Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool for Alignment in Resources for Children Ages Three and Four

The experiences and skills that children develop during their early years are critically important to their success later in school. What children learn during the first few years of life helps lay the foundation for their future growth and development. It is important that teachers provide an environment and experiences that promote growth and learning. This rubric details the desired components of an early childhood curriculum for three/four-year-olds.

Title: **The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool** Age Levels: **Three and Four**

Publisher: **Teaching Strategies, LLC** Copyright: **2010**

Curriculum Type (Language/Literacy, Math, Integrated[1]): **Integrated**

Overall Rating: **Tier I, Exemplifies quality**

Tier I, Tier II, Tier III Elements of this review:

STRONG	WEAK
1. Within Parameters of Stnds. (Non-Negotiable)	
2. Appropriateness of Materials (Non-Negotiable)	
3. Complexity of Materials (Non-Negotiable)	
4. Quality of Materials (Non-Negotiable)	
5. Implementation Format of Materials Activities	
6. Assessment	
7. Scaffolding and Support	
8. Supports Parental Participation	

To evaluate each set of submitted materials, begin by reviewing Column 2. If there is a "Yes" for all **"**Non-Negotiable" indicators in Column 2, then the materials receive a "Yes" in Column 1.If there is a "No" for any "Non-Negotiable" indicators in Column 2, then the materials receive a "No" in Column 1.If an indicator has more than one component, a score of "Yes" must be received for every component in order to score an overall "Yes" on that indicator.

Tier 1 ratings receive a "Yes" in Column 1 for all Non-Negotiable indicators AND Additional Indicators of Quality.

Tier 2 ratings receive a "Yes" in Column 1 for all Non-Negotiable indicators but may receive "No" rating(s) for the Additional Indicators of Quality.

Tier 3 ratings receive a "No" in Column 1 for one or more of the Non-Negotiable indicators.

[1] **Integrated Curriculum:** Resources designed to help children gain knowledge and skills in a variety of developmental areas and make connections across those areas. For the purpose of this review, to meet the criteria for an "Integrated Curriculum", resource(s) must cover each domain of the *Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards* (e.g. include Approaches to Learning, Cognitive Development and General Knowledge, Language and Literacy Development, Physical Well-Being and Motor Development and Social-Emotional Development)

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY	MEETS METRICS YES/NO	JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS WITH EXAMPLES
TIER 1 AND 2 NON-NEGOTIABLES			
1. CONTENT WITHIN THE PARAMETERS OF THE STANDARDS Materials and activities are consistent with the *Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards*. ☒ Yes ☐ No	**FOR ALL INTEGRATED CURRICULA:** **1a)** Large majority of materials and activities provide opportunities and experiences for children to meet the *Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards* (i.e. appropriate for the age level for which they are suggested) across all domains of the standards: o Approaches to Learning, o Cognitive Development/General knowledge which includes Creative Thinking and Expression, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies o Language and Literacy Development o Physical Well-being and Motor Development and o Social-Emotional Development	**Yes**	The materials and activities outlined in the curriculum provide opportunities and experiences for the children to meet the Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards across all domains.An alignment is provided by Teaching Strategies that correlates activities and experiences with an indicator from the standards, with the majority of indicators represented. *It should be noted that Teaching Strategies uses a coding system that differs from the coding system suggested within the within the Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards. Examples include: Approaches to Learning: (AL 1-4) - Intentional Teaching Card M12,, Mighty Minutes #38, Beginning of the Year Study - focus questions, all studies Creative Thinking and Expression: (CC 3) Intentional Teaching Card LL6, (CC 1) Intentional Teaching Card LL10, Mighty Minutes #39, all studies Cognitive Math: (CM 1,2,3,4) All Intentional Teaching Cards M1-79, Mighty Minute #42, all studies Science: (CS 2) Intentional Teaching Card LL15, (CS 4) Mighty minutes #63, all studies Social Studies: (CSS 3) Intentional Teaching Card M45, (CSS 2) Mighty Minutes #69, all studies Language/Literacy: (LL1-7) All Intentional Teaching Cards, (LL 2) Mighty Minutes #09, all studies and Book Discussion Cards

