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Jazzing Up Your Learning Centers

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Learning Objectives - Successful participants will:

- * Examine criteria for selecting materials and activities for learning centers
- * Identify ways to enhance or “jazz up” learning centers

Sources:

1. Greenman, J. (2007). *Caring Spaces, Learning Places: Children’s Environments that Work*. Redmond, WA: Exchange Press, Inc.
2. Kostelnik, M. J., Rupiper, M., Soderman, A. K. & Whiren, A. P. (2014). *Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum In Action*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.

Space Speaks: The Power of the Environment¹

- Space speaks to our _____.
- Space speaks to our _____.
- _____ speak to us.
- The experience of space is _____ and _____.

What Children Need: WHAT CHILDREN NEED MOST IS A HIGH-QUALITY RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU! They also need:¹

- play
- teaching
- people
- nature
- to matter
- places to call their own
- to belong

Ideas for Jazzing Up Your Learning Centers

- “Cross-_____” your materials
- Think “out of the _____”
- Allow for children’s _____ use of materials

Criteria for Selecting Materials and Activities - Select materials and activities that are:¹

- Goal related
- Safe
- Age appropriate
- Sized appropriately
- Complete and ready to use
- Culturally diverse
- Concrete and REAL
- Literacy-related
- Loose parts
- Varied for domains



How Many Learning Centers Should Your Classroom Have?

- Provide enough options so children have _____
- Plan at least _____ spaces per child

Provide Learning Centers in all Domains

- Language Arts
- Creative Arts
- Science & Discovery
- Math & Manipulatives
- Blocks
- Dramatic Play
- Sensory

Learning Center Ideas:

Jazzing Up Implementation:

- Work with small _____ and encourage children to teach others how to use a center
- Use _____ so children know what to do in a center
- Provide activities for _____ of previously taught skills
- Provide activities that children can do with a _____ of supervision and monitoring

Jazzing Up Management of Centers:

- Provide proper _____
- Include all _____ to implement an activity
- Provide appropriate _____
- Explain and demonstrate how to _____ and care for materials
- _____ materials
- Keep shelving _____
- Have clear _____ for the space
- Be _____
- Balance all curriculum _____

You can download a free dramatic play kit at:
<http://www.pre-kpages.com/products/dramatic-play-animal-shelter/>
 (Door prizes courtesy of Vanessa Levin at pre-kpages.com)

