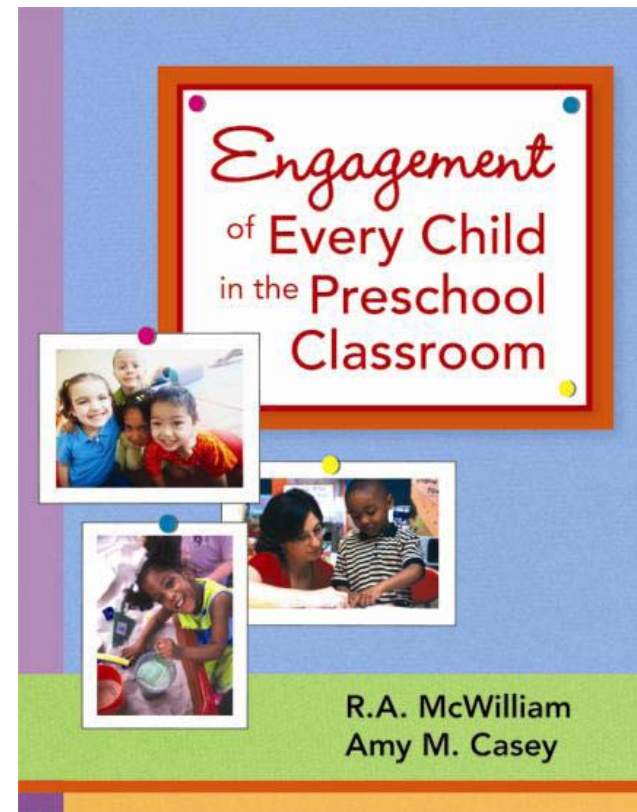


The Engagement Classroom: A Model for Preschool Inclusion

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More Information

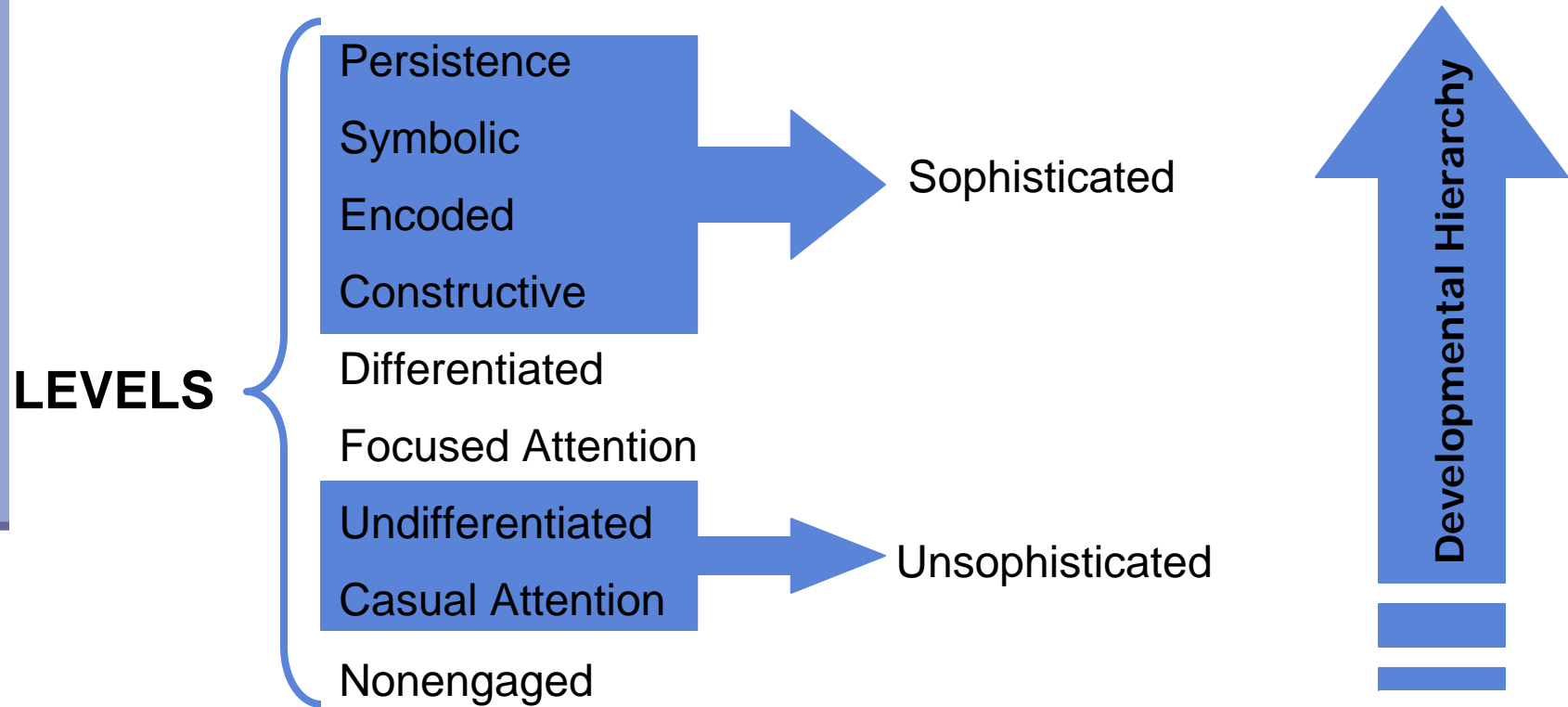
- McWilliam, R. A., & Casey, A. M. (2008). *Engagement of every child in the preschool classroom*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company.



