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## **UNIT 30 PLANNING THE WEEKLY AND DAILY CURRICULUM**

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### **30.1 INTRODUCTION**

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There are several concepts, skills and abilities you want the children to acquire, after they complete the preschool programme at your centre for one/two years. These can also be called the learning outcomes; that is, what you expect the children to learn in the period of time they are with you. Short-term goals help to identify the concepts, skills and values you will focus upon in a shorter period.

In Units 26, 27 and 28, you have learnt how to identify the broad content and activities for the curriculum using different approaches — such as the theme-based approach, the emergent curriculum approach and the Project Approach. While in the theme-based approach, the activities the children engaged in are identified by the teacher in advance, in the emergent and project approach, the activities unfold as the project progresses and the children's interests emerge. These activities cannot be predicted in advance. Nonetheless, though the different activities related to the themes and projects spread over the year, the concepts, values and skills which you have identified as your annual goals can be developed in children.

Now the next step is to create a daily schedule so that you know what activities are to be carried out at different periods of the day. How can we do this? Are there some principles that can help us in this task? This is the focus of this Unit.

## Objectives

After reading this Unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of Annual Plan and Unit Plan;
- state the various principles you have to keep in mind while planning a timetable of schedule for children;
- create different types of schedules based on these principles which are suitable for different age groups of children; and
- schedule the curricular content over the year by making Annual Plan, Unit Plans and Weekly Schedules.

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## 30.2 MAKING THE ANNUAL PLAN AND UNIT PLAN

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The first step toward planning the daily schedule of activities is to make an Annual Plan. An **annual plan** provides a broad framework for the year. The Annual Plan lists what are the themes and projects that will be transacted every month. Projects may be listed, but can be changed or modified depending on the interests of children – usually one can stick to having three or four broad themes in a year, which keeps space for flexibility.

You have come across an example of the Annual Plan in Unit 27 on Theme Based approach. Refer to the Unit and have a re-look at Bhavna’s Annual theme Plan. When you are following the emergent curriculum approach, the teacher’s role is more of a curriculum researcher than a knowledge transmitter, so the planning is different (Refer to Unit 28).

This Annual Plan, stating themes and projects should be developed in synchrony with the Annual Goals. This means that you need to create the sequence in which you will introduce the concepts, skills and values (Annual Goals and Short Term Goals) to the children during the various months of the year. Then for every month (even more than a month, if the theme extends beyond a month), you need to identify what are the themes and projects that will be appropriate and help in achieving these goals. As we have said, in Unit 27 on theme-based planning most of the topics that young children usually find interesting can be selected as themes and projects because there is potential to achieve these broad goals through almost any theme or project. In Emergent Curriculum, a particular theme may be in the mind of the teacher. She may set up a space for exploration (on vehicles or books or food, musical instruments, etc.) and see how children respond. When children come up with stories/drawings and questions, she puts them on the display board and sees whether a theme or a project can emerge from these responses. Once this is identified, she can break it up into smaller sub-units for her planning. In her planning, she may divide the children into sub-groups based on their interests, but these sub-groups have to be under the umbrella of a larger unifying theme. When she gets the children together for a large group discussion, then these different facets or sub-sets are explored.

So in around a month, you may have some themes or a project, which could be identified by you or suggested by children. We have referred to the period in which you will transact ONE project or a theme as a UNIT. Instead of planning the activities for each day in isolation, it is good to think and plan for a few days together — i.e., a Unit. Making a plan for a certain number of days together is desirable because the ‘Theme’ or a ‘Project’ continues over days and there is an interconnection between activities carried out on different days and the concepts, skills and values addressed through a project or a theme. So a theme forms a ‘Unit’ in the case of theme-based planning. So the final web of activities that you prepare on the theme is the Unit Plan (refer to Unit 28 and 29 to recall the web of activities). When you are using the Emergent Approach or the Project Approach, the inquiry question that the children want to investigate would generate the content for the Unit Plan. In this case, the Unit Plan would be the activities children and you have planned together to answer the inquiry question. As we have said earlier, the activities in the emergent curriculum or the Project approach cannot be predicted in advance. They emerge gradually as a result of learners and teacher interaction and are shaped by children’s interests.

Sometimes, you may plan to use both the theme-based approach and the project based in a particular period of time. In this case, the Unit plan reflects the activities related to both the approaches. There is planning required for implementing an emergent curriculum, but it is slightly different. So, a Unit plan essentially means listing out briefly the activities which will be carried out in a certain number of days. It does not tell us details such as the duration of activities or the sequencing of activities or which particular activities will be carried out on which days.

How long would the duration of a ‘Unit’ be? While there is no fixed rule regarding the duration of a theme-based Unit Plan, usually with young children, a theme (or a sub-theme in case the theme is big and has been divided into sub-themes) can be transacted over 5-6 days. When a Unit plan is created for a week, it is also referred to as the ‘weekly plan’. In the Project Approach and the Emergent Curriculum Approach, the Unit would be of a larger time duration since an inquiry question would take longer to be explored and answered. Thus, the range of the Unit Plan can be from a few days to even a month. While having all the Unit Plans of one-week duration might seem practical in terms of planning, the transaction of the actual Unit will be effective only when children’s interests, the complexity, and the relevance of the topic are taken into consideration when deciding upon the duration of a Unit. Also remember that when you actually implement the Unit Plan, the planning does not neatly translate into implementation. The Unit may conclude earlier or take longer.

We summarize by saying that no matter what approach to the curriculum you may follow, it is helpful to think in terms of a chunk of time — a Unit — and plan activities that are meaningfully related to each other and lead to interconnected learning.

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## 30.3 PLANNING THE DAILY SCHEDULE

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A daily schedule is a detailed plan of the activities that would be carried out in a day which specifies the time of the day when each activity would be carried out, the duration of each activity, the sequence of the activities, the location of the activity (i.e., indoors or outdoors), the grouping of children for the activity (individual activity, small group or large group activity), whether all children or groups would be doing the same activity or if they would be engaged in parallel activities, the materials needed for the activity and the staff who would be involved.

Sometimes, the daily schedule is also referred to as the 'time-table'. However, the term 'time-table' has the connotation that the day is rigidly time-bound and highly controlled. Such a connotation does not suit an ECCE programme which is meant to be flexible to include children's interests, choices and spontaneously emerging events and situations for the child. So we have used the term 'daily schedule' to refer to the teacher's plan for a day.

### 30.3.1 Some Factors that Influence Planning of Daily Schedules

How you will plan the day's schedule will depend upon several factors. As a result, different ECCE programmes are likely to have different schedules. Let us look at some factors which affect the scheduling of the day's activities.

#### a) Age of the Children

Children of different ages have different needs. So the age of the children will influence the day's planning to a great extent, as discussed further.

- i) *Duration of Activities:* Pre-primary learners generally respond well to activities of 25-30 min duration, while time slots of 10-15 minutes are more suitable for toddlers. This is because younger children have a shorter attention span.
- ii) *Scheduling of Routine Activities:* Arrangement of certain routine activities such as sleep time and feeding time would be different in schedules for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. For example, a full-day infant programme would have time slots for sleeping both before and after lunchtime, while a full-day preschool programme would dedicate only a one-time slot for sleeping, which would be after lunchtime. Also, infant programmes will have more number of feeding time slots.
- iii) *Distribution of Individual and Group Activities:* Infant and toddler programmes will have mostly individual and small group activities. Large group activities are more appropriate for preschool programmes.
- iv) *Multi-aged Group:* If you have children of different ages in the same class, while some activities can be carried out in common with all children, some activities would need to be different for different age groups. So small group activities catering to different age groups may need to be organized simultaneously.

Examples of schedules for infants, toddler, preschoolers, and multi-aged classrooms are given further in the Unit.

## b) Arrival and Departure Timings

While many ECCE programmes have a fixed arrival time i.e., all the children reach the centre at the same time (for example, all children reach the centre at 9.00 a.m.), there are programmes where the children reach the centre over a staggered period of time (example, children reach between 7.30 a.m. to 9.00 a.m.). Having a staggered arrival time is generally kept because different families may have different requirements.

When children arrive at different timings in the morning, teacher-initiated activities can be organized only once all the children have come in, otherwise, there would be constant interruptions with children's arrival, and the children coming in at a later time may not get the full benefit of the activity. Similarly, if the departure of children is staggered, the same issue arises. Thus, during these periods, it is better to schedule child-initiated activities. On the other hand, you can plan teacher-initiated activities at any time of the day in centers where the arrival and departure of children are at a fixed time.

