

Pre-K

Community
Studies

The Restaurant

Learning about Food



The Restaurant

Learning about Food

by Margit E. McGuire, PhD

Professor of Teacher Education, Seattle University

STORYPATH®

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Field Test Sites

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The Restaurant

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ABOUT PRE-K STORYPATH

THE PRE-K STORYPATH STRATEGY

The *Pre-K Storypath* structure is a familiar one: the story. The *Pre-K Storypath* strategy is grounded in the belief that children learn best when they are active participants in their own learning. Through dramatic play, children connect what they already know to new learning. They rehearse real-life events as they tackle the problems presented through the plot of the story. Together, the structure and the teaching strategy ensure that children feel strongly motivated and have meaningful and memorable learning experiences.

Originally developed in Scotland during the 1960s, *Pre-K Storypath* draws support from decades of experience with teachers and children. The approach has its roots in these beliefs about learning:

- **Constructing Meaning:** When children build on their prior knowledge during dramatic play, new understandings are acquired. Because children construct their own knowledge and understanding of their world, their play is more meaningful and memorable.
- **Social-Emotional Learning:** Through dramatic play, children develop important social skills. They learn to conduct themselves in appropriate and positive ways as they negotiate the problems presented through the story line.
- **Problem Solving:** When children are engaged in problem solving that is developmentally appropriate, they take ownership for their learning and develop self-confidence.
- **Integrated Learning:** The story structure integrates ideas about the social world with skills for literacy, mathematics, and other subjects.
- **Universal Appeal:** The story structure is universal, and children, whatever their background and prior experience, find a place in the unit to build and deepen their prior knowledge and understanding.
- **Literacy Development:** When children engage in rich dramatic play, they rehearse the oral language skills necessary for developing strong reading and writing skills.

An Inquiry Approach

Questioning, by both the teacher and children, is a key aspect of *Pre-K Storypath*. Through the story structure and the conversation it creates, the teacher guides children in their search for meaning and understanding as they acquire new knowledge and skills. Asking open-ended questions results in more complex responses and further develops children's oral communication skills.

Pre-K Storypath Engages the Imagination

Each *Pre-K Storypath* unit challenges children to imagine themselves in new roles and in new places. *Pre-K Storypath* stimulates children's imaginations through dramatic play as well as a variety of other activities, such as listening to stories, engaging in story dictation and dramatization, and creating art projects.

PRE-K STORYPATH AND THE YOUNG CHILD

The Importance of Dramatic Play

Young children are active learners, constructing new understandings of their world through play and other hands-on experiences. *Pre-K Storypath* takes advantage of children's natural and spontaneous desire to pretend. It's important that teachers allow the dramatic play related to the topic to develop at a loose and fluid pace. Children should be allowed to spontaneously change roles and introduce new and unusual ideas to the scenarios they create. Each school day should include at least 45 minutes of uninterrupted play, to allow these pretend scenarios to develop.

A Rich Early Literacy Environment

Reading picture books aloud to young children is a significant source of learning and pleasure in early childhood classrooms. When we share the pleasure of books with young children, we help children develop early literacy skills. *Pre-K Storypath* units incorporate group storytime into almost every episode. There is a list of recommended picture book titles on page 77. Titles in both English and Spanish are included.

Story Dictation

Another valuable early literacy experience for young children is dictation, when an adult writes a child's words and ideas. Dictation can be either teacher-directed or child-directed. Teacher-directed dictation occurs when the teacher writes the child's response to a specific question. Child-directed dictation occurs when the teacher writes a child's creative story. Story dictation can be an especially rich practice because these stories can also be acted out, or dramatized, during group time. In the *Pre-K Storypath* units, dictation is a key activity because it allows teachers to document and measure children's knowledge, skills, and progress. The information learned through dictation and dramatization can be used to make teaching decisions and guide planning.

Children Needing Extra Support

The *Pre-K Storypath* structure is especially suited to meet the needs of young children who may need extra support, such as children living in poverty, children with special needs, and children who are learning English as a second language. These children need content-rich instruction. The meaningful, relevant *Pre-K Storypath* content engages children's senses and teaches skills within a context that makes sense to children. The unit's structure encourages children to question, discover, evaluate, and use higher-order thinking skills which are so important for all learners.

Pre-K Storypath unit topics have been selected because they are based on children's universal experiences. Each topic can be adapted and tailored to reflect the economic and cultural experiences of the children in each classroom.

Flexibility for Following Children's Interests

The *Pre-K Storypath* structure balances the child-directed approach of an emergent curriculum with the teacher-directed approach of a theme-based curriculum. *Pre-K Storypath* allows teachers the flexibility to respond to children's emergent interests within a predictable structure that provides accountability for meeting specific curriculum standards. Each *Pre-K Storypath* episode provides opportunities for children to play, construct their own knowledge, make decisions, and solve problems together. The structure also provides frequent opportunities to include parents and family members in the children's learning activities.

Anti-Bias and Culturally Relevant Practices

Equitable learning opportunities are essential for effective early childhood programs. Being mindful that we bring our own set of experiences and understandings to the instructional process, an openness to families and their children is necessary to achieve equitable learning opportunities. Each *Pre-K Storypath* unit has suggestions for addressing children's identities and life experiences as they would naturally occur in a child-centered curriculum. It is also necessary to confront inequities and oppressions.

Equitable learning opportunities also extend to gender-inclusive classrooms. Throughout the curriculum, you will note that role plays do not impose gender expectations. Materials that allow children to bring their own ideas and imagination to the experience affirm their agency and ability to collaborate and play with others without being confined by predetermined roles. It is important that we challenge children to think more deeply about the roles they play. Something as simple as asking if all children can play with fire trucks and dolls opens the door to a richer and more diverse learning environment. For additional information about anti-bias and creating a culturally responsive and gender-inclusive classroom, see resources on page 77.

EARLY LITERACY AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

The *Pre-K Storypath* approach creates natural and authentic opportunities to develop children's language and literacy learning. Over the course of each *Pre-K Storypath* unit, teachers read many picture books aloud; children dictate words, sentences, and stories; and children discuss the photos and text on the *Discussion Posters*. Dramatic play is a key component of *Pre-K Storypath* and, as a result, children have many opportunities to develop their oral language skills. Children also use simple props during dramatic play that promote interaction with print. All these activities, along with the rich discussions based on an inquiry approach, contribute to children's language and literacy development.

Language and Literacy Goals and Objectives

Each episode in a *Pre-K Storypath* unit is designed to meet language and literacy objectives. These objectives are aligned with early learning goals based on NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) accreditation criteria, the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, and state early learning standards. See page 78 for a list of *Pre-K Storypath* Early Learning Goals.

The Significance of Open-Ended Conversations

Throughout each *Pre-K Storypath* unit, teachers support children's language and literacy learning by engaging children in conversations. During these conversations, teachers respond to and expand on children's conversations by adding new information, asking questions, and making connections to what is familiar. Teachers model vocabulary specific to the *Pre-K Storypath* topic and "think aloud," so that children learn how to make decisions, solve problems, and figure out meanings of new words. During dramatic play, teachers introduce print-related props such as newspapers, advertisements, signs, manuals, and notepads that provide children with opportunities to interact with print within the *Pre-K Storypath* context.

Word Charts and Environmental Print

Throughout each *Pre-K Storypath* unit, teachers are encouraged to create environmental print, such as word charts or lists of important words that can be posted on the wall of the classroom. When young children observe teachers writing these words, they begin to understand the

connections between spoken language and print. The process of creating word charts also helps children develop phonemic awareness. There is no expectation that children will begin to read these words independently. These activities expose children to concepts that they will be learning for many years to come.

Parents and Families

Parents and family members play an important role in language and literacy learning. Take advantage of every opportunity to include parents and family members in the *Pre-K Storypath* unit. When children see and hear their parents and other family members engage in conversations and interact with print materials related to *Pre-K Storypath*, their learning will be enhanced.

ENGLISH LEARNERS

English learner, or EL, is a term that applies to children whose home language is not English. These children are in the process of acquiring English as a way to communicate ideas and gain knowledge in environments where English is the primary language.

According to the NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) position statement *Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education: A Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children*, early childhood programs are responsible for both promoting the acquisition of English and preserving children's home languages.

There are some basic actions teachers can take to make the early childhood classroom a welcoming environment and a place of learning for children who are English learners.

Incorporate the Home Language into Classroom Life

Children will more easily learn new concepts in a familiar language. Recruit staff members and volunteers who can translate important information for children and their families. Whenever possible, use books and print materials written in the child's home language.

Activate Prior Knowledge

Young children who are English learners, like native English speakers, possess a great deal of prior knowledge about *Pre-K Storypath* topics. Provide children with many different kinds of opportunities, both verbal and nonverbal, to show what they know.

Develop Vocabulary

Vocabulary development is key to comprehension, so use a variety of strategies to teach vocabulary. *Pre-K Storypath* units provide multiple opportunities to teach vocabulary through illustrated word charts, picture books, *Discussion Posters*, and dramatic play.

Encourage Involvement in Discussions

English learners will likely be reluctant to contribute to whole-group discussions. Encourage these children to contribute in ways that are comfortable for them, such as using gestures or single-word answers. Conduct discussions in small groups as often as possible. Encourage children to elaborate on their ideas with open-ended questions. Young children who are learning English may also benefit from being paired with children who speak English at home.

Modify Activities and Assessments

Children can communicate what they have learned in many different ways. In addition to the tangible products of children's work, observations of children's play and behavior are an important source of assessment information.

Engage the Senses

Visually rich activities should be commonly used and all the senses should be engaged whenever possible. Music and kinesthetic activities, such as role-playing, are excellent tools for children who are learning English.

See page 72 for additional information about English learners.

ASSESSMENT

Each *Pre-K Storypath* unit offers a range of options for assessing children's learning.

The *Pre-K Storypath* assessments contain flexible suggestions that support a variety of assessment structures. Within this teacher's guide, *Pre-K Storypath* assessment practices are seamlessly integrated into daily activities. The results of these assessments are immediately useful to teachers, allowing them to make adjustments in their teaching that deepen opportunities for learning.

Pre-K Storypath is designed to support early learning goals that align with National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation criteria, the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, and state early learning standards. Examples of these goals are listed on page 78. Additionally, learning objectives are listed at the beginning of each *Pre-K Storypath* episode. The objectives relate to the early learning goals in the domains of social-emotional development, language development, early literacy, social studies, and problem solving.

Assessing Individual Children

Pre-K Storypath offers both formal and informal assessment options for tracking the progress of individual children. The *Child Observation Form* can be used as the foundation of each child's individual portfolio. The *Child Observation Form* is intended for use in combination with artifacts that represent children's learning, such as artwork, dictated words and sentences, and photographs. A *Group Assessment Summary* is also provided. This form allows teachers to track the progress of the entire group.

Suggestions for assessing individual children and developing portfolios are included throughout this teacher's guide. Teachers are encouraged to frequently record children's comments and ideas through dictation and anecdotal observations. Other examples of documentation include photos of children engaged in activities and samples of children's art. Parents and family members are encouraged to participate in the assessment process through the use of Teaching Masters such as the *Family Talk* (Episode 5).

Assessing the Group

Throughout each unit, teachers are encouraged to use observations of children's play to inform planning. The *Play Observation Form* can be duplicated and used to document children's emergent interests and understanding. Observing dramatic play allows teachers to collect information during each episode that can be used to make decisions about the content and pacing of the unit. These observations, combined with teacher reflection, guide and inform planning in a flexible, authentic, and child-centered way.

Communicating with Families

Pre-K Storypath also includes a *Family Poster*, which can be used to inform parents and family members of the learning opportunities offered in each unit.

THE UNIT COMPONENTS

Teacher's Guide

Each *Pre-K Storypath* unit includes a teacher's guide. You can follow the graphic story to see how one teacher uses the *Pre-K Storypath* unit in her classroom.

Assessments

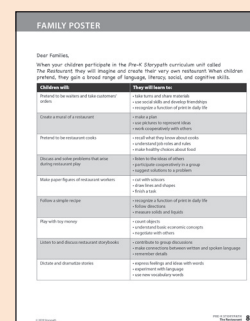
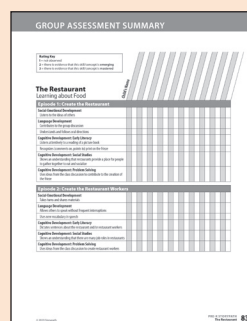
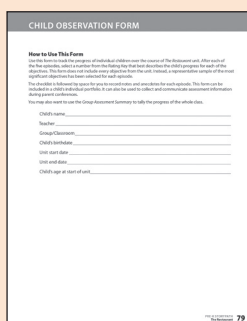
You can use the *Child Observation Form* to document children's behaviors and progress in each episode, as well as to maintain anecdotal records. A summary of key information from the *Child Observation Forms* can be recorded on the *Group Assessment Summary*. The *Family Poster* keeps parents informed about children's learning.

Discussion Posters

Each unit includes a packet of six *Discussion Posters*. These posters provide visuals and a guiding question to stimulate discussion with children. The posters can be used to introduce and reinforce new concepts and vocabulary.

The back of each poster provides open-ended discussion questions and vocabulary words that may arise naturally from conversations with children. This information is provided in both English and Spanish.

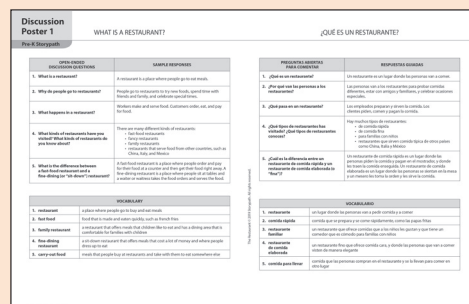
Teacher's Guide



Assessments



Discussion Posters



PREPARING TO TEACH PRE-K STORYPATH

THE RESTAURANT

Involve Families

Young children become more engaged in learning when their parents and family members are actively involved in their school experiences. This teacher's guide provides suggestions for involving families in every episode of the unit.

Before you begin the unit, inform families of your plans, both verbally and in writing. Use the *Family Letter* to ask families to save the date of the celebration at the end of the unit. If a family's home language is not English, make sure the family receives a translation of the *Family Letter*.

Have conversations with families about children's prior experiences with restaurants and preparing food. Ask families about their cultural and religious traditions related to food. The tear-off portion of the *Family Letter* can be used to help collect this information, but many families will prefer to share this information with you verbally. Based on family responses and interests, include in the unit the recipes, cooking utensils, food, and menus that are culturally relevant and familiar to children.

Manage Class Time

Pre-K Storypath activities can be integrated into either a full-day or a part-day early childhood program. Each unit usually takes about four to six weeks to implement, with a new episode introduced every few days. Each episode begins with a large-group time, which can take place during your regular story time. Small-group activities can take place during center time, free play, or another time period set aside for playing and learning in small groups. The *Pre-K Storypath* topic can be woven into activities throughout the day. The dramatic play props related to the *Pre-K Storypath* topic should be available to children during free play. You will want to provide at least 45 minutes of uninterrupted dramatic play each day.

Follow Children's Interests

You may want to modify this curriculum to suit the needs of your classroom. Alternative activities or special arrangements are suggested at various points during the unit to assist you in adapting the curriculum. Frequently, children will provide an unanticipated twist to the unit or important learning opportunities will arise, especially during children's dramatic play. The *Pre-K Storypath* structure encourages teachers to be open and alert to these opportunities to expand or adapt the curriculum based on children's interests and ideas.

Accommodate Children's Food Allergies

Episode 3 includes an optional cooking project. This activity is optional because children's food allergies or other health and safety concerns may make it difficult for some teachers to implement cooking projects in their classrooms. Whenever possible, allow children to take an active role in preparing their own meals and snacks.

Gather Props

Collect menus, notepads for taking orders, cooking utensils, serving dishes, trays, chef hats, aprons, and any other props you think will enhance the learning experience. A toy cash register may also be a helpful prop for this unit. Keep in mind, however, that children will benefit from using their imaginations to turn open-ended materials, such as blocks or fabric, into props and costumes for dramatic play. For example, it is not necessary to provide children with plastic toy food. Instead, encourage children to create their own food out of paper or use small wooden cubes for pretend food.

Gather Books and Art Supplies

A list of picture books for reading aloud can be found on page 77. Most of these books should be available from your local library. Also, collect a variety of art materials to have on hand throughout the unit. You will need large sheets of butcher paper for creating the frieze, as well as colored construction paper, markers, crayons, glue, scissors, and other basic art materials. A specific list of art materials needed for each activity is included at the beginning of each episode.

Organize Your Room for *Pre-K Storypath*

- **Wall Space:** You will need ample wall space for displaying the frieze—the mural of the restaurant. Additionally, you will need space to display word lists, artifacts, children’s writing and drawings, and other materials that are created.
- **Art Table:** Collect magazines, newspapers, and catalogs with images of food and restaurants. Also provide art materials for children to draw pictures related to the activities in the unit.
- **Writing Center:** Include menus, notepads for taking orders, and paper for drawing and writing about the restaurant.
- **Dramatic Play Area:** Include the props and open-ended materials listed previously. Props don’t need to be fancy or expensive, or too numerous.
- **Book Corner:** See the resource list on page 77 for suggested books for children. Also include magazines that feature restaurants and cooking, as well as cookbooks for children to explore.

Consider a Field Trip to a Local Restaurant

This *Pre-K Storypath* unit can be implemented without a field trip, but many young children will certainly benefit from the first-hand experience of visiting a restaurant. Children who have very limited experience with restaurants or children who have visited only fast-food restaurants will especially benefit from a visit to a “table service” restaurant at the start of the unit. It is not necessary for the children to actually eat a meal at the restaurant. A brief visit that includes a walk through the dining area and a peek into the kitchen will help children to develop new ideas and knowledge about restaurants. Ask the restaurant staff to show you equipment that might be of special interest to young children, such as large pots and pans or a walk-in refrigerator. For more information about planning field trips, see page 51.

Involve Experts

You may want to invite a chef, a restaurant server, or a nutritionist to visit your classroom and answer children’s questions about restaurants and healthy eating. This kind of visit fits in well with the activities of Episode 3. Consider inviting a parent or relative who works in a restaurant to visit the class in uniform.

Create a Learning Community

An open and supportive atmosphere is essential for children to engage in the *Pre-K Storypath* approach. Dramatic play is central to the learning experience. It is during dramatic play that children encounter problems and find solutions, building their confidence and deepening their understanding of their social and physical world.

MEET AMBER



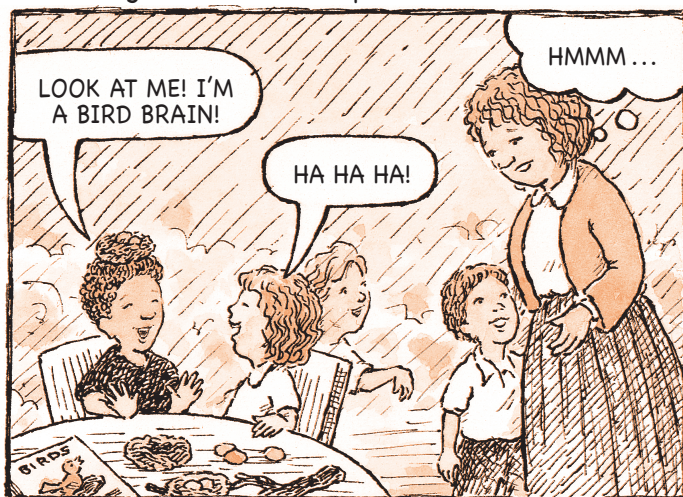
Using Pre-K Storypath in Your Classroom

In this teacher's guide, you will read about Amber, a teacher in a full-day, urban pre-K program. Amber's story is shown here as an example of one teacher's experience implementing the *Restaurant* unit, but you can easily modify the curriculum to meet the needs of your own classroom.

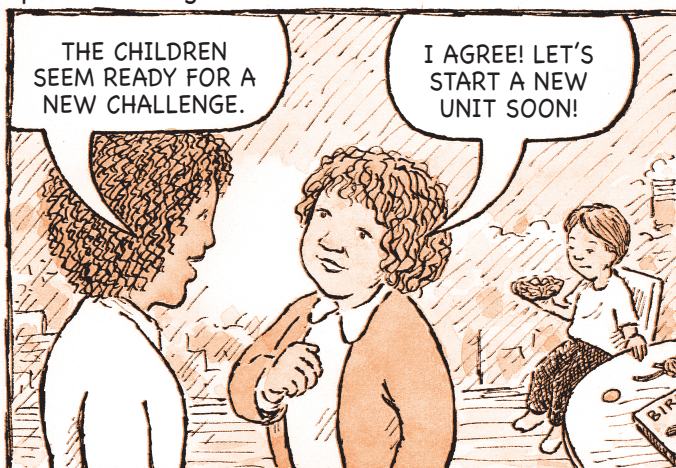
Most of the pages in this book will show Amber's story in the top part of the page and the instructional text in the bottom part of the page. You may choose to read only the illustrated story, only the text in the bottom, or a combination of both. Any of these choices will give you all the information you need to implement the *Pre-K Storypath* unit in your classroom.

OBSERVE CHILDREN'S INTERESTS

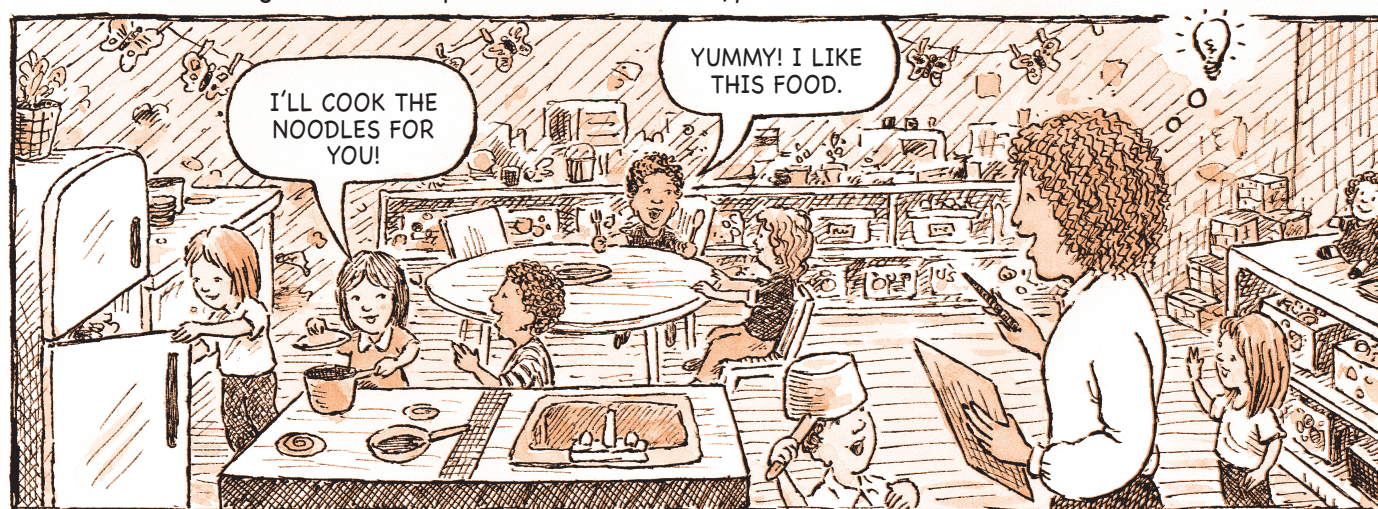
My assistant teacher, Lupe, and I had been teaching a unit on birds. We began to notice that the children were losing interest in the topic.



We needed to start a new unit that would really capture the children's attention. I was also looking for a way to engage Héctor, a new student who didn't speak much English.



I observed the children during free play and took notes. I was looking for clues about their interests. I realized that this would be a good time to implement the *Pre-K Storypath* unit called *The Restaurant*.



Incorporating Emergent Curriculum Practices

When you choose curriculum topics based on children's interests, children will become engaged in the learning process. Observe children's **dramatic play**, then choose a curriculum topic that is directly related to the scenarios displayed during play. When children are allowed to explore the ideas that interest them, they are less likely to engage in problem behaviors and more likely to think deeply about new ideas and challenges. (For more information about dealing with problem behaviors, read the article on page 73.)

The *Pre-K Storypath* structure balances the child-directed approach of an emergent curriculum with the teacher-directed approach of a theme-based curriculum. *Pre-K Storypath* allows teachers to respond to children's emergent interests within a predictable structure.

PROFESSIONAL VOCABULARY

dramatic play *noun* voluntary social play in which children use their imaginations and creativity (also known as “pretend play”)

PLAN AHEAD

Lupe and I reviewed the *Pre-K Storypath* materials and spent several days planning the new unit. We used the Episode 1 planning page on page 13 to help us get organized. We also shared our plans with the children's families and asked them about their family's experiences going to restaurants.



Family Connection

Before beginning the *Pre-K Storypath*, distribute *Family Letter* (pages 52 and 53) to parents and family members. The letter introduces the *Pre-K Storypath* unit to families and includes the date and time of the concluding event. This letter also asks for information about each family's experiences, traditions, and preferences regarding restaurants and food, information that will help you customize the unit. Families may also have items that can be used as **open-ended** props that they would be willing to contribute to the play center, such as menus and dress-up clothing. For more information about communicating with families, read the article on page 75.

PROFESSIONAL VOCABULARY

An **open-ended prop** is an item that children can use in more than one way. For example, a piece of fabric can become an apron, a tablecloth, or a baby's blanket. For restaurant play, there's no need to purchase toy food. Children enjoy using small classroom items, such as counting cubes, as pretend food. They may also enjoy making their own food out of paper scraps. These choices engage children's imaginations and require more creative thinking than expensive toy food sets.

CREATE THE RESTAURANT

INTRODUCE THE RESTAURANT TOPIC

page 14

Children play with restaurant items and share what they know about restaurants. They then listen to a story about a restaurant.

- Materials**
- A collection of items related to restaurants, such as pots and pans, dishes, silverware, notepads, menus from a variety of local restaurants
 - Restaurant-related picture books (see p. 77 for list)
 - *Discussion Posters 1* and *2*

Schedule Have items on display throughout the day. Spend approximately 20 minutes reading a story and introducing the topic to the whole group.