What is Engagement?

- The amount of time children spend involved with the environment (adults, peers, or materials) in a way that is appropriate for their age, abilities, and surroundings
 - Developmentally appropriate
 - Contextually appropriate

Levels of Engagement



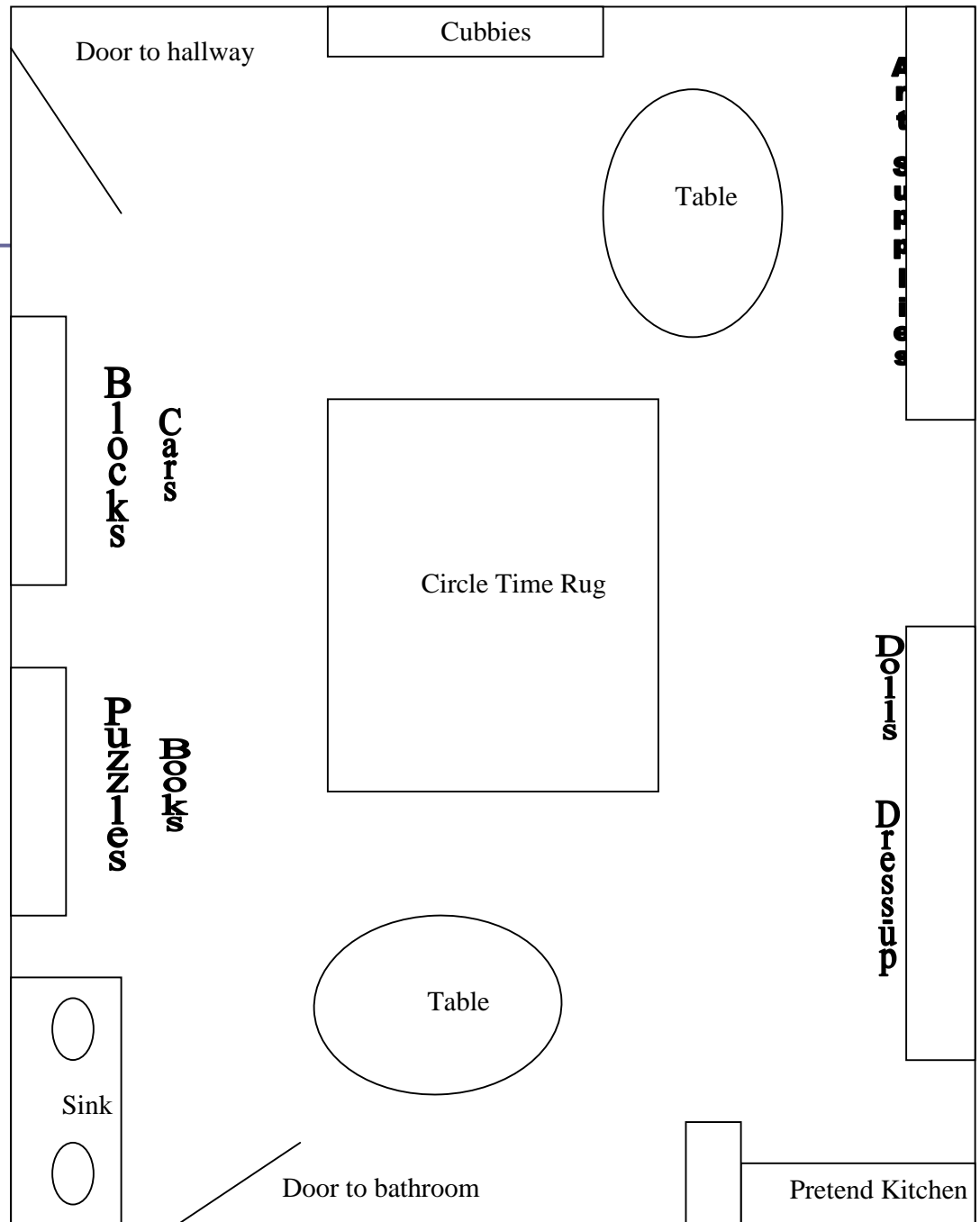
Why Promote Engagement?