## c) Teacher-Child Ratio

It may be possible that one teacher has to handle a very large group of children. In such cases, to ensure that all children may get individual attention from the teacher for some time during the day, parallel activities may need to be organized. The teacher attends to a small group of children, while the remaining majority of the children are engaged in alternate activities which can be supervised by the helper or assistant teacher. The schedule can be adjusted to help in effective management of the class as well as ensuring that all children get some amount of individual attention from the teacher. The strategy used to manage a multi-age group can also be used to manage a large group.

## d) Resources Availability

Multiple groups of children and their teachers may use common facilities at the centre — the same indoor and outdoor space, materials, etc. In such a case, alternating schedules need to be created for each of these groups to ensure that the time slots for using a resource do not overlap and all the groups get a chance to use the various resources of the centre.

## Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) Fill in the Blanks.

- a) The duration of a theme-based Unit Plan is .....
- b) Unit plan means listing out briefly the ..... which will be carried out in .....
- c) A ..... is a detailed plan of the activities that would be carried out in a day.
- d) The Annual Plan lists the ..... and ..... that will be transacted during the various months of the year to impart ....., ..... and .....
- e) A ..... has the connotation that the day is rigidly time-bound and highly controlled.

- 2) Which of the factors influence the planning of daily schedules?
- a) Resource Availability
  - b) Mood of the children
  - c) Teacher-Child Ratio
  - d) Age of the children
  - e) Parents' education
  - f) Arrival and Departure Timings

### 30.3.2 Principles of Formulating Daily Schedules

Let us now discuss the various principles which form the basis of formulating daily schedules.

- a) Principle 1: Activities planned for the day must promote all aspects of development.**

Since the programme aims to foster the all-round development of children, the activities planned for the day, or at least over the week, must promote development in all the developmental domains — cognitive, language, physical, motor, creative, social and emotional. A schedule that has activities catering to all domains of development is said to be comprehensive and balanced.

You know that some activities promote development in more than one domain. For example, in a well-conducted storytelling session, children do more than simply listen to the story — they talk about the story, relate it to their own experiences; express their feelings, and are inspired to imagine, reflecting their thoughts through their drawings or their own narrations. The teacher can also use the story to develop the children's literacy behaviours such as developing awareness of sound and understanding of the link between spoken and written language. Children are likely to be exposed to new concepts or values through the story. So you can see that a well-selected story and a well-conducted storytelling session not only promote language development but also emotional development, cognitive development, development of early literacy, creativity and imagination. The above example about storytelling also shows that the development domains that are fostered through an activity also depend on how that activity is conducted. Some other activities which promote development in multiple domains include nature walk (which promotes cognitive, language, motor, social and emotional development) and playing with clay (which promotes cognitive, motor, creative, social and emotional development). As children develop holistically through participation in these activities, it is difficult to pick the one area which is most promoted.

On the other hand, some activities, by and large, specifically promote development in a certain domain. For example, when the child engages in separating red and blue balls, cognitive development is being promoted over any other area of development.

So whether the activities promote development in a single domain or whether you include activities that promote development in multiple domains, the important thing is to ensure that over the entire day the schedule must be balanced and must focus on strengthening all developmental domains through the various activities.

Let us do an activity to understand this better. Following are a day's activities planned by Beena, for her group of 3-year-olds. Assess whether all developmental domains are nurtured through the day's activities that she has planned.

***Beena's Plan of Activities for a Day***

Activity 1: Prayer and Exercises.

Activity 2: Putting beads in a string

Activity 3: Running and jumping game

Activity 4: Sorting large and small grains

Activity 5: Outdoor free play

Sr. No.	Activities	Areas of Development Fostered
Activity 1	Prayer and Exercises	Gross motor and fine motor
Activity 2	Putting beads in a string	Fine motor
Activity 3	Running and jumping game	Gross motor, social, emotional
Activity 4	Sorting large and small grains	Cognitive, fine motor
Activity 5	Outdoor free play	Gross motor, social, emotional

We can see that this plan largely promotes motor development and socio-emotional development. There is no activity for language development or creative/aesthetic development. Cognitive development is not adequately focussed upon as well, with there being only one activity focussing on this domain. So Beena's schedule is not balanced from the perspective of all-round development. Remember we have explained that if activities are conducted well and the teacher utilizes the full potential of an activity, most activities foster development in more than one domain. The space provided below suggests a new schedule of activities for Beena.

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You can use a checking chart to be sure whether or not your schedule has activities to nurture all developmental domains. You will read an example of a checking chart in Sub-section 30.4.2.

**b) Principle 2: Include vigorous as well as quieter and less energetic activities.**

Activities involving spirited energetic, physical activity are called active or vigorous activities. These are activities like running, jumping, hopping, climbing, catching and throwing. Quiet activities are those where children are less physically active, spend less energy, and are restful; for example, when they are engaged in drawing or threading beads.

Long periods of quiet activities can make the children feel bored and may lead to disruptive behaviour, such as when they start to distract other children who are still working. Too many vigorous activities, one after the other, can leave the children exhausted. So, to have a balanced schedule, include both active and quiet activities.

**c) Principle 3: Include a mix of indoor and outdoor play activities.**

Children also need balance in terms of indoor and outdoor play activities. This aspect is closely related to the one about vigorous physical activities and quieter ones. Outdoor play is generally vigorous and indoor activities are usually quieter.

**Ideally, during the day there must be at least one outdoor activity.**

Outdoor activities provide children with the opportunity of exercising their large muscles. In many pre-primary centres schedules, you will see a dedicated activity called 'outdoor activity'. This time slot is either carried out as free play or as a large group teacher-initiated activity.

Creative planning of outdoor and indoor play activities can help you manage children of different ages, manage large groups or make do with fewer play equipment. For example, if you have a mixed age group of children, you may group children as older and younger and send one group for outdoor activity whereas the other group is involved in indoor activities. If there is no outdoor space at your centre, take the children to a safe park or the rooftop, or a dead-end street where no traffic comes in. Planning a field trip to the zoo, park, etc. can also be an exciting outdoor activity for children.

You might have observed that there are some activities which can be organized both indoors and/or outdoors depending on what would be more suitable considering children's interests, weather conditions or availability of resources. If you have a large room but no outdoor area, you can modify some games requiring vigorous physical activity so that children can play them indoors. Such an adaptation is far better than not carrying out any vigorous physical activity. Children will get tired and bored if they do not get opportunities to spend their energy during the day.

**d) Principle 4: Include a mix of child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities.**

Child-initiated activities are those activities in which children take the lead in making choices, plans and decisions about what activity to engage in and how to take that activity forward. In the schedule, these are usually referred to as 'free play', 'choice time', 'spontaneous play' or 'freely chosen play'.



The teacher has to structure the environment so that there is a variety of materials from which children can self-select what they would like to engage in. Though the adult has provided some selected play materials in the child's environment, it is the child who decides whether to play with those materials or not and how to play with them. During child-initiated activities, the teacher provides scaffolding (you would remember that this concept is based on Vygotsky's theory, refer to Unit 14, Block 4, Course 1) which takes children's learning forward and creates opportunities that lead to their learning. For instance, you may find that during free indoor play, a child daily spends time at one learning centre or with one type of play material, and does not show interest in others. So you would direct the child's attention to the other activity centres or towards other play materials and encourage her to explore those as well. In another instance, the teacher may point out salient aspects that the child may not have noticed; or she may help two children resolve a conflict situation regarding sharing of materials. All of these are ways of scaffolding children's learning.

You would remember reading about the role of the teacher during children's play in Section 8.5 in Unit 8, Block 2 of this Course. We had explained in that Unit that the teacher **can have different levels of involvement in activity depending on what the child needs — she can be an onlooker, facilitator, demonstrator, or playmate.**

Child-initiated activities help children express their emotions and creativity; build skills of autonomy, initiative and decision making and allow opportunities for discovery. For example, during free play with water, children may observe that some heavy objects sink in water and some do not. However, the teacher's engagement would be required to help children derive why this may be so. Child-initiated activities lead to '**incidental learning**' or learning which happens spontaneously. Since incidental learning happens through the child's own initiative and is related to the child's real-life situation, it is likely to hold her interest. Of course, as we have said earlier, the adult's intervention is needed to help children connect their various experiences and derive meaning from them.