CREATE THE FRIEZE

page 17

Children create a frieze (mural) of the inside of a restaurant.

- Materials**
- For the frieze: wall space (about 3' high and 4' long, within children's reach), butcher paper, construction paper, wallpaper and fabric scraps, colored markers and crayons, glue sticks, scissors
 - Optional: camera, magazines, catalogs, and newspapers for images of restaurant items

Schedule Include making the frieze as a choice during free play over the course of 1 to 3 days.

CONCLUDE THE EPISODE

page 19

Children help create a word chart and choose a name for their restaurant.

Materials For the word chart: cards, black marker

Schedule Discuss the frieze in a large group for approximately 10 minutes.

ASSESS AND REFLECT

page 20

Teachers assess the group's progress and begin portfolios for individual children.

- Materials**
- File folders for individual portfolios
 - Child Observation Forms

Schedule Teacher planning time for reflection and assessment will vary.

EPISODE OBJECTIVES

Social-Emotional Development

- Use language to communicate needs.
- Take turns and share materials.
- Listen to the ideas of others.

Language Development

- Listen for information.
- Allow others to speak without frequent interruptions.
- Contribute to group discussions.
- Use new vocabulary in conversation.
- Understand and follow oral directions.

Cognitive Development: Early Literacy

- Listen attentively to a reading of a picture book.
- Focus on illustrations for details.
- Recognize print in the local environment.
- Understand that different text forms are used for different purposes.

Cognitive Development: Social Studies

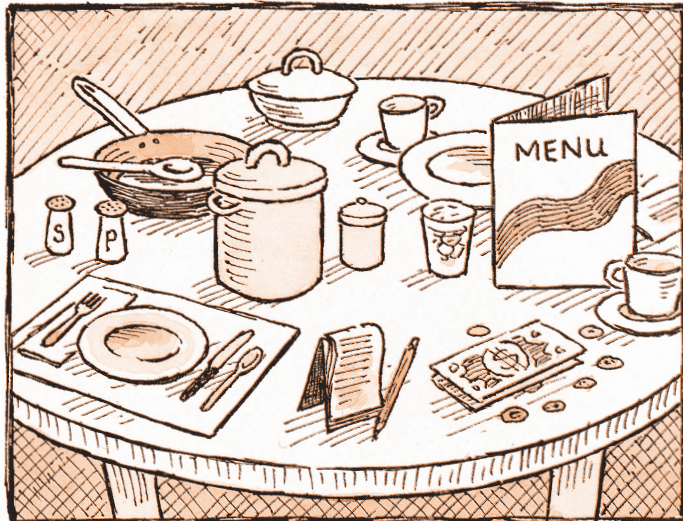
- Understand that restaurants provide a place for people to gather together, to eat, and to socialize.
- Understand that people come to restaurants because of cost, personal tastes, location, and ethnic/cultural background.

Cognitive Development: Problem Solving

- Use ideas from the class discussion to create the frieze.

INTRODUCE THE RESTAURANT TOPIC

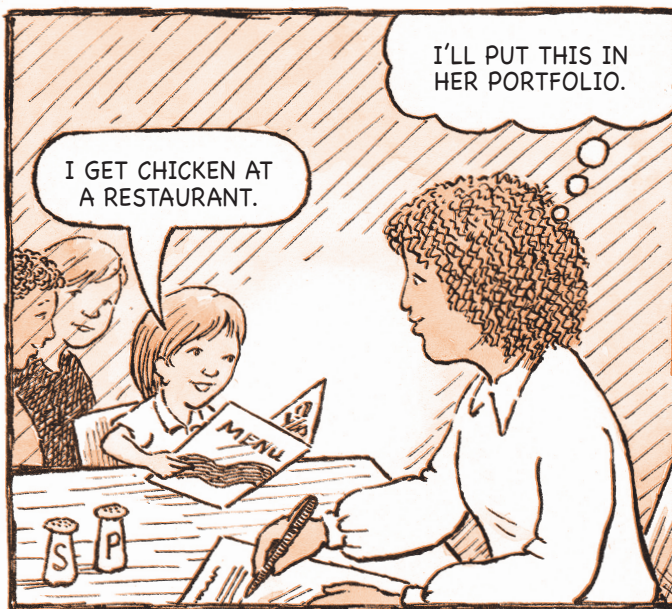
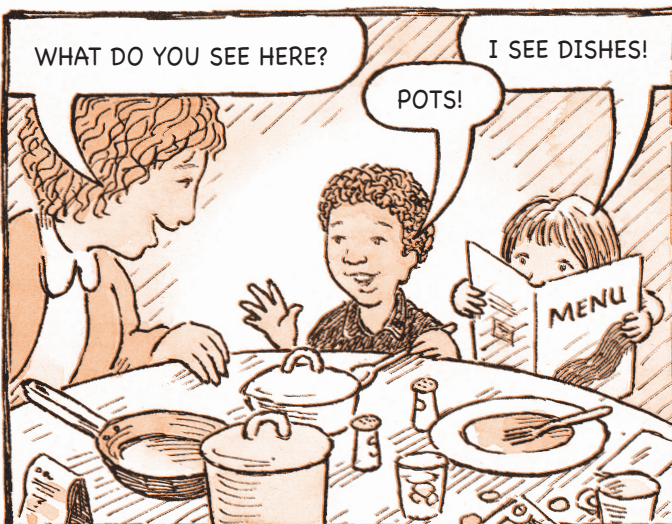
To introduce the restaurant topic, Lupe and I created a display of items used in restaurants.



We observed each child and wrote down what they said about restaurants as they played with the items.



As the children arrived at school, they explored the materials and talked about restaurants.



INTRODUCE THE RESTAURANT TOPIC

Begin the episode

In this episode, the children will begin the *Pre-K Storypath* unit by creating the restaurant setting. To introduce the idea of a restaurant, create a display of items used in a restaurant. Allow time for children to explore the items in an open-ended way and encourage discussion about what is displayed.

For more information about selecting open-ended props and playthings, read the Teacher Workshop on page 69.

ASSESS Pre-assess individual children

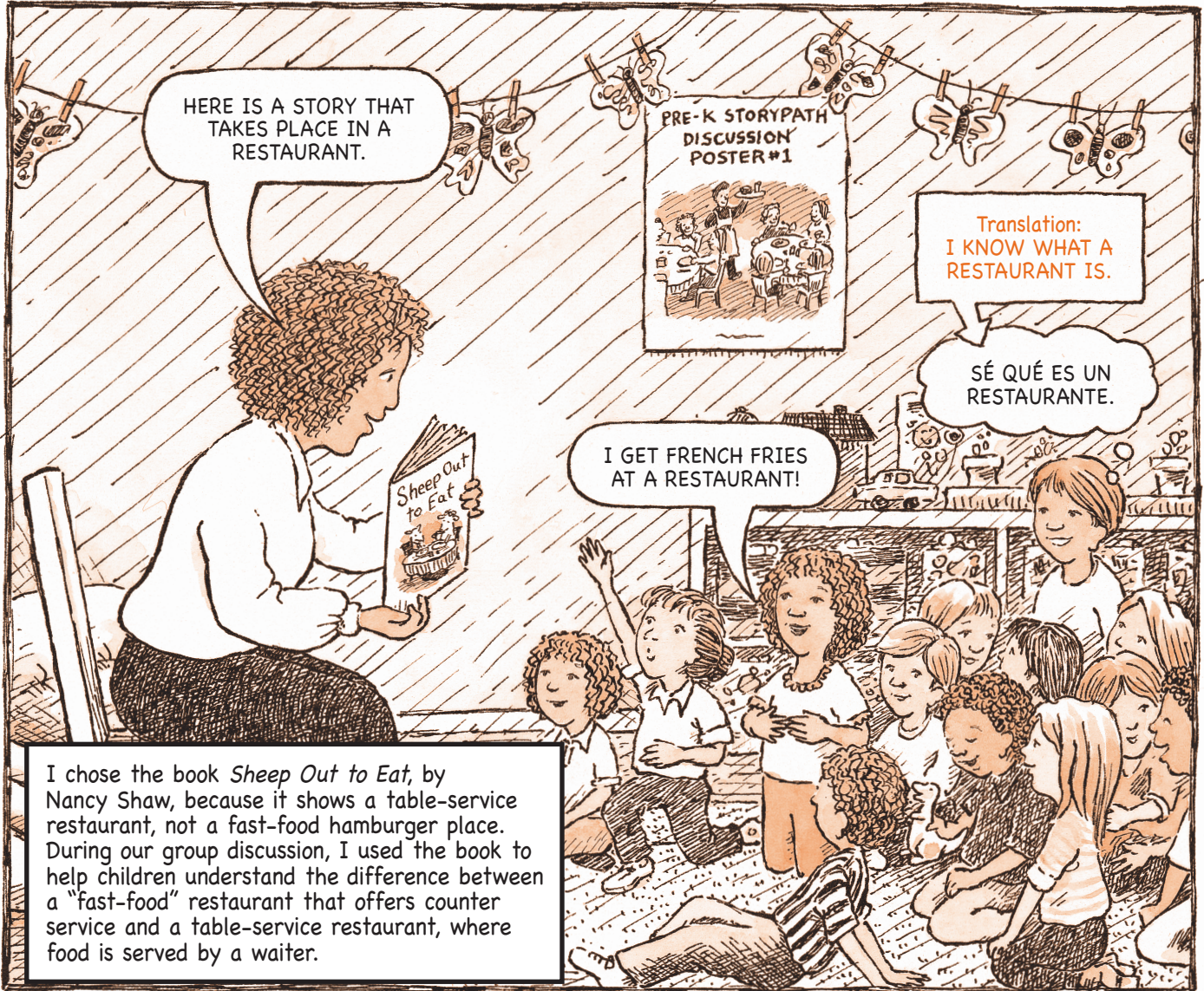
Observe what children already know about restaurants as they play with the items. Then ask each child a few open-ended questions and write down their answers. Keep these responses in the child's individual portfolio for future reference.

Suggested open-ended questions:

- What happens in a restaurant?
- What might you see in a restaurant?
- What might you smell in a restaurant?

INTRODUCE THE RESTAURANT TOPIC *continued*

At circle time, I read a picture book about restaurants. The funny story sparked more conversation about restaurants. Then I announced that our class would be creating our own pretend restaurant.



Introduce the topic to the group

During group time, read aloud a picture book about restaurants. See page 77 for a list of picture books related to restaurants and food. Introduce the topic by announcing that the class will be creating their own restaurant. Use open-ended questions to activate children's prior knowledge about restaurants.

Suggested discussion questions:

- Why do people go to restaurants?
- What are some different kinds of restaurants?
- What do you see in a restaurant?

Share Discussion Posters

Use the *Pre-K Storypath Discussion Posters* throughout the episode, whenever you think children would benefit from seeing these visual representations of the restaurant concepts. You can use the posters to introduce concepts or to add new ideas to discussions.

EL Children who are not native English speakers especially benefit from seeing images that represent new words and concepts.

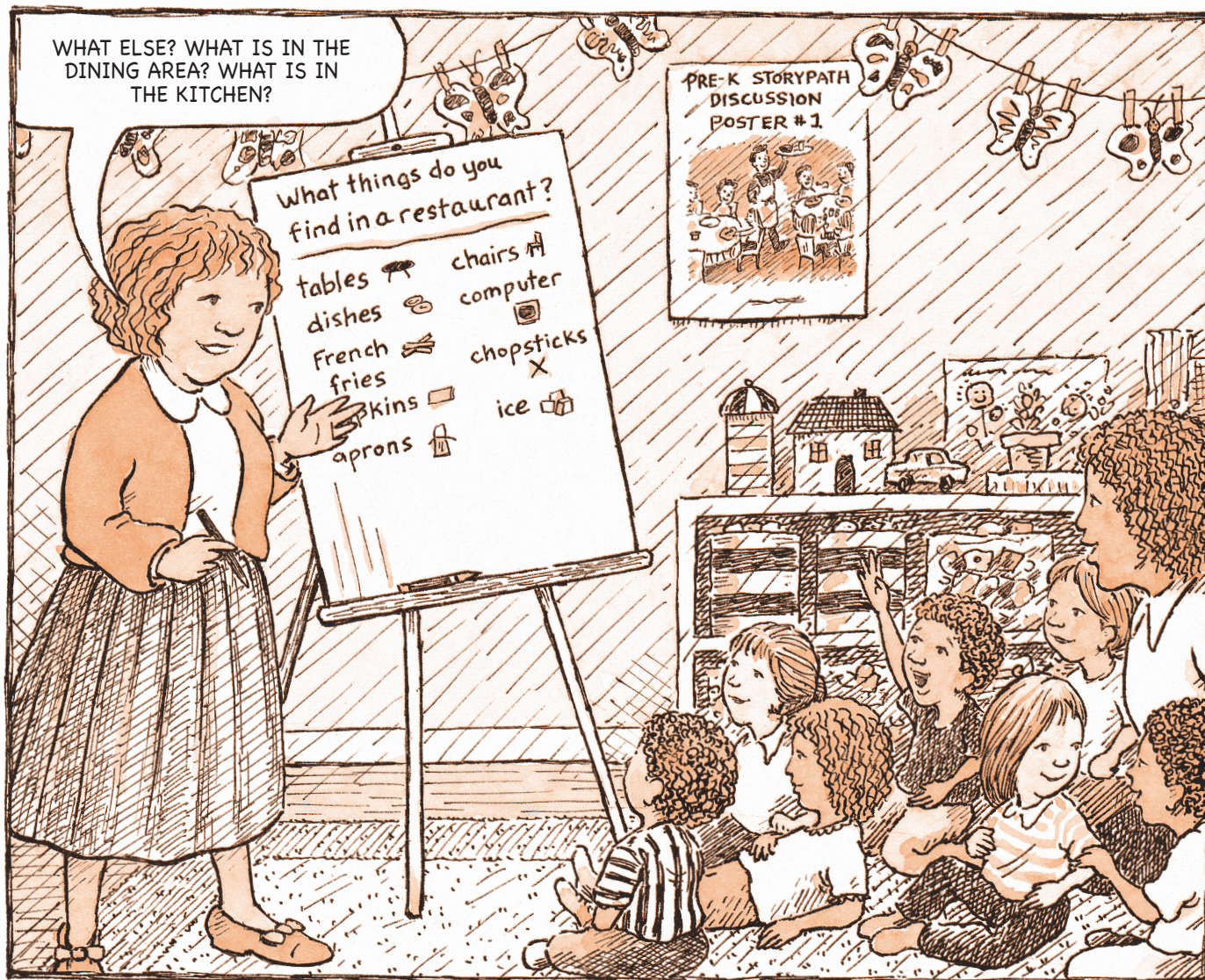
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

During story time, children learn to

- listen attentively
- focus on illustrations for details
- use new vocabulary

INTRODUCE THE RESTAURANT TOPIC *continued*

Next, Lupe asked the children to imagine how their restaurant might look. She asked, “What things do you find in a restaurant?” Then she wrote down their ideas on a big sheet of paper. We would be using these ideas to create the restaurant setting.



Discuss the restaurant

Explain that the children will decide what kind of pretend restaurant they would like to have. Use open-ended questions to help children vividly imagine their restaurant.

During the discussion, make a list of children’s responses with both words and simple sketches. The process of making the list helps children develop print awareness. You will want to refer to this list later as children create the frieze.

EL Using both words and images supports the learning of children who are not native English speakers.

Use anti-bias and culturally relevant practices

Guide the discussion so that every child feels included. Due to the diversity of economic backgrounds, some children will likely have more experience with restaurants than others. Also, be sure to include in your discussion a range of ethnic restaurants related to children’s backgrounds and experiences.

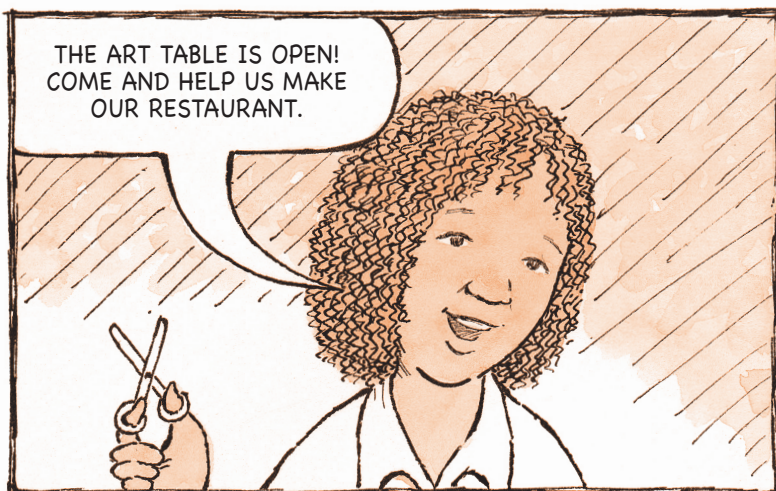
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

During the group discussion, children learn to

- listen for information
- allow others to speak without frequent interruptions
- contribute to group discussions

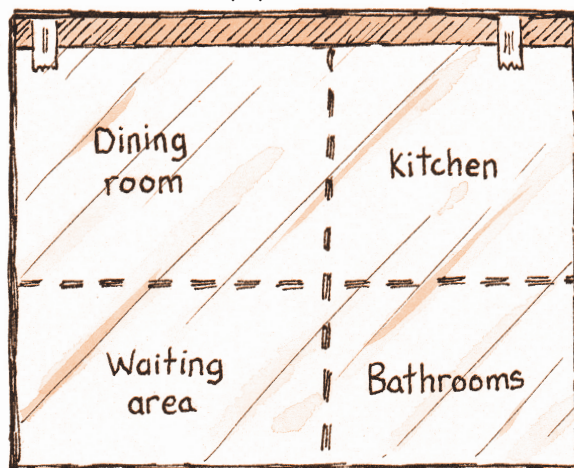
CREATE THE FRIEZE

The next step was making a frieze, or mural. This was important for helping the children visualize what happens in a restaurant. We also wanted them to develop a sense of ownership for our pretend restaurant.



Children drew their own way or colored prepared shapes.

Lupe and I knew that making a frieze would be a challenge for the children. So we used several approaches to **scaffold** children's work, such as marking off the areas of the restaurant on the paper ahead of time.



Another option was to cut out pictures from catalogs and magazines.



CREATE THE FRIEZE

Explain to children that they will be creating a big picture of the restaurant. To help **scaffold** children's learning, you may want to organize the frieze into several sections: dining room, kitchen, waiting area, and bathrooms.

Have art materials available for children to make items for the restaurant. Then children can tape or glue the items in the appropriate section of the frieze. Scaffold and support children's work by providing paper that has been cut or outlined with the shapes of the items, such as tables and chairs. Then children can add color by drawing or painting.

Guide children's work

As children work on the restaurant setting, try to limit your role to asking questions and, if necessary, making very general suggestions. Children should begin to feel ownership for the restaurant and make their own decisions about the features. For more information about young children and their artwork, read the Teacher Workshop on page 61.

PROFESSIONAL VOCABULARY

scaffold *verb* to support a child's learning in a way that allows a child to accomplish a task he or she would not be able to do independently. (For more information about scaffolding, read the article on page 71.)

As we worked on the frieze, some conflicts developed. At first, I was discouraged by this, but then I realized we could use these conflicts as opportunities to teach problem-solving and conflict resolution.



I asked the children to listen to each other and encouraged Héctor to explain his thinking.



Help children resolve conflicts peacefully

As they work at the art table, remind children to listen to each other, share the materials, and help each other. Model these behaviors as you interact with the children. If a conflict develops, help children resolve the conflict by giving each child a chance to speak and be heard by the other. Sometimes just listening to each other is enough to help children move on. Problem-solving skills will be discussed in depth in Episode 4.

Allow children to take ownership of their work

When children suggest ideas that seem implausible, ask them to explain their ideas. Their responses often provide new insights into their understanding or misconceptions. Allow implausible ideas to stand. This will build ownership for the place they are creating. Later you can correct misconceptions as children gain more knowledge.

CONCLUDE THE EPISODE

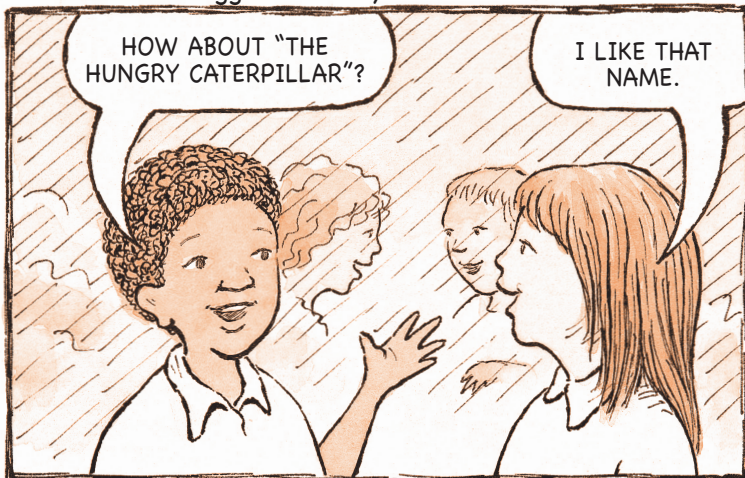
When the frieze was finished, we all talked about what we had made. We made labels for many of the items in our restaurant.



Our Word Chart

restaurant
lobby
waiting area
dining area
kitchen
restroom
meal
menu
waiter
waitress
cash register
oven
stove
counter

We discussed what we'd like to name our restaurant. There was one suggestion everyone liked.



Since we had just read *The Hungry Caterpillar*, I was pleased that the children were making this connection.



CONCLUDE THE EPISODE

Discuss the frieze

Discuss the restaurant as a group. Ask children to explain how they decided what to include, where and why they placed objects in their restaurant, and how they worked together to create their place.

Create a word chart

Have children identify the features of the restaurant, such as the dining area, tables, chairs, kitchen, stove, and the refrigerator. Write the labels on cards and post these labels around the frieze. For more information about word charts and environmental print, read the Teacher Workshop on page 67.

Name the restaurant

Help the children decide what they should call the restaurant. Write the name in big letters above the frieze.

Dictate sentences about the restaurant

As a group or individually, have children dictate sentences describing the restaurant. Display the dictated sentences near the frieze.

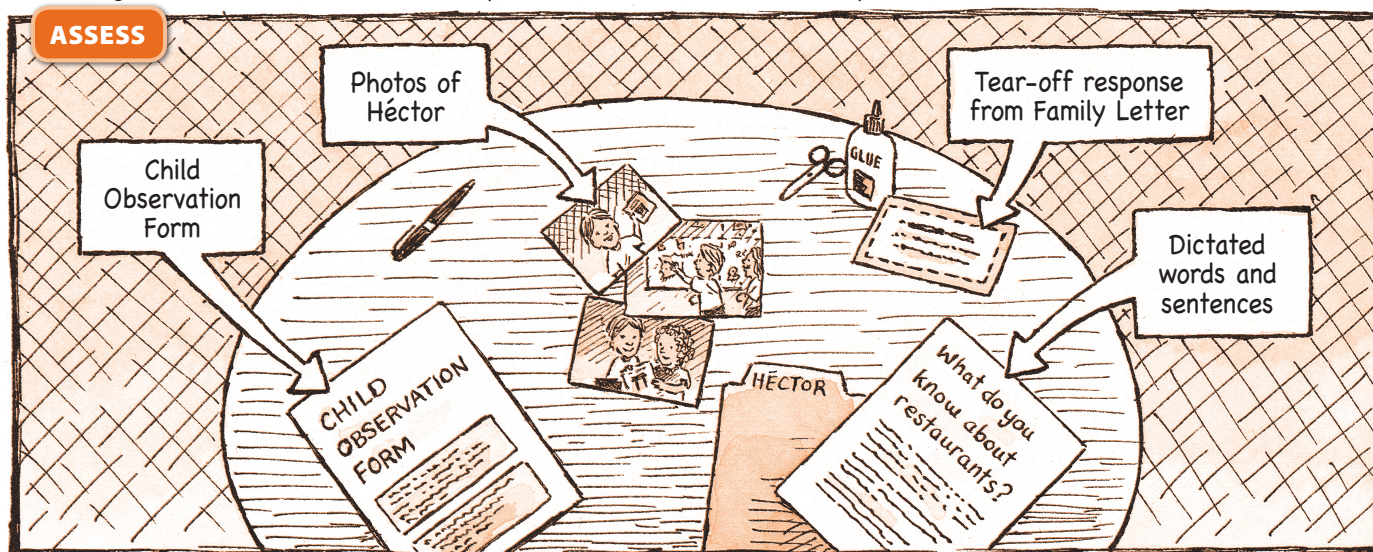
EL Allow children who are not native English speakers to dictate their sentences in their home language.

ASSESS AND REFLECT

After we ended Episode 1, Lupe and I talked about how things went.



We also gathered items for each child's portfolio. Here's what Héctor's portfolio looked like.



ASSESS AND REFLECT

ASSESS Assess the group

Did children

- use information from the discussion to make their restaurant?
- make appropriate objects and place them in the appropriate places?
- work together by listening to each other's ideas, sharing materials, and helping each other?

Use your observations of the group to help shape your plans for next steps.

ASSESS Assess individual children

Use the *Child Observation Form* to assess each child's learning. Include this form and other items, such as dictated sentences and photos of the frieze, in children's portfolios. For more information about using portfolios for assessment, read the article on page 76.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Use discussions to assess

- acquisition of new vocabulary words
- the ability to use words to solve problems

Use dictated sentences to assess

- an understanding of restaurant concepts
- print awareness

CREATE THE RESTAURANT WORKERS

IMAGINE AND DISCUSS RESTAURANT WORKERS

page 22

Children listen to a story, discuss the people who work in a restaurant, and participate in dramatic play.

Materials

- *Discussion Posters 3 and 4*
- Restaurant props, such as aprons, menus, and notepads
- Teaching Master 2, *Play Observation Form*, pp. 54–55

Schedule

Allow approximately 15 minutes for story and group discussion; dramatic play will take place during free play throughout the unit.

CREATE RESTAURANT WORKERS

page 26

Children create paper restaurant workers and dictate stories about them.