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			Physical Well-being and Motor Development: (PM 1-5) All Intentional Teaching Cards, (PM 2) Mighty Minutes #09, all studies Social/Emotional: (SE 1-5) All Intentional Teaching Cards, (SE 1) Mighty Minutes #20, Book Discussion Cards and all studies
2. APPROPRIATENESS OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS & ACTIVITIES ☒ Yes ☐ No	**FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES:** **2a)** Materials and activities are provided through a balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated experiences.	**Yes**	Materials and activities are provided through a balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated experiences. The Intentional Teaching Cards and Mighty Minutes are utilized primarily through teacher-directed instruction with many opportunities for children to make choices within or after those activities (e.g. materials are often placed in the center areas when the whole/small group activities are completed). The daily plan includes opening routine, discussion and shared writing, large group, choice time, read aloud, small group, Mighty Minutes, and large group round-up. The Volume 2 Interest Area Guide provides many materials that could be included in learning centers for choice time. This resource (Chapter 4) also provides guidance for teachers on setting up and managing interest areas, guiding chidren's behavior and teaching intentionally and responsibly during these times. Each study is determined based on the collective group of children’s interests.
	FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES: **2b)** Materials and activities allow substantial opportunities for frequent and systematic practice of skills using interactive and hands-on approaches (i.e. does not typically support practice through the use of worksheets, etc.) Examples of interactive and hands-on approaches include but are not limited to games, dramatic play, investigations, etc.	**Yes**	The Creative Curriculum has six units that focus on investigations of various topics.The materials and activities provided allow substantial opportunities for frequent and systematic practice of skills using interactive and hands-on approaches. Each study provides prescribes daily opportunities for skill practice utilizing the Intentional Teaching Cards, Mighty Minutes and

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			Book Discussion Cards. There are 2 options for Intentional Teaching Cards allowing a teacher to tailor whole/small group time to fit the needs of the children. Examples include Intentional Teaching Card M07 - Ice Cubes, Intentional Teaching Card LL33 - Clothesline Storytelling, and Mighty Minutes #25-Freeze. Read alouds and activities/questions outlined through the Book Discussion cards provide daily opportunities for development of language/literacy skills, social - emotional development and problem-solving skills
	FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES: **2c)** Materials and activities are culturally sensitive and appropriate.	**Yes**	Materials and actitivies are culturally sensitive and provide a variety of culturally and linguistically relevant books for children and families of diverse backgrounds. Examples include books such as Jalapeno Bagels, A Chair for My Mother. Other examples include Intentional Teaching Card M24-Matzo Balls, and the Clothes and Building Studies. Materials and activities are appropriate for early childhood children.
3. COMPLEXITY OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS & ACTIVITIES ☒ Yes ☐ No	**FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES:** **3a)** Materials and activities present a logical and coherent progression of complexity over time (i.e., read-aloud text complexity increases over time; math concepts and vocabulary build upon each other in a meaningful way).	**Yes**	The curriculum does not have a prescribed sequence for covering studies with the exception of "Beginning the Year" which is taught first in the series. The issue of progression of complexity over time is addressed through the following: 1) The progression of children's understanding of concepts and vocabulary which are built upon as they progress through each study, 2) through the use of the Teaching Sequence in the Intentional Teaching Cards, and 3) the ability to scaffold the activities found in the Mighty Minutes. Teachers must utilize the Objectives for Development and Learning which is the critical component in using this curriculum so that skills can be taught with increasing complexity. Teachers should access the “progressions of

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			development and learning" found in the Teaching Sequence of the Intentional Teaching Cards to adapt each activity within curriculum to the appropriately complex level regardless of the time of year in which a study is covered. Teaching Guides for each unit include a listing of the two options of Intentional Teaching Cards which are used for the study. For example, on Day 1 of the Buildings Study under Small Group, two options teacher can use in order to differentiate instruction. "Mighty Minutes" have an Objective and Related Objectives listed at the top of each card and provide additional correlating suggestions and general adaptations. Teachers must follow the progressions of development and learning in order to make decisions about how to make the best choice of activities from these cards. For example, Card 03: Purple Pants has additional/extension activities guiding teachers to "focus questions on beginning sounds, ending sounds or rhyming words as appropriate for the group". Following the progressions will help them determine the appropriate option based on the sequence of development of these skills. The Intentional Teaching Cards and Mighty Minutes are coded numerically with a for ease of access, but are not intended to be taught in numeric order.
4. QUALITY OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS & ACTIVITIES ☒ Yes ☐ No	**FOR INTEGRATED CURRICULA AND LANGUAGE/LITERACY CURRICULA:** **4a) Language development** is emphasized through resources and activities that support the following: • Significant time spent on reading appropriately complex books aloud to children, drawing from a balance of narrative and informational text • Regular read-alouds of informational text related to a	**Yes**	A significant amount of time is spent on reading appropriately complex books aloud to children although a majority of stories are narratives/fiction. Repeated "Read-Alouds" are incorporated daily and several of the books provided in each unit of study are related to the theme/focus.Each book comes with a corresponding Book Discussion Card .Each card includes instructions related to

