

## **Scholastic Big Day Curriculum**

*Big Day for PreK* is organized into eight engaging and child-friendly themes. As the year progresses, the themes in this early-learning program broaden, and children begin to understand more about the world around them. The flexible content allows prekindergarten teachers to incorporate their own favorite themes into the classroom.

Each theme has the following:

- Social-emotional focus which is introduced, practiced and reinforced throughout the theme.
- Knowledge focus which identifies learning objectives and key understanding of each theme.
- Big ideas which help children connect what they're learning to their world.
- Four weeks of instruction builds children's knowledge in concepts, language and skills.

In *Big Day for PreK*, each day is organized around three Big Experiences—Whole-Group, Circle Time, and Story Time lessons—that provide an anchor for conversation, play, and learning. Carefully selected activities ground the entire class in a common Big Experience.

### **Big Day for PreK provides 5 BIG Elements of Success:**

#### **1. Big Experiences**

Big Experiences provide integrated learning opportunities and introduce children to new vocabulary, concepts, and skills. *Big Day for PreK* provides intentional instruction in all learning domains:

Social-Emotional Development  
Oral Language and Vocabulary  
Emergent Reading  
Emergent Writing  
Mathematics  
Science  
Social Studies  
Fine Arts  
Physical Development  
Technology

#### **Small Group Instruction**

Daily small-group instruction provides multiple opportunities for children to be actively involved in learning, developing skills with teacher modeling, guidance, immediate feedback, and support. Small Group lessons focus on the most predictive skills: phonological awareness, alphabet recognition, and mathematics.

#### **Learning Centers**

Each theme offers weekly activities for learning centers that extend the content from the Big Experiences. In *Big Day for PreK*, all Learning Centers are intentional, purposeful, and fun! Suggestions for materials, writing connections, and conversation

support are provided for each center.

## **2. Meaningful Conversations**

Oral language is at the heart of *Big Day for PreK* instruction. Teacher supports for generating meaningful conversations encourage oral language and vocabulary development throughout the day. *Big Day for PreK* provides opportunities for children to hear language modeled and use language in rich and varied contexts. A wealth of materials and strategies included in *Big Day for PreK* help teachers promote the development of the most important language skills:

- Listening Comprehension
- Speaking and Conversation
- Sentence Structure
- Oral Vocabulary

## **3. Best Childrens' Literature and Non-Fiction**

- a. Books of Every Kind—big books, lap books, little books, eBooks, video storybooks, audiobooks, take-home books, downloadable books!
- b. A Wide Variety of Genres—fiction, nonfiction, rhymes, poetry, realistic fiction, content-area books, multicultural books, alphabet books—expose children to all kinds of text!
- c. Classic and Contemporary Favorites—award-winning titles all children will love!

## **4. Innovative Technology**

Family Space is a bilingual website that enables all families to extend early learning at home. This powerful tool helps engage families and encourages them to take an active role in their child's preschool education.

- Information About Current Classroom Lessons
  - Easy Access to BookFlix
  - Downloadable Books and Educational Resources
  - Fun With Clifford® Activities
  - All Materials in English and Spanish

## **5. Comprehensive Program**

**\*\*Your teacher will provide you with a username and password at the beginning of the school year in order for you and your child to access the FamilySpace\*\***

**\*All the above information was taken directly from the BigDay for PreK website at [www.bigday.scholastic.com](http://www.bigday.scholastic.com)**



## About the High/Scope Approach

(High/Scope 2005 Magazine)

Developed in the early 1960's as an open framework instructional model, the High/Scope approach is based on Jean Piaget's constructivist theory of child development blended with the best of traditional teacher experience. This model has been tested and researched for over 40 years.

This approach is about helping students:

- Become independent, responsible, and confident-ready for success in school and life.
- Learn to plan many of their activities, carry them out, and talk with other children and their teacher about what they have done.
- Learn through active involvement with people, materials, events, and ideas.
- Gain knowledge and skills in important content areas, such as creative representation, language and literacy, initiative and social relations, movement, music, classification, seriation, number, space and time.

For the children, the framework provides a consistent and secure daily experience that promises interesting things to do, attention by their teachers to their interest and needs, and a sense of control over themselves and their environment.

### Five Key Elements of the High/Scope Approach:

1. **Active learning:** teachers plan instructional strategies around 58 key experiences in child development.
2. **Adult-Child Interaction:** by balancing child-adult initiated activities, teachers and children share control of the learning experience.
3. **Learning Environment:** based on clearly defined interest areas.
4. **Daily Routine:** provides consistency for both children and adults.
5. **Assessment:** High/Scope Preschool Child Observation Record (COR).

Houghton Mifflin Early Growth Indicators Assessment: administered at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. There are a total of 7 indicators (word parts, beginning sound, letter recognition, word knowledge, listening comprehension, oral counting, and number identification), each of which takes 1-2 minutes to administer. The total assessment time is 7-15 minutes per child, three times a year. This assessment measures the rate of growth on critical skills.





## Play is Learning

**When your child builds with blocks:** He/she learns about sizes and shapes, weighs and balances, height and depth, smoothness and roughness.

**When you child paints:** He/she learns how to use small muscle coordination to handle a brush and learns to make choices and decisions.

**When you child plays in the house area:** He/she learns what the roles of mothers, fathers and children are and understands what it feels like to play being somebody other than himself/herself.