Materials

- Teaching Master 3, *Paper Figure*, p. 56 (pre-cut paper figures in a variety of skin colors can also be purchased from art supply companies)
- markers or crayons
- Optional: magazines, newspapers, or catalogs with photos of items used in restaurants

Schedule

Include this activity as a choice during free play over the course of 1 to 3 days.

ASSESS AND REFLECT

page 27

Children talk about working in a restaurant. Teachers share information about children's progress with families.

Materials

Optional: camera for individual photos with paper restaurant character

Schedule

Take photos and dictation during free play; allow approximately 15 minutes for group discussion.

EPISODE OBJECTIVES

Social-Emotional Development

- Use language to communicate needs.
- Take turns and share materials.
- Listen to the ideas of others.

Language Development

- Listen for information.
- Allow others to speak without frequent interruptions.
- Contribute to group discussions.
- Use new vocabulary in speech.
- Understand and follow oral directions.

Cognitive Development: Early Literacy

- Listen attentively to a reading of a picture book.
- Focus on illustrations for details.
- Understand that different text forms are used for different purposes.
- Dictate words, sentences, or stories.

Cognitive Development: Social Studies

- Understand that there are many jobs in restaurants and that people work together to do their jobs.
- Understand that there are special tools that workers use to do their jobs in the restaurant.

Cognitive Development: Problem Solving

- Use ideas from the class discussion to create restaurant workers.

IMAGINE AND DISCUSS RESTAURANT WORKERS

Lupe and I were ready to teach the children about the workers in a restaurant. The next morning, I wore a chef's hat to group time. The children were so excited.

I read a story to the class and asked open-ended questions about what cooks do in a restaurant.



IMAGINE AND DISCUSS RESTAURANT WORKERS

Introduce the episode

In this episode, children will learn about the various jobs in a restaurant, explore these roles through dramatic play, and create paper restaurant workers.

Begin a discussion about the people who work in a restaurant by asking **open-ended questions** about a picture book related to restaurants, such as *Little Nino's Pizzeria*. See page 77 for a list of suggested picture books. You may want to show or wear a prop that a restaurant employee would use and take on that role, such as a chef with a chef's hat or a server with a menu. Then ask children, "What job do you think I have?"

EL If English is not the home language of children in your class, try to recruit a volunteer to provide an interpretation of the story while you are reading. If an interpreter is not available, find translations for a few key words in the story and use these translated words to explain and discuss the story. *Discussion Posters 3 and 4* feature some key vocabulary words that have been translated into Spanish.

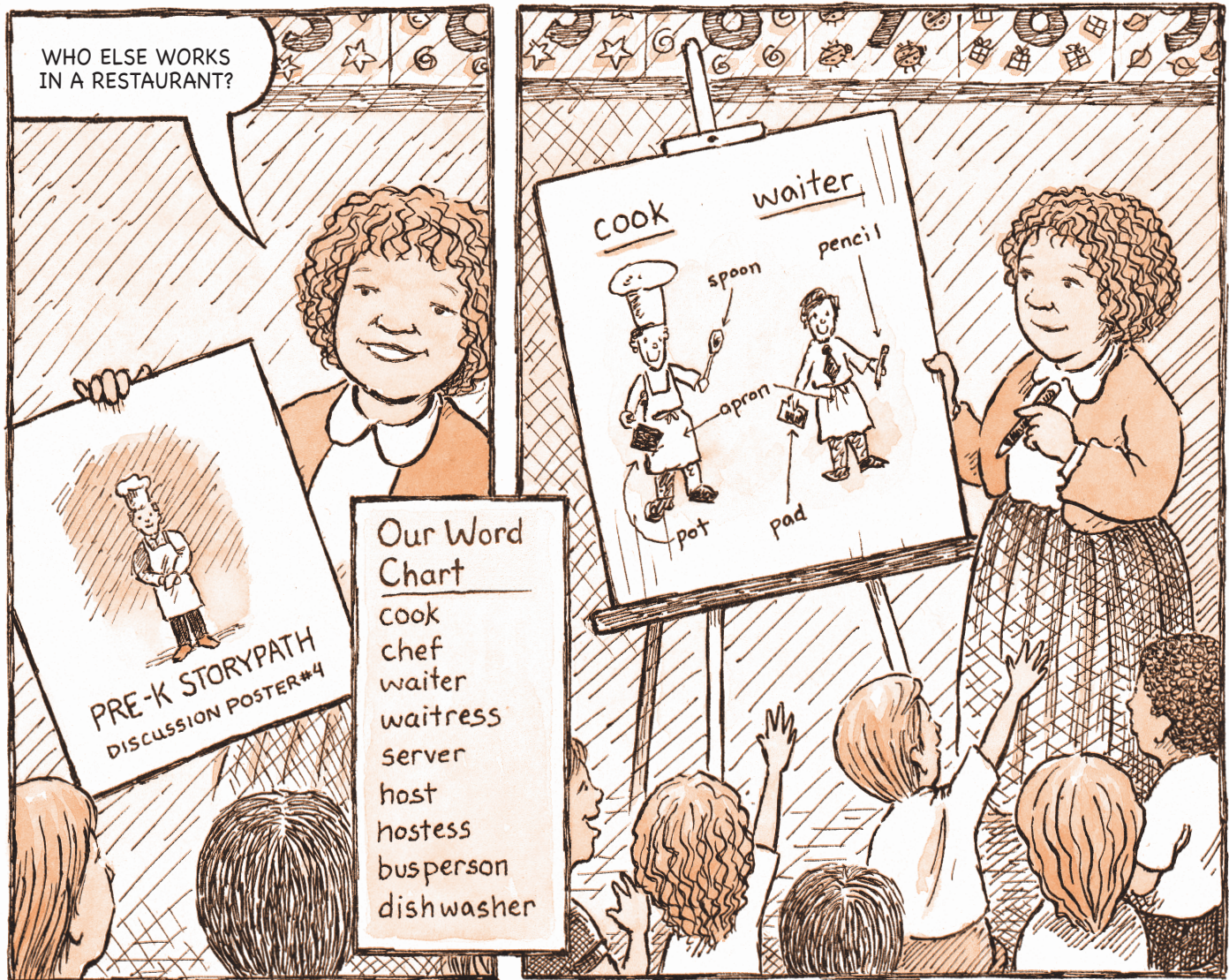
PROFESSIONAL VOCABULARY

open-ended question *noun* a question that inspires creative thinking and cognitive growth because it has more than one correct answer. (For more information about open-ended questions, read the Teacher Workshop on page 66.)

IMAGINE AND DISCUSS RESTAURANT WORKERS *continued*

Lupe asked the children about other workers in a restaurant. She wrote the children's words on a big sheet of paper.

Then Lupe made a simple sketch of a cook and a waiter. We talked about the kinds of tools these workers use. Lupe added the children's suggestions to her sketch.



Add to the word chart

Continue the discussion by asking, "Who else works in a restaurant?" Create a list of the workers needed in a restaurant. The list can form a word chart to be added to the frieze area.

EL Use the images on *Discussion Posters 3 and 4* to help children who are not native English speakers understand new vocabulary words.

Children may not know the names of some of the workers such as "host" or "server." Suggest these words for the word chart and explain what they mean.

Talk about the tools workers use

As children offer ideas, sketch the workers mentioned and ask children about the kinds of tools these workers need to do their jobs. Sketch the tools, such as a stove, pots, stirring spoons, and so forth. If children are having difficulty imagining the workers of the restaurant, use *Discussion Posters 3 and 4* to help them identify some workers in the restaurant and the tools they use.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Adding to the word chart

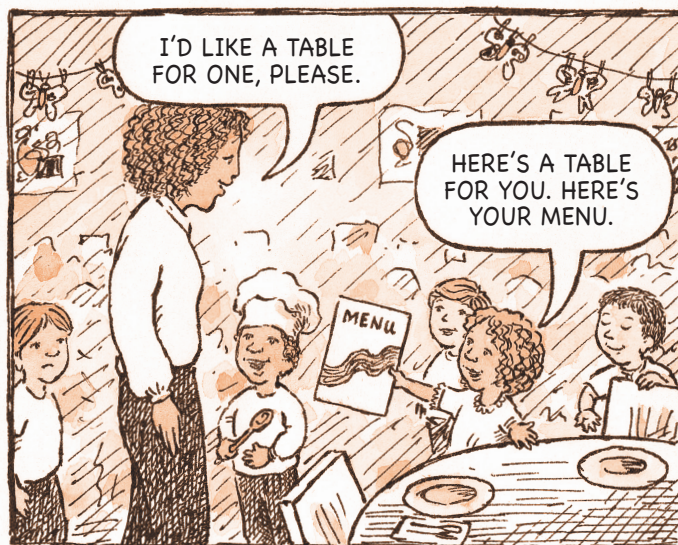
- reinforces new vocabulary learning
- increases print awareness
- documents children's ideas and interests

IMAGINE AND DISCUSS RESTAURANT WORKERS *continued*

During free play, we put the chefs' hats in the dramatic play area. We also added a few aprons, some menus, and a pad of paper and pen for taking orders.



I joined in and played with the children. I wanted to make sure Héctor felt included.



Héctor loved pretending that he was taking my order. It made me so happy to see him engaged in this activity.


Use dramatic play

In the dramatic play area, include props for restaurant play. Be sure to include props that are familiar to children and relevant to their cultural backgrounds. Over the next several days, provide many opportunities for children to spontaneously create their own dramatic play scenarios.

EL During play, try to pair children who do not speak English at home with native English speakers. For more information about how to support children who are English learners, read the article on page 72.

Occasionally enter into the play to extend and engage children's understanding. For example, you can take on the role of a customer and ask questions about the choices on the menu.

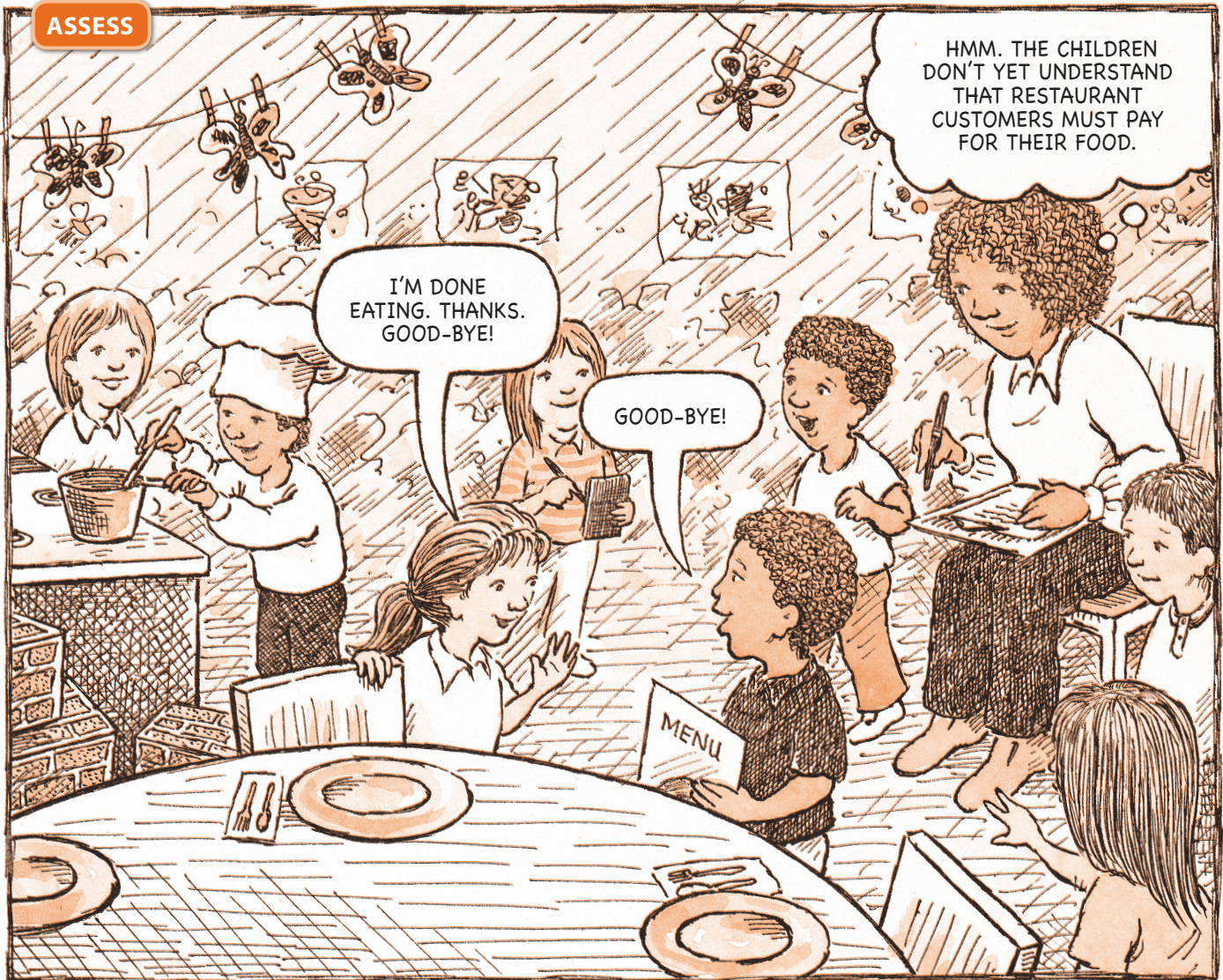
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

When the teacher joins in the play, the teacher can

- model new ways to use language
- introduce new ideas and concepts
- challenge children's thinking
- help engage children who might be reluctant to join in

IMAGINE AND DISCUSS RESTAURANT WORKERS *continued*

Over the next few days, Lupe and I observed the children while they pretended to be restaurant workers and customers. We used these observations to assess how well the children were learning new concepts about restaurants and restaurant workers.



ASSESS Assess the group

Make copies of *Play Observation Form*, pages 54 and 55, and use it to document your observations of children's dramatic play. This form provides opportunities to record information regarding

- children's use of vocabulary
- children's understanding of workers' roles
- children's knowledge of restaurants

Observe children's play

Children's dramatic play both supports and reflects children's development. By observing children's play, teachers can discover children's interests, learn about children's personalities, assess development, and identify areas that need more practice.

When you observe children's dramatic play, sit close enough to the play area to hear the children's conversations but far enough away so that you don't influence the play. Begin with a broad focus, taking note of the dramatic play area as a whole. Is this a noisy, busy area? Or is it calm and orderly? Then narrow your focus and observe how the children have grouped themselves and how they are interacting. Finally, narrow your focus even more, to observe one child at a time. Take note of the child's facial expressions and listen to his or her speech. For more information about observing children's play, read the Teacher Workshop on page 63.

CREATE RESTAURANT WORKERS

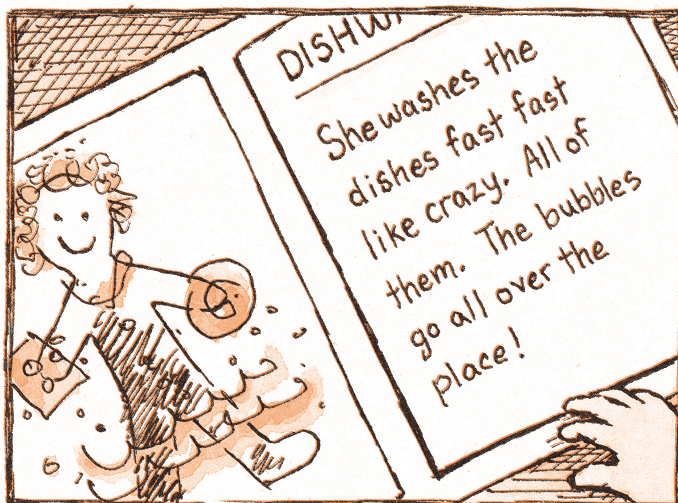
Next, the children made restaurant workers out of paper. This process allowed children to think more deeply about the workers and their jobs.



I invited the children to dictate stories about their workers. I wrote down what they said, word for word.



We posted the paper workers and the dictated stories near the frieze.



CREATE RESTAURANT WORKERS

Make paper characters

At the art table, invite children to decide what kind of worker they want to make for the restaurant. Provide a cut-out *Paper Figure*, page 56. Have children draw on the paper figures. They might also want to glue paper or fabric scraps.

Identify the tools for the job

Explain that workers in a restaurant need tools. Have children think about the tools needed for each job. Remind them of the group discussion and your observations from their dramatic play. Then ask children to add at least one tool to each paper figure. Children

can either draw pictures of the tools they need or cut out pictures from magazines, catalogs, or newspaper ads and glue them onto their figure.

Dictate stories about the workers

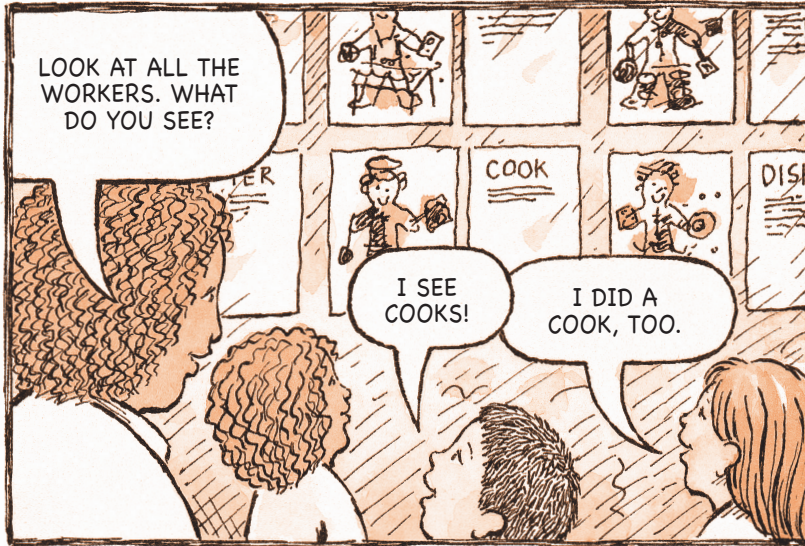
Children may also enjoy dictating stories about the workers. Ask an open-ended question such as, "What does your worker do?" and write down the child's answer, word for word. For more information about story dictation, read the Teacher Workshop on page 68.

Use anti-bias and culturally relevant practices

When making the paper figures, be sure to include paper in a variety of skin colors.

ASSESS AND REFLECT

In group time, we discussed the workers we had made. We had a very interesting conversation...



ASSESS AND REFLECT

Discuss the restaurant workers

Have children look at the display of restaurant workers. Encourage them to talk about the jobs in a restaurant. This will reinforce their new vocabulary related to jobs and tools. Continue this discussion over the next several days as children continue their dramatic play. Reinforce concepts through discussion and play so that everyone becomes familiar with the various jobs and tools regardless of their prior knowledge.

Ask questions to stimulate children's thinking:

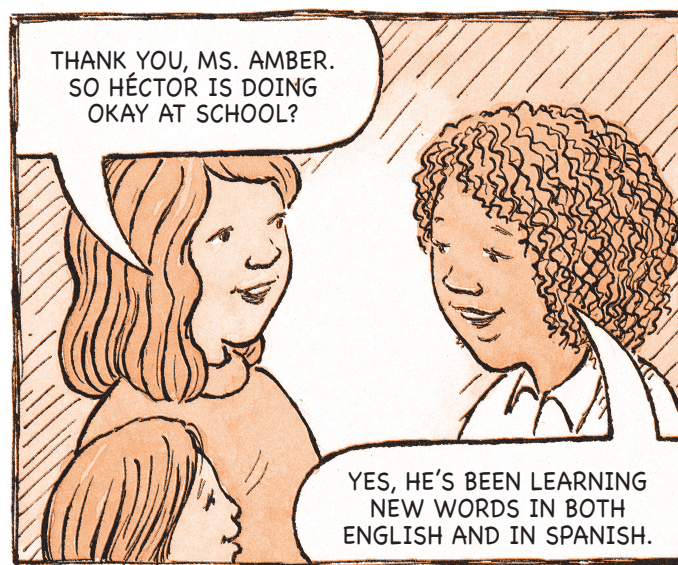
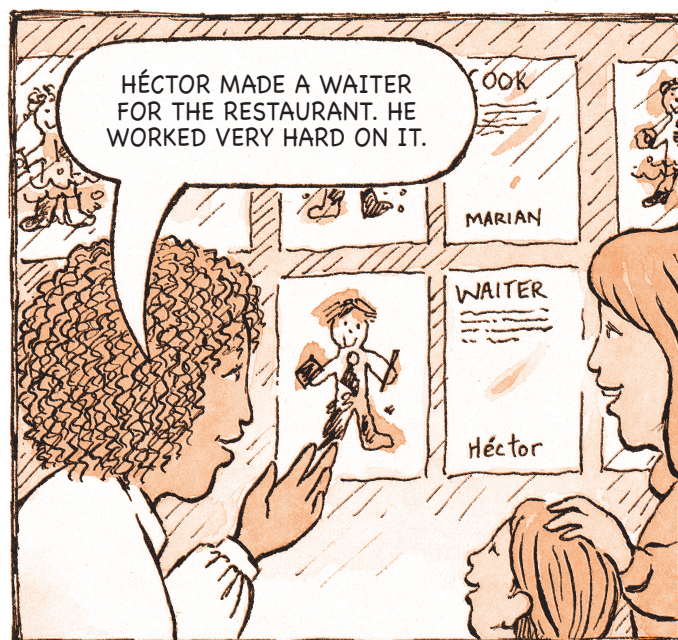
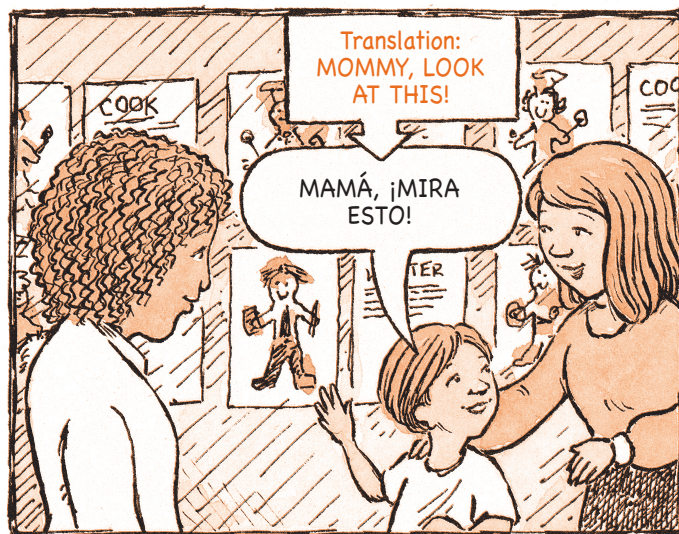
- How do workers help each other in a restaurant?
- Do you think it would be fun to work in a restaurant? Why?
- How do tools help workers do their jobs?

Use anti-bias and culturally relevant practices

As children make and talk about the workers in the restaurant, watch for opportunities to discuss gender roles so that stereotypes are not reinforced. You may also want to introduce gender-neutral language to children by using the word "server" instead of "waiter" or "waitress."

ASSESS AND REFLECT *continued*

At the end of the day, Héctor and I had a chance to show his mother the paper worker he made and the words he dictated.


Make family connections

Keep families informed about the progress of the *Pre-K Storypath* unit. At pick-up and drop-off time, invite parents to look at the paper restaurant workers and read the children's dictated sentences.

If any of the children's parents or family members work in restaurants, invite them to visit your classroom and share their experiences.

To prepare for Episode 3, ask families to send simple recipes that are special to their family's traditions and culture. Also, ask families to continue collecting restaurant menus to use for dramatic play.

ASSESS **Assess individual children**

Use the *Child Observation Form* to assess each child's learning. Collect items for children's portfolios, such as

- copies of children's paper workers
- dictated words and sentences
- photos of dramatic play

LEARN ABOUT FOOD

INTRODUCE HEALTHY EATING

page 30

Children learn about healthy eating by listening to a story and exploring menus and food items.

- Materials**
- Menus from local restaurants
 - Picture books about food, such as *Pancakes*, *Pancakes* by Eric Carle (see p. 77 for list)
 - *Discussion Poster 5*
 - MyPlate poster available at www.choosemyplate.gov
 - A variety of foods or pictures of foods: grains; vegetables; fruits; milk, cheese, and yogurt; meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts, and beans (see www.choosemyplate.gov)
 - Cooking utensils, dishes, and clay for making pretend food items
- Schedule** Discuss for approximately 20 minutes during group time.

CREATE MENUS AND PRETEND FOOD

page 33

Children create menus and pretend food for their restaurant.

- Materials**
- Menu examples
 - Paper for dictating menus
 - Magazine pictures of food items, or paper and crayons for drawing food items, or clay for creating pretend food items
- Schedule** Include as a choice during free play over the course of 1 or 2 days.

COOK RESTAURANT FOOD (OPTIONAL)

page 34

Children prepare food using simple recipes.

- Materials** Food and cooking utensils for making menu items (see p. 34 for suggested options)
- Schedule** Allow approximately 10 minutes to introduce in group time; prepare food for 15 to 20 minutes in small groups.

ASSESS AND REFLECT

page 35

Children discuss what they learned about healthy eating and teachers share information with families.

- Materials**
- Teaching Master 4, *Healthy Eating Tips for Families*, pp. 57 and 58
 - Optional: photos of cooking project
- Schedule** Allow approximately 15 minutes in group time.

EPISODE OBJECTIVES

Social-Emotional Development

- Use language to communicate needs.
- Listen to the ideas of others.

Language Development

- Contribute to group discussions.
- Use new vocabulary in speech.
- Understand and follow oral directions.

Cognitive Development: Early Literacy

- Listen attentively to a reading of a picture book.
- Recognize print in the local environment.
- Understand that different text forms are used for different purposes.

Cognitive Development: Social Studies

- Understand that people make choices about eating at restaurants based on cost, personal tastes, location, and ethnic/cultural background.