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	theme or topic (i.e., animals, cities, weather) in order to accelerate background knowledge and vocabulary development • Frequent use of a repeated-reading approach for texts read aloud, building from enjoyment of the story and basic/literal comprehension to discussion of inferential questions about the text		each Read-Aloud session (three total). Each session includes instructions related to what to do "before reading, while reading, and after reading". Each card includes story related vocabulary with definitions, questions to use and comments to make before, during, and after the story, and questions/comment to use/make that focus on social-emotional development and problem-solving skills. Books are also placed in the literacy/library corner for children to explore during center activities. The Volume 3: Literacy manual outlines methods for teachers to support children's language development. It is important that teachers learn about, synthesize and put into practice information and strategies outlined in this resource as well as those contained in each of the studies. *Types of Books in Each Study (terminology of vendor): Beginning of the Year Study – 3 Nonfiction, 16 Fiction (19 total) Balls Study- 2 Nonfiction, 6 Fiction (10 total) Buildings Study – 4 Nonfiction, 7 Fiction (11 total) Clothes Study – 3 Nonfiction, 12 Fiction (15 total) Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Study – 2 Nonfiction, 6 Fiction (8 total) Trees Study –5 Nonfiction, 9 Fiction (14 total) (This information is based upon "The Creative Curriculum for Preschool: Teaching Strategies Children's Book Collection")

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	FOR INTEGRATED CURRICULA AND MATH CURRICULA: **4b) Math** materials and activities devote a large majority of time (75% or more) to the development of understanding numbers, ways of representing numbers, and relationships between number and quantities, consistent with the *Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards*.	**Yes**	Intentional Teaching Cards M01-M79 provide teachers with explicit instruction, with information related to differentiation of instruction, related to the development of understanding numbers, ways of representing numbers, and relationships between number and number quantities, consistent with the Louisiana Early Learning and Development Standards. Objective 20 (Uses Number Concepts and Operations which includes counting, quantifying and connecting numerals with their quantities) is the main objective addressed in Intentional Teaching Cards MT 1-6, 11-13, 16-19, 22, 37, 39, 41, 59, 61, 63, 66-68, 77-79 and is a related objective in many more. These cards are incorporated primarily during Small Group time. All math standards are addressed through these resources and reinforced through Mighty Minutes and each of the studies. Suggestions for incorporating math activities, experiences, and materials into large group and center-based activities are also outlined in The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Volume 4 Mathematics.
	FOR INTEGRATED CURRICULA AND MATH CURRICULA: **4c) Math** materials and activities adhere to the following indicators of quality: • Promote children's acquisition and use of the language and vocabulary of math • Promote conceptual understanding of math content • Promote children's development of perseverance and persistence in solving problems	**Yes**	The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Volume 4 Mathematics included with the curriculum provides teachers with several strategies to incorporate math into group and center based activities and provides example statements, questions, words/terms that teachers can use, while working with them in each of the outlined activities, facilitating children's acquisition and use of the language and vocabulary of math; an example of the terms/words suggested in the "Using the Library Area to Teach Mathematics" chapter of the book are the use of positional words such as over, under, in front of, next to, behind, and comparative terms such as big, bigger, biggest/ fast, faster, fastest.

