



WOODLAND COMMUNITY ACADEMY

Course Blueprint

PLAY-BASED INSTRUCTION
IN PRE-K CLASSROOMS

WOODLAND EARLY CHILDHOOD
CENTER

DATE: 09/30/2025

This course blueprint showcases our proposed learner experience and curriculum for planning play-based instruction for preschool classrooms. Pre-K teachers will learn what play-based instruction is, and how to plan for it within their preschool classrooms at Woodland Early Childhood Center.

Project Context

This course was developed in response to the Woodland Early Childhood Center principal's observation of a heavy reliance on worksheet-based instruction, which is not developmentally appropriate for preschool-aged learners. As a small private church school, Woodland Early Childhood Center is committed to providing the highest quality education to its students, ensuring that teaching methods support young children's natural learning through play.

The purpose of this course is to support teachers in understanding more effective and engaging instructional approaches aligned with state early learning standards. It equips teachers with practical strategies to make simple but impactful adjustments to their lesson planning and classroom activities that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

The end objectives of the course focus on long-term improvements in instructional quality and student development. By the conclusion of the course, teachers will be empowered to consistently integrate age-appropriate, play-based learning opportunities in their classrooms, fostering an enriching and supportive environment for all learners.

Project Requirements

Timelines:

Entire eLearning course and supplemental materials completed by January 1st, 2026

Standards:

This course will be developed in accordance with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) professional standards and competencies, ensuring the training reflects evidence-based, culturally responsive, and research-informed practices that support early childhood educators' growth and effectiveness. The design will also comply with established accessibility guidelines, including the Web Content Accessibility

Guidelines (WCAG), to ensure equitable access for all learners, including those with disabilities. Best practices for online learning environments will be applied to provide an inclusive, user-friendly experience.

Learning Requirements

Audience Profile:

The learners for this course are preschool teachers at Woodland Early Childhood Center who vary in age and teaching experience. Many do not have formal education training and have limited familiarity with play-based learning concepts and the Florida Early Learning Coalition standards. Despite constraints imposed by shared classroom resources, these teachers are deeply motivated by their commitment to providing the best possible care and education for their students. The course is designed to address these constraints and support teachers with practical strategies to improve their instructional approaches.

Learning Environment:

Teachers will access the course primarily during planning and professional development days at the school, using school-provided laptops with consistent internet access. Due to the absence of a Learning Management System (LMS) at the school, the training will be delivered via a web-based platform. The course has been designed to fit within a 30-minute timeframe to accommodate teachers' limited planning time.

Course Objectives

By the end of this training, Preschool teachers will be able to:

1. Define play-based instruction by stating its three components.
2. Classify activities by identifying whether required components are present in planned activities.
3. Reference Florida VPK standards to choose appropriate learning goals for activities planned in the classroom..
4. Modify pre-planned activities to incorporate play-based requirements in math, writing, and literacy centers.
5. Scaffold play-based instruction for students who are advanced (extend) or struggling (reinforce and support).

Course Outline

Woodland Early Childhood Center

Preschool Teachers for 3-4 year olds.

Play-Based Instruction for Preschool

Whole Task: Plan a play-based weekly lesson plan for centers in the pre-school classroom

1. Identify and explain core components of play-based learning
 1. Define “play-based instruction”
 1. Activities should be child-centered - driven by their interest and/or choices
 2. Activities should include the use of one or more open-ended manipulatives
 3. Activities should allow children to explore and discover through problem-solving and interacting with their environment
 2. Classify activities that are play-based
 1. Child-centered
 2. Open-ended
 3. Exploration
2. Modify a week of curriculum to include play-based activity centers
 1. Choose a learning goal from the list of Florida Pre-K standards (Might already be in their lesson plans, but probably not based on research)
 2. Develop an activity for students to reach the learning goal that incorporates play-based components
 3. Scaffold the activity for students
 1. Reinforce and support students below expectations - reference KDI charts for support
 2. Extend the activity for students above expectations - reference KDI charts for support
3. Plan a week of curriculum and implement - this is beyond the scope of a 30 minute training and will not be included, plans are in place to make a second course in the future to extend the learnings from the initial course.

Instructional Strategy Overview

A. Introduction (2 minutes)

Outcome: After completing this activity, the learner will know the characters and understand the framework for the course.

Vyond



Introduction and Setting the Scene

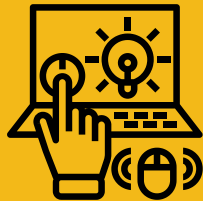
Component: Animated Video

- Introduce the course: Learners will be role-playing as Leah, a new lead teacher in a 4-year-old preschool classroom at WECC. Learners will meet Maya Smart, a veteran teacher who will be mentoring Leah.