Cognitive Development: Science

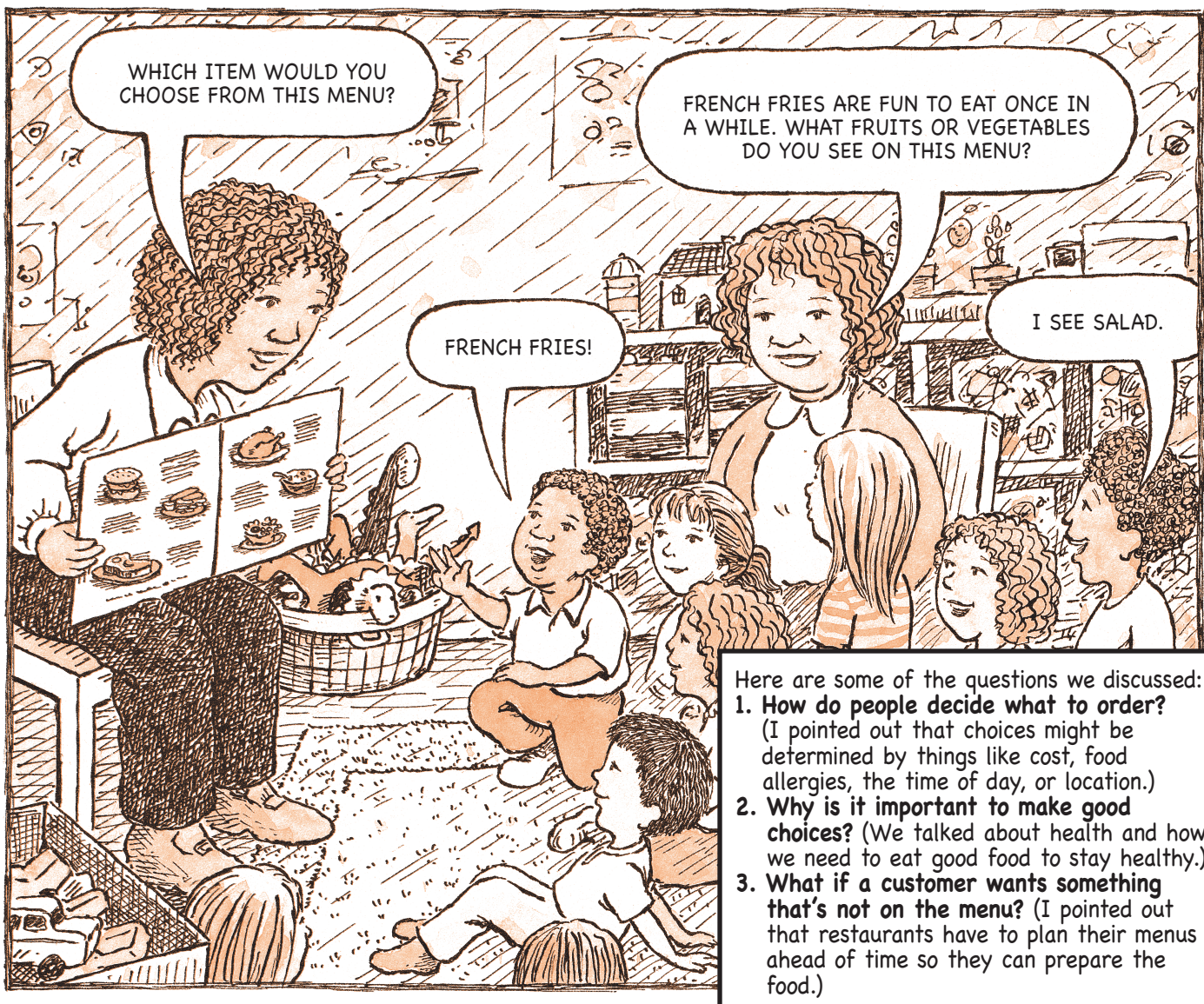
- Understand that our bodies need healthy food to grow strong.
- Understand that people need to eat a balanced diet by choosing from each of the food groups.

Cognitive Development: Problem Solving

- Participate in discussion and decision making.

INTRODUCE HEALTHY EATING

Creating our pretend restaurant was the perfect opportunity to encourage children to eat healthy foods. At group time, Lupe and I used some of the restaurant menus we'd collected to discuss food choices with the children.



INTRODUCE HEALTHY EATING

Talk about menus

In this episode, children will discuss healthy diets and the foods that are served in restaurants and then plan menus. As an optional activity, children can prepare a simple recipe to eat. To begin the episode, ask children to look at the menus that their families sent to class or menus you have gathered. Discuss how people decide what to order at a restaurant.

The topic of “junk food” and sweets will naturally arise. Children may suggest french fries or ice cream as foods they most enjoy eating in a restaurant. It is important to acknowledge that some of the most popular foods served in restaurants are not very healthy choices. It

may be helpful to talk about these foods as “sometimes” foods—foods that are eaten once in a while—because they taste good.

Read a story about food

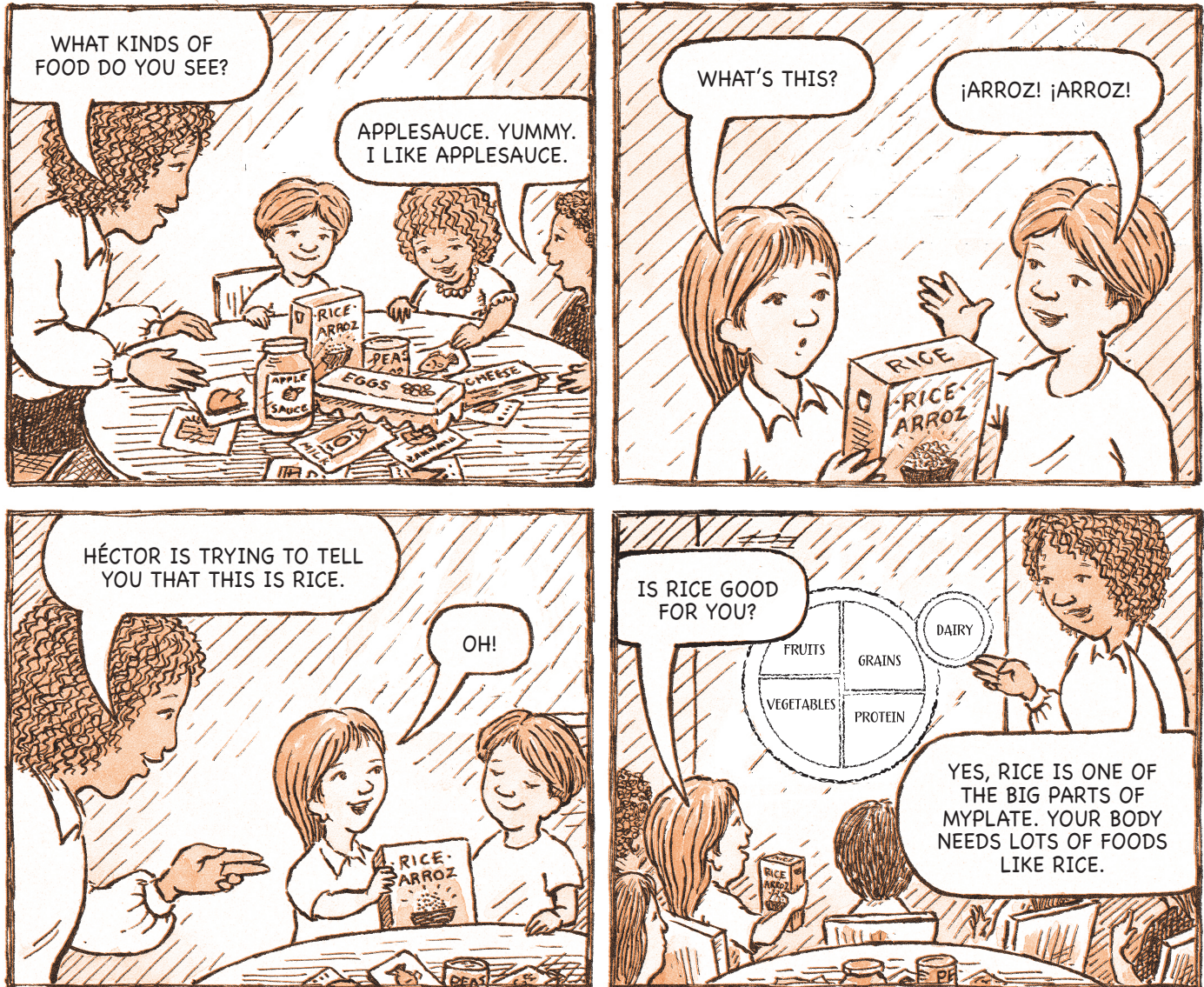
Read aloud a picture book about food or restaurants and ask open-ended questions that help children connect the story to the class discussion about menus. Examples of picture books, such as *Two Eggs, Please* by Sarah Weeks, are listed on page 77 of this book.

Discuss allergies and food restrictions

Discuss with children food allergies and food restrictions as they arise. Some children may be vegetarians or for religious or cultural reasons avoid certain foods.

INTRODUCE HEALTHY EATING *continued*

During free play, we put out a display on our science table. We used pictures and examples of food from each of the food groups on USDA's MyPlate.



Look at the food groups

Arrange a variety of food or pictures of food on a table. You may want to include one food from each of the five food groups: (1) grains, (2) vegetables, (3) fruits, (4) dairy, (5) protein. (For more information, see www.choosemyplate.gov.) Display and discuss *Discussion Poster 5* and ask children to identify the foods and food groups in the photos.

EL Include food packages that are labeled in the children's home languages.

Invite children in small groups to visit the table. Ask children to identify the food and explain that everyone needs to eat food from each of these food groups to be healthy. As children talk about the food, reinforce the

categories of food groups. The children will probably want to use the food in their dramatic play, so you may want to set aside some empty cardboard packages for this purpose.

Use anti-bias and culturally relevant practices

When selecting menus, food, and recipes, it is important to consider the range of socioeconomic, religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds of the children in your class.

INTRODUCE HEALTHY EATING *continued*

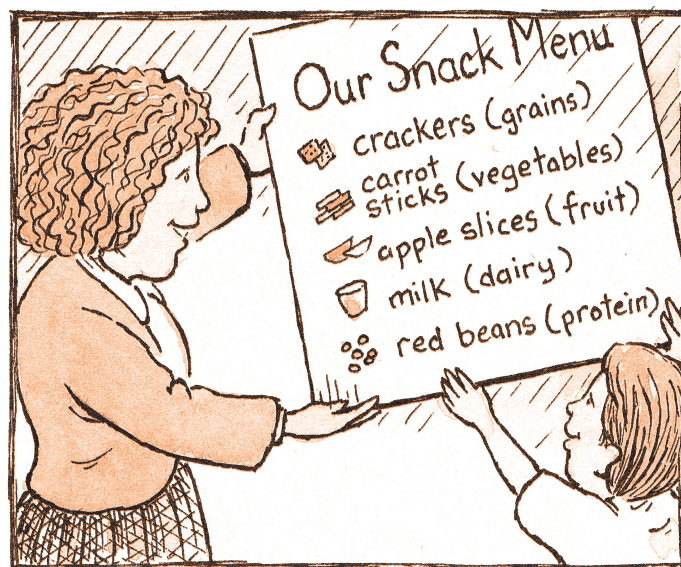
At snack time, we served the children one small serving from each food group. Everyone wanted to help.



As we ate, we talked about MyPlate and healthy eating. We discussed “sometimes” foods too.



Lupe made a menu that showed all the foods we served.


Taste food groups

In small groups, have children taste samples of food from the different food groups.

EL Talk about the foods using descriptive words to deepen their understanding and vocabulary. For example, ask questions such as these:

- How does this fruit taste?
- Why do you think fruit is better for you than candy?
- Do you like to eat fruit? What kinds do you eat? (Help children understand that people in different parts of the world eat different fruits because of location, taste preferences, and cost. People everywhere eat fruit, but they don't all eat the same kind of fruit. Also, some people are allergic to certain kinds of fruit and can't eat them at all.)

Repeat the same process with foods from other food groups. Ask open-ended questions that encourage the discussion of tastes, healthy eating, and cultural traditions. For more information about teaching children about food, read the Teacher Workshop on page 65.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Asking children open-ended questions

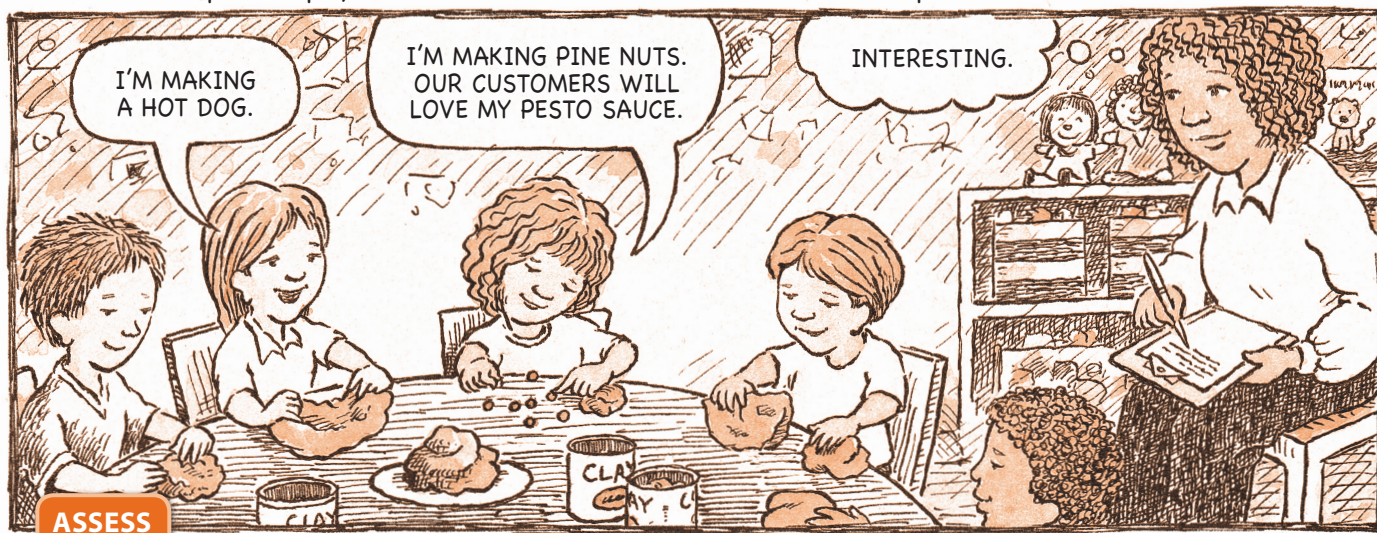
- encourages independent thinking
- requires more than a one-word answer
- shows that you value children's opinions

CREATE MENUS AND PRETEND FOOD

At the art table, the children made menus. They drew pictures of food and some children cut out pictures from magazines. They included desserts, too. Then Lupe wrote down their words.



At the sensory table, the children made pretend food out of clay. Then we let the "food" dry so we could use it for pretend play. As I observed, I took notes for the children's portfolios.



CREATE MENUS AND PRETEND FOOD

Make menus

Explain to children that they are going to make menus for their restaurant. Have children draw pictures or cut out photos of food from magazines and catalogs. Then have children dictate words and sentences for the menus. You may want to introduce menu options, such as appetizers, soups, salads, main courses, desserts, and beverages.

EL Invite children to dictate words for the menu in their home language.

Make pretend food

Ask children to make pretend food out of clay or on paper. At the art table have pictures of food, paper for drawing, or clay for making food items. Include other props for meal preparation and serving, such as plastic spoons and forks.

ASSESS Assess the group

Make additional copies of *Play Observation Form*, pages 54 and 55, and use it to continue to document your observations of children's dramatic play. You will probably observe some new behaviors, ideas, and concepts when children are using props they created themselves.

COOK RESTAURANT FOOD (Optional)

We were all thrilled when Michael's dad, who works as a chef, offered to come to class and help us make a real pizza. We talked about the ingredients and the steps we'd have to follow to make a delicious pizza.



COOK RESTAURANT FOOD (Optional)

Do a cooking project

Choose a simple food project to prepare with children. Some options include fruit salad, mini pizzas, or trail mix. Introduce the cooking project during group time. Discuss the importance of working together the way cooks work together in a restaurant. Then have children make a menu item in small groups. As they work, ask open-ended questions that guide children's learning. For example, the question, "How did the heat of the oven change the pizza?" helps children observe how heat causes cheese to melt and dough to rise.

Consider safety and sanitation

Safety and sanitation are the most important concerns when cooking with young children. A cooking project must take place in a safe, protected area, away from hot ovens and sharp utensils. Care must be taken to reduce the spread of germs. Children must always wash their hands, of course, before participating in a cooking project. But washing hands is not enough. Young children may cough, sneeze, or lick their fingers while cooking. If the recipe requires that the food will be cooked or baked, the heat of the oven or stove will destroy most bacteria. If the food is not going to be cooked, such as a fruit salad, children should work on their own individual portions that will be eaten right away or carefully labeled with their names.

ASSESS AND REFLECT

We used photos from the cooking project and put them in a notebook. We asked the children to dictate sentences about the photos. The children were very proud of our pizza book and many showed it to their parents at pick-up time. The process of creating and sharing the book helped children reflect on their experiences.



Michael's dad is a cook.
He came to school.



He threw the dough
up in the air!



He put on the
tomato sauce.



We made pizza!

ASSESS AND REFLECT

Discuss the food projects

Ask children to dictate a story or **narrative** about the projects they worked on during this episode, such as tasting new foods, making menus, making pretend food, and cooking.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

When children dictate words or sentences about their food experiences, they

- talk about their experience
- use new vocabulary in context
- create something to read and discuss with their families

Engage children in conversations that help reinforce the big ideas from this episode.

- Our bodies need healthy food to grow strong.
- People need to eat a balanced diet by choosing food from each of the food groups.
- People choose restaurants because of cost, personal tastes, location, and ethnic and cultural background.
- Restaurant workers work together to do their jobs.

PROFESSIONAL VOCABULARY

narrative *noun* a description of an event or experience

Lupe and I sent home a letter to parents, telling them about the success of our cooking project. We also used Teaching Master 4, *Healthy Eating Tips for Families*, to share some information about healthy eating at home.



ASSESS Assess individual children

Use the *Child Observation Form* to assess individual children's learning. Collect items for children's portfolios, such as

- dictated words and sentences
- menus the children created
- photos of children participating in activities

Make family connections

Share information about healthy eating with families. Copy and distribute *Healthy Eating Tips for Families*, pages 57 and 58. Encourage parents and family members to discuss MyPlate and the food groups with their children during meals. For more information about healthy eating for families, visit www.choosemyplate.gov/children.

SOLVE A PROBLEM

INTRODUCE THE PROBLEM

page 38

Children are introduced to a problem in the restaurant.

Materials Props for role-play presentation

Schedule Discuss for approximately 15 minutes during group time.

DISCUSS AND SOLVE THE PROBLEM

page 40

Children hold meetings to discuss and solve the problem.

Materials Will vary, depending upon the problem

Schedule Discuss for approximately 15 minutes in small or large groups.

ASSESS AND REFLECT

page 41

Children reflect on solving problems.

Materials Chart paper and markers for writing down children's ideas

Schedule Discuss for approximately 15 minutes during group time.

LEARN ABOUT MONEY (OPTIONAL)

page 42

Children engage in dramatic play to learn about how customers in a restaurant use money to pay for their food.

Materials Play money, toy cash register (or shoe box), small pads of paper

Schedule Allow approximately 10 minutes to introduce concepts in small groups; dramatic play with play money to take place during free play over the course of several days.

EPISODE OBJECTIVES

Social-Emotional Development

- Listen to the ideas of others.
- Work with others to make a decision.
- Suggest solutions to problems.

Language Development

- Allow others to speak without frequent interruptions.
- Contribute to group discussions.
- Use new vocabulary in speech.

Cognitive Development: Early Literacy

- Show an awareness of print in the environment.
- Communicate ideas and thoughts through dictation and drawing pictures.

Cognitive Development: Mathematics

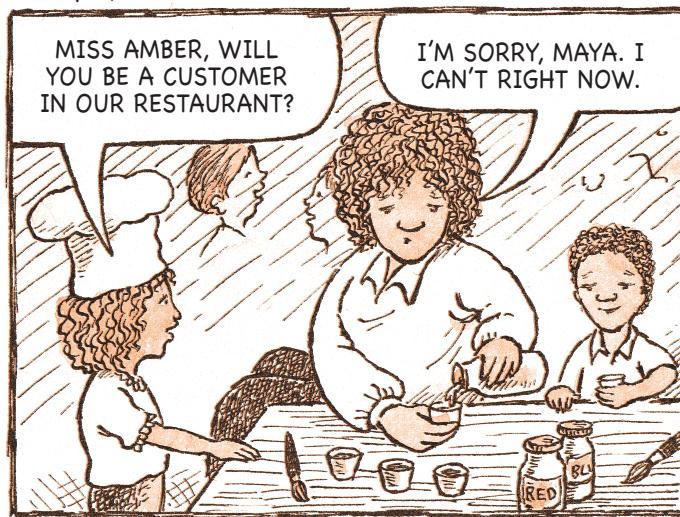
- Understand the economic concept that restaurant customers must pay money in exchange for the food they eat.
- Understand that a price is the amount of money one must pay to buy something.
- Understand that money is something that is counted.

Cognitive Development: Problem Solving

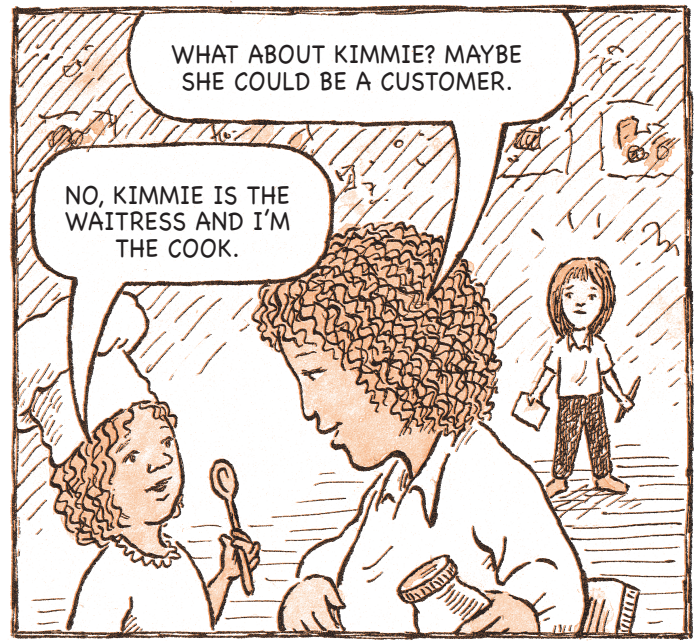
- Define issues or problems related to the restaurant and then make decisions on how to respond.

INTRODUCE THE PROBLEM

It was time for Lupe and me to choose a critical incident, or problem, that we could use to teach the children some problem-solving skills. One day, during free play, we had an idea.



I mentioned to Lupe that some of the children were having trouble playing restaurant.



INTRODUCE THE PROBLEM

Before you begin this episode, be alert for a **teachable moment**—an opportunity for the children to develop and practice problem-solving skills. Here are some opportunities that may arise during play:

- Customers request food that's not on the menu.
- The restaurant runs out of a popular menu item.
- Food gets burned in the oven and can't be served.
- Too few customers are coming to the restaurant.
- Customers don't like the taste of one of the menu items.

You may decide to select a problem that is relevant to your class and has emerged from the children's dramatic play. Ideally, the problem will result in the need for children to work together to solve it. When selecting the problem to solve, consider the following:

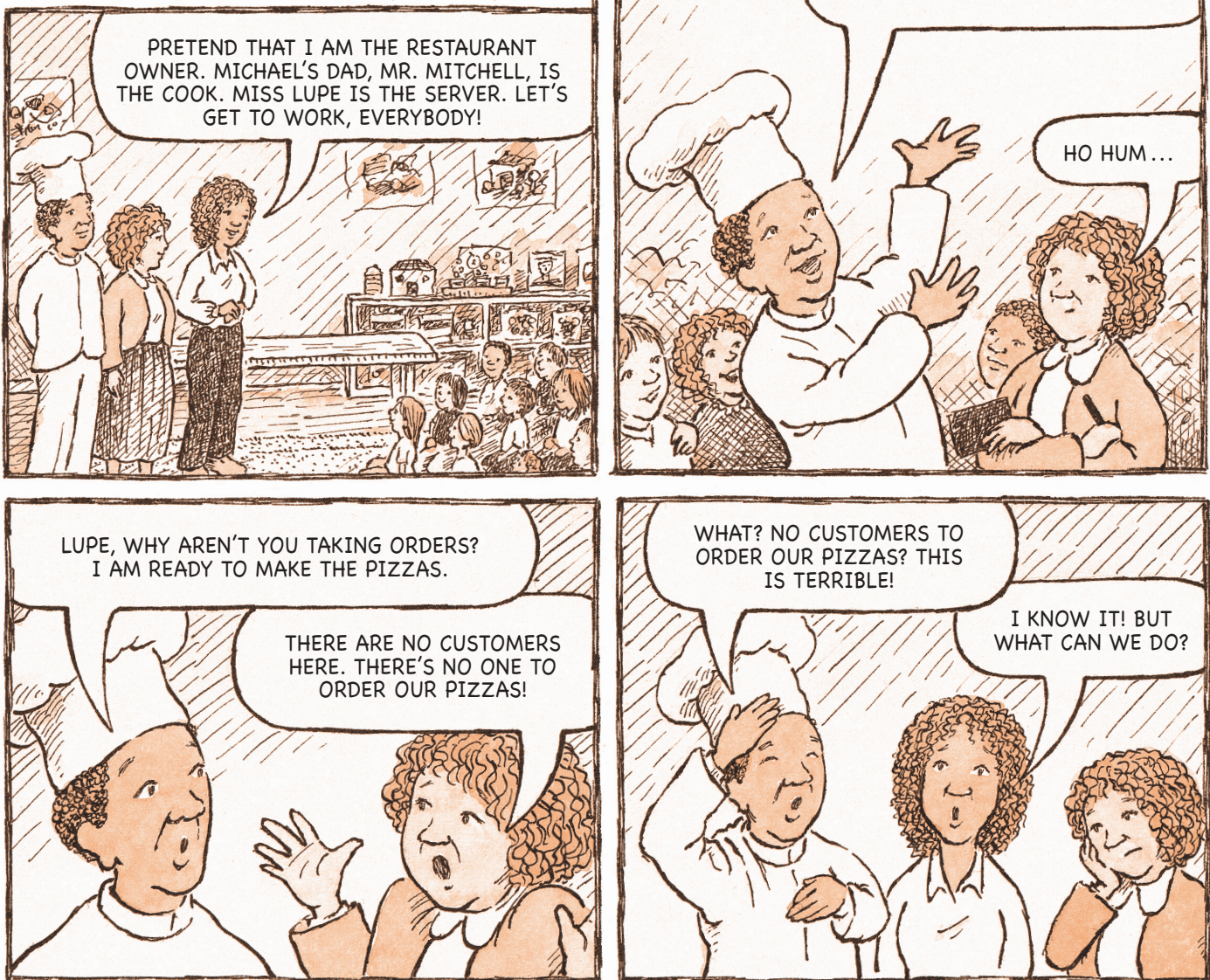
- Does the problem allow for multiple solutions?
- Does it allow all the children to participate in solving the problem?
- Is it culturally relevant to the children in your class?

