



## Suggested Materials List

### Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Third Edition (ECERS-3)

### Ages 3 years – 5 years

Classroom:	Teacher(s):
Ages served:	Completed by:
Number of children enrolled:	Date:

**Children learn best through play. For successful classroom management ensure your classroom has the suggested materials as well as staff-child engagement, interactions, and conversations.**

The recommended materials need to be in good repair, organized, and easily accessible to the children anytime they are not involved in routine care. Examples that are given are not all inclusive unless otherwise mentioned. Review the left-hand column and then complete the right-hand column based on your classroom. Write specific plans to improve your classroom. **Each classroom teacher should complete this form for their classroom.**

<b>Materials/Items Suggested</b>	<b>Notes/Observations (to be filled out by teacher(s))</b>
<p><b>Furnishings for Care, Play, and Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Separate storage for each child's belongings – personal belongings (bags, coats, naptime sheets/blanket etc.) do not touch</li> <li>Low, open shelves for storage of toys and materials</li> <li>Seating for children is child-sized – children can sit at the table with their feet touching the floor, elbows resting comfortably on the table, and knees fit under the table</li> <li>2 to 3 pieces of furniture, each designed for a different, specific activity (Examples: easel for art, sand/water table, graduated bookcase, train table, etc.)</li> <li>At least 2 soft furnishings available</li> </ul>	<p>Where do the children store their belongings? Do their personal items touch?</p> <p>Do you have enough shelves to store toys/materials?</p> <p>Is the seating child-sized?</p> <p>List specific pieces of furniture for different activities:</p> <p>List soft furnishings available:</p> <p>Is all of the furniture clean and in good repair?</p> <p><b>Plan for improvements:</b></p>

<p><b>Room arrangement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A special cozy area is available with a substantial amount of softness where children may lounge, daydream, read, or play quietly. Cozy area must provide enough soft furnishings to allow children to completely escape the normal hardness of the classroom.</li> <li>• Space is arranged so that classroom pathways do not interrupt play</li> <li>• Quiet and noisy areas are separated from each other, not just by furniture but by physical space</li> <li>• At least 5 interest centers, including a cozy area</li> </ul> <p><i>Interest Center: clearly defined play area for a particular kind of play. Materials are organized by type and are easily accessible to children. There should be enough furniture and space to encourage play for the number of children allowed in the center. Other types of materials that distract from the intent of interest center should be stored in other areas of the classroom.</i></p>	<p>Do you have a cozy area?</p> <p>List the soft furnishings in your classroom:</p> <p>Do pathways interrupt play?</p> <p>Are quiet and noisy areas separate?</p> <p>List the interest centers in your classroom:</p> <p><b>Plan for improvements:</b></p>
<p><b>Child Related Display and Promoting Literacy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1/3 of displayed items are children's, individualized work</li> <li>• Pictures and posters are relevant to children (nature, animals, people, food, etc.)</li> <li>• Photos of the children are displayed at their eye level</li> <li>• 1/2 the display is related to children's current interests</li> <li>• 3D child created work is displayed</li> <li>• Most visible print is combined with pictures (Examples- labeling shelves/bins, handwashing steps, teeth brushing steps, nose wiping steps, directions for making snacks, etc.)</li> <li>• Printed names of children used in classroom. (Examples- on cubbies, artwork, name cards, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p>List children's artwork displayed:</p> <p>List pictures/posters displayed:</p> <p>Do you have photographs of the children displayed at their eye level?</p> <p>How are children's current interests represented in the display?</p> <p>List children's 3D work displayed:</p> <p>How do you promote language and literacy using the display?</p> <p>List visible print that is combined with pictures:</p> <p>Where are children's names printed in the classroom?</p> <p><b>Plan for improvements:</b></p>