A successful child-initiated activity, requires children to have ample time to consider their play options, select an activity, get involved in it and satisfactorily complete it. Some children may want to be involved in more than one activity. Thus, a good schedule would dedicate adequate time during the day to child-initiated activities. However, you would have realized that child-initiated activities require resources such as sufficient play materials, activity corners that provide the option of various activities, and teachers/adults who can provide support and scaffolding during play. This may be difficult for many preschools in India where resources are limited. In such a situation, a danger is that the teacher would ignore free play activities — this needs to be avoided. You need to **ensure that at least a minimum of 1 hour is dedicated to child-initiated activities in a 4-hour programme.** This minimum time can be managed even in programmes with fewer resources. Also, this one hour is best broken up into the time slots of 30 minutes each. In this way, you can alternate child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities twice during the day.

**Teacher-initiated activities**, also known as structured activities, are those which are planned by the educator. Here, the teacher controls the direction of the activity, though of course children's opinions are taken into account. So the teacher tells them what materials to engage with and also how to engage with these materials (this is equivalent to the 'play-leader' role of an adult you read about in Sub-section 8.3.3 in Unit 8). A teacher-directed discussion and a collage-making activity as per the instructions of the educator are examples of teacher-directed activities. These activities lead to '**planned learning**' with a specific objective that the teacher has in mind. While these activities are driven by the teacher's actions, it may sometimes happen that a teacher-initiated activity leads to spontaneous play. While the theme-based curriculum is largely teacher-directed, the emergent curriculum is not. The teacher has a role in facilitating the process as a co-learner but holds back from actually directing and controlling the process. Her role is more of an active observer to picking up the cues, for future planning, but generally goes with the flow.

As said earlier, many times the outdoor activity is planned as a free play (child initiated) time slot. Indoor play where children freely choose activities from learning corners or choice of play materials is another way the child-initiated play is carried out. In these activities, children generally play individually and sometimes in pairs or even small groups. Typically, large group and small group activities in the schedule are more often teacher-initiated. You will read more about this under Principle 5.

**It is the method or the process of the activity which determines whether it is free or structured.** Painting, which is generally a child-initiated activity, becomes a structured activity when all children are asked to paint inside a given outline. Also, arranging leaves based on their length, which is generally a teacher-initiated activity (since the teacher gives the children the direction to do so), becomes free play when the teacher just provides a basket full of leaves and lets the children explore them and choose what they wish to do with the leaves. One would find different children arranging leaves in different ways and some would perhaps arrange them according to increasing or decreasing size.

**e) Principle 5: Provide children opportunities to work alone as well as in a group.**

A daily schedule should have a good mix of **individual activities, small group activities and large group activities.**

**Individual Activities:** Individual activities give children a chance to do an activity all by themselves and develop their confidence in their abilities and the skill of task-persistence. By and large, most child-initiated activities such as threading beads, or building a tower with construction blocks are individual activities as each child engages in the activity as he/she wants to.

The infant and toddler programme will mainly have individual activities as children do not yet have the skills of working together in a group.

**Group Activities:** Group activities help children to build social skills such as cooperation, sharing, waiting for one's turn, listening to others' ideas, and agreeing to do things as per the decision of the group. There are two types of group activities- small group and large group activities.

**Small Group Activities:** These are activities typically where a teacher carries out short duration activity with a group of 4-6 children. Generally, the purpose of such activities is to communicate some specific concept to children or to help them develop some specific skill. When the children are in a small group she can pay individual attention to them. Sometimes, if a group of children shows a common interest, they can engage in that activity as a small group. Sometimes older pre-primary learners may engage in free play activities in small groups, though the free play is usually an individual activity.

**Large Group Activities:** These are group activities, generally initiated by the teacher which involves the whole class together such as storytelling, discussions, rhymes, movement activities, and dramatization. Large group activities are seen more in preschool programmes as compared to toddler or infant programmes.

Group activities are a common strategy in most preschools. The teacher needs to consciously organize **at least one individual activity in the day**. Alternating group activities with individual activities in the daily schedule helps guard against monotony.

Planning for individual and group activities requires some considerations. For instance, when you plan for individual activities you must also plan to have adequate material for each child. When doing group activities, you need to also think about the seating arrangement for children.

**f) Principle 6: Include new activities and those that children are familiar with.**

Children like to repeat a familiar activity as well as try out new activities. When children repeat a familiar activity, they are practicing, which leads them to master a skill or a concept. Doing things well gives children a sense of achievement. So children repeat activities — they play with the same toys or do the same puzzle or sing the same song over and over again.

However, unless you include some new activities in the day's schedule, children will get bored and begin to lose interest. New activities broaden their learning. Once they have mastered the activity you would find that they usually give it up on their own, since now it is no longer challenging.

It is, therefore, very important to **introduce at least one new activity every day**. New activity here, does not mean, something completely unfamiliar. Sometimes, just changing the method of doing an old activity also makes it look brand new and fun for the children such as instead of drawing on paper, drawing on the floor, or painting using fingers instead of a brush. Changing the place of the activity, (that is from indoor to outdoor) or changing the activity from structured activity to free play activity or from group activity to individual activity too can make the activity feel new to children. This is because when the method of doing the activity changes, the skills required to do the activities become different and children encounter new challenges. For example, if you conduct a storytelling session— the same story can be told orally, then again with props, then repeated with masks, or drawing on the board, and finally done as a role play. Each activity will bring different kinds of response, engagement and learning for the children.

**g) Principle 7: Move from simple to complex activities**

Activities must be planned in such a way that children engage with the simpler ones first before they move to the more difficult or complex ones. For example, we may start with simple stories and then move on to those that may have more characters or a more complex plot. Similarly, we may start with songs with just four lines and go on to singing longer songs. When introducing activities for the development of cognition, start with activities where children have to match objects or pictures, then move to grouping or sorting activities, then to classification and seriation activities, and then to sequencing activities. In these activities, begin by giving the children two-three objects to match; begin by giving three cards for sequencing, three to four objects for seriating or classifying. Similarly, while conducting pattern-making activities, start with simple patterns and where children have to copy a given pattern and then present more complex patterns which they have to extend.

**h) Principle 8: Set a reasonable pace of activities.**

While setting a daily schedule, it is very important to set a pace for the day. You cannot rush an activity, nor spend so much time over it that the children get bored.

When planning the duration of an activity, you need to estimate the time you will need to introduce the activity and complete it, along with the time for transition, that is, winding up the activity and moving on to the next one.

A time slot of 20 to 30 minutes is appropriate for activities for pre-primary learners, while infants and toddlers require shorter periods. However, the specific time needed for each activity may vary depending on the activity. For example, the activity of 'nature walk' needs more time whereas songs and rhymes require lesser time. In a half-day programme for pre-schoolers and toddlers, you may plan about 3 to 5 activities.

Do not rigidly adhere to the time duration/time slot for an activity. **Flexibility is important.** While you must finish all the activities that you have planned, you must also allow children to learn at their own pace, especially infants and toddlers. Thinking in terms of a broad **block of time for an activity** rather than rigidly adhering to the clock to begin and wind up activity would help you give children the time they need to complete an activity. These time blocks can be lengthened or shortened, depending upon children's response to the activity and their involvement in it.

In case you find children are engrossed in what they are doing, you should allow the activity to continue a bit longer. So if children still want to continue with the free drawing activity, it would be appropriate to let them continue with it rather than curtail their expression and creativity simply because it is time to move to the next activity, according to your timetable. The teacher needs to see the day's programme from the perspective of children's development and not simply in terms of the responsibility of completing the activities planned. If you find that some children finish the activity before others, you should move them on to other activities while the rest of the

children complete their tasks. If the activity does not hold children's interest, then you should move on to the next activity even if the time allotted to it has not elapsed.

**The transition time from one activity to another** gives children the time to mentally prepare for the change in activity and also provides the teacher the opportunity to make arrangements for the new activity — for example, rearrangement of seating when moving from group to individual work, or moving out of the class for outdoor activity. Some teachers use specific actions to signal a change of activity. So the children realize it is time for change as soon as they see the particular action.

**i) Principle 9: Be open to suggestions from children and plan activities accordingly.**

You should be open to suggestions from children regarding the activities to be carried out. Be flexible about modifying the schedule as and when needed. For example, suppose you conduct a movement and dance activity on one day which the children enjoy. The next day, you find that children want to repeat the activity. So you would need to modify your day's schedule to make room for children's wishes.

When children are involved in planning and selecting the day's activities, the curriculum activities become child-centred. Children get an opportunity to make decisions, solve problems and organize their thoughts. They gain the ability to relate events, think about the past, and anticipate events. Their self-esteem improves.

Remember that you should ask children for suggestions only if you intend to follow them. If any suggestion is not accepted, you need to tell them the reason for it.

In Section 30.4, let us now learn how to use these principles to prepare daily schedules. Preparing a daily schedule essentially means sequencing the learning experiences.

