High Quality Interactions and Instruction in Action

In high quality kindergarten classroom, teachers use responsive interactions and comprehensive instructional strategies to create a learning environment which supports young children’s development and learning. Teachers build relationships with their students based on trust, support, and respect for individual differences. When children feel supported and valued, they are more likely to participate in classroom activities and share their ideas and perspectives with the teacher and other children. Through responsive interactions and instruction, students develop effective communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and a positive self-image.

Interactions and Instruction address the New York State Learning Standards

The New York State Learning Standards provide a framework for early childhood education and development. They emphasize the importance of responsive interactions, clear communication, and the use of language and literacy skills. Teachers must provide a supportive and stimulating learning environment that encourages children to engage in meaningful conversations and activities. To do this, teachers must be skilled in understanding and building relationships with their students, as well as being able to adapt their instruction to meet the needs of individual learners.

Strategies For Teachers

1. Create a warm, caring, and engaging environment
2. Listen to and encourage children to express their ideas and feelings
3. Structure the day to ensure that the majority of learning occurs in small groups

Strategies For Leaders

1. Provide training for staff on early childhood education and cultural awareness
2. Select curricula that foster rich discussion and understanding among students and teachers
3. Use a variety of techniques to enhance student engagement and critical thinking
4. Encourage teachers to engage in reflective practice and professional development that encourages responsive and appropriate instruction
5. Ensure teachers have sufficient time to engage in meaningful and relevant professional development.
Responsive Interactions and Instruction in Prekindergarten through 3rd Grade: Building a Strong Foundation for the New York State Learning Standards

As members of the NYS Early Childhood Advisory Council, the NYS Head Start Collaboration Office, the NYS State Education Department, and the NYS Association for the Education of Young Children providing guidance to support our youngest students, their families, teachers, and leaders by highlighting key features of high quality early childhood teaching. We firmly believe that young students can best meet New York State Learning Standards when they have effective teachers who use intentional, experiential, and developmentally and culturally appropriate practices. This brief provides helpful strategies related to setting up a classroom environment that will help to put the State’s young learners on a path to social and intellectual success as they master the foundational skills to meet the New York State Learning Standards.

Guidance from
New York State Head Start Collaboration Office
New York State Association for the Education of Young Children
New York State Education Department

To learn more and view the other briefs in this series that address curriculum, the classroom environment, instruction and interactions, assessment and family engagement, behavior and play, please visit the New York ECAC website at www.nysecac.org or contact us at ecac@ccf.ny.gov

Supported by Grant Number 90TP001901-01 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Resources
- Pre-K-3rd: Getting Literacy Instruction Right
  Foundation for Child Development, Nonie K. Lesaux
  www.fcd-us.org/resources/prek-3rd-getting-literacy-instruction-right
- Engaging Interaction and Environments
  Head Start National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (NCQTL)
  www.eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/practice/engage
- Classroom Assessment Scoring System
  Teachstone
  www.teachstone.com/the-class-system/
- New York State Education Department
  www.nysed.gov

Sources
1 How the Brain Develops (2013). Early Childhood Mapping Project Alberta, pg. 3