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			The suggested activities, questions and statements also work to promote children's conceptual understanding of math content through the facilitation of teacher/child conversations related to a variety of math concepts. Additionally, Chapters 22 and 23 of Volume 4 (Mathematical Process Skills and Planning Your Mathematics Program) also provide several examples of teacher/child conversations that focus on mathematics that teachers can use as a reference. Several of the statement and question suggestions also facilitate perseverance and persistence as children participate in the suggested activities; example statements include "How can you check?", "How could you find out?" , "How do you know", "Tell me why you think…", etc. The Intentional Teaching Cards include "Questions to Guide Your Observations" which may be helpful in helping teachers assess children's conceptual understanding of math concepts and to make assessments based on a child's level of persistence during problem solving activities.
	FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES: **4d)** Adequate, explanatory materials for teachers are provided.	**Yes**	The Creative Curriculum provides numerous guides and explanatory materials for teachers. These include:The Foundations, Interest Areas, Literacy, Mathematics, Objectives for Development and Learning and the Teaching Guides for the six units of study are all provided for the teacher to use in implementing this curriculum. The Guide to the Creative Curriculum for Preschool highlights all of the components that teachers will use. The Objectives for Learning and Development provides guidance for teachers to help them in

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			learning how to observe and document children's learning, make decisions about their level of growth and how to use that information for planning, informing others and making decisions about children who may need additional support or evaluation. Teachers are given information on how to prepare for activities and what materials they will need to gather in the studies as well as in the Intentional Teaching Cards and Mighty Minutes. These resources include step-by-step instructions describing what teachers are to do during the activity as well as examples of questions and responses based on children's understanding. The "Teaching Sequence" provides guidance and language for scaffolding the lesson to meet the skill levels of the children.
ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF QUALITY			
5. IMPLEMENTATION FORMAT OF MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES Materials and activities reflect a wide range of experiences for skill development. ☒ Yes ☐ No	**FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES:** **5a)** Materials and activities are incorporated throughout a variety of settings, including whole group time, centers/activity or interest areas, small group and individualized attention.	**Yes**	Materials and activities are incorporated thoughout a variety of settings.The daily plan includes discussions and shared writing, large group, choice time, read aloud, and small group. The Foundations and Interest Areas resources as well as Literacy and Math manuals provide information on strategies for setting up the environment and establishing the daily routines/schedule. Ways to individualize the learning of students are highlighted through the Intentional Teaching Cards. This resource contains a color coded teaching sequence.
	FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES: **5b)** Additional/supplemental materials and activities are suggested that appeal to children's interests in order to deepen motivation, enjoyment and learning.	**Yes**	Each lesson includes suggestions for additional activities that appeal to children's interests. A whole manual is provided with suggestions for interest areas.

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			Varying options are given each day for small group depending on the interests of the children. The units are also all based on investigations that the children wish to pursue. At the end of each study, there are suggestions for activities that help children reflect and celebrate what they have learned. There are also supplemental activities through Outdoor Experiences, Family Partnerships and Wow! Experiences.
	FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES: **5c)** Materials are available in different formats (e.g. print and non-print such as videos, art, music, charts, pictures, etc.).	**Yes**	Materials are available in print and non-print formats and include texts, art, music, pictures, and manipulatives. Various ideas are given for materials for the interest areas including ebooks.
6. ASSESSMENT Materials offer assessment opportunities that accurately and appropriately measure progress. ☒ Yes ☐ No	**FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES:** **6a)** Assessments consistent with the *Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards* are provided through a variety of appropriate methods (e.g. anecdotal observations/notes, photographs, checklists, and work samples).	**Yes**	Assessments are consistent with the Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards are provide through a variety of appropriate methods. The curriculum assessment is GOLD® which is based on the Objectives for Development and Learning which are highly aligned with the ELDS. The assesment system supports the use of anecdotal records, photographs, checklists, work samples and videos to document children's growth and learning. This online assessment is built into the lessons and are noted throughout the plans
	FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES: **6b)** Methods to assess children's learning are embedded throughout activities (e.g. whole group, small group, center/activity times, transitions, etc.) within the daily schedule.	**Yes**	Methods to assess children's learning are embedded thoughout activities within the daily schedule. The Intentional Teaching Cards, Mighty Minutes, and Book Discussion Cards all provide ways to assess learning and reference them back the the Objectives of Development and Learning. The Intentional Teaching Cards contain a "Questions to Guide Your Observations" that provide guidance on what questions teachers can