B. Activation (2 minutes)

Outcome: After completing this activity, learners will be able to identify the course objectives and know how to progress through the course.

Canva



Presentation and Demonstration of the Whole Problem and Its Context

Component: Slides with goals and pin images

- Learning goals: Present the learning objectives through a sample lesson plan that demonstrates the whole problem.
- Set up gamification: Learners will be trying to earn 6 lanyard pins that represent their progress through the course. They will earn one pin per application - paired with a learning objective. Click each pin for information about each application

C. Play-Based Instruction Demonstration (3 minutes)

Outcome: The learners will see a whole task demonstration of how to modify an existing lesson to make it more play-based using the definition that is explored in future demonstrations.

Vyond



Canva



Play-Based Instruction Demonstration

Component: Animated Video

- Maya (the mentor) is preparing for an upcoming lesson and notices that the previously planned activity is not age-appropriate for 4-year-olds. She modifies the lessons to make it play-based by implementing student choice, open-ended manipulatives, and student exploration.
- Previous activity: All students make identical paper apples for their craft of the week for the Letter A.
- Modified activity: Students chose a noun that starts with a, and can use any art materials to create their chosen object.

Component: Job Aid

- Learners will be given a job aid that is a checklist for the three components of play-based instruction:
 - Child-centered: Student choice and/or student interest
 - Open-ended manipulatives
 - Allows for exploration and/or inquiry

D. Child-Centered Demonstration (2 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will understand how to modify an activity to make it child-centered by implementing student choice and/or student interest.

Vyond



Child-Centered Demonstration

Component: Animated Video

- Maya explains a math center that she modified to prioritize student interest.
- Previous Activity: Students will roll a die and use counting bears to model the number shown on the die.
- Modified activity: Replace the counting bears with plastic dinosaurs after students expressed excitement during story time while reading a dinosaur book.

E. Open-Ended Manipulatives Demonstration (2 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will understand how to modify an activity to include the use of open-ended manipulatives.

Vyond



Open-ended Manipulatives Demonstration

Component: Animated Video

- Maya explains a math center that she modified to include open-ended manipulatives
- Previous Activity: Students will roll a die and use counting bears to model the number shown on the die.
- Modified activity: Replace the counting bears with plastic dinosaurs after students expressed excitement during story time while reading a dinosaur book.

F. Exploration/Problem-Solving Demonstration (2 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will understand how to modify an activity to allow for exploration and problem-solving.

Vyond



Exploration/Problem-Solving Demonstration

Component: Animated Video

- Maya explains a sensory table center activity where students are given manipulatives and allowed to explore without designated activity instructions.
- Previous Activity: Students are playing in a water table and are told to pour water through a spout in the top to turn the water wheel.
- Modified activity: Don't give instructions, let the students play in the water table and discover how to use the tools on the water table.

G. Play-Based Instruction Applications (3 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will be able to select the three components of play-based instruction.

Lectora



Play-Based Instruction Application

Component: Knowledge Check with Feedback

- Leah is preparing for Meet the Teacher night and is concerned of the parent push-back she has heard about in recent news articles. She wants to make sure she can explain the importance of play in her classroom. In addition to the research articles provided by the school, she will need to define “Play-based instruction” to the parents.
- “Select all that apply” question. Feedback from Maya is shown after each attempt.

Component: Section Reward

- After completing the knowledge check with 100% accuracy, learners are presented with their “Family Partner” pin.

H. Classify Activities Application (3 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will be able to classify activities based on if they are play-based.

Lectora



Classify Activities Application

Component: Knowledge Check with Feedback



- Leah is looking through an activity database and wants to choose an age-appropriate play-based activity to help her students with letter recognition. Leah is looking through an activity database and wants to choose an age-appropriate play-based activity to help her students with letter recognition. Sort the following activities into “Play-Based Activity” and “Not Play-based Activity”. Flip each card for a description of each activity.
- “Sorting” question. Feedback from Maya is shown after each attempt.

Component: Section Reward

- After completing the knowledge check with 100% accuracy, learners are presented with their “Classification Captain” pin.


I. Determine Learning Goals Demo (3 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will be able to accurately choose learning goals based on the Florida Pre-K Standards.

<p>Vyond</p>  <p>Camtasia</p> 	<h3>Determine Learning Goals Demonstration</h3> <p>Component: Animated Video</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maya explains why teachers should use the Florida Early Learning Coalition Pre-K Standards to create their learning goals. <p>Component: Screencast Video Demonstration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners will watch a screencast with voice-over explaining where to find and how to use the Florida Early Learning Coalition Pre-K standards.
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J. Determine Learning Goals Application (2 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will be able to accurately choose learning goals based on the Florida Pre-K Standards.