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## **30.4 SEQUENCING LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN DAILY SCHEDULES**

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**To prepare a daily schedule, we need to follow a two-step process:**

- a) First, fix the time slots for routine activities in the schedule.
- b) Then, sequence the play activities in the remaining time slots.

Table 30a provides a broad template which you can use for planning the daily schedule. So in a day, you can have about 4 to 5 play and learning activities apart from the routine activities. This is only suggestive and you can change the schedule to suit your needs. For example, meal time break may vary depending upon if the centre provides the food or children bring in their own food.

**Table 30a: Sample Schedule Half-day/Full-day Types of Programmes**

Timings	Template for Day for Half-day/Full-day Programmes	
	Half-day Programmes	Full-day Programme
8:45- 9:00 a.m.	Arrival	Arrival
9:00- 9: 30 a.m.	Circle Time/ Assembly	Circle Time/ Assembly
9:30- 10:00 a.m.	Play Activity 1	Play Activity 1
10:00- 10: 30 a.m.	Play Activity 2	Play Activity 2
10:30- 11:00 a.m.	Play Activity 3	Play Activity 3
11:00- 11:30 a.m.	Meal Time: Snacks	Meal Time: Snacks
11:30- 12: 00 a.m.	Play Activity 4	Play Activity 4
12:00 a.m.- 12: 45 p.m.	Play Activity 5	Play Activity 5
12:45- 1:00 p.m.	Departure	Departure for some children, Quiet play time for others
1:00- 1:30 p.m.	igru	Meal time: Lunch
1:30- 3: 00 p.m.		Sleep time
3:00- 3:30 p.m.		Play Activity 6
3:30- 4: 00 p.m.		Play Activity 7
4:00- 4:30 p.m.		Meal Time: Light Snacks
4:30- 4: 45 p.m.		End of the Day Circle Time
4:45- 5:00 p.m.		Departure

Now, we shall discuss these steps in detail.

### 30.4.1 Fixing the Time Slots for Routine Activities

‘Routine activities’ are those activities which take place every day at the centre at a particular time. When these activities take place at the same time every day, it gives a structure to children's daily experiences, which helps to create a sense of security. Let us discuss these routine activities one by one.

- a) **Arrival Time:** The first 15 minutes of the morning at the centre is the arrival time for children. Greeting children warmly when they arrive at the centre and spending a few minutes talking to each child gives them a sense of being welcome, helps them to settle in, and sets the tone for the rest of the day. When children are new to the centre and separating from their parents for the first time, this period may be longer in duration.

After the initial welcome by you, children would settle down by putting their tiffin or bags in the designated places, taking their shoes off if required, and keeping them at the fixed place. Children may spontaneously begin to interact and play with each other or the play material, and they may be involved in spreading out the common mat or arranging the chairs and tables.

When all the children have arrived, you can gather the children for the whole group activity. Some pre-primary centres term this as ‘morning-assembly’ or ‘morning-circle’ time. This is when you can take children’s

attendance, check hygiene (checking children's nails, and asking if they have brushed their teeth and taken a bath), carry out simple exercises, or say prayers. During this time, you can ask the children to recall the activities they did the previous day, ask them what they may want to do today, and share with them the activities that are planned for the day, including the theme or the project of the day.

- b) Meal Time:** Food may be either served by the centre or children may bring snacks from home. Meal time is an opportunity for children to learn healthy habits like washing hands before and after meals and appropriate meal-related social behaviours.

Young children eat little at a time. Hence, we need to serve food at intervals of about 2 hours. In a half-day programme for pre-primary learners, about 1½ to 2 hours from the time the centre starts is a good time to have a mid-morning snack break. In full-day programmes, children would have more than one meal time – snack in the mid-morning time, lunch in the afternoon, and perhaps also a light evening snack before they leave for home. Furthermore, the age of the child would also impact the meal time — younger children would need to be fed more frequently.

Children, especially the younger ones, may not be **toilet trained** when they come to the centre. Over time, as children gain more control over their muscles, they can hold their toilet needs till the designated time. Good times for toilet use are just before meal time or just after arriving at the centre or before leaving the centre. The transition time between two activities can also be used as toilet breaks. Some educators dedicate a fixed time slot for toileting in the schedule, while others don't specifically mention it in the schedule but include it as part of other time slots like meal time. You must be flexible about children's toilet timing habits so that children do not have accidents in the class. Along with toilet training, you can also train the children to wash their hands.

- c) Sleep Time:** In a full-day programme, we must fix a time for children to sleep or rest. For preschoolers, sleep time is normally planned sometime after children have had their lunch in the afternoon for a duration of at least one to two hours. Younger children, particularly infants, sleep in the morning time as well.
- d) End of the Day Time (Departure):** About 15-20 minutes before the departure time, you must start to prepare the children for going home. You may have to ask children to wind up the activity they are doing and put away the toys, materials, etc. that they have been using at their designated places, pack their bag or tiffin, wash their hands, wear their shoes, or go to the toilet. It is a good idea to engage with children in a whole group discussion at the end of the day, where you can ask them to recall the activities they carried out during the day and draw their attention to the concepts they learnt during the day. If you want to hand over some of the children's work to them to take home (such as an artwork created by them) or you want to send a communication note to the parents, this is the time to do so. You must ensure that children are

safely seated in their respective transports or collected by parents or authorized people. This time is also an opportunity to talk with family members who have come to collect the child from the centre.

**Since these routine activities are fixed activities for every day, the first step in creating a schedule involves identifying time slots for these daily routine activities in the timetable.**

Since the schedule of activities will be different for infants, toddlers and pre-primary learners, we will learn to prepare separate plans for different age groups.

### Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) You have read the principles of planning daily schedules. Identify the incorrect statements from the following:

- a) During the day, include new activities and those that children are familiar with.
- b) Plan the activities during the day in such a way that children mostly work alone.
- c) Either include vigorous or quiet activities, but not both together.
- d) Activities planned for the day must focus on cognitive and language development as these are important for admission in primary school.
- e) Plan only simple activities.

2) What are the routine activities that you will list while fixing the time slots in the day's schedule?

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### 30.4.2 Sequencing the Play Activities

After fixing the routine activities in the schedule, the next step is to add in it the play activities and learning experiences you have thought of. The principles of planning schedules that you have read about in Sub-section 30.3.2 of this Unit, can be used to sequence the play activities in the schedule in a way that is suitable to your need.

There are multiple ways in which the play activities can be sequenced. In the following examples (A, B, C and D), you will see how different types of schedules can be created by focusing on specific principles for sequencing learning experiences and play activities, catering to different groups of children. In each of the examples, we have first created a framework for the schedule (based on specific principles you have read in Sub-section 30.3.2) and then arranged the play activities. The framework provides a rationale using which a variety of play activities can be sequenced in the schedule.



**EXAMPLE A: Schedule for a Half- day Programme for 4-5-year-olds**

Table 30b shows a template for a day’s framework that has been created by focusing on the following three principles:

- Balance between teacher-initiated or child-initiated activities (**Principle 4**). The teacher has ensured that the children have 1 hour of child-initiated activities.
- Balance between individual, small groups and large group activities (**Principle 5**). You will note that in many time-slots, the framework allows for flexibility regarding whether the activity would be individual, small group or large group.
- Reasonable pace of activities and flexibility: Each play activity is of 30 minutes duration keeping in mind the age of the children (**Principle 8**).

**Table 30b: Suggestive Framework for Schedule**

Principle: Time Duration	8:00- 8:30 a.m.	8:30- 9:00 a.m.	9:00-9: 30 a.m.	9:30- 10:00 a.m.	10.00 - 10:30 a.m.	10:30- 11:00 a.m	11:00- 11:30 a.m	11:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.	12:00- 12:30 p.m.
<b>Principle: Teacher- initiated/ child- initiated</b>	<i>Routine activities</i>	<i>Teacher- initiated activities</i>	<i>Child- initiated activities</i>	<i>Teacher- initiate activities</i>	<i>Routine activities</i>	<i>Teacher- initiated activities</i>	<i>Child- initiated activities</i>	<i>Teacher- initiated activities</i>	<i>Routine activities</i>
<b>Principle: Individual/ small group/ large group</b>		<i>Large group activities</i>	<i>Individual / small group activities</i>	<i>Small/ large group activities</i>		<i>Individual/ small group activities</i>	<i>Individual/ small group activities</i>	<i>Large group activities</i>	

Let us now see how Bhavna uses the above framework to sequence the activities of the web (web of activities can also be referred to as the ‘Unit Plan’) she had developed on the topic 'Birds' into daily schedules for 5 days. The Web of Activities that Bhavna had developed (refer to Unit 27) has been reproduced here for your easy reference. By and large, Bhavna took up one sub-theme per day and sequenced the activities related to one sub-theme on one day (refer Tables 30c to 30g). In the schedules for five days, you will find that most activities are theme-based. However, some activities are not based on the theme. This is alright.