<p><b>Gross motor equipment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of ample and varied equipment (stationary and portable) indoors and outdoors to keep children active and involved</li> <li>• Equipment is appropriate for the ages and abilities of children</li> <li>• Equipment provided stimulates at least 7 different skills (Examples of skills include catching, pulling/pushing, swinging, jumping, hula hoop, tossing tings into containers, balancing, steering, pedaling, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p>List stationary equipment:</p> <p>List portable equipment:</p> <p>Is all the equipment appropriate for the ages/abilities of children?</p> <p>List skills stimulated by the equipment:</p> <p>What equipment is provided to encourage more advanced age-appropriate skills?</p> <p><b>Plan for improvements:</b></p>
<p><b>Use of Books</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book area should be a defined interest center</li> <li>• At least 20 books for a group of up to 10 children or 30 books for a group of 15 children, and 1 extra book for each child over the 15<sup>th</sup>. Calculate based on the highest number of children attending at any time.</li> <li>• Books should not be frightening or contain anything inappropriate. ( If you do not want the children to act out the book, remove it from your classroom.)</li> <li>• Wide selection of books is accessible (Examples of topics: people, feelings, nature/science, math, cultures, varying races, males and females, jobs/work, health or self-help skills, sports/hobbies, abilities, etc.)</li> <li>• At least 5 books relate to current classroom activities or themes</li> </ul>	<p>Is the book area a defined interest center?</p> <p>How many books are accessible to children?</p> <p>How do you show positive interest when children choose to use books independently?</p> <p>Do the books contain violence or anything inappropriate?</p> <p>List the topics represented in your books:</p> <p>Are there 5 books that relate to current classroom activities or themes?</p> <p><b>Plan for improvements:</b></p>
<p><b>Fine motor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 10 materials accessible with at least 1 from each of the 4 categories. Materials should offer different levels of difficulty.</li> </ul> <p><u>Interlocking blocks</u>: such as interlocking blocks of varied sizes, even those that are large, interlocking logs, etc.</p> <p><u>Art materials</u>: crayons, scissors, pencils, markers, etc.</p> <p><u>Manipulatives</u>: stringing beads, pegs with pegboards, sewing cards, table blocks, etc.</p> <p><u>Puzzles</u>: floor puzzles, framed puzzles, etc.</p>	<p>List materials accessible to children (at least 1 of each category):</p> <p>Interlocking blocks;</p> <p>Art materials;</p> <p>Manipulatives;</p> <p>Puzzles;</p> <p>How do you show positive interest when the children use the materials?</p> <p><b>Plan for improvements:</b></p>

<p><b>Art</b></p> <p>It is important to note that the majority of art activities offered to children should encourage creative expression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank paper or another surface for use when carrying out artwork must be accessible to children</li> <li>• At least 1 materials from each category is accessible (1 hour): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Drawing materials</u>: crayons, non-toxic marker, colored pencils, chalk, etc.</li> <li>• <u>Paint</u>: tempera, watercolor sets, finger paint, etc.</li> <li>• <u>3D materials</u>: play dough, wood scraps, clay, boxes, etc.</li> <li>• <u>Collage materials</u>: cloth scraps, yarn, colorful or textured paper scraps, etc.</li> <li>• <u>Tools</u>: scissors, tape, hole punches, rulers, stencils, stamps with pads, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Do the majority of the art experiences encourage creativity and individual expression? Y N</p> <p>Do I have conversations with children about their artwork?</p> <p>List materials accessible to children (at least 1 for each category):</p> <p>Drawing: Paint: 3D: Collage: Tools:</p> <p>Do I teach children to use more complex art materials? Y N</p> <p>Are art activities related to current classroom themes or interests? (examples) _____</p> <p>Are written captions dictated or written by interested children about their artwork? _____</p> <p><b>Plan for improvements:</b></p>
<p><b>Music and movement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A variety of at least 10 musical instruments in good condition is accessible during free play for 1 hour.</li> <li>• If instruments are used at group time, there must be at least 1 instrument for each child participating (recorded music can be considered 1 musical instrument).</li> <li>• If recorded music is played by staff, this counts as 1 material that is accessible to children.</li> </ul>	<p>List musical instruments accessible to children:</p> <p>Do I sing/do music activities with children during free play? Do all children have to participate when doing group music activities? Do I encourage children to participate (dance, clap, or sing)? Do I point out rhyming words in songs? Do I identify sound repetition (consonants or vowels) Do I do finger plays where children use gestures or actions to act out meaning of words?</p> <p><b>Plan for improvements:</b></p>