- When a child is displaying challenging behavior, he or she is nonengaged
- A child cannot learn if he or she is not engaged
- Compared to typically developing children, children with disabilities spend
 - More time nonengaged
 - Less time interacting with adults
 - Less time attending to peers
 - Less time displaying mastery-level engagement with materials

How to Promote Engagement

1. Classroom Environment
2. Staff Organization
3. (Functional Goals)
4. Incidental Teaching
5. (Integrated Therapy)
6. Data Collection

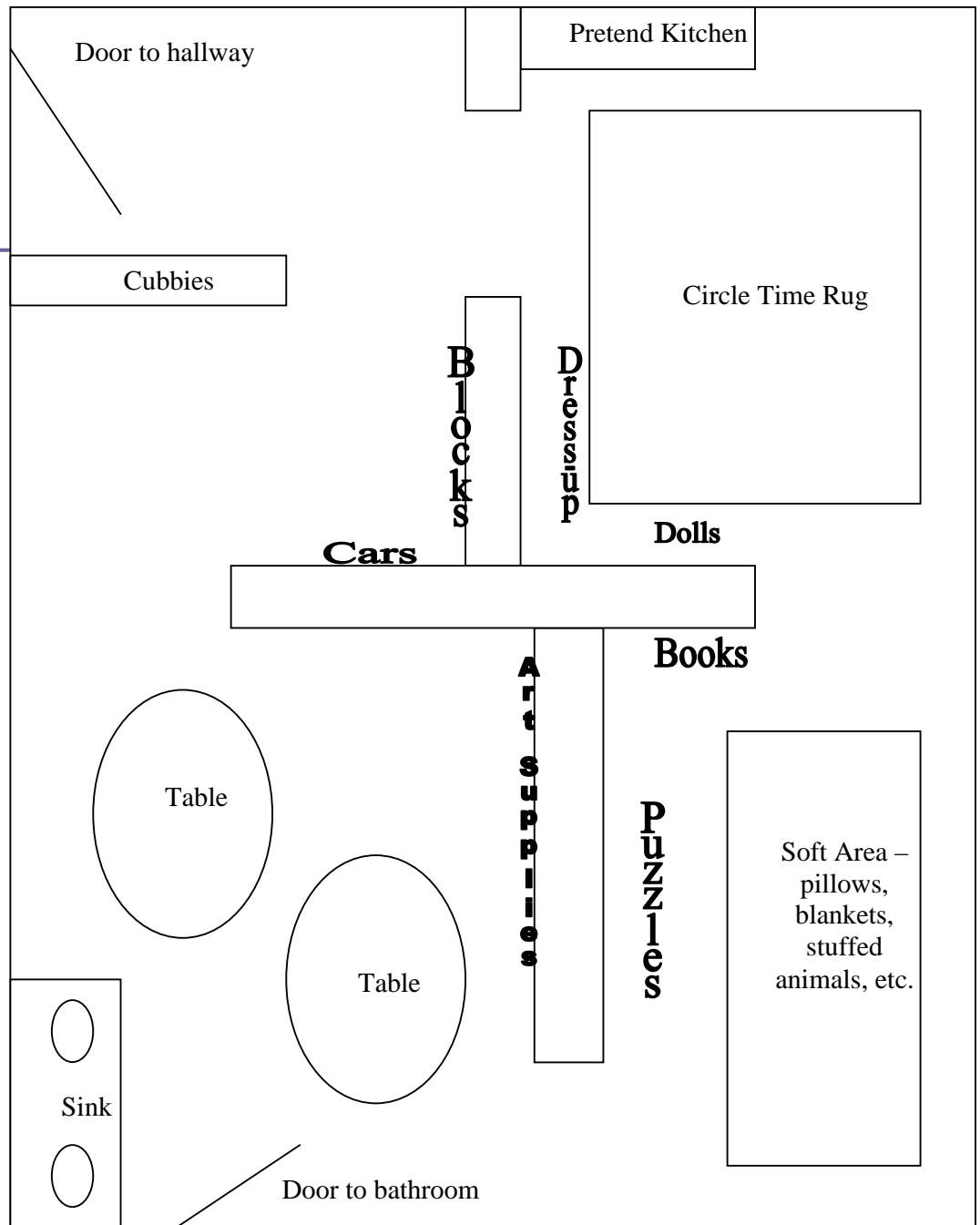
How could the arrangement of this classroom be improved?



Room Arrangement

- Break up the middle of the room
 - Prevents children from running laps or wandering
 - Creates four zones
- Scatter centers throughout the room and throughout the zones
 - Most nonengagement occurs in wide open, empty spaces
- Put similar activities near each other

Same
classroom,
arranged to
promote
engagement



Other Environmental Considerations

- Ensure that you can see children in all zones
- Place materials on low shelves so children can access them at all times (promotes independence)
 - Exception: Place preferred items on high shelves to encourage communication
- Rotate the toys and activities available, so children always have something new to explore



EXIT



- Class Expectations