PROFESSIONAL VOCABULARY

teachable moment *noun* something that happens in the classroom that can be used as a natural opportunity to teach problem solving

INTRODUCE THE PROBLEM *continued*

At group time, we presented the problem to the children by role-playing what had gone wrong in our restaurant. Michael's dad agreed to visit and help us role-play.



Teachers role-play the problem

During group time, present the problem to the children. You may want to take on the role of the restaurant owner and tell children that you are calling an important meeting with the workers to talk about a problem in the restaurant. Before beginning the meeting, discuss with children how the meeting will be conducted:

- Children will listen respectfully to each other.
- Everyone will have an opportunity to speak.

For more information about teaching problem-solving skills, read the Teacher Workshop on page 62.

EL When the teachers present the problem through role-playing, facial expressions and body language help children understand what is being communicated.

Make family connections

Invite family members or other adults to help you role-play the problem. Dramatize the problem, but keep it short and simple.

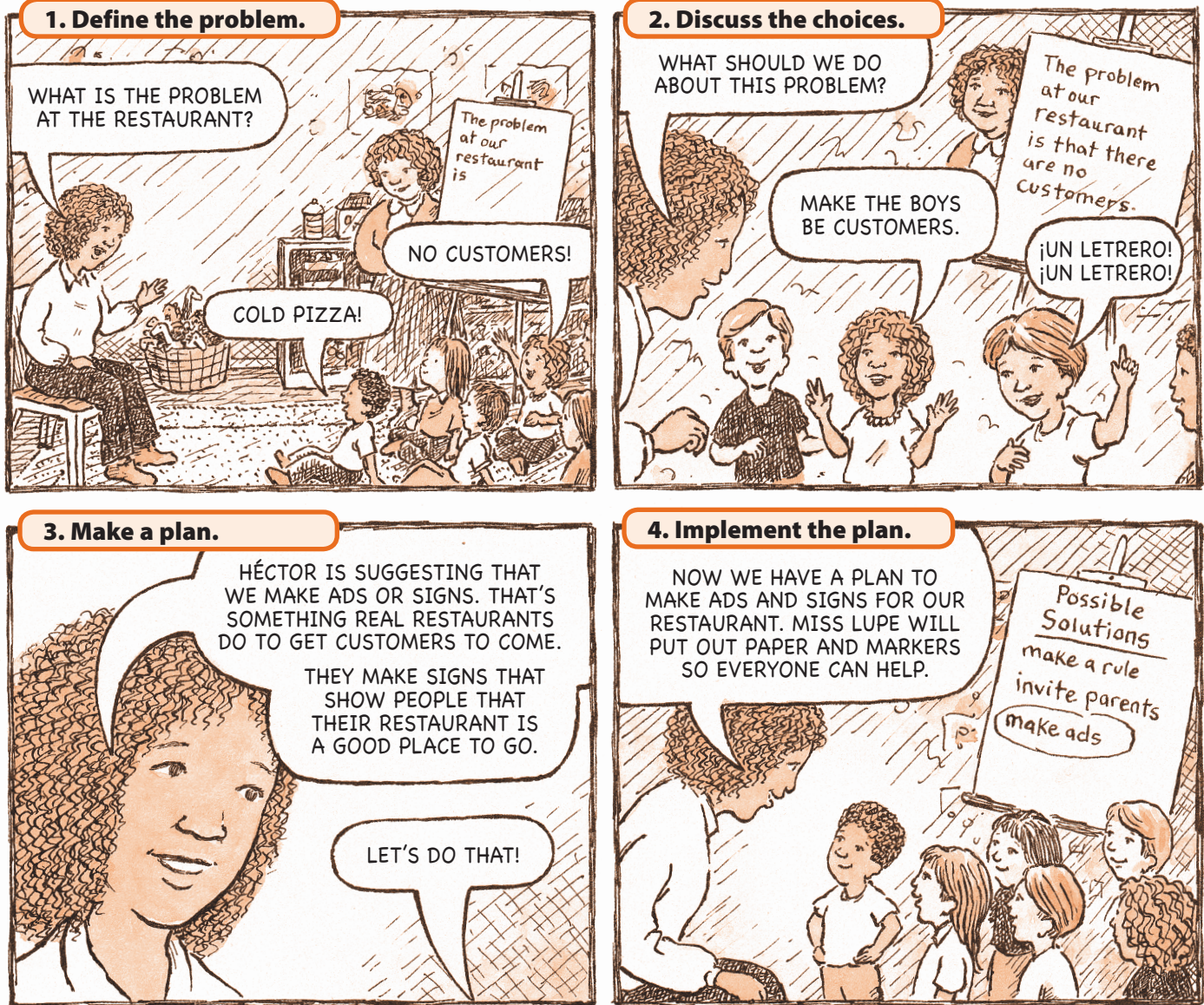
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

When you "think out loud," this helps children

- learn how to identify and describe a problem
- use new vocabulary words in context
- understand that solving a problem is a process that takes time

DISCUSS AND SOLVE THE PROBLEM

We led the children through a four-step process to solve the problem.



DISCUSS AND SOLVE THE PROBLEM

Use the following four steps to structure the discussion:

1. Define the problem. On a big sheet of paper, write: "The problem at our restaurant is..." Then ask the children, "What is the problem at the restaurant?" Listen to children's ideas. Then, finish the sentence on the paper with words that summarize the problem.

2. Discuss the choices. Ask children, "What should we do about this problem?" Encourage children to think of a range of solutions. Raise questions to help them think more deeply about the problem. Allow them to disagree but ask them to explain their ideas. Generate a list of several possible solutions.

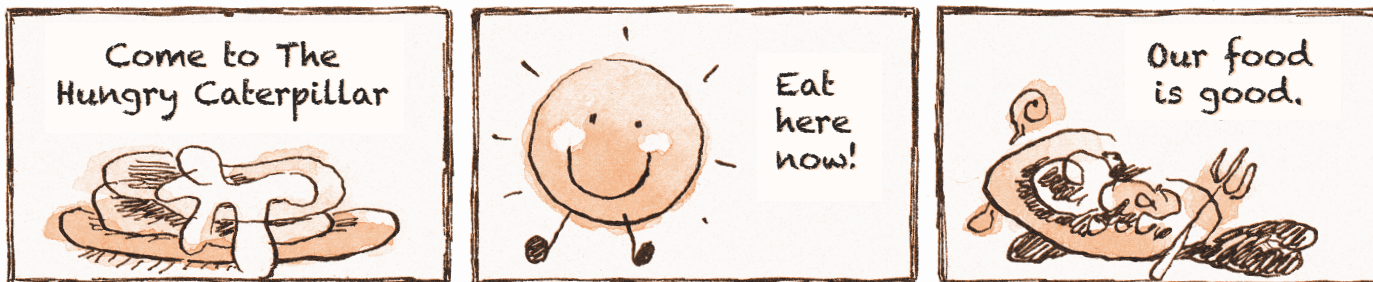
3. Make a plan. Help children choose a solution by guiding the discussion to a consensus. Then ask children, "How will our restaurant make this plan happen?" On a large sheet of paper, write words or draw pictures to show the plan.

4. Implement the plan. Assign children specific tasks. You may want to have children work in small groups. Make an effort to give every child an important role in solving the problem.

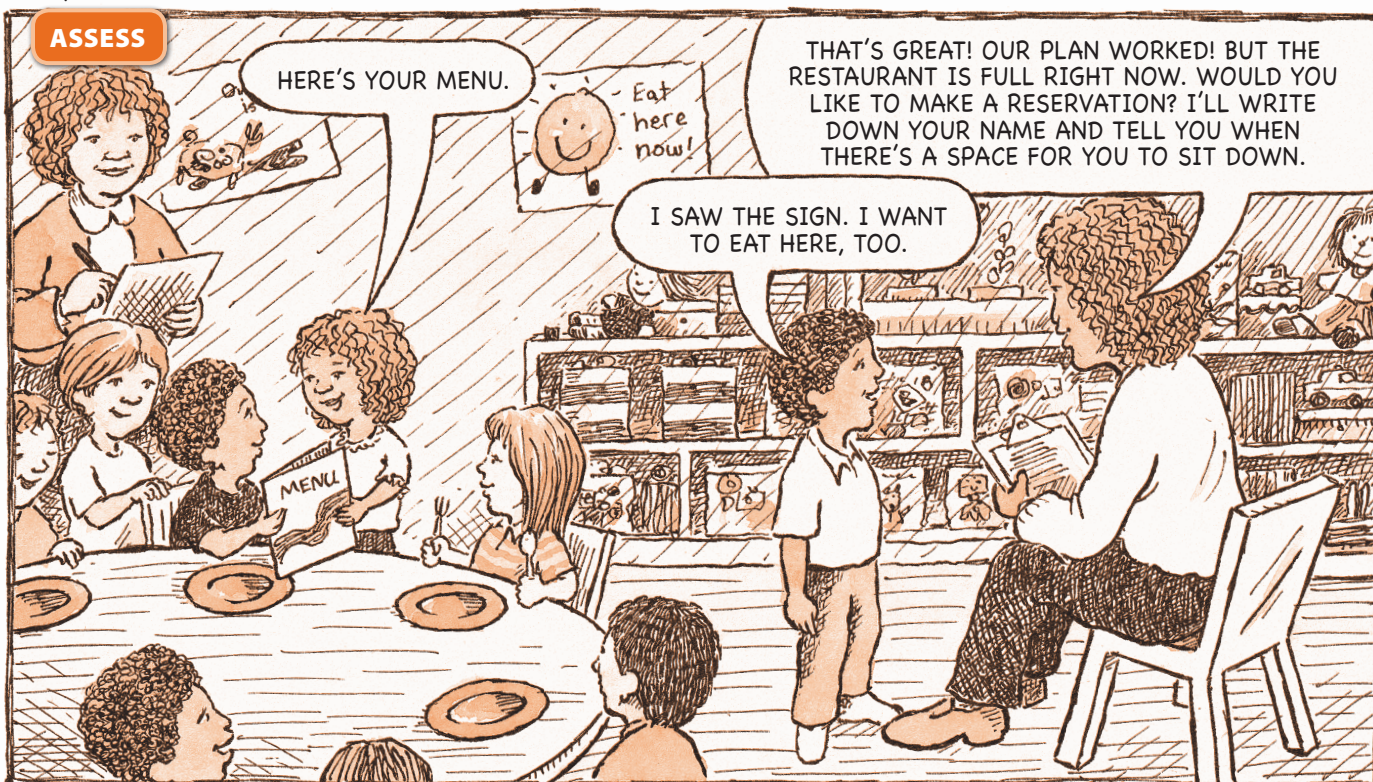
EL Use role-playing or simple sketches to help children who are not native English speakers understand the solutions that other children suggest.

ASSESS AND REFLECT

The children enjoyed drawing pictures and dictating the words for the ads and signs. The process seemed to spark more interest in pretending to be customers.



As Lupe and I observed the children at play, it was clear that they recognized that their plan had solved the problem.



ASSESS AND REFLECT

In a group or with individual children, discuss how well the plan helped solve the problem. Ask children to dictate words and sentences that answer questions such as these:

- In what ways did we work well together to solve our problem?
- How did our plan help the restaurant?

Use anti-bias and culturally relevant practices

If a child is reluctant to contribute to the group discussion, find a moment to talk with that child individually.

ASSESS Assess the group

Provide many opportunities for dramatic play following the problem-solving session. Use *Play Observation Form*, pages 54 and 55, to document the language and behaviors in children's play. Look for examples that illustrate children's understanding of problem solving in their restaurant.

ASSESS Assess individual children

Use the *Child Observation Form* to document individual children's learning. Note each child's participation in the problem-solving process.

LEARN ABOUT MONEY (Optional)

Next, Lupe and I decided to teach the children some basic concepts about money and how people pay for restaurant food.



As we talked, Lupe added important new words to our word chart.



LEARN ABOUT MONEY (Optional)

At group time, introduce the concept of paying a bill for a restaurant meal. This topic has probably already come up naturally in class discussions or during children's dramatic play. Ask the children open-ended questions and offer information that will help clarify their understanding.

- Why do customers have to pay for their food? (Help children understand that restaurant owners must buy supplies and pay the workers.)
- How do customers know how much their food will cost? (Guide children to recognize that most menus will have prices printed on them.)

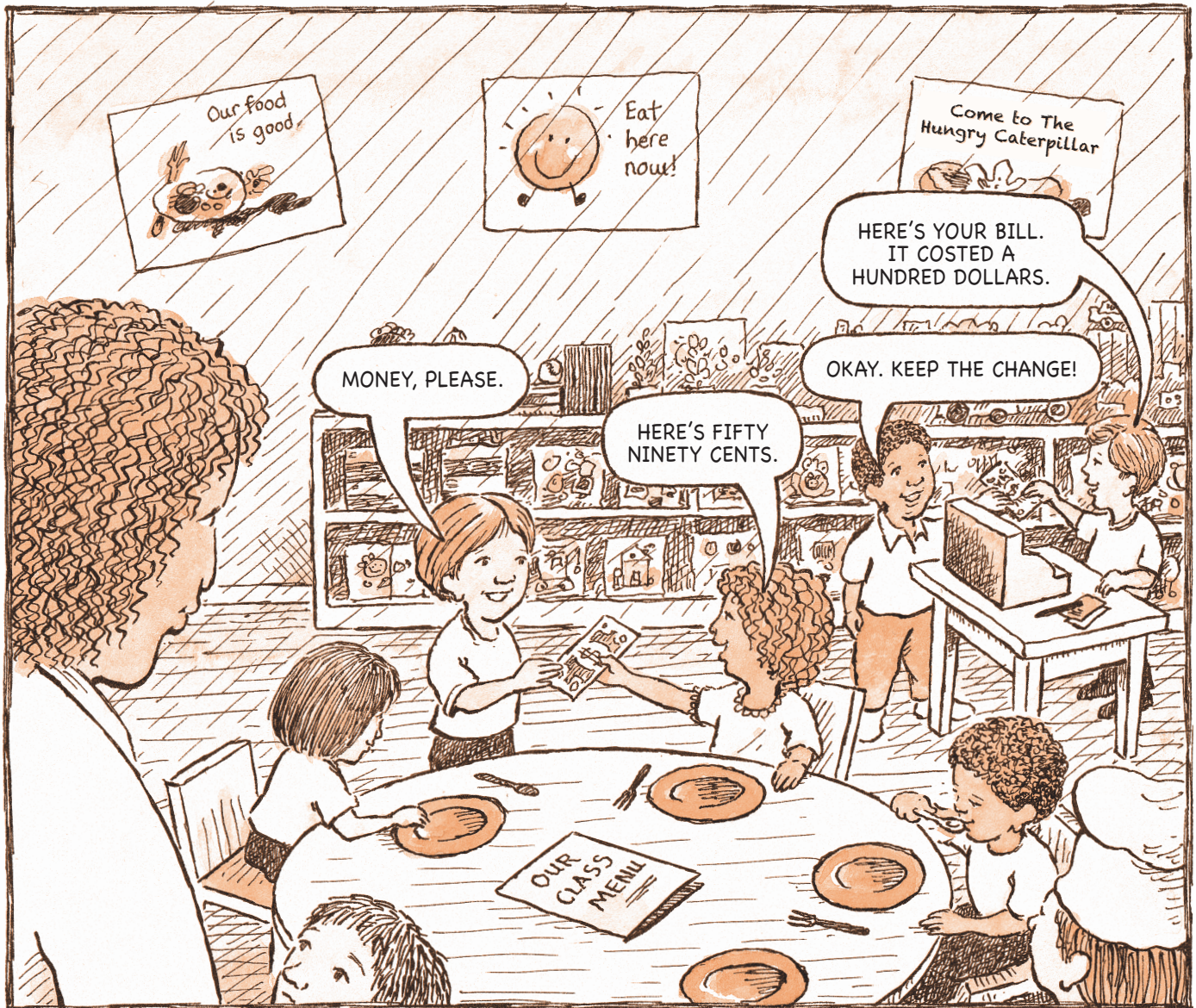
- How and when do customers usually pay for their food? (Help children understand the difference between a fast-food restaurant, where customers pay for their food at the time it is ordered, and table-service restaurants, where customers pay from a printed bill at the end of the meal.)

You may also want to discuss the concept of tipping. Explain to the children that much of the money waiters and waitresses earn comes from the tips that the customers leave for them on the table.

For more information about teaching early math skills, read the Teacher Workshop on page 70.

LEARN ABOUT MONEY *continued*

Our talk about money led to some rich and exciting pretend play.



Reinforce concepts during dramatic play

Show the children one of the menus that they created in Episode 3. If the menu does not already have prices on it, add some one-digit prices to the menu. Keep the amounts small and simple, such as \$1, \$2, or \$3. Then invite children to use the menu, the play money, a pad of paper (to write the bill), and the toy cash register to play restaurant. You may want to be the first customer during the play session so you can model how a customer pays a bill and leaves a tip. Invite children to play with the materials during open-ended dramatic play.

Do not be concerned when children do not accurately count the play money or pay the amounts of the prices listed on the menu. The important thing is that they understand the broad concept of paying money in exchange for goods and services.

EL Young children who are not native English speakers may benefit from being paired with children who speak English at home.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

When you engage in play with children, model the use of appropriate words and phrases.

- "Please"
- "Thank you"
- "You're welcome"
- "Keep the change"

FAMILIES VISIT THE RESTAURANT

INTRODUCE THE CONCLUDING EVENT

page 45

Children create menus and invitations to prepare for a visit to the restaurant from their families.

Materials

- Chart paper and markers
- *Discussion Poster 6*
- Copies of invitations and art supplies for decorating invitations
- Thick paper for menus

Schedule

Allow approximately 10 minutes in group time; invitations can be prepared at an art table during free play over the course of 1 to 2 days.

PREPARE THE FOOD

page 46

Children prepare food for the restaurant.

Materials

Ingredients for food preparation will vary.

Schedule

Time for food preparation will vary, depending on menu items.

WELCOME FAMILIES

page 47

Children host the families at the restaurant.

Materials

- Food and dishes for the restaurant, cash register and play money
- Teaching Master 5, *Family Talk*, pp. 59 and 60
- Optional: camera, *Discussion Posters 1–6*

Schedule

Allow approximately one hour.

ASSESS AND REFLECT

page 49

Children reflect on the experience by engaging in conversations and looking at photos.

Materials

- Poster board panels to sequence the episodes
- Colored markers

Schedule

Allow approximately 20 minutes for group discussion; sequencing activity and sentence dictation to take place during free play.

EPISODE OBJECTIVES

Social-Emotional Development

- Use language to communicate needs.
- Take turns and share materials.
- Listen to the ideas of others.

Language Development

- Contribute to group discussions.
- Use new vocabulary in speech.
- Understand and follow oral directions.

Cognitive Development: Early Literacy

- Recognize print in the local environment.
- Understand that different text forms are used for different purposes.

Cognitive Development: Social Studies

- Understand that people make choices about eating at restaurants based on cost, personal tastes, location, and ethnic and cultural background.
- Understand that restaurant workers work together to do their jobs.

Cognitive Development: Science

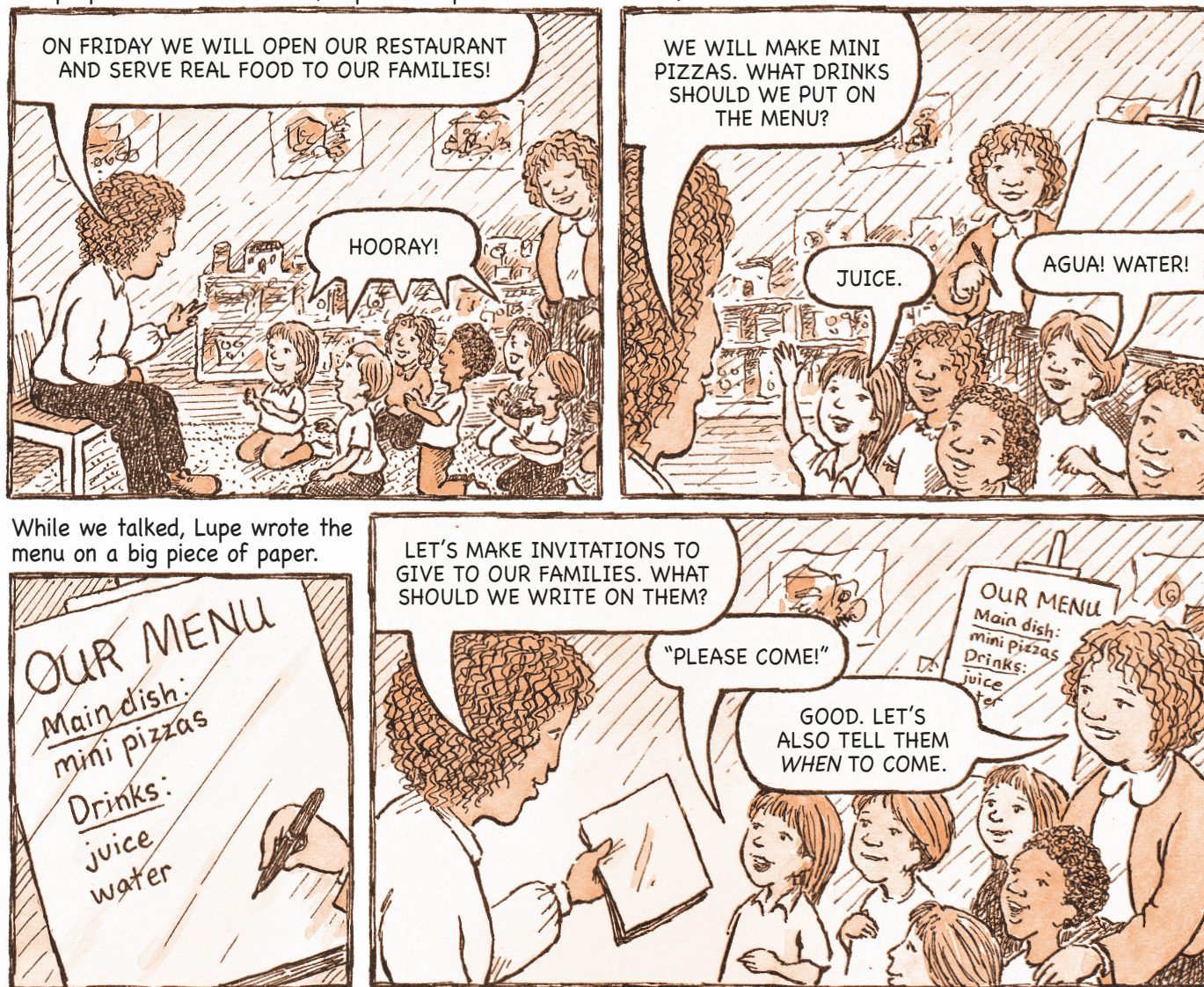
- Understand that our bodies need healthy food to grow strong.

Cognitive Development: Problem Solving

- Organize ideas in new ways.
- Participate in discussions and decision making.

INTRODUCE THE CONCLUDING EVENT

It was now less than a week until our family celebration. The parents already knew about the event because we had sent a letter at the beginning of the unit. Now it was time to have the children take an active role in the preparation. To save time, Lupe and I planned the main dish, and we let the children choose the drinks.



While we talked, Lupe wrote the menu on a big piece of paper.

INTRODUCE THE CONCLUDING EVENT

Gather children for group time and announce that parents and family members are invited to visit the restaurant. This is the event that was announced to families in the *Family Letter*, in Episode 1. If it is not possible to schedule a family event, invite children from another classroom to visit your restaurant.

Make menus and invitations

Create a menu for the event based on children's preferences. Offer some simple suggestions, such as cheese and crackers, fruit salad, trail mix, breakfast cereals, or whatever is easy to organize and culturally relevant. Post the menu in the room. Later, you may want to make picture menus that children can use for the event. Use thick paper

to create the menus so that they hold their shape and are easy for children to use.

Introduce the concept of sending an invitation and ask children why we use invitations. Guide the discussion so that children think about the kinds of information that are included on an invitation, such as the date, time, and place. Write a master invitation and make copies. In small groups, have children decorate and "sign" their invitations to take home to their families.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

When children make menus and invitations they

- use print to communicate with others
- understand that different text forms are used for different purposes

PREPARE THE FOOD

During the week, Lupe and I talked with each family individually. We wanted to make sure that every family felt welcomed and included.



On the day of the event, the children took turns preparing the mini pizzas. It took a long time to give each child a turn, but it was worth it. All the children were very excited.



PREPARE THE FOOD

Use anti-bias and culturally relevant practices

Contact each family member regarding the invitations. Make sure everyone feels welcomed. You may want to prepare an alternative menu item for families who have diet restrictions.

EL Ask a staff member or volunteer to translate the words on the invitation into each family's home language.

Plan ahead

Make sure you have enough tables to accommodate all your guests. You may need to borrow tables, or hold your event in another room. Also, if your event takes place during regular class time, make a plan for children whose

families are not able to attend. Pair them with a teacher or volunteer for the event.