<p>Lectora</p> 	<h3>Determine Learning Goals Application</h3> <p>Component: Knowledge Check with Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leah wants to strengthen her students' literacy skills but isn't sure which standard to focus on. She wants students to work on naming letters when they are shown a written letter. Which of the following standards should Leah use for her activity?• Multiple choice question. Feedback from Maya is shown after each attempt. <p>Component: Section Reward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• After completing the knowledge check with 100% accuracy, learners are presented with their "Standard Slueth" Pin
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K. Developing Play-Based Activities Demonstration (5 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will understand the basics of modifying an activity to implement the components of play-based instruction.

Vyond



Developing Play-Based Activities Demonstration

Component: Animated Video

- Maya explains to Leah how to modify current activities to implement play-based learning components. She uses two sample activities, one in a math center and another in a reading center.

L. Developing Play-Based Activities Application (4 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will demonstrate proficiency in modifying lessons to implement the components of play-based instruction.

Lectora



Developing Play-Based Activities Application

Component: Knowledge Check with Feedback

- After choosing the standard Math A.1: Counts and identifies the number sequence "1 to 31", your co-teacher decides to do a worksheet where students are given the numbers 1-10 and have to place a corresponding number of stickers with each number.
- Multiple Choice Question. Feedback from Maya will show after each attempt.

Component: Practice with Feedback

- How can you modify this activity to make it more play-based for the students? Brainstorm ideas in the space below and click submit to see a sample lesson activity.
- "Creation" Free-response question. Sample answer from Maya will show after one attempt. There is no correct answer. The goal is to brainstorm options in a safe environment that allows for feedback.

Component: Section Reward

- After completing the knowledge check with 100% accuracy, learners are presented with their "Play Champion" pin.

M. Scaffolding Demonstration (4 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will understand how to define scaffolding and know the basics for implementing scaffolding in Pre-K lesson plans.

Vyond



Scaffolding Demonstration

Component: Animated Video

- Maya defines scaffolding and explains how to implement it for pre-k lessons to support students who are struggling and those who need a bigger challenge.

Component: Job Aid

- Learners will be given a “How to Scaffold” Job aid to use throughout the remainder of the course. This will include tips on how to know when to scaffold, and how to scaffold for struggling and advanced students.

N. Scaffolding Application (2 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will demonstrate their understanding of scaffolding and brainstorm practical ways to use it in their classrooms.

Lectora



Scaffolding Application

Component: Practice with Feedback

- Learners will help Leah brainstorm how to scaffold the given activity for students who are struggling to hit standards. A sample answer will be provided after the learner answers the question.

Component: Practice with Feedback

- Learners will help Leah brainstorm how to scaffold the given activity for students who have already demonstrated proficiency and are ready for a challenge. A sample answer will be provided after the learner answers the question.

Component: Section Reward

- After submitting any answer to the open-ended response questions previously, the learner will be provided with their “Scaffolding Star” pin.

O. Final Demonstration: (7 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will be able to explain how to implement play-based instruction for their center activities.

Vyond



Final Demonstration

Component: Animated Video

- Maya talks Leah through her plans for the centers this week. She points out each of the components of play-based instruction, the connection to state standards in her objectives, and how she plans to scaffold each activity for students' varying needs.

Component: Test with interactive

- Maya provides tips throughout the video with additional information to help Leah on her journey.

P. Final Application: (5 minutes)

Outcome: Learners will be able to modify a weekly lesson plan for centers to implement play-based instruction

Lectora



Final Application

Component: 10-question Multiple Choice Test with feedback

- Learners will answer multiple-choice questions about each step in the process of modifying a weekly lesson plan for Pre-K centers to implement play-based instruction

Component: Section Reward

- After completing the test with 70% accuracy, learners will be presented with their "Playmaker" pin.

Q. Real World Application:

Outcome: The Learners will be able to modify existing lesson plans to implement play-based instruction during center time.

Lectora



Real World Application (No Guidance)

Component: Text with Text Entry

- Learners will be asked to brainstorm activities for their next few weeks in their pre-k classroom.

Component: Future Tasks

- As a result of the training, learners will be submitting their lesson plans to the principal for the next four weeks to get additional practice and feedback within their classroom.

OTHER MATERIALS

Job Aids



Course Key Takeaways

- “What is Play-Based Instruction” Infographic
- “Is it Play-Based” Checklist Poster
- “How to Scaffold” Poster

Project Sign-Off

Printed Name

Role

Signature

Printed Name

Role

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