**When your child makes a gift out of paper and paste:** He/she learns how to use his/her imagination to make the kind of present he/she has in mind. Once again the process, not the finished product, is important to him/her as he/she learns about shapes, sizes, colors and textures.

**When your child plays in the sand and water:** He/she has a great opportunity to learn about size and measurement experimenting with measuring spoons, cups and different size containers.

**When your child works with puzzles:** He/she gains satisfaction in completing a task and builds his/her self-confidence and has an opportunity to improve his/her eye-hand coordination.

**When your child listens to stories or looks at books:** He/she has an opportunity to increase his/her vocabulary by hearing new words read to him/her and learns about different concepts, people and places.

**When you child cooks:** He/she learns to recognize colors and shapes from different kinds of foods and kitchen utensils and learns mathematical concepts through measuring and counting.



## Early Childhood Milestones

### Social Skills: (3-4 years)

- Joins in play with other children; begins to interact
- Shares toys; takes turns with assistance
- Begins dramatic play, acting out whole scenes

### Social Skills: (4-5 years)

- Plays and interacts with other children
- Dramatic play is closer to reality, with attention paid to detail, time and space
- Plays dress-up
- Shows interest in exploring sex differences

### Cognitive Milestones: (3-4 years)

- Recognizes and matches six colors
- Intentionally stacks blocks or rings in order of size
- Draws somewhat recognizable picture that is meaningful to child if not to adult, names and briefly explains picture
- Asks questions for information, why and how questions requiring simple answers
- Knows own age
- Knows own name
- Has short attention span; learns through observing and imitating adults and by adult instruction and explanation; is very easily distracted
- Has increased understanding of concepts, of the functions and grouping of objects, and part/whole
- Begins to be aware of past and present
- Recognizes and expresses quantities like some, more, a lot and another
- Begins to have a sense of time, recognizes familiar geometric shapes in the environment, sorts objects by one characteristic
- Rote count to 5, notices and compares similarities and differences
- Uses words to describe quantity, length and size

### Cognitive Milestones: (4-5 years)

- Plays with words, creates own rhyming words, says or makes up words having similar sounds
- Points and names 4 to 6 colors
- Matches pictures of familiar objects
- Draws a person with two to six recognizable parts, such as head, arms and legs; can name or match drawn parts to own body
- Rote counts to five, imitating adult
- Knows own street and town
- Has more extended attention span, learns through observing and listening to adults, as well as through explorations; is easily distracted
- Has increased understanding of concepts of function, time, part/whole relationships, function or use of objects may be stated in addition to names of objects
- Time concepts are expanding, can talk about yesterday or last week, about today and about what will happen tomorrow
- Plays number games with understanding
- Counts objects to 10 and sometimes to 20
- Identifies the larger of two numbers
- Answers simple questions that require logic, recognizes more complex patterns
- Uses position words, sorts forms by shape
- Compares sizes familiar objects not in sight, and works multi-piece puzzles

### Speech and Language Milestones: (3-4 years)

- Can tell a story
- Has a sentence length of 4-5 words
- Has a vocabulary of nearly 1000 words
- Names at least one color
- Understands "yesterday", "summer", "lunchtime", "tonight", "little-big"
- Begins to obey requests like "put the block under the chair"
- Knows his/her last name, name of street on which he/she lives and several nursery rhymes
- Communicates needs, asks questions, begins to enjoy humor
- Has much better articulation, begins true conversation, responds to directional commands
- Knows parts of songs, is acquiring the rules of grammar and learns sophisticated words heard in adult conversations

### Speech and Language Milestones: (4-5 years)

- Has sentence length of 4-8 words
- Uses past tense correctly
- Has a vocabulary of nearly 1500 words
- Points to colors red, blue, yellow and green
- Identifies triangles, circles and squares
- Understands "in the morning", "next", "noontime"
- Can speak imaginary conditions such as "I hope"
- Asks many questions, ask "who?" and "why?"
- Uses irregular noun and verb forms, talks with adults on adult level
- Giggles over nonsense words, engages in imaginative play using complex oral scripts
- Tells longer stories, recounts in sequence the day's events and uses silly and profane language to experiment and shock the listener

### Gross Motor Milestones: (3-4 years)

- Runs around obstacles
- Walks on a line
- Balances on one foot for five to ten seconds
- Hops on one foot
- Pushes, pulls, steers wheeled toys
- Rides tricycle
- Uses slide independently
- Jumps over six inch high objects and lands on both feet together
- Throws ball overhead
- Catches a bouncing ball

### Gross Motor Milestones: (4-5 years)

- Walks backward toe-heel
- Jumps forward 10 times without falling
- Walk up and down stair independently, alternating feet
- Turns somersault

### Fine Motor Milestones: (3-4 years)

- Builds tower of nine small blocks
- Drives nails and pegs
- Copies circles
- Imitates cross

- Manipulates clay material (rolls balls, snakes, cookies)

#### Fine Motor Milestones: (4-5 years)

- Cuts on line continuously
- Copies cross
- Copies square
- Prints some capital letters

#### What children are like... 3 ½ to 5 years:

- Have a longer attention span
- Act silly or boisterous
- Talk a lot, ask many questions
- Want real adult things and to keep art projects
- Experiment with new physical skills, with varying degree of caution
- Reveal feelings in dramatic play
- Like to play with friends, do not like to lose
- Share and take turns sometimes