Prepare the food

On the day of the event, work with children to prepare the food. Break into small groups or keep a list of who has had a turn so that every child has an opportunity to participate in the preparation. Be sure to follow safety and sanitation guidelines as described on page 34.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

When children use a recipe to prepare food, they

- follow print directions
- understand that numbers and letters can convey meaning

WELCOME FAMILIES

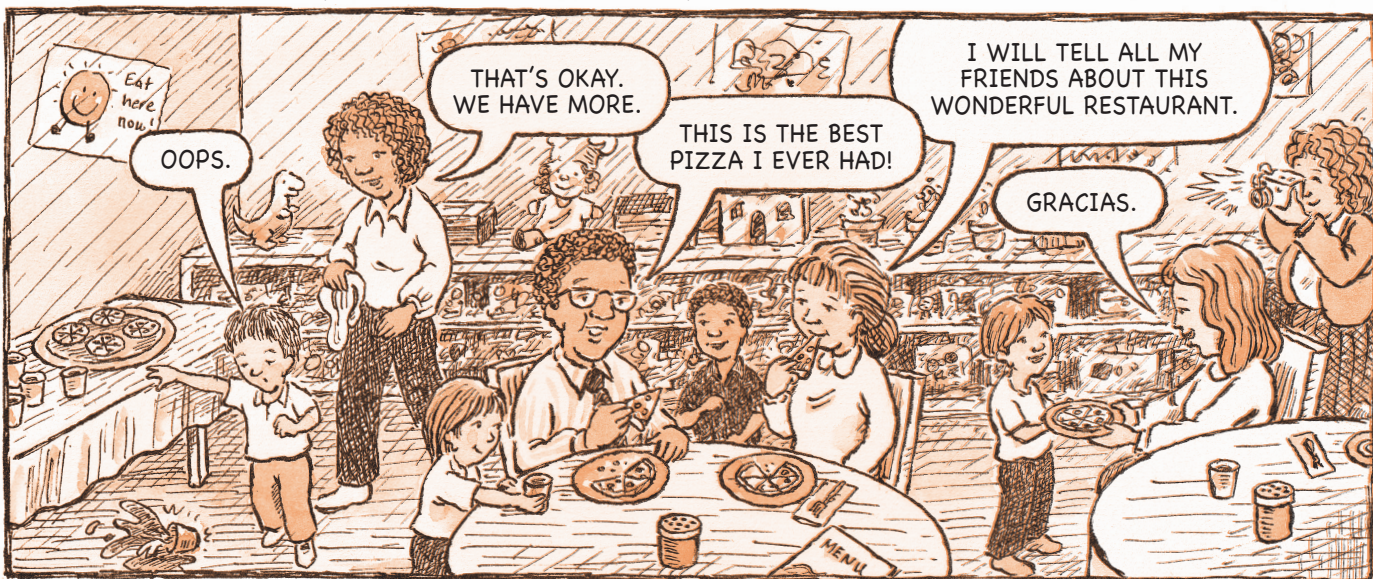
Before the parents and family members arrived, we reviewed “restaurant language.”



As our guests began to arrive, the children greeted them.



During the meal, the only problems we had were a few spills. Everyone had a wonderful time.



WELCOME FAMILIES

Use “restaurant language” to welcome families

Before the guests arrive, talk with the children about how they greet their “customers,” take orders, and talk about the food they will serve. Model for them so they continue to practice the social norms associated with eating at a restaurant. For example, say, “Welcome to our restaurant. Please follow me.” “May I take your order?” “Here is your order, please enjoy.” Provide opportunities for children to role-play with each other so they reinforce language skills. Display *Discussion Poster 6* and discuss the words and phrases people say in restaurants. Leave the poster out so children can refer to it again during pretend play.

EL Spanish translations of important words and phrases are listed on the reverse side of the *Discussion Posters*.

When families arrive, have children show them to their seats and offer them a menu. You may also want to give families play money when they arrive so they can pay for their meal. Then children can take orders, serve food, and give their families a bill.

Make family connections

For more information about helping families feel welcome, read the Teacher Workshop on page 64.

When everyone had finished eating, we gave each family a copy of *Family Talk* from the *Pre-K Storypath*. We asked the parents to talk with their children so they could find out what their children had learned.



Lupe offered Héctor's mother a Spanish translation of *Family Talk*, but...



Encourage conversations

Distribute *Family Talk*, pages 59 and 60, to families at their tables so parents can talk with their children about what they learned. Explain the purpose and then have families talk with their children. Collect the pages at the end of the event.

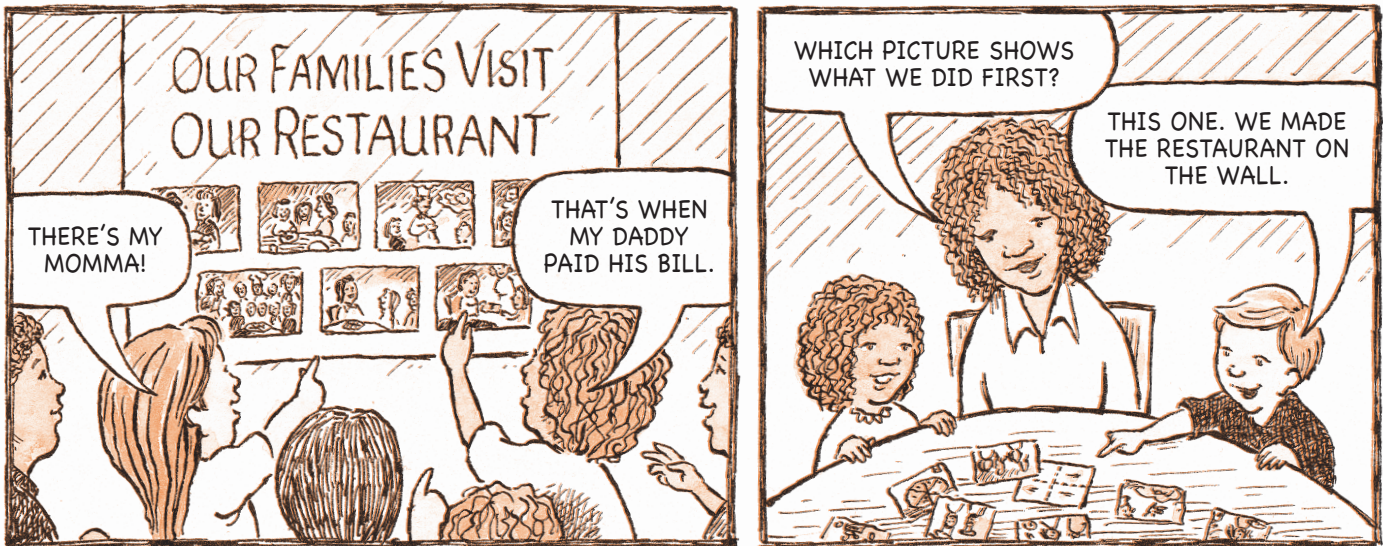
ASSESS Assess individual children

Add the *Family Talk* pages to the children's individual portfolios.

EL Be sensitive to family members who may not feel comfortable reading and writing English in front of their children. If possible, provide a translation of the questions and encourage families to talk with their children in their home language. Another option would be for one of the teachers to ask the questions, while encouraging participation from the whole family. If the child has difficulty responding to the questions, use the set of *Discussion Posters* to review the unit with the child and family. Allow the child and family members to point to the pictures to help them express what they would like to say.

ASSESS AND REFLECT

The next day, we posted pictures from the celebration on a bulletin board. We also used photos from the entire unit to help the children review everything they had learned and experienced.



When Lupe and I sat down to update the children's portfolios, we felt really good about all the progress the children had made. We knew that the children's interest and excitement had fueled their learning.



ASSESS AND REFLECT

Reflect on the event and the unit

On the following day, invite children to talk about their experiences creating their own restaurant. Record their responses on chart paper for display in the room.

Sequence the unit

Discuss with the children each of the events of the unit in sequence: creating the frieze, creating the restaurant workers, learning about food, solving problems, and the final celebration. Sketch each episode on a separate sheet of poster board or use photos you have taken during the unit. Then have children put them in the correct order. This sequencing activity will reinforce learning.

ASSESS Assess individual children

Use the *Child Observation Form* to assess individual children's learning. Collect items for children's portfolios, such as

- dictated words and sentences
- photos of the event
- the restaurant interview

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Learning to sequence (arrange in order, from first to last) is an important cognitive skill. Sequencing also helps children understand and use words such as

- | | | |
|---------|----------|--------|
| ■ first | ■ before | ■ then |
| ■ next | ■ after | ■ last |

Develop Children's Interests

Use Documentation to Inspire Reflection

To encourage children to reflect on their own learning, create a display or **documentation panel** about the *Restaurant* unit. The documentation panel might include items such as parts of the restaurant frieze, word charts, children's dictated stories, photographs of children's dramatic play, and menus from the family event.

Create opportunities for children to study the documentation panel and talk about what they did and learned. For example, invite a teacher from another classroom to view the panel. Encourage children to use the pieces of documentation to explain to their visitor what they did, how they did it, and what they learned. When children make statements such as, "We made a stove because we need to heat up the food," it shows an awareness of the concepts and reasoning behind their actions.

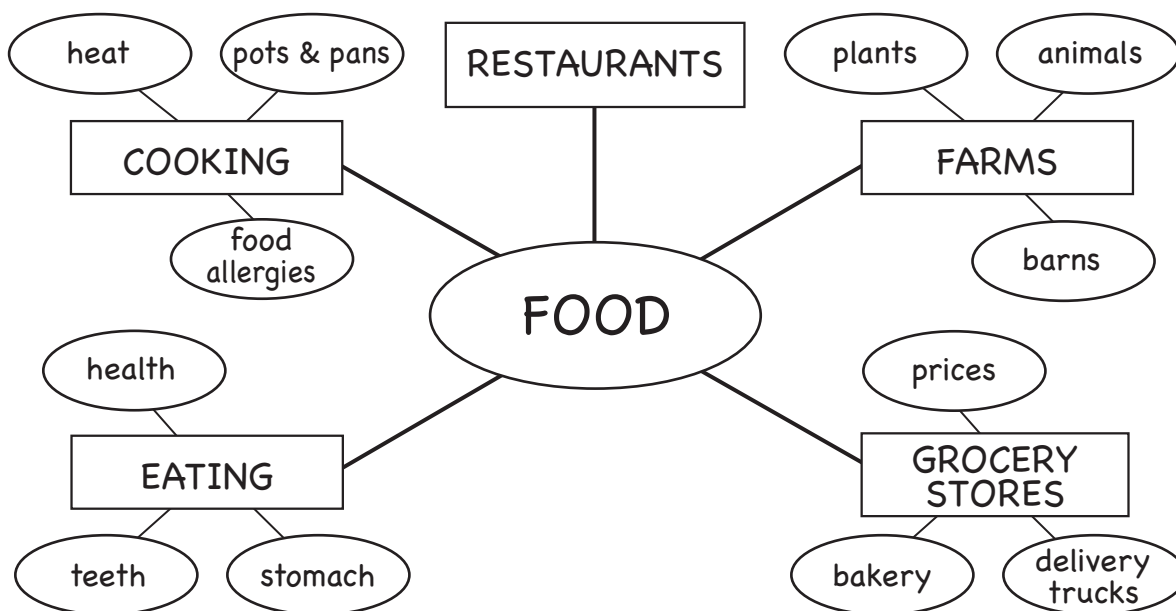
Write down children's statements that illustrate self-reflection and add them to the panel. In this way, children are encouraged to "think about thinking" and continue to deepen their learning.

PROFESSIONAL VOCABULARY

documentation panel *noun* a visual representation of children's learning

Discover Other Emergent Interests

Learning about restaurants and food may inspire children's interest in many other related topics and themes. Look for clues to these interests in children's dramatic play. Children may begin pretending they are shopping for food at a grocery store, working on a farm, planting a garden, or baking bread in a bakery. Any of these interests may lead to a new curriculum unit that expands and builds upon what the children have learned during the *Restaurant* unit.



This web shows just a few of the topics that might interest children.

Extend Learning through Field Trips

Take Restaurant-Related Field Trips

A trip to a local restaurant is a great follow-up to this unit, even if children have already visited a restaurant earlier in the unit. Visiting a restaurant at the end of the unit gives children an opportunity to compare the restaurant they created with a real restaurant. Another option is to visit a farmer's market or grocery store to see examples of the different kinds of foods discussed in the unit. To make the most of each field trip experience, use the Field Trip Planning Guide below.

FIELD TRIP PLANNING GUIDE: THE RESTAURANT

Before the Trip

When planning a field trip to a restaurant, select a large restaurant where there is plenty of room for children to safely walk through the facility. Visit the restaurant ahead of time and talk with the restaurant manager about your goals for the field trip and what you hope the children will learn from the visit.

In most cases, the children will not be able to come into the kitchen during the restaurant tour due to safety concerns. Instead, see if the children might be allowed to visit a food storage area or a walk-in refrigerator. Another option is to ask the manager if one of the cooks might be able to bring some pots and pans into the dining area to show the children. Ask the staff if they might also be willing to let the children have a small taste of the restaurant food, such as a cracker or a fortune cookie. Remember to include all parts of the restaurant, including the bathrooms, the parking lot, and the delivery area, as part of the restaurant tour.

During the Trip

Rather than touring the restaurant in one large group, divide into several small groups, each taking turns viewing a different part of the restaurant. As the children tour the restaurant, ask them open-ended questions. For example, asking "How are these big pots different from the pots your family uses at home?" will help children identify what is unique about a restaurant setting.

If possible, take photos during the trip and take notes about children's interests and questions. Collect a menu or brochure from the restaurant to use later for documentation.

After the Trip

As a class, write a thank-you letter to the restaurant. Ask children, "What did you like about our visit to the restaurant?" and include children's answers in the letter. Have the children decorate the letter with stickers or drawings.

Create documentation of the visit, such as a poster or photo album. Encourage children to dictate sentences and stories about the field trip.

FAMILY LETTER

Dear Family,

Our class has started a unit called *The Restaurant*. During this unit, your child will have many valuable learning experiences. Your child will

- work with others to solve problems
- role-play the jobs in a restaurant
- learn about healthy eating
- plan menus for the restaurant
- develop language and literacy skills

We will be using a teaching method called "Pre-K Storypath." This method uses children's natural enthusiasm for pretending to create important learning opportunities.

SAVE THE DATE! At the conclusion of the unit, we will invite you to visit our restaurant. The event will take place on _____ from _____ to _____. We hope to see you there.

Sincerely,

Please complete and return to school by: _____

Child's name: _____

Does your child have any food allergies or food restrictions? If so, please describe. _____

What are your family's favorite foods? _____

What restaurants has your child visited? _____

Does anyone in your family work at a restaurant? If so, would this person be willing to visit our class and talk about work? _____

If possible, please bring to school examples of menus from the restaurants your family has visited. We would also appreciate donations of aprons, chefs' hats, or empty food packages, like cereal boxes.

Thank You!

CARTA A LA FAMILIA

Querida familia:

La clase ha comenzado una unidad llamada *El restaurante*. En esta unidad, su hijo(a) tendrá muchas experiencias valiosas. Su hijo(a) va a

- trabajar con otros niños para resolver problemas
- representar los distintos trabajos de un restaurante
- aprender a comer de manera saludable
- planificar los menús para el restaurante
- desarrollar destrezas de lenguaje y de lectoescritura

Vamos a usar una metodología de la enseñanza llamada "Pre-K Storypath". Esta metodología se vale del entusiasmo natural de los niños por hacer representaciones para crear oportunidades importantes para el aprendizaje.

¡RESERVEN LA FECHA! Al terminar la unidad, los invitaremos a visitar nuestro restaurante. El evento tendrá lugar en _____ de las _____ a las _____. Esperamos verlos.

Atentamente,

Por favor rellene y devuelva a la escuela en: _____

Nombre del niño o de la niña: _____

¿Tiene su hijo(a) alguna alergia a un alimento o alguna restricción alimentaria?
De ser así, por favor explique de qué se trata. _____

¿Cuáles son las comidas preferidas de su familia? _____

¿A qué restaurantes ha ido su hijo(a)? _____

¿Trabaja alguien de su familia en un restaurante? Si ese es el caso, ¿estaría esa persona dispuesta a ir a nuestra clase para hablar acerca de su trabajo? _____

De ser posible, traiga por favor a la escuela ejemplos de menús de los restaurantes a los que su familia haya ido. También agradecemos donaciones de delantales, gorros de chef o envases vacíos de comida, como cajas de cereales.

¡Gracias!

PLAY OBSERVATION FORM

Make multiple copies of this form and use it for planning purposes and to record themes, problems, and ideas that emerge from children's play.

Date and time of observation: _____

Who participated?	In what role?

Restaurant vocabulary used	Interesting quotes

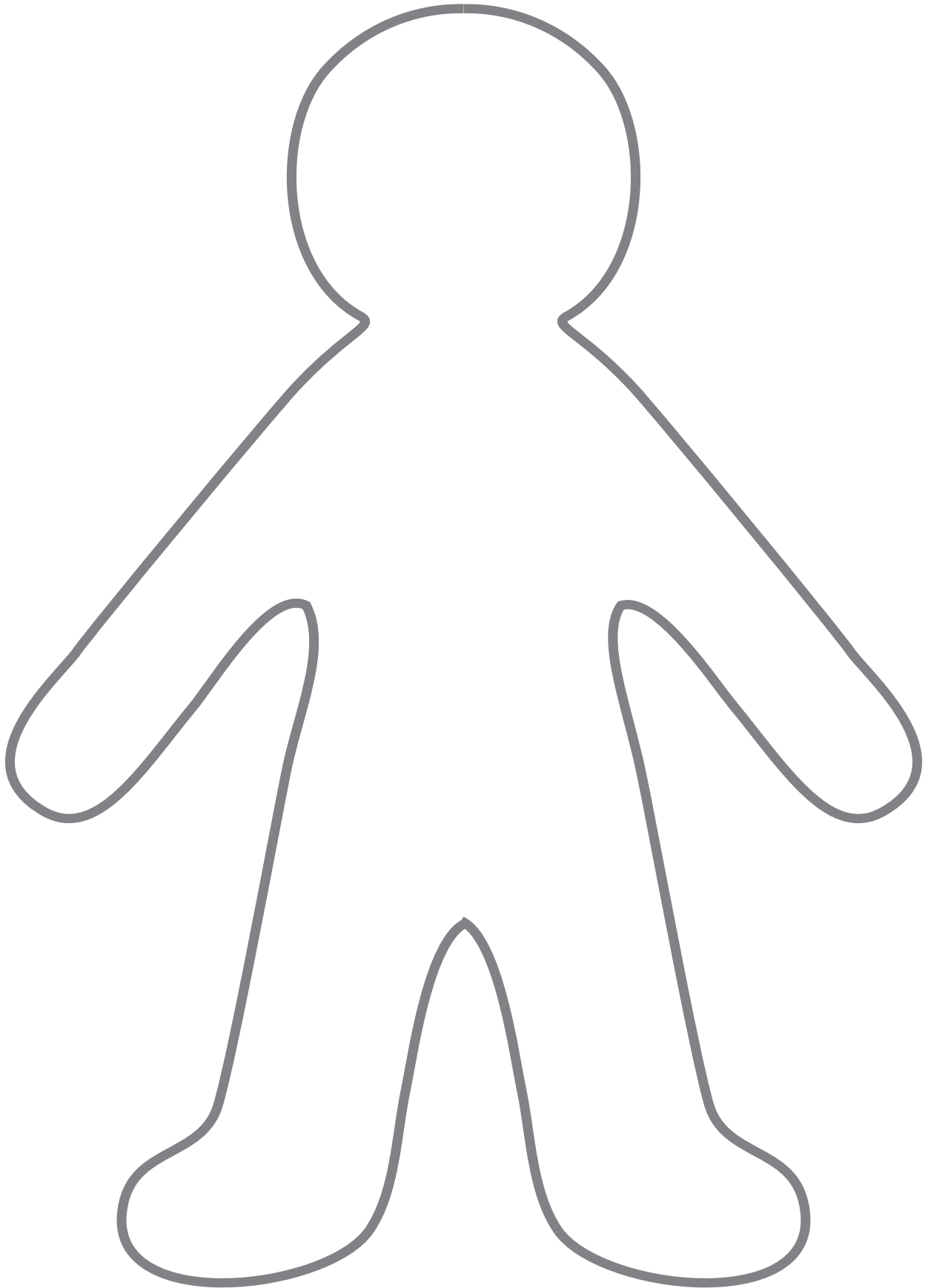
Conflict/problems observed	Resolution?

Roles, ideas, or concepts in which children were especially interested

Gaps in children's knowledge or understanding

Recurring themes or ideas

PAPER FIGURE

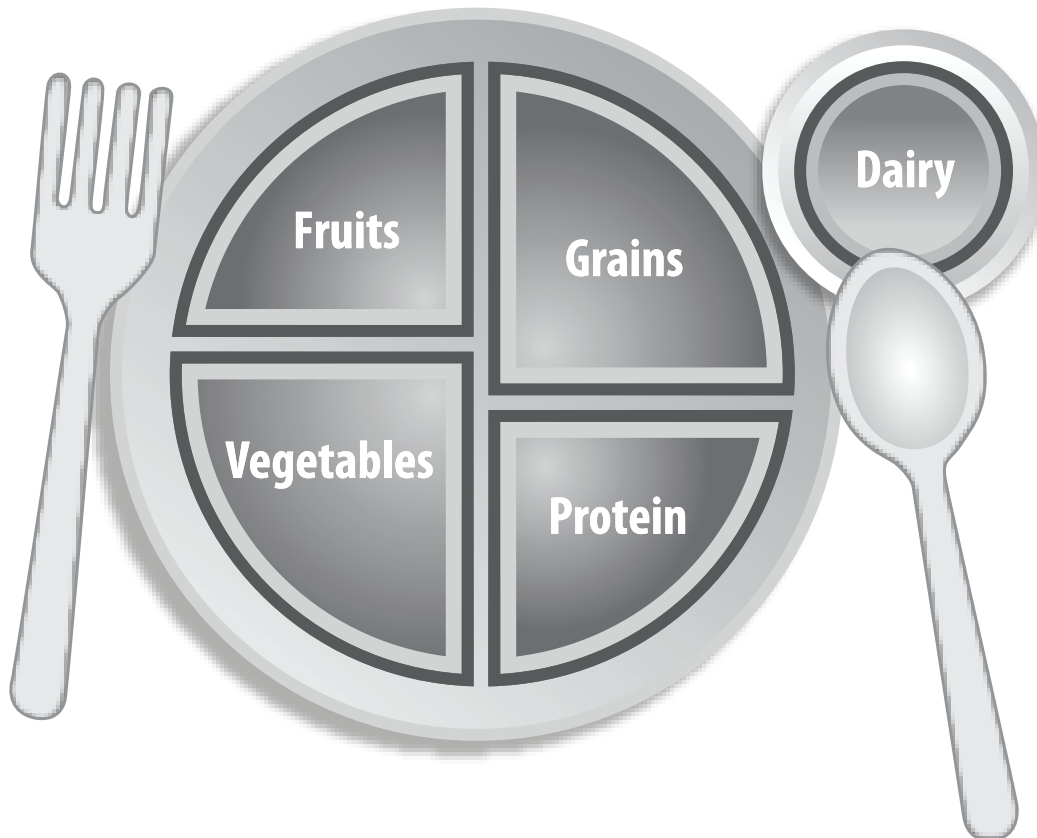


HEALTHY EATING TIPS FOR FAMILIES

Dear Families,

Your child has been learning about healthy eating at school. Here are some ideas for healthy choices you can make at home. Use this list to talk with your child about healthy eating.

1. **Eat whole grains.** Choose whole-grain foods, such as whole-wheat bread, oatmeal, brown rice, and low-fat popcorn.
2. **Vary your veggies.** Eat a variety of dark green and orange vegetables, such as spinach, broccoli, carrots, and sweet potatoes.
3. **Focus on fruits.** Eat fruit with meals and as snacks. Choose fruit that is fresh, frozen, canned, or dried. Drink fruit juice, but only in small amounts.
4. **Get your calcium.** To build strong bones, serve low-fat and fat-free milk and other milk products several times a day. If your child is lactose intolerant, serve calcium fortified soy milk.
5. **Reduce your sugar.** Choose foods and beverages that do not have sugar or sweeteners as one of the first ingredients. Added sugars add extra calories with few, if any, nutrients.



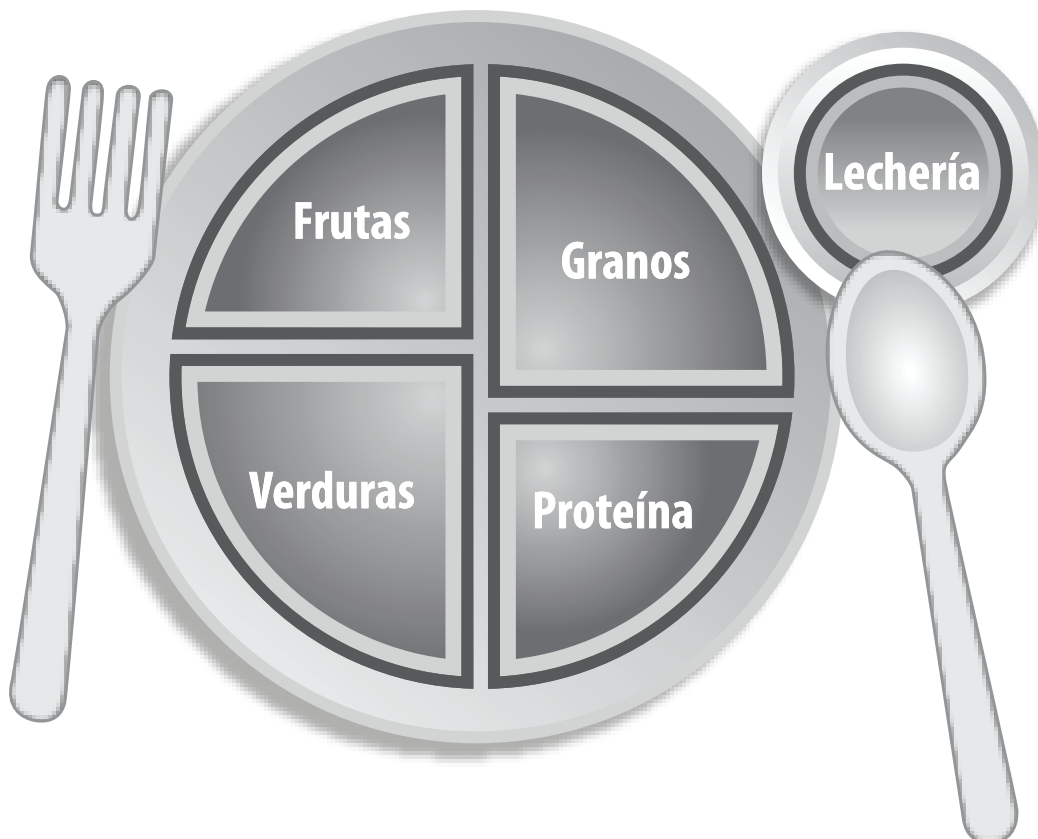
Source: The U.S. Department of Agriculture, ChooseMyPlate.gov

SUGERENCIAS A LA FAMILIA PARA UNA ALIMENTACIÓN SALUDABLE

Estimada familia:

Su hijo(a) ha aprendido en la escuela acerca de comer saludable. Estas son algunas ideas para una alimentación saludable que puede aplicar en su casa. Utilice esta lista para hablar con su hijo(a) acerca de comer saludable.