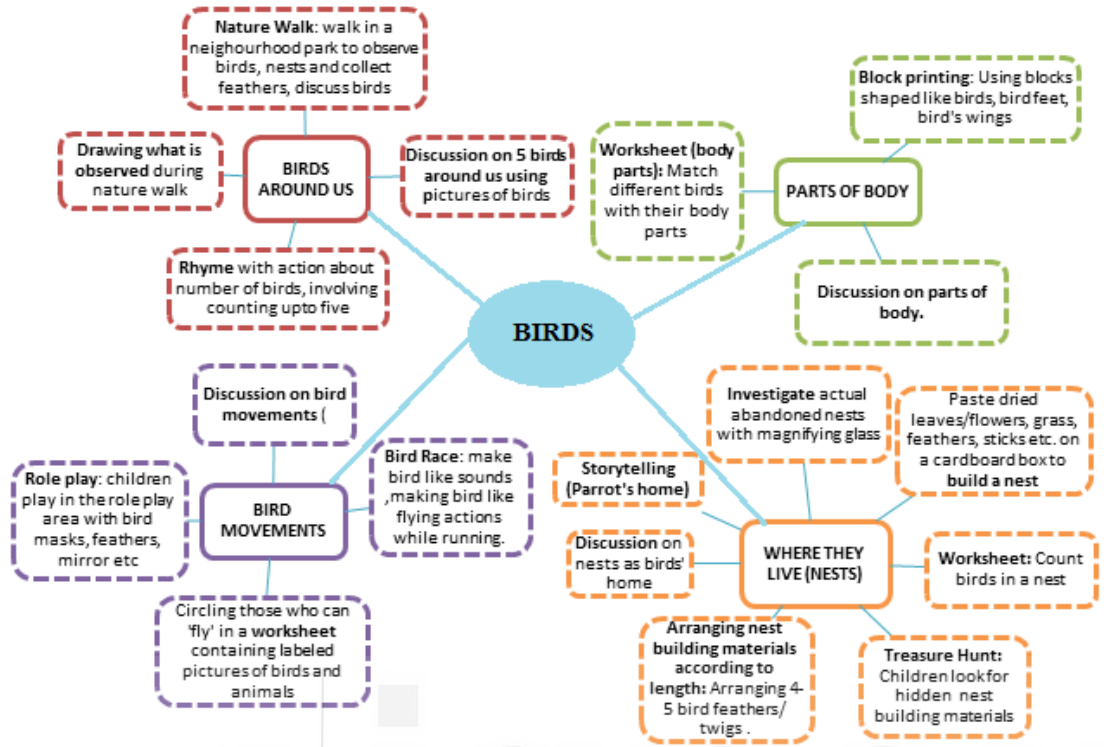


Fig.1: Web of Activities on the theme 'Birds'

Table 30c: Schedule for Day 1  
Theme: Birds; Sub-theme: Birds Around Us

Time	Activity	Framework(derived by focusing on three specific principles, specified in Table1)
8:00- 8:30 a.m.	Arrival: Welcome, Prayer, Attendance, Hygiene check-up, Talking about the previous day; Introducing today's theme and activities	<i>Routine activities</i>
8:30- 9:00 a.m.	Discussion on 5 birds around us using pictures of birds	<i>Theme-based activity: teacher initiated; large group</i>
9:00 - 9: 30 a.m.	Indoor free play at activity centres	<i>Child initiated; individual or small group</i>
9:30- 10:00 a.m.	Nature Walk: Identify and observe birds, look for nests and collect feathers	<i>Theme-based activity: teacher initiated; large group</i>
10.00 -10:30 a.m.	Snack	<i>Routine Activity</i>
10:30– 11:00 a.m	Drawing what was observed during the nature walk	<i>Theme-based activity: teacher initiated; individual</i>
11:00-11:30 a.m	Indoor Free play	<i>Child initiated; individual</i>
11:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.	Rhyme with action about the number of birds, involving counting up to five; Recap of the day	<i>Theme-based activity: teacher initiated; large group</i>
12:00- 12:30 p.m.	Departure	<i>Routine activity</i>

**Table 30d: Schedule for Day 2**  
**Theme: Birds Sub-theme: Bird Movements**

Time	Activity	Framework (derived by focusing on three specific principles, specified in Table 1)
8:00- 8:30 a.m.	Arrival: Welcome, Prayer, Attendance, Hygiene check-up, Talking about the previous day; Introducing today's theme and activities	<i>Routine activities</i>
8:30- 9:00 a.m.	Discussion on bird movements	<i>Theme-based activity: teacher initiated; large group</i>
9:00 - 9: 30 a.m.	Outdoor Free play	<i>Child initiated; individual or small group</i>
9:30- 10:00 a.m.	Children identify word-initial sounds in different bird names and suggest more words starting with that sound	<i>Teacher initiated activity for developing early literacy skills initiated using the theme but extending further; Large group</i>
10.00 -10:30 a.m.	Snack	<i>Routine activity</i>
10:30– 11:00 a.m	Circling those birds that can 'fly', in a worksheet containing labeled pictures of birds and animals	<i>Theme-based teacher initiated activity; individual</i>
11:00-11:30 a.m	Role Play: children are free to play in the role play area where bird masks, feathers, and mirrors have been added to other existing material	<i>Child initiated; small group or individual; children's role play may or may not be theme-based</i>
11:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.	Bird Actions: Children make bird-like sounds while making bird-like flying actions or bird-like walk.	<i>Theme-based teacher initiated activity; large group</i>
12:00-12:30 p.m.	Departure	<i>Departure</i>

**Table 30e: Schedule for Day 3**  
**Theme: Birds; Sub-theme: Parts of Body**

Time	Activity	Framework (derived by focusing on three specific principles, specified in Table 1a)
8:00- 8:30 a.m.	Arrival: Welcome, Prayer, Attendance, Hygiene check-up, Talking about the previous day; Introducing today's theme and activities	<i>Routine Activities</i>
8:30- 9:00 a.m.	Discussion on parts of the bird's body. Linked to 5 birds discussed earlier (using pictures)	<i>Theme-based activity: teacher initiated; large group</i>
9:00 - 9: 30 a.m.	Outdoor Free play	<i>Child initiated; individual</i>
9:30- 10:00 a.m.	Outlines of four shapes are drawn on the floor with chalk. From a bucket, children close their eyes and pick a small shape cutout. Then they run to place it on the corresponding shape on the floor.	<i>Teacher-initiated activity; large group (not theme based)</i>
10.00 -10:30 a.m.	Snack	<i>Routine activity</i>
10:30– 11:00 a.m.	Block printing using blocks shaped like birds, bird feet, bird's wings	<i>Teacher-initiated activity; Theme based; individual</i>
11:00-11:30 a.m.	Indoor free play at activity centres	<i>Child initiated; individual</i>
11:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.	Rhyme with action about the number of birds (repeat rhyme); Recap of the morning;	<i>Teacher-initiated activity; large group; theme based</i>
12:00- 12:30 p.m.	Departure	<i>Routine activity</i>

**Table 30f: Schedule for Day 4**  
**Theme: Birds; Sub-theme: Where They Live (Nests)**

Time	Activity	Framework (derived by focusing on three specific principles, specified in Table 1)
8:00- 8:30 a.m.	Arrival: Welcome, Prayer, Attendance, Hygiene check-up, Talking about the previous day	<i>Routine Activities</i>
8:30- 9:00 a.m.	Storytelling (Parrot's home): Story about a parrot searching for a home	<i>Teacher-initiated activity; large group, theme based</i>
9:00 - 9: 30 a.m.	Outdoor Free play: In the sand play area	<i>Child initiated; individual</i>
9:30- 10:00 a.m.	Investigate nest: children explore abandoned nests using a magnifying glass. They note building materials seen, shape and texture.	<i>Teacher-initiated activity; small group; theme based</i>
10.00 -10:30 a.m.	Snack	<i>Routine Activity</i>
10:30– 11:00 a.m	Arranging materials used for building the nest and other materials according to size: Arranging 4-5 bird feathers/ twigs / or blocks according to size	<i>Teacher initiated activity for concept development; small group or individual (initiated using the theme but extending further)</i>
11:00-11:30 a.m	Indoor free play at activity centres	<i>Child initiated; individual</i>
11:30a.m.- 12:00 p.m.	Music and movement activity - repeat activity from Day 2 Recap of the morning;	<i>Teacher-initiated activity; large group; theme based</i>
12:00-12:30 p.m.	Departure	<i>Departure</i>