- Share your toys
- Use your words
- Follow directions
- Be kind
- Be safe



Numbers 1-10

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10		

Each number is accompanied by a visual representation of its value using dots or objects.

Math

Our Motor Center





purple

Goldfish



2. The Zone Defense Schedule

- During each routine, one adult is in the set-up role
 - Cleans up previous activity
 - Prepares for next activity
 - Handles unexpected situations (diaper changes, phone calls, visitors, temper tantrums, etc.)
- Having one person in the set-up role allows other adults to focus on child engagement

Example 2-Person Schedule

Time	Person 1	Person 2
8:00-8:15	Arrival	Set Up
8:15-8:30	Set Up	Morning Meeting
8:30-8:45	Free Play	Set Up
8:45-9:00	Set Up	Free Play
9:00-9:15	Story	Set up
9:15-9:30	Set Up	Centers
9:30-9:45	Set Up	Centers
9:45-10:00	Set Up	Centers
10:15-10:30	Snack	Set Up
10:30-10:45	Set Up	Music

Transitions Between Activities

- Goal: Reduce nonengaged time by eliminating transitions that require children to stand around and wait
- One adult is at the new activity, ready to engage the first child that transitions
 - Materials are prepared
- One adult is at the old activity, keeping children engaged until they decide to make the transition
 - Cleans up activity once all children are gone