1. **Comer granos integrales.** Elijan alimentos hechos con granos integrales, como pan integral, avena, arroz integral y palomitas de maíz bajas en grasa.
2. **Variar las verduras.** Coman distintas verduras de color verde oscuro y anaranjadas, como las espinacas, el brócoli, la zanahoria y el camote.
3. **Concentrarse en las frutas.** Coman frutas con las comidas y como tentempié. Elijanlas frescas, congeladas, envasadas o secas. Tomen jugos de fruta, pero en pequeñas cantidades.
4. **Tomar calcio.** Para formar huesos fuertes, sirvan leche baja en grasa o sin grasa y otros productos derivados de la leche varias veces al día. Si su hijo(a) es intolerante a la lactosa, sirva leche de soya fortificada con calcio.
5. **Reducir el azúcar.** Elijan alimentos y bebidas cuyo ingrediente principal no sea el azúcar ni los edulcorantes. El azúcar agrega calorías con muy poco, o ningún, valor nutritivo.



Fuente: Departamento de Agricultura de Estados Unidos, ChooseMyPlate.gov

FAMILY TALK

Please have a conversation with your child about his or her experience during our restaurant unit. Please write down your child's answers to the following questions.

Child's name: _____

1. What was your favorite part about playing "restaurant"? _____

2. What happens inside a restaurant? _____

3. Why do people like to go to restaurants? _____

4. Who works in a restaurant? _____

5. What is a menu? _____

6. What kinds of problems might happen in a restaurant? _____

7. What is the hardest part about working in a restaurant? _____

8. What is the best part about working in a restaurant? _____

CONVERSACIÓN FAMILIAR

Por favor converse con su hijo(a) acerca de su experiencia con la unidad sobre los restaurantes. Escriba las respuestas de su hijo(a) a las siguientes preguntas.

Nombre del niño o de la niña: _____

1. ¿Qué fue lo que más te gustó de jugar al “restaurante”? _____

2. ¿Qué sucede en un restaurante? _____

3. ¿Por qué les gusta a las personas ir a los restaurantes? _____

4. ¿Quiénes trabajan en un restaurante? _____

5. ¿Qué es un menú? _____

6. ¿Qué clase de problemas podría haber en un restaurante? _____

7. ¿Qué crees que es lo más difícil de trabajar en un restaurante? _____

8. ¿Qué crees que es lo mejor de trabajar en un restaurante? _____

Young Children and Art

Many children enjoy drawing and painting. These activities help young children develop small motor skills and express their ideas and feelings. The drawings and paintings of young children, however, usually look very different from the art on the walls of elementary school classrooms.

Two- and three-year-olds enjoy making marks and scribbles on a page but they are usually not able to draw objects and figures. Most four-year-olds can draw basic shapes and will begin drawing human figures. A young child's drawing of a person, however, may simply consist of one round shape that serves as both the body and the face. Around the age of five, many children will begin to add details to their figure drawings, such as fingers, hair, and ears.

Children should be allowed open-ended opportunities to freely experiment with art materials. If the art activity has a specific purpose, such as the creation of a classroom frieze (mural), teachers can support children's learning by drawing outlines, providing stencils, or cutting out shapes on which children can draw, color, glue, or paint. Adding dictated titles, labels, or captions to children's drawings also adds meaning to their art.

Children should be
allowed open-ended
opportunities to freely
experiment with
art materials.



Photo: Courtesy of Leslie Morrison.

Ask children for their permission before writing on their drawings. This models respect for children's work and encourages children to develop a sense of ownership in their creations.

Teaching Problem-Solving Skills

From a stuck truck to a broken crayon, children encounter problems, large and small, every day of their lives. As children grow, they must develop problem-solving skills that will help them make friends and be successful in school. Early childhood educators (and parents, too!) can teach problem-solving skills by supporting and guiding children as they struggle with everyday challenges.

Ask the child open-ended questions that help define the problem, such as, “What’s happening here that is making you feel frustrated?”

When a child encounters a problem, perhaps a conflict with another child or difficulty using a pair of scissors, do not rush to assist the child. If there is no danger to the child, allow the child to struggle with the problem. When you’re sure that the child needs assistance, help the child define the problem by describing what you see. “I see that you and your friend are both using the blocks and there are only a few blocks left,” or “I see that the scissors are tearing the paper instead of cutting it.” Ask the child open-ended questions that help define the problem, such as, “What’s happening here that is making you feel frustrated?”

Then help the child come up with some strategies for solving the problem. If possible, show that there is often more than one solution to every problem. If the problem is a conflict with another child, ask both children to suggest possible solutions. Then encourage the child or children to make a choice about how to solve the problem. It’s also important to follow up later and help the children reflect on their problem-solving experience. Ask, “How did your solution work?”

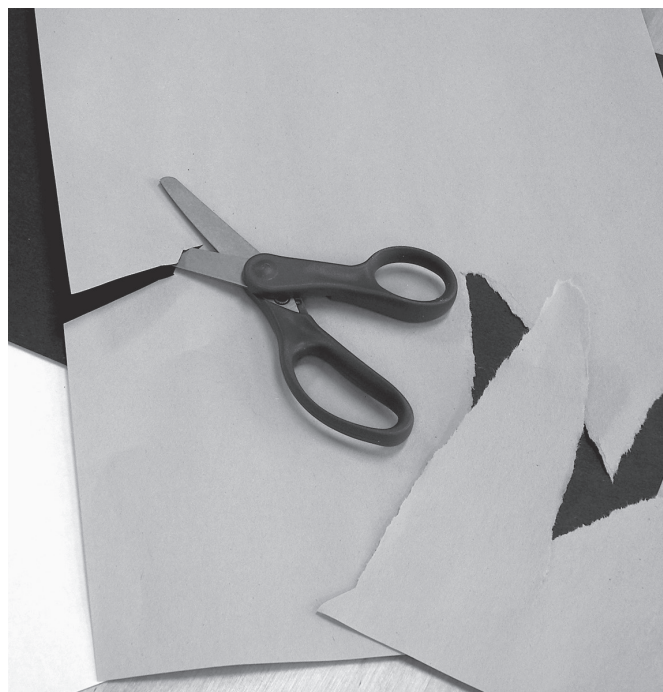


Photo: Courtesy of Leslie Morrison.

Young children learn to solve problems when they are active participants in discovering solutions.

Observing Children's Play

Observation is an important tool for assessing and understanding young children. By observing children's play, teachers can discover children's interests, learn about children's personalities, assess development, and identify areas that need practice. The challenge is observing children from an objective and unbiased perspective. It's difficult to avoid using our own assumptions, expectations, and feelings to interpret what we are observing.

Use the following questions to help guide your observations.

- What am I seeing?
- What does this child know how to do?
- What does this child find difficult or frustrating?
- What emotions does this child seem to show, through specific actions, language, and facial expressions?
- What does this child seem to want?
- What is this child trying to accomplish?

As you observe, document what you are seeing by writing short, descriptive phrases and sentences. Focus on one child at a time. For example, "the child pulls on the doll's leg" is descriptive and objective. But "the child is mean to the doll" is not. Try to focus only on observable facts. Describe the actions you see. Write down specific words and phrases the child uses.



Photo: Courtesy of Leslie Morrison.

Take a moment to observe children every day.

EXAMPLES OF OBJECTIVE SENTENCES:

"The child places a square block on top of a rectangular block."

"The child says to another child, 'Go away!'"

"The child hits the clay with her fist and frowns."

"The child opens the book in her lap and points her finger at one of the illustrations."

"The child looks up at the teacher's face and smiles."

Welcoming Families

It feels good to be recognized and greeted by name. Create a welcoming atmosphere in your classroom by greeting children and adults by name each time they arrive. If a child's family speaks a language other than English at home, learn how to greet family members in their home language.

A written invitation is not enough to ensure families are aware of the event and have included it in their plans.

When scheduling a family event at school, choose a day and time that will be most convenient, especially for working families. If possible, survey families ahead of time regarding several different dates and times. Provide a meal and transportation to make your event more convenient. Use more than one method to communicate with families about a school event. A written invitation is not enough to ensure that all families are aware of the event and have included it in their plans. Phone calls and face-to-face conversations are important follow-up measures.

At the event, greet family members and provide name tags. Parents and family members usually feel most comfortable when they are given a specific task or role. Invite parents to look at children's art on display or browse through children's storybooks.



Photo: Courtesy of Leslie Morrison.

A warm greeting helps parents feel welcome in your classroom.

Cooking with Young Children

The variety of sights, smells, tastes, and textures of food make cooking with young children a wonderful learning experience. Children develop language, use math skills, and learn about nutrition. Most young children really enjoy the tasks involved with preparing a recipe, such as pouring, stirring, and rolling. They enjoy cutting with safety knives, such as the child-safe knives sold for carving pumpkins. Cooking projects are best supervised in small groups of 4 or 5 children. This helps reduce the amount of time children must wait for a turn.

Cooking with children is a perfect time for sharing ideas about healthy eating.

Safety and sanitation are the primary concerns when cooking with young children. A cooking project must take place in a safe, protected area, away from hot ovens and sharp utensils. Care must also be taken to reduce the spread of germs.

When planning cooking projects, always consider children's food allergies or food restrictions. Nurture an inclusive community by using only those recipes that will allow all children to fully participate. For more information about how to assure the safety of children with food allergies, visit the Food Allergy Research & Education website at www.foodallergy.org.

Cooking with children is a perfect time for sharing ideas about healthy eating. The USDA MyPlate, found at www.choosemyplate.gov, shows current nutrition recommendations. The plate is divided into colored slices that represent the various food groups. The colors on the plate can be used to show children that grains, meat and beans, vegetables, fruits, and milk are important parts of a healthy diet.

JUICE POPS

Ingredients and Materials

fruit juice (any flavor)

paper cups

a small pitcher

foil

craft sticks

Instructions

Label cups with children's names. Invite each child to take a turn pouring juice into his or her cup. Assist each child in covering the cup with a piece of foil. Help children poke a craft stick through the foil so that the stick stands up in the middle. Freeze the juice for several hours. Remove the paper cup and enjoy!

Guiding Children's Play with Open-Ended Questions

A question such as “What color is your hat?” does not encourage learning as much as “Why do people wear hats?” This is because “What color is your hat?” is not an open-ended question. An open-ended question is a question that cannot be answered with just one word, such as “yes,” “no,” or “blue.”

An open-ended question has more than one correct answer. Open-ended questions promote creativity, problem-solving skills, cognitive growth, and seeing things from another point of view.

**An open-ended question has more
than one correct answer.**

Teachers can use open-ended questions to guide and extend children's play. They should be used sparingly and timed carefully. If a child is building a tower with blocks and progressing well, there is no need to ask any questions. But if the tower tips over and the child asks for help, the teacher might ask, “Why do you think the tower fell?” and “What could we do to make the tower stronger?”



Photo: Courtesy of Leslie Morrison.

Examples of open-ended questions include:

- What do you think about . . . ?
- What would happen if . . . ?
- What else can we try?
- Why do you think that happened?
- How did you . . . ?
- What did you notice about . . . ?
- What can you tell me about . . . ?

Wooden blocks are a good example of open-ended materials.

Modeling Literacy with Environmental Print

Learning to read is a gradual process that begins at birth. Children begin to value reading and writing when they see their family members and caregivers engaged in literacy activities. When teachers write down important words and display those words on the walls of their classrooms, they are creating environmental print. The process of creating environmental print exposes children to literacy concepts and helps them to begin to make connections between spoken language and written words.

Children will benefit most from environmental print when they are active participants in the writing process. For example, during a group discussion about restaurants, a teacher may ask the children, “Who works in a restaurant?” and then make a chart of the children’s responses. The word chart may include *server*, *cook*, and *dishwasher*.

The process of writing the list demonstrates to the children that their ideas are important. The teacher is also modeling important writing behaviors, such as creating text from left to right. While most young children will not begin to read, or decode, for several more years, even three- and four-year-olds may begin to recognize the correspondence between specific letters and specific sounds, or phonemes. These kinds of experiences help children develop early literacy skills.

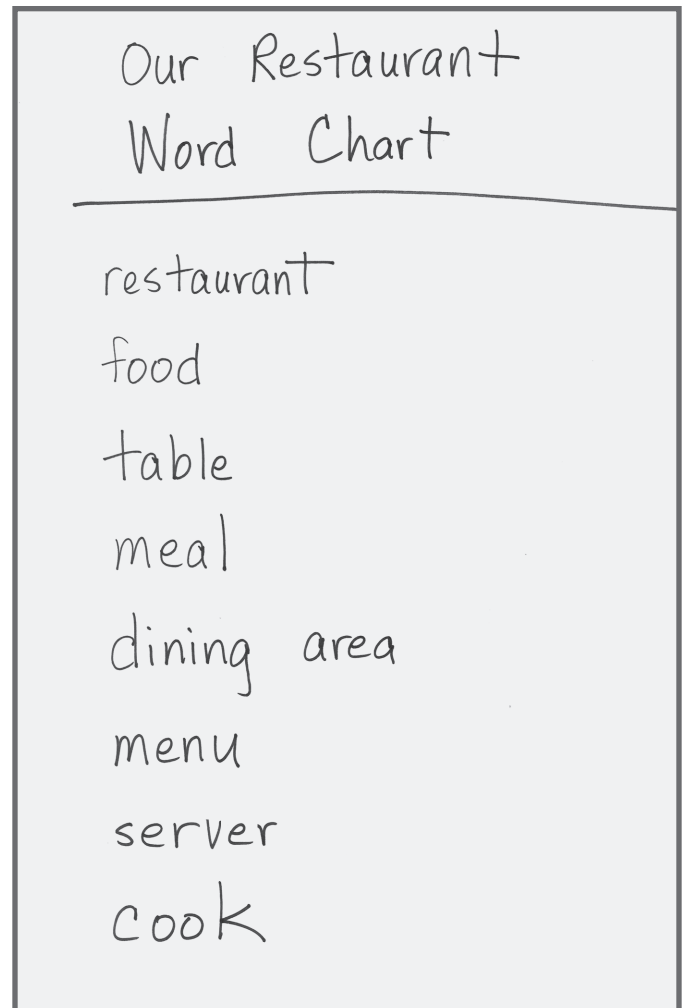


Photo: Courtesy of Leslie Morrison.

The process of creating a word chart demonstrates for children that print is important.

Story Dictation

In a preschool classroom, a child and a teacher sit together at a low table. The teacher holds a pencil above a blank page. The child turns to his teacher and says, “The dragon hid the jewels in the cave . . .” The day’s story dictation session has begun.

When a child tells a story and an adult writes down what the child says, this is called “story dictation.” A child’s story may consist of just one important word, such as “birthday.” A child’s story may be a description of a person or event, such as a trip to the dentist. A child’s story may also be full of magic, modeled after the folk tales and fairy tales the child hears at home and in school.

Children feel the most ownership for their stories when adults refrain from directing them to tell their stories in a certain way.

In most early childhood classrooms, free play is the best time for scheduling story dictation. Offer story dictation as an option at the writing or art table. Write down the child’s words exactly as a child says them. Don’t worry about mistakes in grammar or words that don’t make sense. The most important idea is that the child has the opportunity to see his or her words in print.

Children feel the most ownership for their stories when adults refrain from directing them to tell their stories in a certain way. However, some children will benefit from just a little support to help them create a story.

TEACHER: How does your story begin?

CHILD: It’s about a kitty.

TEACHER: (writing) “It’s about a kitty.” (waits, then asks) What happens to the kitty?

CHILD: A kitty got lost. She didn’t know what to do.

TEACHER: (writing) “A kitty got lost. She didn’t know what to do.” What happens next?

CHILD: She cried.

TEACHER: (writing) “She cried.”

CHILD: But then her mama finded her. Then she was happy.

TEACHER: (writing) “But then her mama finded her. Then she was happy.” (waits, then asks) Is there anything else you want me to write?

CHILD: No, that’s the end.

Children become especially engaged in the story dictation process when their stories are dramatized or “acted out” in a group. Gather children together and assign roles randomly. Read the story aloud, inviting children to move their bodies to show what is happening in the story. Acting out stories takes very little time, but the process motivates children to continue to tell more and more stories.



Photo: Courtesy of Leslie Morrison.

Many children enjoy dictating stories inspired by their artwork.

Open-Ended Props and Playthings

We've all seen it before: The young child tears off the wrapping paper and, throwing aside the expensive toy, proceeds to gleefully play with the cardboard box it came in. The truth is that most young children prefer everyday objects such as boxes, rocks, string, and paper towel tubes over expensive toys and gadgets.

Pretending with open-ended materials encourages complex and creative thinking.

The good news is that playing with these safe, open-ended materials will stimulate more creativity and problem solving than ordinary toys. An “open-ended” object or toy is something that can be used in more than one way. In pretend play, a box may become a house, a boat, a chair, or a mountain. Pretending with open-ended materials encourages complex and creative thinking.

This is especially true when it comes to pretend food. Many toy companies sell plastic or rubber food that looks almost like the real thing. One concern with toy food is that it may limit the opportunities to think creatively and abstractly. When pretending to cook and eat, children may feel that their menu is limited by the plastic food they find in the toy basket.

Also, toys are expensive! Instead of investing in fancy toys, look for interesting materials at yard sales, thrift stores, and in your recycling bins. For restaurant play, a bunch of old pots and pans from a yard sale are an exciting option. Use an old computer keyboard for a cash register. For food, use colorful scraps of paper. Check your recycling bin for paper scraps and other items that make great props and playthings.

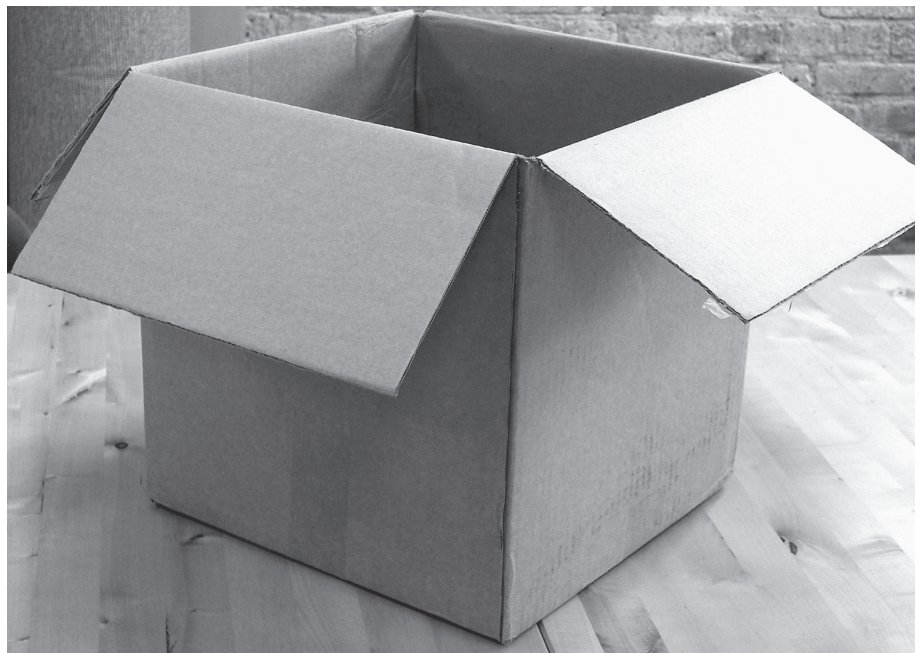


Photo: Courtesy of Leslie Morrison.

A cardboard box is an open-ended prop that inspires many different kinds of play.

Teaching Early Math Skills

At the local grocery store, a young child sits in a stroller and watches his father place apples in a bag. “One,” “three,” “ten,” “six,” the child counts. Although this child is still making frequent errors in his counting, he is well on his way to learning that math skills will play an important role in his world.

When young children explore their world and play with friends, they often use mathematical concepts to understand their experiences. Children are frequently comparing things, navigating space, balancing objects, and negotiating with others. We may not call these experiences “math,” but they are all activities that build a foundation for a child’s mathematical thinking.

One of the ways we help children understand their world is by teaching them to count. Young children between the ages of three and five are still in what Piaget would call a “pre-operational” stage, which means they are not yet able to think logically. This means that learning to count is a gradual process that children will not fully master until they enter elementary school.

The best way to teach young children to count is to model counting using concrete objects that children can touch, hold, and manipulate. Use items such as blocks, sea shells, or spoons to demonstrate that we use one counting word for each object.

one 

two 

three 

Over time, children will begin to understand that the last counting word is the answer to the question “How many?”

It’s normal for young children to make frequent mistakes when learning to count. Encourage children to use counting to solve problems and make decisions. Allow children to experiment with counting and other math concepts by encouraging them to make guesses and comparisons.



Photo: Courtesy of Leslie Morrison.

Children learn to count by touching and manipulating objects in their environment, such as fingers and toes.

Scaffolding Children's Learning

The theories of Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky have become widely accepted among American educators. Vygotsky, who lived from 1896–1934, developed a sociocultural theory of development based on the idea that children learn primarily through their interactions with other people.

The influence of Vygotsky on early childhood education can be found in the now common use of scaffolding as an instructional strategy. *Scaffolding* is a teaching strategy in which the teacher supports the child's learning in a way that allows the child to complete a task or master a concept that he or she would not be able to do independently. The goal of scaffolding is to gradually withdraw the teacher's support as the child's competence grows. The idea behind scaffolding is expressed in Vygotsky's words as: "What a child can do in cooperation today, he can do alone tomorrow."

Vygotsky described the gap between what a child is able to do with assistance and what a child is able to do alone as the *zone of proximal development*, or ZPD. According to Vygotsky, the role of the teacher is to provide the child with experiences that are within the child's ZPD—challenging enough to require assistance from others but accessible enough that the child can begin to master it on her own.

There is a growing body of research that shows how scaffolding techniques foster cognitive growth in young children. When using the *Pre-K Storypath* curriculum, there are a variety of ways teachers scaffold children's learning. These include thinking out loud, accepting partially correct responses, and modeling.

Thinking Out Loud

When teachers "think out loud," they carry on a conversation with themselves that illustrates their thought process. A teacher who wants to help children understand the weather might say, "I think it is raining outside. I see some drops of water on the window. I wonder if the rain will stop soon. Hmm. I see some sunshine starting to peek through the clouds. I think that means the rain will stop soon." When we think out loud we are not only demonstrating how to solve problems and draw conclusions, we are also modeling *metacognition*, the awareness of one's own thinking process.

Accepting Partially Correct Responses

During group discussions and informal conversations with children, teachers ask open-ended questions that stimulate children's thinking. An important way to encourage and develop children's participation is to accept partially correct responses and use them as cues to probe for further consideration. A teacher may ask, "What does a waiter do?" and a child may answer, "He brings the food." This answer is correct but incomplete. So the teacher can extend the child's thinking by saying, "Yes, he brings the food. But how does he know what food to bring?" This question challenges the child to think more deeply about the role of the waiter.

Modeling

Teachers scaffold children's learning by modeling tasks, behaviors, and processes. This may occur formally, such as when a teacher demonstrates for the class how to count ten pennies. But modeling also happens informally throughout the school day. For example, one of the best ways for adults to support children's learning, according to Vygotsky, is to participate in children's dramatic play. When a teacher takes on a role in a pretend scenario, such as becoming a customer who visits the children's pretend restaurant, the teacher models important language, behaviors, and social skills. This modeling that takes place within the context of dramatic play is particularly valuable to preschool-age children. As Vygotsky said, "In play, a child is always above his average age, above his daily behavior; in play, it is as though he were a head taller than himself."

RESOURCES

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Teaching Young Children Who Are English Learners

English learners, or EL, is a term that applies to children whose home language is not English. Working with preschool-age children who are English learners requires a different approach than working with older children because preschoolers are still developing their home language. Yet most early childhood teachers do not receive any specialized training that will prepare them for teaching children from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds. This article presents a brief summary of best practices for working with young children who are English learners.

Respect and Preserve the Child's Home Language

Young children who are English learners need to develop their home language along with English. The importance of preserving the home language is reflected in the position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), *Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education: A Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children*. According to this statement, early childhood programs are responsible for both promoting the acquisition of English and preserving children's home languages. Preserving a child's home language also helps to support and encourage the child's acquisition of English. A child who is developing new language skills and vocabulary in the home language is also building a greater capacity for learning English.

Work Closely with Families

One of the best ways to demonstrate respect for a child's home language is to build a close and supportive partnership with the child's parents and family. Ideally, the teachers and caregivers who work with children who are English learners also speak the child's home language. When this is not possible, the support of bilingual volunteers and family members is needed. Make sure all written materials, such as parent handbooks, are available in the family's home language.

Establish Predictable Routines

Predictable classroom routines are good for all young children, but children who are English learners, in particular, benefit from the repetition of classroom

routines and rituals, such as the singing of a clean-up song at the end of free play. As teachers lead the children through these daily routines, children who are English learners also benefit from the repetition of key words or phrases, such as, "time to eat" or "let's go inside."