**Table 30g: Schedule for Day 5 – suresh**  
**Theme: Birds; Sub-theme: Where They Live (Nests)**

Time	Activity	Framework (derived by focusing on three specific principles, specified in Table 1)
8:00- 8:30 a.m.	Arrival: Welcome, Prayer, Attendance, Hygiene check-up, Talking about the previous day	<i>Routine Activities</i>
8:30- 9:00 a.m.	Discussion on nests as birds' home and how they build nests (repeat Parrot's home story if children want)	<i>Teacher initiated; large group; theme based</i>
9:00 - 9: 30 a.m.	Outdoor Free play	<i>Child initiated; individual</i>
9:30- 10:00 a.m.	Build a nest: children paste dried leaves/ flowers, grass, feathers, sticks, etc. on a cardboard box to build a nest	<i>Teacher-initiated activity; small group; theme-based (children divided into three small groups)</i>
10.00-10:30 a.m.	Snack	<i>Snack</i>
10:30–11:00 a.m	Worksheet: Colour and count birds in a nest	<i>Teacher-initiated activity; individual; theme based</i>
11:00-11:30 a.m	Indoor free play at activity centres	<i>Child initiated; individual</i>
11:30a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Rhyme with action about several birds (repeat of rhyme of Day 3); Recap of the morning;	<i>Teacher-initiated activity; large group; theme based</i>
12:00-12:30 p.m.	Departure	<i>Departure</i>

As we mentioned earlier, Bhavna focused on three principles while devising the framework for the day's schedule, assuming that the remaining principles of formulating daily schedules would automatically get addressed. Let us see if this indeed happened or not. So we will state each of the remaining principles and see whether these have been addressed in the above schedules or not.

**a) Principle 1: Each day's activities must promote development in all domains.**

You would remember the mention of a checking chart in Sub-section 30.3.1. We said that a checking chart can be used to see if the day's activities are fostering development in all domains. In a checking chart, all the activities of the day are listed next to the domain of development they foster. This helps in guarding against neglecting any area of development. In the Checking Chart below (Table 30h), the activities Bhavna has planned for Day 1 are written next to the domain in which they foster development. You would note that some activities like ('nature walk') foster development in multiple domains. Looking at the column filled for Day 1 you can conclude that all domains are represented in the schedule for Day 1 in a balanced way. Now you fill the activities for the other days as well, to check if Bhavna's schedule fulfills Principle 1, i.e., balance in terms of representation of domains of development.

**Table 30h: Checking Chart**

Area of Development	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<b>Physical and Motor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature Walk</li> <li>• Outdoor Free play</li> </ul>				
<b>Language</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on birds around us</li> <li>• Rhyme with action about a number</li> <li>• Nature Walk</li> </ul>				
<b>Cognitive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on 5 birds around us</li> <li>• Nature Walk</li> <li>• Rhyme with action about numbers</li> </ul>				
<b>Social</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indoor free play</li> <li>• Outdoor Free play</li> </ul>				
<b>Emotional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indoor free play</li> <li>• Outdoor Free play</li> <li>• Rhyme with action about the number</li> </ul>				
<b>Creative/ Aesthetic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drawing what was observed</li> </ul>				

**b) Principles 2 and 3: Mix energetic and quieter activities as well as indoor and outdoor activities.**

By scheduling indoor and outdoor activities during the day, Bhavna has taken care of these two principles.

**c) Principles 6 and 7: Mix of new and familiar activities; movement from simple to complex.**

Activities like outdoor and indoor free play and storytelling are familiar to children; activities like investigating the nest or building the nest were new for them. Bhavna also repeated a rhyme and music and movement activity during the week. In fact, the rhyme was repeated in later weeks as well, even after the theme of birds was completed.

Bhavna planned a discussion about birds and nature walk at the outset as it was a simpler activity, orienting the children to birds around them. In the subsequent days, she scheduled more complex activities such as birds' movements and their body parts.

You may have noticed that the Web of Activities contained more activities than what Bhavna had finally included in the schedules. Bhavna had planned a worksheet activity based on body parts of birds; she had planned a 'treasure hunt' activity related to nests — these have not been included in the schedules. This is alright. **Not all the activities included in the web (Thematic Unit Plan) have to be included in the daily schedule.** Bhavna can keep them as 'optional' activities which she can introduce if she feels it is needed. Also, if Bhavna, based on the children's response to the theme, decides to extend this theme for a few more days, then she can use the extra activities later too.

Example A showed how using three Principles — child/teacher initiated activities; individual/small group/large group activities; and setting a reasonable pace as per age of children — a framework can be created, based on which the schedule can be created. This is only one way of the ways how a framework and schedule can be created using these principles. Another way of creating a framework and a schedule using these same principles is as described in Example B further.

**EXAMPLE B: Framework and Schedule for a Half- day Programme for a Mixed Age Group of Children between 3 to 6 years**

This example is of a framework and schedule for a half-day programme which has been created using the same principles as in 'Example A', i.e. child/teacher initiated activities; individual/small group/large group activities; and reasonable pace of activities as per age. However, in this case, the teacher is also mindful of the fact that she has a mixed age group of children with her, ranging from ages 3 years to 6 years. This framework (refer Table 30i) was created for an *Anganwadi* which operates for three-and-a-half hours for children between ages 3 and 4 years, while children of ages 5 and 6 years are at the *Anganwadi* for four hours. Children aged 3-4 years leave after a mid-day meal, while the older 5-6-year olds stay back for some more time. Furthermore, as this *Anganwadi* has different timings for summers and winters, the *Anganwadi* supervisor chose to create a framework that mentions the time slot duration rather than have fixed timings, unlike the framework in Example A schedule.

**Table 30i: Suggestive Framework for Schedule for 3-6-years old**

Time Block	30 min	60 min: Parallel activities (30 min + 30 min)		30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min
<b>Age group in focus</b>	A common activity for 3-6-year olds	Simultaneous activities for 2 groups i.e group of 3-4-year old and 4-6-year old. While one group was involved in teacher-guided activities for 30 min, the other was involved in free play. Activities switched in the next 30 min		A common activity for 3-6-year olds	A common activity for 3-6-year olds	A common activity for 3-6-year olds	A common activity for 3-6-year olds. 3-4-year-olds leave for home after the meal, and 5-6-year-olds stay back.	Activity for 5-6-year olds
<b>Principles in Focus</b>	Teacher-initiated Large group	Teacher-initiated Small group	Child-initiated; Individual/ small group	Teacher-initiated/ Child-initiated; Individual/ small group/ large group	Teacher-initiated Large group	Child-initiated Individual	Routine	Teacher-initiated Small group

As you can see, this framework allows the *Anganwadi* worker to manage a group with children of varied ages. While many activities here are common, the *Anganwadi* worker has also spaces in the schedule where she can focus on the needs of the children in a particular age range. This is seen particularly in two instances in the schedule. First, in the 60-min time block, where the children are divided into small groups; while the *Anganwadi* worker works with children in one age group, the other group is involved in free play under the supervision of the helper. **This strategy can also be used when working with a large group of children.** The 30-minute time after lunch is another slot that allows the *Anganwadi* worker to focus on the language and cognitive skills of the 5-6-year-old children.

So you can see that even though both the frameworks in Example A and Example B have been created by focusing on the same principles, they are not the same. This is because each framework was created keeping in mind the needs of the particular programme.

Let us now develop a week's schedule based on the above framework. Table 30j shows a week's schedule developed based on the above framework having the theme 'animals'. Here you would note that every day there are 1-2 theme-related activities, while the other activities are not related to the theme. Can you see the linkage between the framework given in Table 30i and the schedule created in Table 30j?