<p><b>Blocks</b></p> <p>It is important to note that the Block area should be a defined interest center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enough space, blocks, and accessories for 3 children to use at the same time and build sizable structures</li> <li>• <b>Unit blocks</b> and <b>hollow blocks</b> are accessible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blocks must be at least 2 inches on majority of sides and cannot be interlocking</li> </ul> </li> <li>• At least 3 different types of accessories accessible including: small people, vehicles, and animals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessories should enhance block play rather than distract from block play</li> <li>• Accessories labeled on shelf and containers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Blocks and accessories are stored on open, labeled shelves with a suitable surface to build on</p> <p>List types of blocks accessible:</p> <p>List block accessories accessible to children:  Small people _____  Vehicles _____  Animals _____  Other: Road signs, fences, trees, small buildings _____</p> <p>Am I involved with children as they use blocks? Y N</p> <p>Do I have conversations with children about their block play?  _____</p> <p>Blocks organized and labeled by type and shape/size on shelf?</p> <p>Is there enough space, blocks, and accessories for 3 children?  Do I link written language to children's block play?  Do I point out math concepts that are demonstrated in unity blocks (more/less), size, shape, numbers, or measurements.</p> <p><b>Plan for improvements:</b></p>
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**Dramatic play**

Dramatic play area should be a defined interest center

- Enough materials for the number of children allowed in the area at one time
- Materials include dolls, child sized furniture, play foods and cooking/eating utensils, dress up clothes for boys and girls
- Area has additional props to use, either additional housekeeping toys or materials from other themes such as different kinds of work, fantasy, or leisure. There should be a wealth of materials for children to use in their pretend play.
- Diversity is represented in materials: at least 4 clear examples
  - Examples- dolls of different races/cultures, foods of different cultures, equipment used by people with disabilities, etc.

Does your dramatic play area have:

Dolls?  
Child sized furniture? Play foods? Cooking/eating utensils? Dress up clothes for boys? Dress up clothes for girls?

List other materials accessible to children:

List materials that represent diversity:

Dolls of different races/cultures?  
Foods of different cultures?  
Equipment used by people with disabilities

Do I talk with children about print or numbers in dramatic play in a way that is meaningful to them?

Discuss menu prices?  
Help children make signs and price tags for store play?  
Pretend to phone people using a home-made telephone book?

**Plan for improvements:**

<p><b>Nature/science</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 15 nature/science materials from each of the 5 categories (must have at least 5 nature/science books) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Living things</u>: such as house plants, pets, etc.</li> <li>• <u>Natural objects</u>: such as birds nest, leaves, insects in transparent plastic, rocks, seashells, collection of seeds, etc.</li> <li>• <u>Factual books/nature-science picture games</u></li> <li>• <u>Tools</u>: such as magnifying glass, magnets, etc.</li> <li>• <u>Sand/water with toys</u>: such as measuring cups, digging tools, and containers. No food is to be used in sensory play</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sand/water are not required to be in the nature/science interest center</li> <li>• Staff talk about nature/science and nature/science materials with children</li> <li>• Staff show interest in nature/science with children and do not show dislike for natural world (for example- staff do not show fear of spiders instead they are respectful and use as a learning experience or teachable moment)</li> </ul>	<p>List living things:</p> <p>List natural objects:</p> <p>List factual books/picture games:</p> <p>List tools:</p> <p>List sand/water toys:</p> <p><b>Plan for improvements:</b></p>
<p><b>Math materials and activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All materials are appropriate, safe, have no negative social messages, challenging and interest children while not leading to constantly wrong answers or frustration</li> <li>• At least 10 materials with a least 3 from each of the 3 categories (a material can only be counted in 1 category) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Counting/comparing quantities</u>: such as unifix cubes with number trays; small objects to count into numbered containers; games that require children to figure out more or less; chart graph activities for children to use by placing materials into cells; dominoes; playing cards; games with dice; abacus; pegboards with numbers printed and holes to match; puzzles where written numbers are matched to quantities on puzzle piece; beads with bead patterns; etc.</li> <li>• <u>Measuring/comparing sizes and parts of wholes (fractions)</u>: Such as measuring cups with spoons with materials to measure; balance scale with things to weigh; rulers, yardsticks, tape measures with things to measure; thermometers; foot size</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>List of counting/comparing quantities materials :</p> <p>List measuring/ comparing sizes and parts of wholes (fractions) materials:</p> <p>List familiarity with shapes materials:</p> <p>How do I join in children's math play throughout the day?</p>