Use Gestures and Visual Aids

We know that young children learn best when all their senses are engaged, and this is especially true of children who are English learners. During conversation, use gestures and visual aids, such as picture cards or puppets, to visually demonstrate what you are trying to communicate. Whenever possible, use touch, taste, and smell to help support communication. This is why mealtimes often present excellent opportunities for conversation.

Create an Open and Welcoming Environment

Every time a child tries something new, there is a sense of risk. Children must feel that their mistakes are acceptable. Teachers can help create an open and welcoming environment for children who are English learners by responding to every effort a child makes to communicate with encouragement. An open and welcoming environment is also a place where communication is not rushed. Allow time for conversations to develop.

RESOURCES

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Dealing with Challenging Behavior

When early childhood teachers talk about stress on the job, one of the most frequent causes mentioned is children with challenging behaviors. The term “challenging behavior” includes any behavior that interferes with children’s learning and relationships. These behaviors might be aggressive, such as hitting, or they may be more passive, such as ignoring a teacher when she is speaking.

Early childhood teachers need both support and information to deal with children’s challenging behaviors. Challenging behaviors can be reduced through collaboration with parents and colleagues and through a careful investigation of the causes of the behavior. While some challenging behaviors may be caused by physical, emotional, or neurological conditions, such as attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), other behaviors may be part of a child’s temperament or learning style or they may be caused by specific stresses or hardships at home or at school.

Work with Families

One of the most important steps in responding to a child’s challenging behavior is building strong partnerships with parents and family members. Spend time listening to parents talk about their children and learn as much as you can about each family’s cultural background. Home visits are a wonderful opportunity to reach out to families and share information in a positive and supportive manner. Let parents know that their involvement in their children’s school experience is valued and appreciated.

Develop Consistent Relationships

All children benefit from consistent, nurturing relationships with their teachers and caregivers. This is especially true for children with challenging behaviors. Try to minimize the number of adults and authority figures the child interacts with over the course of the school day. Designate one teacher to be the primary contact for the child’s family. That teacher can take the lead in establishing a supportive and nurturing relationship with the child and in communicating regularly with the child’s family.

Modify the Environment and Activities

Careful observation of a child may reveal specific triggers that lead to challenging behavior. For example, a crowded hallway and loud voices during the transition to the playground may trigger a child’s aggressive behavior. Make a list of possible triggers and work with your teaching team to try to reduce or eliminate those triggers by adapting the environment, such as clearing furniture away from a crowded doorway, or by adapting the activity, such as taking children outside in smaller groups.

Seek Additional Support

It is important that teachers feel they are not alone when dealing with challenging behaviors. Seek support and advice from supervisors, mentors, consultants, and co-workers. Many teachers find that keeping a journal about their experiences helps them to reflect, develop empathy, and identify behavior patterns. Also, the resources listed below may provide helpful information.

RESOURCES

Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. *From Best Practices to Breakthrough Impacts: A Science-Based Approach to Building a More Promising Future for Young Children and Families*. May 2016. www.developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/from-best-practices-to-breakthrough-impacts.

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Teacher Teamwork

An early childhood classroom is a place where young children learn to work cooperatively with other children. We strive to teach young children to listen to each other and treat each other with respect and kindness. Often we have similar goals for ourselves as professionals: we strive to work cooperatively with our co-workers and to create teaching teams that are respectful and collaborative.

There are a number of different models for team teaching. One common approach is a system of turn taking, when teachers rotate the roles of leading and supporting. Another model is parallel teaching, when teachers simultaneously lead smaller groups of children. Among these and other models there are some shared characteristics of successful teams. These characteristics include clear expectations, good communication, and a diversity of talents and opinions.

Clear Expectations

The expectations for how teachers work together may be expressed formally or informally. Formal expectations may be described in job descriptions and staff handbooks. Also, teacher supervisors may state expectations directly and provide specific instructions or suggestions for how teams of teachers function, such as requiring that teaching teams meet together and complete a weekly planning form.

Informally, teachers may develop their own set of expectations for working together. For example, suppose two teachers work together as co-teachers, equally sharing responsibilities. If one teacher is having a stressful week and is not able to do her fair share, the other teacher may do extra work, with the expectation that the favor will soon be returned. It is important that these expectations are discussed openly, to avoid hard feelings later. The more clearly teachers express these expectations to each other, the better teachers will understand and trust each other.

Good Communication

The foundation of team teaching is good communication. Sometimes the greatest communication challenge is not speaking, but listening. Many of the same techniques we use with children to encourage language skills are useful for learning to listen to our colleagues. Ask open-ended questions, such as, “How do you feel about that?” that encourage a thoughtful

response. Use your body language and eye contact to show that you are paying attention and interested in what the other person has to say. After the other person has spoken, use clarifying questions to make sure you fully understand the other point of view.

Conflicts are a natural part of any healthy relationship and teaching teams are no exception. Prevent conflicts from escalating into heated arguments by always assuming the best intentions of your co-workers. Remember that you all have the best interests of the children at heart, even when you have different ideas and opinions.

A Diversity of Talents and Opinions

A diversity of talents and opinions is an important ingredient for creative teaching and exciting collaboration. When teachers develop complementary strengths and interests, the work of the team becomes more energized and interesting. For example, if one teacher has a passion for the visual arts, that teacher could take the lead on developing long-term art projects, ordering art supplies, and maintaining the art area of the classroom. Another teacher may be more interested in working with parents and families, and that teacher could take the lead in developing new strategies for communicating with parents, maintaining the parent bulletin board, and providing resources to parents of children with special needs.

An inclusive, welcoming, and creative classroom is a place where differences are celebrated and children are not expected to fit a mold. The same is true for teaching teams. Each teacher has a unique set of talents and strengths to offer the team.

RESOURCES

Cramer, Sharon F. *The Special Educator's Guide to Collaboration: Improving Relationships with Co-Teachers, Teams, and Families*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2006.

Curtis, Deb, and Margie Carter. *Learning Together with Young Children: A Curriculum Framework for Reflective Teachers*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf, 2007.

Masterson, Marie L. “Small Steps with Big Rewards: Connecting with Coteachers.” *Young Children* 70, no. 5 (November 2015): 28–33. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/ycyoungchildren.70.5.28>.

O'Neill, Cassandra, and Monica Brinkerhoff. *Five Elements of Collective Leadership for Early Childhood Professionals*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2018.

Communication with Families

An essential part of early childhood education is building strong relationships between teachers and families. The tool for building these relationships is good communication. Many teachers master half of this job: they keep parents and family members well informed about what is happening at school. But good communication goes both ways, and early childhood teachers must be as open to receiving information as they are to giving it.

Parents and family members are valuable resources to teachers because they know more about their children than anyone else. They are the source of important information about their children's routines, schedule, growth, and health. They know about what makes their children smile, laugh, and cry. They know about their family's culture, language, values, and traditions. All of this information can be enormously helpful to teachers. But teachers must earn families' trust before parents and family members will freely share this information.

Establish Trust

To set the stage for building trust and two-way communication, teachers can demonstrate in a variety of ways that they are open to receiving information from parents. Written materials such as handbooks and newsletters can emphasize the importance of parent and family communication. Teachers can schedule regular opportunities for home-school communication, such as weekly check-in times, phone calls, home visits, and informal or formal conferences. Teachers also demonstrate respect and understanding for families with their body language and manner during conversations with parents and family members. Taking time to listen without distraction or interruption encourages parents and family members to communicate.

Value Each Family's Cultural Background

Understanding and valuing families' cultural backgrounds is an important part of building strong relationships with families. Understanding culture means looking beyond assumptions and stereotypes. Culture influences almost everything we do. Culture shapes our values, beliefs, language, relationships, and child-rearing practices. Families may share information about culture directly, informing teachers or school staff about important beliefs and practices. But for the most part, teachers will learn

about a family's culture through observation and conversation.

Resolve Conflict

Often teachers are not especially aware of a family's culture until there is a conflict between the values or practices at home and the values or practices at school. For example, suppose a child is having difficulty getting to sleep at nap time. The teacher asks the parent to send a teddy bear or soft toy to school to help soothe the child at nap time. The parent refuses.

This teacher may feel surprised, confused, and frustrated because she thinks the parent is not supporting her efforts to help the child fall asleep at school. These feelings of surprise, confusion, or frustration are good indicators that culture may be playing a role in this conflict. At these difficult times, it is more important than ever to remember that communication goes two ways. Rather than expressing her frustration to the parent, this teacher might begin asking some questions of this parent in order to find out more information about how this child functions at home. This family may have some very specific beliefs about how children should be soothed and comforted at nap time. It is likely that good communication will lead to new ideas, shared understanding, and a successful resolution to this conflict.

RESOURCES

Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. *From Best Practices to Breakthrough Impacts: A Science-Based Approach to Building a More Promising Future for Young Children and Families*. May 2016. www.developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/from-best-practices-to-breakthrough-impacts.

Evans-Santiago, Bre, and Miranda Lin. "Preschool through Grade 3: Inclusion with Sensitivity—Teaching Children with LGBTQ Families." *Young Children* 71, no. 2 (May 2016): 56–63. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/ycyoungchildren.71.2.56>.

González, Katia. "Two Homes, One Classroom: Inclusive Practices That Work." *Teaching Young Children* 10, no. 3 (February/March 2017).

Head Start, Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center. "Community Engagement." <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/community-engagement>.

Muhs, Mary. *Family Engagement in Early Childhood Settings*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2019.

Nemeth, Karen, Derry Koralek, and Kelly Ramsey. *Families and Educators: Building Great Relationships that Support Young Children*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2019.

Using Observation and Portfolios for Child Assessment

Assessment is an important and valuable part of teaching young children. Child assessment is a process that includes documenting and evaluating the growth and progress of individual children. The assessment challenge in early childhood education is finding an assessment process that is appropriate for young children. Tools like standardized achievement tests are not going to work well with preschoolers. The assessment of young children must be authentic, that is, based on the play and behaviors that spontaneously engage young children. Two important authentic assessment practices are the use of classroom observation and the creation of child portfolios.

Classroom Observation

The word “observation” means something much more than just looking. The observation of a child includes the collection of information, in the form of notes or checklists, that can be used to report on children’s growth and progress. Becoming a good observer takes time and practice, because the most useful information is collected when the observer is able to look objectively at the child and make no judgments or assumptions.

One of the uses of observation is to document the tasks and skills a child has mastered. This is useful information because it helps teachers understand what children can do and then guide children to new challenges. For documenting the mastery of specific skills and tasks, an observation checklist can be very helpful. Teachers may choose from published checklists, such as those contained in the *Child Observation Form*, or they may create one of their own, based on goals and objectives of their curriculum.

Another use of observation is to collect brief descriptions or anecdotes of children’s play, explorations, and interactions. Because anecdotes are more detailed than checklists, these descriptions can help bring a child’s learning experiences to life.

Child Portfolios

A portfolio is a collection of documents that illustrate a child’s learning. Ideally, a portfolio is more than just a file folder full of drawings.

The process of building a child’s portfolio reveals important information that can be used to monitor a child’s growth over time.

One significant feature of portfolio assessment is that it must be ongoing. If document collection occurs regularly over a long period of time, the child’s progress becomes visible. For example, a child’s self-portrait in the spring of the school year, compared to a self-portrait collected in the fall, may reveal significant improvements in the child’s fine motor skills as well as self-concept.

In addition to artwork, portfolios may contain

- anecdotal records
- samples of children’s conversation
- dictated sentences and stories
- photos or notes documenting a child’s experience using manipulatives, such as puzzles or pattern blocks
- children’s writing samples
- photos of children engaged in dramatic play or outdoor play

Portfolios can also be created electronically. Paper documents can be scanned and turned into PDFs. Creating electronic portfolios opens up the possibility of creating audio and video samples to document children’s learning. Storing portfolios electronically also solves storage problems and, in some cases, creates more opportunities for sharing children’s work with parents.

RESOURCES

Bohart, Holly, and Rossella Procopio. *Spotlight on Young Children: Observation and Assessment*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2018.

Gronlund, Gaye, and Marlyn James. *Focused Observations: How to Observe Children for Assessment and Curriculum Planning*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf, 2005.

Helm, Judy Harris, Sallee Beneke, and Kathy Steinheimer. *Windows on Learning: Documenting Young Children’s Work*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2007.

Shabazian, Ani N. “Birth to Grade 3: The Role of Documentation in Fostering Learning.” *Young Children* 71, no. 3 (July 2016): 73–79. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/47cyoungchildren.71.3.73>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Picture Books in English

Cohn, Jessica. *On the Job in a Restaurant*. South Egremont, MA: Red Chair, 2017. Photographs and text describe different restaurant jobs. Nonfiction.

Colby, Jennifer. *Restaurant*. Ann Arbor, MI: Cherry Lake, 2017. Photographs and text describe different aspects of restaurants. Nonfiction.

Detlefsen, Lisl. *Right This Very Minute: A Table-to-Farm Book about Food and Farming*. Washington, DC: Feeding Minds, 2019. Colorful illustrations show where the food on our tables comes from. Nonfiction.

Fischer, Ellen. *If an Armadillo Went to a Restaurant*. Minneapolis, MN: Scarletta Kids, 2014. Different animals order different foods at a restaurant. Fiction.

Gavin, Ciara. *Bear Likes Jam*. New York: Knopf, 2017. Bear learns about eating healthy foods. Fiction.

Liebman, Dan. *I Want to Be a Chef*. Richmond Hill, ON: Firefly, 2013. Photographs and speech bubbles introduce different kinds of chefs. Nonfiction.

Lin, Grace. *Fortune Cookie Fortunes*. New York: Knopf, 2004. A Chinese American family visits a restaurant and ponders their fortunes. Fiction.

McGuirk, Leslie. *Wiggins Learns His Manners at the Four Seasons Restaurant*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick, 2009. A puppy's parents take him to a fancy restaurant to learn manners. Fiction.

Sendak, Maurice. *In the Night Kitchen*. New York: HarperCollins, 1998. Bakers in a dreamland kitchen create an unusual cake. Fiction.

Staake, Bob. *The Donut Chef*. New York: Dragonfly, 2008. A donut chef opens up a successful donut shop. Fiction.

Wellington, Monica. *Pizza at Sally's*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2006. Simple drawings detail how the pizza at Sally's Pizzeria is made. Fiction.

Yolen, Jane. *How Do Dinosaurs Eat Their Food?* New York: Blue Sky, 2005. The author ponders if dinosaurs would be rude and messy at meal times. Fiction.

Picture Books in Spanish

Mora, Pat. *Let's Eat/A Comer!* (Bilingual). New York: Rayo, 2008. A family eats dinner together. Fiction.

Radabaugh, Melinda Beth. *Voy al restaurante (Going to a Restaurant)*. Mankato, MN: Capstone, 2003. Nonfiction.

Rubin, Adam. *Fiesta Secreta de Pizza (The Secret Pizza Party)*. New York: Puffin, 2015. A raccoon plans a secret pizza party. Fiction.

Professional Resources

Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. *From Best Practices to Breakthrough Impacts: A Science-Based Approach to Building a More Promising Future for Young Children and Families*. May 2016. www.developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/from-best-practices-to-breakthrough-impacts.

Gadzickowski, Ann. *Story Dictation: A Guide for Early Childhood Professionals*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf, 2007. Practical information for teachers about including story dictation in classroom routines and curriculum.

Gillanders, Cristina, and Rossella Procopio. *Spotlight on Young Children: Equity and Diversity*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2019.

Hullinger-Sirken, Holly, and Lynn Staley. "Preschool Through Grade 3: Understanding Writing Development—Catie's Continuum." *Young Children* 71, no. 5 (November 2016): 74–78. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4619999>.

Kalich, Karrie, Lynn Arnold, and Carole Russell. *The Early Sprouts Cookbook*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf, 2012. Healthy recipes for preschool children.

Kroeger, Janice, Abigail E. Recker, and Alexandra C. Gunn. "Tate and the Pink Coat: Exploring Gender and Enacting Anti-Bias Principles." *Young Children* 74, no. 1 (March 2019). <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/mar2019/exploring-gender-enacting-anti-bias>.

Masterson, Marie L., and Holly Bohart. *Serious Fun: How Guided Play Extends Children's Learning*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2019.

Mraz, Kristine, Alison Porcelli, and Cheryl Tyler. *Purposeful Play: A Teacher's Guide to Igniting Deep and Joyful Learning Across the Day*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2016.

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. *Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.17226/24677>.

www.naeyc.org
National Association for the Education of Young Children. Online resources include position statements and articles.

Neuman, Susan, Carol Copple, and Sue Bredekamp. *Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2000. Guidelines and ideas for teaching early literacy skills.

Paley, Vivian. *A Child's Work: The Importance of Fantasy Play*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005. Explores the value of children's dramatic play and how it helps children construct meaning.

Pelo, Ann, and Margie Carter. *From Teaching to Thinking: A Pedagogy for Reimagining Our Work*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2019. Support and guidance for developing children's capacity as thinkers and researchers.

www.choosemyplate.gov
United States Department of Agriculture nutrition website. Online resources include "MyPlate Kids' Place," a kid-friendly version of the USDA's most recent nutrition recommendations.

Wolf, Laurie Goldrich. *The Do It Myself Kids' Cookbook: Nothing Hot, Nothing Sharp*. New York: Downtown Bookworks, 2010.

EARLY LEARNING GOALS AND STANDARDS

Each *Pre-K Storypath* unit provides opportunities for children to develop skills and knowledge across all domains of early learning. The following chart shows the major early learning goals of the *Restaurant* unit. These goals are based on state and national standards.

	Episode 1	Episode 2	Episode 3	Episode 4	Episode 5
Social-Emotional Development					
Demonstrate progress in expressing feelings, needs, and opinions.	•	•	•	•	•
Increase ability to interact with peers by helping, sharing, and discussing.	•	•	•	•	•
Participate in a variety of dramatic play activities that become more extended and complex.	•	•	•	•	•
Language Development					
Demonstrate an increasing ability to listen to and understand conversations and stories.	•	•	•	•	•
Understand and use an increasingly complex and varied vocabulary.	•	•	•	•	•
Develop increasing abilities to understand and use language.	•	•	•	•	•
Cognitive Development: Early Literacy					
Develop an increasing awareness of print and its different forms and functions.	•	•	•	•	•
Show a growing interest in books and a variety of print material.	•	•	•		•
Begin to represent ideas, stories, and experiences through pictures, dictation, play, and scribbles.	•	•	•	•	•
Develop an understanding that words are made up of letters, each with a unique name, shape, and sound.	•	•	•	•	•
Cognitive Development: Social Studies					
Explore social roles in the family and workplace through play.	•	•	•	•	•
Begin to express and understand concepts of geography, economics, and community in the contexts of the classroom and home.		•	•	•	•
Begin to express and understand basic concepts of health, safety, and nutrition.			•		•
Cognitive Development: Mathematics					
Demonstrate increasing awareness of numbers and counting as a means of solving problems and determining quantity.			•	•	•
Begin to associate number concepts and written numerals in meaningful ways.			•	•	
Cognitive Development: Science					
Develop increased ability to observe, discuss, and compare common objects and materials.			•		
Begin to develop knowledge of and respect for our bodies and the environment.			•		
Cognitive Development: Problem Solving					
Participate in discussions about fairness, friendship, responsibility, and differences.	•	•	•	•	
Organize ideas in new ways.	•	•	•	•	•
Participate in problem-solving discussions and decision making.	•	•	•	•	•

CHILD OBSERVATION FORM

How to Use This Form

Use this form to track the progress of individual children over the course of the *Restaurant* unit. After each of the five episodes, select a number from the Rating Key that best describes the child's progress for each of the objectives. This form does not include every objective from the unit. Instead, a representative sample of the most significant objectives has been selected for each episode.

The checklist is followed by space for you to record notes and anecdotes for each episode. This form can be included in a child's individual portfolio. It can also be used to collect and communicate assessment information during parent conferences.

You may also want to use the *Group Assessment Summary* to tally the progress of the whole class.

Child's name _____

Teacher _____

Group/Classroom _____

Child's birthdate _____

Unit start date _____

Unit end date _____

Child's age at start of unit _____

Child's name _____

Rating Key**1** = not observed**2** = there is evidence that this skill/concept is **emerging****3** = there is evidence that this skill/concept is **mastered**

Episode 1: Create the Restaurant	Rating
Social-Emotional Development Listens to the ideas of others	
Language Development Contributes to the group discussion	
Understands and follows oral directions	
Cognitive Development: Early Literacy Listens attentively to a reading of a picture book	
Recognizes (comments on, points to) print on the frieze	
Cognitive Development: Social Studies Shows an understanding that restaurants provide a place for people to gather together to eat and socialize	
Cognitive Development: Problem Solving Uses ideas from the class discussion to contribute to the creation of the frieze	

Episode 2: Create the Restaurant Workers	Rating
Social-Emotional Development Takes turns and shares materials	
Language Development Allows others to speak without frequent interruptions	
Uses new vocabulary in speech	
Cognitive Development: Early Literacy Dictates sentences about the restaurant and/or restaurant workers	
Cognitive Development: Social Studies Shows an understanding that there are many job roles in restaurants	
Cognitive Development: Problem Solving Uses ideas from the class discussion to create restaurant workers	

Episode 3: Learn about Food	Rating
Social-Emotional Development Uses language to communicate needs	
Language Development Contributes to group discussions	
Understands and follows oral directions	
Uses new vocabulary in speech	
Cognitive Development: Early Literacy Shows an understanding that print, such as a recipe or menu, has meaning	
Cognitive Development: Science Shows an understanding that our bodies need healthy food to grow strong	
Shows an understanding that people need to eat a balanced diet by choosing from each of the food groups	

Episode 4: Solve a Problem	Rating
Social-Emotional Development Listens to ideas of others	
Language Development Allows others to speak without frequent interruptions	
Contributes to group discussions	
Cognitive Development: Early Literacy Dictates sentences about the restaurant and/or restaurant workers	
Cognitive Development: Math Shows an understanding that restaurant customers must pay money for the food they order	
Cognitive Development: Problem Solving Participates in solving a problem	

Episode 5: Families Visit the Restaurant	Rating
Social-Emotional Development Participates in the planning and preparation for the family visit to the restaurant	
Language Development Understands and follows oral directions	
Cognitive Development: Early Literacy Dictates sentences as part of the <i>Family Talk</i> activity	
Cognitive Development: Social Studies Shows an understanding that restaurant workers work together to do their jobs	

Child's name _____

Notes

Episode 1: Create the Restaurant

Episode 2: Create the Restaurant Workers

Episode 3: Learn about Food

Episode 4: Solve a Problem

Episode 5: Families Visit the Restaurant

GROUP ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Rating Key

1 = not observed

2 = there is evidence that this skill/concept is **emerging**

3 = there is evidence that this skill/concept is **mastered**

The Restaurant

Learning about Food

Child's Name

Episode 1: Create the Restaurant

Social-Emotional Development

Listens to the ideas of others

Language Development

Contributes to the group discussion

Understands and follows oral directions

Cognitive Development: Early Literacy

Listens attentively to a reading of a picture book

Recognizes (comments on, points to) print on the frieze

Cognitive Development: Social Studies

Shows an understanding that restaurants provide a place for people to gather together to eat and socialize

Cognitive Development: Problem Solving

Uses ideas from the class discussion to contribute to the creation of the frieze

Episode 2: Create the Restaurant Workers

Social-Emotional Development

Takes turns and shares materials

Language Development

Allows others to speak without frequent interruptions

Uses new vocabulary in speech

Cognitive Development: Early Literacy

Dictates sentences about the restaurant and/or restaurant workers

Cognitive Development: Social Studies

Shows an understanding that there are many job roles in restaurants

Cognitive Development: Problem Solving

Uses ideas from the class discussion to create restaurant workers

Rating Key

1 = not observed

2 = there is evidence that this skill/concept is **emerging**3 = there is evidence that this skill/concept is **mastered**

The Restaurant

Learning about Food

Child's Name

Episode 3: Learn about Food

Social-Emotional Development Uses language to communicate needs																				
Language Development Contributes to group discussions																				
Understands and follows oral directions																				
Uses new vocabulary in speech																				
Cognitive Development: Early Literacy Shows an understanding that print, such as a recipe or menu, has meaning																				
Cognitive Development: Science Shows an understanding that our bodies need healthy food to grow strong																				
Shows an understanding that people need to eat a balanced diet by choosing from each of the food groups																				

Episode 4: Solve a Problem

Social-Emotional Development Listens to the ideas of others																				
Language Development Allows others to speak without frequent interruptions																				
Contributes to group discussions																				
Cognitive Development: Early Literacy Dictates sentences about the restaurant and/or restaurant workers																				
Cognitive Development: Math Shows an understanding that restaurant customers must pay money for the food they order																				
Cognitive Development: Problem Solving Participates in solving a problem																				

Episode 5: Families Visit the Restaurant

Social-Emotional Development Participates in the planning and preparation for the family visit to the restaurant																				
Language Development Understands and follows oral directions																				
Cognitive Development: Early Literacy Dictates sentences as part of the <i>Family Talk</i> activity																				
Cognitive Development: Social Studies Shows an understanding that restaurant workers work together to do their jobs																				

FAMILY POSTER

Dear Families,

When your children participate in the *Pre-K Storypath* curriculum unit called *The Restaurant*, they will imagine and create their very own restaurant. When children pretend, they gain a broad range of language, literacy, social, and cognitive skills.

Children will:	They will learn to:
pretend to be servers and take customers' orders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take turns and share materials • use social skills and develop friendships • recognize a function of print in daily life
create a mural of a restaurant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make a plan • use pictures to represent ideas • work cooperatively with others
pretend to be restaurant cooks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recall what they know about cooks • understand job roles and rules • make healthy choices about food
discuss and solve problems that arise during restaurant play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listen to the ideas of others • participate cooperatively in a group • suggest solutions to a problem
make paper figures of restaurant workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cut with scissors • draw lines and shapes • finish a task
follow a simple recipe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognize a function of print in daily life • follow directions • measure solids and liquids
play with toy money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • count objects • understand basic economic concepts • negotiate with others
listen to and discuss restaurant storybooks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contribute to group discussions • make connections between written and spoken language • remember details
dictate and dramatize stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • express feelings and ideas with words • experiment with language • use new vocabulary words