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			ask themselves about what they notice about children's learning.
7. SCAFFOLDING AND SUPPORT Materials/activities provide all children with opportunities and support to meet the standards. ☒ Yes ☐ No	**FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES:** **7a)** Appropriate suggestions are outlined for supporting varying needs of children (e.g. for English language learners, children with special needs, etc.) and are integrated throughout all materials and activities. Examples may include additional, alternate or modified activities or materials.	**Yes**	Appropriate suggestions are outlined for supporting varying needs of childre in the areas of English language learners and children with special needs. These activities are integrated throughout all of the materials and activiites. For example, the Intentional Teaching Cards, Book Discussion Cards and Mighty Minutes give suggestions for what to do for students to make the skill more or less challenging. Each Intentional Teaching Card contains a section entitled "Including All Children" that provides suggestions for modifying activiites or making accomodations to meet child-specific needs. The Teaching Sequence in the Intentional Teaching Cards follows the progressions of Development and Learning and allows teachers to scaffold activities to meet the needs of individuals as well as groups of children. Intentional Teaching Cards and Mighty Minutes are also available in Spanish.
	FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES: **7b)** Schedule or time for activities appears to be flexible and would allow for adjustments according to children's needs/interests.	**Yes**	The daily schedule gives guidelines in which to have during the day and allows the teacher to adjust the schedule according to the needs and interests of the students. The guidelines include offering a balance of active and quiet activities throughout the day, providing at least 60 minutes for each choice time, allocating 40-60 minutes for each outdoor period, planning two or three read-aloud times during the day, and including times for intentionally teaching literacy and math skills every day.

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8. ACTIVITIES/ MATERIALS SUPPORTING PARENTAL PARTICIPATION ☒ Yes ☐ No	**FOR ALL CURRICULUM TYPES:** **8a)** Provides a variety of activities to extend learning from the classroom into the home.	**Yes**	A variety of activities are provided to extend learning from the classroom into the home. Letters are available for each unit to send home to the parents in both English and Spanish that provide the families with information about the unit of study the students are about to begin. The letter includes numerous ways in which the families can extend their child's learning at home. Family partnership ideas are also given throughout the teacher guides.
FINAL EVALUATION: ***Tier 1 ratings*** receive a "Yes" in Column 1 for all Non-Negotiable indicators AND Additional Indicators of Quality. ***Tier 2 ratings*** receive a "Yes" in Column 1 for all Non-Negotiable indicators but may receive "No" rating(s) for the Additional Indicators of Quality. ***Tier 3 ratings*** receive a "No" in Column 1 for one or more of the Non-Negotiable indicators.			
Compile the results of Sections I and II to make a final decision for the material under review			
I: Non-Negotiables	1. Content Within the Parameters of the Standards	**Yes**	The materials and activities provide numerous opportunities and experiences for children to meet the Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards
	2. Appropriateness of Curriculum Materials and Activities	**Yes**	Materials and activities are culturally sensitive and appropriate, and there are substantial opportunities for frequent and systematic practice of skills provided through balanced teacher-directed and child-initiated experiences
	3. Complexity of Curriculum Materials and Activities	**Yes**	Materials and activities can be presented in a logical and coherent progression of complexity over time based on children's levels of development rather than a sequential order
	4. Quality of Curriculum Materials and Activities	**Yes**	Language development is emphasized through numerous opportunities for read-alouds; math materials and activities devote a large majority of time to support children's understanding of numbers and supporting understanding of the language of math and math content; adequate, explanatory materials are provided for teachers
II: Additional Indicators of Quality	5. Implementation Format of Materials and Activities	**Yes**	Materials in a variety of formats are available which can be incorporated across multiple classroom settings; additional supplemental materials and activities are suggested

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	6. Assessment	**Yes**	Assessments are consistent with the Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards and collected through a variety of appropriate methods throughout daily activities
	7. Scaffolding and Support	**Yes**	There are appropriate suggestions for supporting children of varying needs including those with disabilities and those who are English Language Learners; suggested schedules are appropriate, flexible and designed with children's needs in mind
	8. Activities/Materials Supporting Parental Participation	**Yes**	There are a variety of options for extending learning from the classroom into the home by engaging families
FINAL DECISION FOR THIS MATERIAL: **Tier I, Exemplifies quality**			

Appendix I.

Publisher Response

The publisher had no response.

Appendix II.

Public Comments

There were no public comments submitted.