP IDEA

AUTHENTIC EARLY LEARNING

Effective programming begins with an understanding of what children are capable of learning and how they learn effectively. "During the early years, children learn through active engagement, activity, observations, experimentation, and social interactions with others. As they develop an understanding about themselves and others, they learn to regulate their emotions, attend to what is important, and to make plans – all based on the cultural values and practices embedded in their social and physical environment. **If the focus shifts from play during the preschool years to a strong emphasis on the formal instruction of isolated skills like learning symbols (letters, sounds, numbers), children's literacy skills as well as their numeracy and inquiry skills – may actually be reduced.**" (ELECT, 2014)



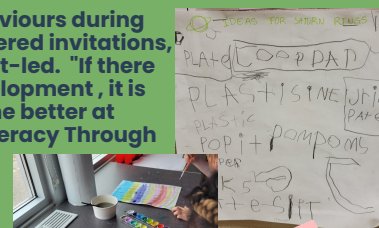
What are literacy behaviours? What are the pre-reading skills and how can we support them in authentic ways in the Ontario Kindergarten Program context? Revisit pages 64-74 in the Kindergarten Program

Young children may demonstrate literacy behaviours by, for example:

- Sharing their ideas, feelings, interests, and experiences
- Looking at name tags to figure out who class visitors may be
- Asking and responding to questions
- Noticing letters and words no matter where they appear
- Showing an interest in print
- Initiating, responding to, and engaging in both verbal and non-verbal communication with others

Emergent and early reading skills can be supported through phonological awareness and phonemic awareness instruction. The Heggerty program and The Phonics Companion are great resources to support the development of these skills. The activities can be done whole class, they are less than 10 minutes, and the children love them!

Opportunities to engage in literacy behaviours during play and inquiry can be carefully considered invitations, responses to guided questions or student-led. "If there is one thing we know about literacy development, it is that the more you read, write and talk, the better at them you become." (Supporting Early Literacy Through Play, pg. 3)



Welcome to Kindergarten
CANADIAN EDUCATION WAREHOUSE

Don't forget to visit www.welcome-to-kindergarten.ca and use your board email to create a member account. You will find loads of creative ideas to help with planning your Welcome to Kindergarten event, and more ideas to use in your classroom with students.



ST. ANNE (K) FORTS AND MOVIE

Kindergarten at St. Anne (K) worked in small groups to plan, problem-solve and create forts from materials provided to them. They engineered some creative spaces including signage for others to read. The forts were the backdrop for a movie and popcorn afternoon in PJs!



INSTAGRAM PAGES TO CHECK OUT

@exploreinkinder
@thekinderforest
@rightbrainedmom
@theconsciouskid
@reggio.emilia.inspired
@joannebabalis



OUTDOOR LEARNING

FEATURE PODCAST

Episodes on loose parts, interviews with early childhood researchers, practitioners and authors like Suzanne Axelson and Miriam Beloglovsky.



"Speaker and podcast host Heather Bernt-Santy, also known as That Early Childhood Nerd, has been working with children, their families, and their caregivers for over 30 years and has loved very-nearly-almost every minute. She is a believer in children's right to play and in the science that tells us play IS right."

When planning for outdoor play experiences, consider the following:

- How am I supporting all four frames?
- How are the different learning areas defined?
- How are the children currently using the space?
- What invitations for learning can I setup to extend the learning I observed indoors?
- What can I add to this play, at this time for this child/group?
- How can I include the children in the planning?
- What materials do I need quick access to, in order to be a successful co-learner, co-researcher?
- How can I document what I am observing?



EDUCATE OUTSIDE
Inspire brilliance. Teach outside.

The Educate Outside website is a great resource to help you with ideas for learning math, literacy and science in outdoor spaces.

ST BONIFACE PAPERMAKING INQUIRY

Kindergarten at St Boniface School wondered about how paper was made. Where did it come from? Who invented it? So they delved into an inquiry to learn all about making paper. The end result was some beautiful handmade paper that included real flowers to make it beautiful.



"Before we ever put a pencil in a child's hands, those hands should dig, climb, press, pull, squish, twist, and pinch in a wide array of environments and with a variety of materials" - Amanda Morgan

PROBLEM-SOLVING STRATEGIES

When our students do not have the skills necessary to problem-solve effectively, either in a social or academic context, educators may notice behaviours such as task avoidance or not engaging in social play that they feel may be challenging for them. This can then impact their ability to form and maintain relationships with peers, excel academically or reduce their confidence in pursuing personal interests. Without strong critical thinking or conflict resolution skills, students may engage in negative or impulsive behaviours.



So what can educators do?

1. Explicitly teach calming, mindful breathing techniques as an easy way to self-regulate.
2. Once a child is regulated, helping students communicate with words can give perspective and make it easier to come up with possible solutions.
3. Set a timer and try to brainstorm together as many solutions as possible, even if they seem far-fetched; every idea has merit and humour is allowed.
4. Sort the options from the brainstorming. What are the pros or cons of each one.
5. Test out a solution. Reflect on the results and try something else if the first one doesn't work.

What is Read-Write-Rest? It's a period of time in the school day set aside for students and educators to quietly engage in time to read, write/draw, or to rest. It is thoughtfully included in the flow of the day where it best meets the self-regulation needs of the students in the room. It is intended to help address the physical and mental stress of school for young children and is intended to give educators an opportunity to sit quietly alongside students, have gentle conversations, and to build relationships.



Students at St Augustine School engaging in RWR

READ - WRITE - REST



Let's Play!



Play in Ontario kindergarten classrooms is crucial for holistic development. It fosters creativity, social skills, problem-solving, and emotional regulation. Through play, children explore, experiment, and learn in a natural and enjoyable way, laying the foundation for lifelong learning and well-being.



Discover more about play-based learning through playlearninglab.ca a research backed website with information and ideas related directly to play and inquiry in Ontario kindergarten classrooms. Dr. Angela Pyle leads the play lab research and is a well-known author and speaker on all things related to play.

Ontario Kindergarten Program Update

The Ontario Minister of Education, Stephen Lecce recently announced that there would a new version of the Ontario Kindergarten Program released in 2025 for implementation in the fall of 2025. At this time, no further information has been shared with school boards. Please plan to continue using the 2016 version for the 2024-2025 school year.

