

How to Use This Guide

The Coach's Guide to The Creative Curriculum for Preschool: A Step-by-Step Resource for Individualizing Professional Development is designed to assist you in individualizing your coaching. Begin using the *Guide* by reading part I for information about your role, the coaching process, and tailoring your coaching to meet the strengths and needs of the teachers with whom you work.

Use the *Guide* to Individualize

Parts II–VIII of the *Guide* do not have to be used in sequence. Choose sections on the basis of the strengths and needs of the individuals or small groups of teachers with whom you work. Before turning to a particular chapter in parts II–IV, read the first few pages of the part in which the chapter is located. The introduction to that part presents an overview of the broad topic. Then read the introduction to the chapter for details about how to use the tools provided in that chapter. For parts V–VIII, turn directly to the introduction to the chapter of immediate interest.

A central premise of the *Guide* is that teachers' implementation of *The Creative Curriculum* ranges along a continuum, from a beginning level to a high level of knowledge, understanding, and practice. When appropriate, tools in the *Guide* illustrate three levels of implementation to help focus your observations and enable you to adjust the support you give to each teacher.

Beginning implementation—These teachers are new to teaching, are new to *The Creative Curriculum*, or have been using *The Creative Curriculum* without progressing with implementation. They benefit from clear direction and a lot of modeling.

Progressing with implementation—These teachers understand and practice the basics of *The Creative Curriculum* and are ready to learn more. Sometimes you will have to take the initiative and present suggestions, but sometimes you can brainstorm together and plan collaboratively.

Refining implementation—These teachers have a high level of implementation expertise, and others often look to them as leaders. They are reflective about their practice and attuned to new developments in early childhood education. As you coach these teachers, it is important for you to communicate respect for their mastery and encourage them in their leadership role.

Use Tools to Facilitate Your Coaching

These tools are included throughout the *Guide* to assist you with coaching responsibilities:

Coaching considerations—The coaching process begins by thinking about several questions. What do you know about each teacher as an individual? What do you know about circumstances that encourage or interfere with a teacher’s implementation of new strategies? The chapters in parts II–IV begin with examples of coaching considerations. Use these examples to prompt your thinking about issues that may affect the teacher’s current practices and receptivity to change. Give yourself some time to reflect before meeting with a teacher, and anticipate ways to respond to factors that encourage or interfere with the adoption of best practices.

Messages to teachers—Sending a short message is a good way to initiate a conversation about the curriculum and focus it on best practices rather than on the teacher. Inspirational, subject-specific messages are offered at the beginning of many chapters. You may use them as they are worded or adapt them for the teachers with whom you work. They can be sent by e-mail or printed and sent another way.

The image shows two overlapping boxes representing lists from a guide. The top box is titled "DO" LIST and "Help Teachers Promote Technological Learning". It includes a "General Strategies" section with a bullet point: "Review pages 156–160 of *The Creative Curriculum For Preschool* with the teacher." The bottom box is titled "SEE" LIST and "Observe How Teachers Support Technological Learning". It includes an "Awareness of Technology" section with four bullet points: "Offer real or toy tools and equipment as appropriate for dramatic play, practical use, and taking apart (e.g., phones, household appliances, cash registers, cameras, microphones, CD players, tape recorders, carpentry, cooking, medical, housekeeping, and office tools; and so on).", "On study trips, point out how technology is used.", "Use a camera to record children’s play and let them watch the videos.", and "Provide a computer, and CD or tape players for children to use."

Lists—You will find two types of lists in the *Guide*: “see” lists and “do” lists.” “See” lists guide your observations. They describe strategies that you should see teachers using in relation to a specific aspect of *The Creative Curriculum*. You can use “see” lists with teachers in face-to-face conferences to help them identify their personal strengths and challenges. “Do” lists provide strategies for guiding teachers toward improved practice.

Charts—A chart is used when examples of more than one coaching action (observing, conversing, and offering additional support) are given on a single tool. Four types of charts are included in the *Guide*.

The image shows a "SEE AND SAY" CHART titled "Redirecting Teaching Practices—Learning". It is a table with two columns: "Classroom Situations" and "After sharing your observations, you might say...".

Classroom Situations	After sharing your observations, you might say...
Children spend too much time in whole-group activities.	Whole-group activities are great for building a sense of community. They are most successful when they last for 10–20 minutes. Let’s read pages 84 and 85 of <i>The Creative Curriculum for Preschool</i> together.
Adult voices predominate in the classroom, and children do not have enough time to express themselves.	It seems like children need more time to process what they hear and to think about what to say. Try speaking more simply and giving children more time to respond. Let’s see if that will help children engage in deeper conversations with you.
The teacher misses teachable moments and other opportunities to scaffold children’s learning.	Children do and say very interesting things as they play! It would be great if you interact with them at least briefly, even when they have initiated their activities.

“See and say” charts present examples of classroom situations where you need to redirect the teacher’s practices. They show how you might begin a conversation with the teacher about why other strategies are more appropriate for young children.