<p>measurer; height chart if regularly used to measure children's growth; games with parts to divide and put back together to make the whole (fractions); puzzles with geometric shapes that must be put together; games where halves are matched to the whole (fractions); shapes-matching games where geometric shapes are divided into parts (fractions); etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Familiarity with shapes</u>: such as shape sorters; puzzles with different geometric shapes; unit blocks with image/outline labels on shelves used during clean up; geoboards (boards with pegs to which rubber bands are attached to make shapes); attribute blocks of different sizes, shapes, colors; parquetry blocks with patterns; magnetic shapes; shape stencils; etc.</li> </ul>	<p>How do I encourage use of math materials/activities and help children use them successfully throughout the day?</p> <p>Staff frequently join in children's play with math materials. Y N  Staff encourage children to use their fingers to represent numbers. Y N  Staff encourage use of math materials/activities and help children use them successfully. Y N  Staff never use math talk in a threatening or punitive manner with children.</p> <p><b>Plan for improvements:</b></p>
<p><b>Understand written numbers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 2 examples of print numbers in display materials that are accompanied by pictures that show what the number means: such as signs for number of children allowed in center accompanied by stick figures to represent the number; poster with numbers and corresponding image showing that number of objects, etc.</li> <li>• At least 3 different play materials that help show children the meaning of print numbers are accessible: such as puzzle with number on one piece and that number of dots matching piece; puzzle with numbered fingers on a hand; matching picture/number card game; simple number card games; etc.</li> </ul>	<p>List display materials that are accompanied by pictures that show what the number means:</p> <p>List play materials that help show children the meaning of print numbers are accessible:</p> <p>Staff show children how to use materials and talk about the meaning of print Numbers. Y N</p> <p>In what ways do I show children how to use the materials:</p> <p><b>Plan for improvements:</b></p>

**Promoting acceptance of diversity:**

- Materials show diversity in a positive way and easily visible. Books should be easy to find by looking at book covers.
  - Staff allow both boys and girls to follow their interests, despite the gender stereotypes associated with some toys and activities
  - Staff have positive conversations with children discussing the benefits and similarities and differences among people
  - At least 2 different types of dramatic play props representing different races or cultures are included in dramatic play
  - At least 10 easily visible positive examples of diversity with at least 1 example in each of the following:
    - Books
    - Displayed pictures
    - Accessible play materials
- And include at least 4 of the 5 types of diversity:
- Race
  - Culture
  - Age
  - Differing abilities
- Non- traditional gender role

Write number accessible to children in each box

	<b>Books</b>	<b>Pictures</b>	<b>Materials</b>
<b>Race</b>			
<b>Culture</b>			
<b>Age</b>			
<b>Ability</b>			
<b>Gender</b>			

Do I allow both boys and girls to choose what they play with, following their interest no matter what gender they are typically stereotyped with?

How do I have conversations with children discussing diversity?

**Plan for improvements:**