Table 30j: Week’s Schedule of Activities for the Theme ‘Animals’

Day/ Time	30 min	60 min		30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min
<b>Framework</b> (derived by focusing on three specific principles)	<b>Morning circle time (welcome/greeting, prayer, conversation which may or may not be theme based) (teacher-initiated; large group)</b>	<b>Free play (30 min)</b> (Child-initiated Individual/ small group)		<i>Outdoor Play (Teacher-initiated/Child-initiated Individual/ small group large group)</i>	<b>Story/ rhymes/ activity for self-expression (may or may not be theme-based) (Teacher-initiated Large group)</b>	<b>Bonding with books(books may or may not be theme based) (Child-initiated Individual)</b>	<b>Mid-day meal (Routine)</b>	<b>Focused language and cognitive activities for 5-6-year-olds (may or may not be theme based) (Teacher-initiated Small group)</b>
		3-4 years	4-6 years					
<b>Day 1</b>	Conversation theme: Animals and birds that stay on land and in water	What is missing?	Free play	Free outdoor play	The Anganwadi worker will narrate the story ‘tup tap tup’	Bonding with books		
		Free play	What is missing?					
<b>Day 2</b>	Conversation theme: Taking care of animals and birds: building empathy	Join the dots with crayons Use animal pictures	Free play	Jump and walk two steps	Singing different animal rhymes	Bonding with books	Mid-day meal	5-6-year-olds stay back for activities to strengthen early literacy and numeracy
		Free play	Join the dots with crayon					
<b>Day 3</b>	Conversation theme: How do animals and birds help us?	Sorting large and small grains	Free play	Free outdoor play	The Anganwadi worker will again narrate the story ‘tup tap tup’	Bonding with books		
		Free play	Sorting large and small grains					
<b>Day 4</b>	Conversation theme: life cycle of a duck/ hen	Pouring activity	Free play	Big bird and small bird	Vegetable printing	Bonding with books		
		Free play	Pouring activity					
<b>Day 5</b>	The life cycle of a butterfly- a story with stick puppets	Join the dots with crayons Use butterfly picture	Free play	Free outdoor play	Roleplay	Bonding with books		
		Free play	Join the dots with crayon					
<b>Day 6</b>	Conversation theme: Life cycle of a butterfly- a story with stick puppets	Sorting large and small grains	Free play	Throw the ball in the basket	Shared writing and illustration of the story 'tup' tap' 'tup'	Bonding with books		
		Free play	Sorting large and small grains					



You would have noted that the first activity of the day, i.e., **morning circle** includes both arrival-related routine activities (like welcome, prayer) as well as a learning experience (conversation on the theme). Thus, the arrival and first play-based learning activity of the day have been merged, unlike in Example A.

You would have noted that the teacher has kept 30 min every day for **bookbinding**. This time is for children to freely interact with and read books in their class library.

While Examples A and B are scheduled for half-day, i.e., for 4 hours, the next two examples focus on programmes operating for full-day.

### **EXAMPLE C: Framework and Schedule for a Full-day Programme for 3 to 4 Year-Olds**

The following daily framework (refer Table 30k) was created for a group of 3-4-year-old children in a preschool cum day-care programme running from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (i.e., a full-day programme). All children in the group arrive at the centre in the morning, some children leave the centre at 12:00 p.m., while others remain at the centre till 5:30 p.m.

As you remember, Examples A and B were based on three principles/parameters; the current framework is created using four parameters/ principles. These are:

- a) Individual, small group and large group activities
- b) Teacher-initiated or child-initiated activities
- c) Reasonable pace of activities according to age
- d) Domain of development in focus in that period

You are familiar with how to include the first three parameters in a framework. In Example C, you will see that each activity time slot **of the day is dedicated to a particular developmental domain/s** – cognitive development (which includes environmental awareness and early mathematics), gross motor development, fine motor development, language and literacy development, and creative and aesthetics development. This means that the activities carried out in that time slot have the development in that domain as their major focus. However, you need to also remember that this does not mean that the activity carried out during that time slot will not foster development in other domains. It only means that the activity focuses specifically on a particular domain. In Framework C, you will notice that there is no dedicated time slot for the domain ‘socio-emotional development’; it is expected that development in this domain will be fostered throughout the day as the educator and children interact with each other during various activities of the day.

Let us see how this schedule framework can be converted to daily schedules, with the theme of ‘transportation’. The schedule has been developed for three days (refer to Table 30k).

Table 30k: Framework and Schedule for Three Days for a 3 to 4 Year Olds

Principle - Time Duration	Principle - Teacher/ child initiated; Individual/ small group/ large group; Developmental domains fostered	Day's framework	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
8:00-8:30 a.m.	Routine activities (Teacher initiated/ large group)	Welcome Circle	Welcome Circle Arrival, Prayer, Attendance, Hygiene check-up, free conversation		
8:30-8:50 a.m.	Teacher- initiated large group activities With focus on <b>LANGUAGE AND LITERACY</b> (theme-based)	Introduction of day's theme/activities through story or discussion	Discussion on the theme 'vehicles around us', using toy models	A story about a child's bus ride	Visitor: a conversation with the school-bus driver
8:50-9:30 a.m.	Child- initiated Individual/ small group activities With focus on <b>GROSS MOTOR</b>	Outdoor Free play	Outdoor Free play	Outdoor Free play	Outdoor Free play
9:30-9:50 a.m.	Teacher-initiated Small/ large group activities with a focus on <b>COGNITIVE: ENVIRONMENTAL AND EARLY MATHEMATICAL AWARENESS</b> (may or may not be theme based)	Teacher initiated group activity for concept development	Give children cutouts of a vehicle in different sizes. Paste vehicle cutouts in three sizes on the board. Children have to compare their vehicle size with those on board and stick their cut-out in appropriate place.	Discussion on 'Safety While Crossing the Road'	Cut out different numbers from 1-5 on sandpaper. Hide them under sand in a bucket. Children locate them and trace the numbers with their fingers
9.50 - 10:20 a.m.	Routine	Snack	Snack		
10:20 - 10:40 a.m.	Child- initiated/teacher-initiated; Individual/small group/ large group activities with a focus on  <b>LANGUAGE AND LITERACY or COGNITIVE</b> (may or may not be theme based)	Interaction with books	Bonding with books (child initiated individual activity)	Picture reading (using a picture of a busy road(teacher-initiated large group	Shared writing of the story narrated the previous day - A Child's Bus Ride; children recall story and teacher writes the sentences on board

10:40 – 11:00 a.m.	Child- initiated /teacher- initiated <i>Individual/ Small/ activities</i> <i>With focus on</i> <b>CREATIVITY AND AESTHETICS</b> <i>(may or may not be theme based)</i>	Child- initiated /teacher- initiated <i>Art activity</i>	Children are given an outline of a vehicle. They identify the vehicle and paste seeds on the outline.	Children are given clay and encouraged to form cars, wheels, etc,	Children are encouraged to draw the scenes from the story as they like to
11:00 - 11:40 a.m.	Child- initiated Individual/ small group activities with a focus on  <b>All developmental domains</b>	Indoor free play	Indoor free play from activity centres	Indoor free play from activity centres	Role play: children enact the scene of a bus ride
11:40 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.	Teacher- initiated Large group activities  <b>CREATIVITY AND AESTHETICS</b>	music and movement activity/rhymes	children imitate the movements of various vehicles	rhyme about a vehicle; creative movements according to music	rhymes about a vehicle;
12:00 - 12:30 p.m.	Routine activity  Child- initiated Individual activities	Departure for some children; while other children are involved in indoor free play	Goodbye circle; Departure for some children; while other children are involved in indoor free play		
12:30 - 1:00 p.m.	Routine activity	Lunch	Lunch		
1:00- 3:15 p.m.	Routine  Child- initiated Individual activities	Transition to sleep time; Sleep Time; Quiet individual play for children not wanting to sleep	Transition to sleep time; Sleep Time; Quiet individual play for children not wanting to sleep		
3:15- 3:45 pm.	The teacher initiated Individual activities <b>FINE MOTOR</b>	Quiet individual play. As children wake up, they can join in	Quiet individual play. As children wake up, they can join in	Rangoli: children put the coloured powder inside shapes traced on the floor	
3:45- 4:15 p.m.	Routine Activity	Snack	Snack		
4:15- 5:00 p.m.	Child- initiated/teacher- initiated individual / large group activities  <b>GROSS MOTOR/ LANGUAGE AND LITERACY</b>	Outdoor games	Storytelling by children	Show and Tell by Children	Structured Outdoor play activity
5:00- 5:30 p.m.	Teacher initiated/ large group  Routine		Goodbye circle Recap of day's activities; rhymes/songs; Departure		

In this framework, you would note that **the teacher-initiated activities are of a 20 min duration while larger blocks of time (30-40 min) have been devoted to child-initiated activities.** This has been done keeping in mind that these children are slightly younger as compared to the 4-5-year-old group, you read about in Example A. While 3-4-year-olds can be attentive even for a longer duration in case an activity interests them, generally, a shorter teacher-initiated group activity is more rewarding and appropriate for them. You need to decide the duration of the activity keeping in mind the age of the children and their interests. Later in the year, as the children spend more time at the centre and become older, you can re-evaluate the time duration you have allotted for different activities in the schedule. You will find that the longer blocks of time have been allocated for routine activities, as compared to frameworks A and B, since the children are younger and will need more time to do the routine activities.