Example With Part-Time Person

Time	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3
2:00-2:15	Set Up	Snack	Snack
2:15-2:30	Story	Set Up	Story
2:30-2:45	Centers	Centers	Set Up
2:45-3:00	Centers	Centers	Set Up
3:00-3:15	Centers		Set Up
3:15-3:30	Set Up		Outside
3:30-3:45	Set Up		Outside
3:45-4:00	Free Play		Set Up
4:00-4:15	Free Play		Set Up

Limiting Nonengagement

- The adult leading the activity devotes his or her full attention to the activity and children's engagement
- Needless waiting is avoided because children do not have to wait for
 - Peers to complete a transition before the new activity begins
 - Teachers to prepare the new activity

Staff Empowerment

- Each person has a chance to lead activities
 - No one is stuck doing the boring classroom tasks all day long
- Each person plans and prepares their own activities
- Roles are alternated weekly so the same person isn't always in charge of a specific activity
- Gives volunteers a role in the classroom

3. Incidental Teaching

- Basing a teaching interaction on a child's existing engagement and
 - Expanding it (more engagement)
 - Elaborating upon it (higher engagement)
 - Addressing a goal (skill development)

Incidental Teaching Checklist

Identify the teacher(s)	Teaching Staff (Initials)		
Ensure there were interesting things for children to do or talk about? (If the activity was boring, mark -)			
Conduct developmentally appropriate activities?			
Rotate activities and vary materials?			
Initiate interactions based on what children were doing (i.e., respond to children's appropriate behaviors)?			
Allow children to remain engaged in the activity of their choice (i.e., not redirect children to a new activity)?			
<i>Attempt</i> to elicit elaboration of children's engagement (more engagement, higher engagement level, or specific target behavior)?			
<i>Succeed</i> in eliciting elaboration?			
Give children no more help than they needed?			
Ensure children were reinforced, naturally or by the teacher, for improving their engagement?			
2. Scan the room and move to different children?			
1. Use incidental teaching with children with and without disabilities (paying particular attention to children with severe disabilities)?			
2. Encourage children to move around during the activity?			
3. Encourage children's independence?			
4. Encourage children's interactions with each other?			
5. Sit at children's level (e.g., on the floor, if children are sitting on the floor or are infants or toddlers)?			
5. Address outcomes/goals on IFSPs and IEPs?			
7. Ensure an adult was always available to teach children anywhere (in the classroom, hallways, Commons, playground, etc.)?			
3. Communicate with other adults in the classroom to manage activities and transitions smoothly?			
2. Use incidental teaching with any child in their zone, not just children for whom they are the primary caregiver?			

Proper Implementation Involves

- Quality of incidental teaching
 - Following steps, improving engagement
- Target of incidental teaching
 - All children, not just those with disabilities
- Rate of incidental teaching
 - Rates are low before raising teachers' awareness through workshops and the provision of feedback

4. Data Collection

- Individual Engagement
 - Scale for Teachers' Assessment of Routines Engagement (STARE)
- Group Engagement
 - Engagement Check II

STARE

Centers/Free Play	Almost none of the time	Little of the time	Half of the time	Much of the time	Almost all of the time
With Adults	1	2	3	4	5
With Peers	1	2	3	4	5
With Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Complexity*	Nonengaged 1	Unsophisticated 2	Average 3	Advanced 4	Sophisticated 5

* **Nonengagement** = inappropriate behavior, zoning out; **Unsophisticated** = repetitive play, casually looking around; **Average** = following routines, participating.; **Advanced** = talking, creating; **Sophisticated** = symbolic talk, pretending, persisting.

Engagement Check II

Interval	Number Present	Number Nonengaged	Number Engaged	Percent Engaged
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

Additional Resources

- Zone Defense Schedule Implementation Checklist
- Casey, A. M., & McWilliam, R. A. (2005). Where is everybody? Organizing adults to promote child engagement. *Young Exceptional Children, 8*(2), 2-10.
- Casey, A. M., & McWilliam, R. A. (2007). The STARE: The Scale for Teachers' Assessment of Routines Engagement. *Young Exceptional Children, 11*(1), 2-15.