The **theme-related activities are predominantly carried out in the morning half** of the programme, i.e., the time when all children are at the centre. The afternoon time, after lunch is more quiet/relaxed as a major block of it is for sleep time. You would also note that in a full-day schedule children have more than one meal time.

**EXAMPLE D: Framework and Schedule for a Full day Programme for 2 to 3 Year-Olds**

The following framework and schedule were developed by the educator in charge of children in the age range 2-3 years in a crèche that functions from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. This crèche is situated in a commercial area with many office buildings and caters mostly to children whose parents work in these nearby offices. They drop the children at the centre on their way to work in the morning and pick them up after working hours.

The following Table 30I shows the framework for the day's activities that the educator created for the group.

The arrival/departure timings in this schedule are staggered which is convenient for the families who want to drop the children off at the centre at different times.

**Table 30I: Framework for Day's Activities for a 2 to 3 Year Olds**

<b>Principle: Time Duration</b>	<b>Framework based on Principles:</b> • <i>Teacher-initiated/child-initiated activity</i> • <i>individual/ small/large-groups</i>	<b>Day's Schedule</b>
<b>8:00- 9:00 a.m.</b>	<i>Child initiated; individual and Teacher initiated large group</i>	<b>Arrival:</b> Welcome children. Children arrive in a staggered fashion. Children reaching early engage in free play. Early arrivers may also eat small snacks carried from home during this time. After all, children arrive, and a 10-15 mins time is given for morning prayer. Children sit around the teacher for the introductory session where prayers are said, followed by attendance and hygiene check-ups.

9:00- 9: 15 a.m.	Teacher- initiated Large group	Storytelling.
9:15- 10:15 a.m.	Child- initiated Individual/ small group	Indoor free play
10:15- 10:30 a.m.	Teacher- initiated Small group(Caregiver works with 1 or 2 children while others are playing or eating or sleeping)	Teacher initiated small group Activity for concept development (for example: based on matching colours, shapes, naming of objects)
10:30- 11:15 a.m.	Routine	Toilet; washing up; Snack
11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.	Child- initiated Individual; Teacher-initiated small or large group	Outdoor Activity: Free play. The teacher may also include a 10 min teacher- initiated game during this time.
12:15- 12:30 p.m.	Teacher- initiated Small group	Teacher initiated small group Activity for concept development
12:00- 12:45 p.m.	Routine	Toilet; washing up; Lunch
12:45- 2:45 p.m.	Routine	Transition to sleep; Sleep
2:45-3:30 p.m.	Routine	Toileting followed by a snack
3:30-4:30 p.m.	Child- initiated Individual/ small group	Outdoor Activity: Free play. The teacher may also include a 10 min teacher- initiated game during this time.
3:45- 4:00 p.m.	Teacher- initiated Large group	Group time: rhyme/ conversation/ music and movement activity
4:00- 5:00 p.m.	Child- initiated Individual/ small group	Indoor Free play
5:00- 6:00 p.m.	Routine	<b>Departure:</b> Children leave in a staggered fashion. While children wait for their parents, they continue with free indoor play.

As this framework is for toddlers, you would note many differences in this framework as compared to the earlier examples.

**Firstly**, this framework for toddlers devotes more time to child-initiated activities as compared to teacher-initiated activities. This is because younger children need more flexibility in their daily routines. Furthermore, the child-initiated activities here are of a longer duration (1 hour long) as compared to the same in a schedule for older preschoolers (where they were of 30 minutes duration). Toddlers need more time to complete an activity and to transition to a new activity. Also, as you read in Example C when planning the teacher-initiated activities, you have to keep in mind the age of the children in the group, since younger children have a shorter attention span. That is why you would have noted that the schedule in Example A which was created for 4-5-year-olds has a duration of 30 minutes for teacher-initiated activities; in Example C which focused on a schedule for 3-4-year-olds, the teacher-initiated activities were of 20 minutes duration, and in the current Example D of a schedule for 2-3-year-olds, the same is of 15 minutes duration.

**Secondly**, younger children need more time for certain routine activities like meal time, toileting and sleeping. This is also reflected in the above framework. For very young children, you can also schedule regular time slots for toileting, especially before going outdoors or going to sleep.

**Thirdly**, toddler schedules have fewer large group activities as compared to older preschoolers. Toddlers need more individual attention.

**These are only a few examples of how the day's schedule can be organized**; you can also use other frameworks to create a schedule. Whichever framework suits you, the main aim is to ensure that ALL principles of planning schedules discussed in Sub-section 30.3.2 of this Unit are addressed in the schedule.

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### **30.5 SELF-DEMAND SCHEDULE FOR INFANTS**

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While it is possible to have one common daily schedule for all the children in the group in preschooler and toddler programmes, in infant programmes, each child has her own daily schedule which is created to cater to the needs and natural cycles (like sleeping, toilet and eating cycles) of the individual infant.

The schedule followed in an infant programme is called a **self-demand schedule**, wherein the adults respond to the needs as communicated by the infants. A self-demand schedule helps the infant to develop trust in their caregivers and leads to healthy socio-emotional development. Here, the aim is not to push infants into a pre-determined schedule, but rather to communicate daily with the parents to understand each infant's needs and observe the child to determine what is needed next. For example, when 6-month-old Arunima arrived at the centre one morning, her mother told the crèche caregiver that Arunima did not sleep well the previous night. The caregiver helped Arunima to sleep in the morning. After waking up Arunima was fed. The next day, Arunima arrived at the centre well rested but hungry. After Arunima was fed, she wanted to play with the caregiver. Eleven-month-old Ravi also comes to the same centre, but has different daily routine needs. So the child-care worker would respond according to the needs of the individual child.

In infant programmes, a lot of time is spent on routine activities like feeding, changing nappies/ toileting, helping the baby to sleep by holding her, etc. These routine activities should not be rushed, but rather should be relaxed, responsive to the infant's needs and seen as an opportunity to interact with the child. Infants' schedules change over time. As children grow, they sleep for lesser periods of time, and so their feeding and active/alert time also change. During the times, the infant is awake and active, the caregiver can plan various stimulation activities. You read about these in detail in Unit 12 in Block 3 of this Course. When the parent comes to pick the child up, the child-care worker should let them know about the child's day- when the baby ate, how much she/he slept, etc. This would help the parent understand the child's needs.

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### **30.6 SUMMING UP**

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The first step toward planning the daily schedule of activities is to make an Annual Plan. An annual plan provides a broad framework for the year. The Annual Plan lists what are the themes and projects that will be transacted every month. This Annual Plan should be developed in synchrony with the

Annual Goals. Then for every month (even more than a month, if the theme extends beyond a month), one needs to identify the themes and projects that will be appropriate and help in achieving these Goals. A theme forms a 'Unit' in the case of theme-based planning. So the final web of activities that one prepares on the theme is the Unit Plan.

While there is no fixed rule regarding the duration of a theme-based Unit Plan, usually with young children, a theme (or a sub-theme in case the theme is big and has been divided into sub-themes) can be transacted over 5-6 days. A daily schedule is a detailed plan of the activities that would be carried out in a day which specifies the time of the day when each activity would be carried out, the duration of each activity, the sequence of the activities, and the location of the activity, and so on.

Some factors that influence the planning of daily schedules are the age of the children, arrival and departure timings, teacher-child ratio, resource availability, etc.

Several principles govern the planning of daily schedules:

- Activities planned for the day must promote all aspects of development.
- Include vigorous as well as quieter and less energetic activities.
- Include a mix of indoor and outdoor play activities.
- Include a mix of child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities.
- Provide children opportunities to work alone as well as in a group.
- Include new activities and those that children are familiar with.
- Move from simple to complex activities.
- Set a reasonable pace of activities.
- Be open to suggestions from children and plan activities accordingly.

To prepare a daily schedule, we need to follow a two-step process: a) First, fix the time slots for routine activities in the schedule (arrival time, meal time, sleep time, departure time); and b) Then, sequence the play activities in the remaining time slots.

The schedule followed in an infant programme is called a self-demand schedule, wherein the adults respond to the needs as communicated by the infants. A self-demand schedule helps the infant to develop trust in their caregivers and leads to healthy socio-emotional development.

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## 30.7 REFERENCES

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## **30.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES**

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### **Check Your Progress Exercise 1**

- 1) a) flexible  
b) activities, a certain number of days  
c) daily schedule  
d) themes, projects, concepts, skills and values  
e) timetable
- 2) a, c, d, f

### **Check Your Progress Exercise 2**

- 1) b, c, d and e
- 2) arrival time, meal time, sleep time, departure time