

IN THE BEGINNING,

balancing teaching and thinking about child development principles can be tough. A great place to start is to read as much as you can about how children grow and develop

their brains, bodies, emotions everything's connected you know.

If you learn all you can about the principles and put in your classroom practice, you will reach a point where you cannot imagine going back to any other way of teaching.

You'll think you've arrived when you witness deep and lasting engagement on the part of the children in your classroom. But many teachers tell us that, when it comes to principle-based teaching, you NEVER truly arrive. There's always more to learn from those inspiring children.



We've included our favorite resources in this workbook to make finding information about children's development super easy.

As you learn about the principles of child development you might find yourself saying, "I don't believe in these things." Consider that gravity makes things fall to the floor whether or not you believe in gravity or understand how it works. Principles are like that. They are always at work, regardless of our beliefs or understanding. It is not possible to break or change a principle, you can only break or change yourself when you are up against a principle.

We hope you'll return to our videos and this workbook often when you need a booster shot of support or inspiration.





Throughout our videos and this workbook, we've included what we've called SOUND CUES. These cues were designed to help you deeply understand and remember the impact of the principles.

Watch for them!

Some of your ideas will flop as you begin to apply the principles in your classroom. Mistakes will happen. Things won't happen as quickly as you'd like. Expect it. This is what thinking looks like. Keep trying. If you're like us, many of your life's fondest memories and greatest learning experiences have occurred when things didn't go as planned. Always let the principles guide your decisions. And remember what Beth tells us,

"It might not be perfect, but it will always be perfectly imperfect."

* YOU'LL

GET TO

YOUR GOAL.



Beth Heimann



Beth tells a good story,

and with two growing boys, we're sure she'll have more to tell in the future! Beth's passion is helping early education teachers learn to unleash the power of principles in their classrooms.



Risha gets emotional

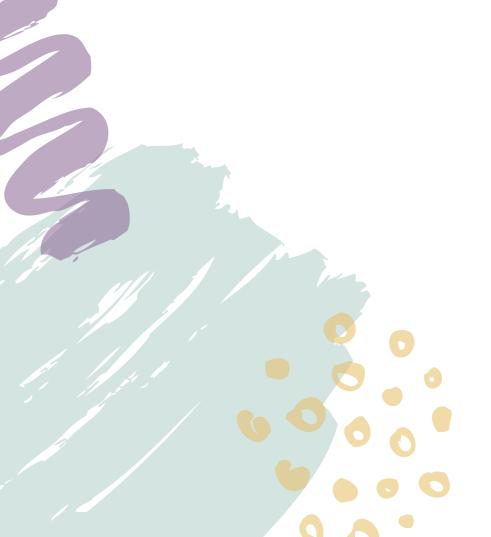
about children and their vast capacity to learn. The mom of two adults, she is driven to support teachers and use her knowledge to improve early education for children AND teachers.

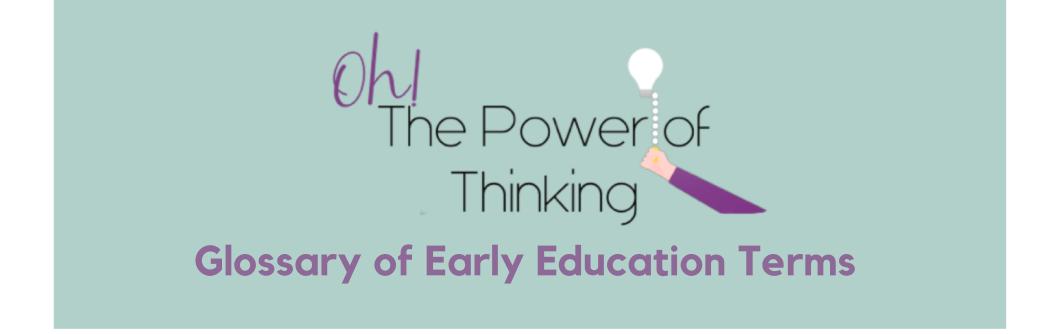
Kim Schroeder



Kim's animation

is everything! Watching her two daughters grow and thrive fueled Kim's desire for all children to have the very best in early education.





Autonomy:

Self-directing freedom, the quality or state of being self-governing.

Child development:

The sequence of physical, language, thought and emotional changes that occur in a child from birth to the beginning of adulthood.

Early Education:

The teaching of children from birth to age five.

Early Education Principles:

Timeless, unchanging truths that apply to the teaching of children from birth to age five. Over time, educators have identified a set of seven principles that apply to young children and their learning. These principles are:

- Some choice is good. Too much choices puts children into overload.
- Give children what they need to learn. Nothing less. Nothing more.
- Offer children variety. They'll find topics they love and you'll be amazed at how they blossom.
- Start with basics. Add detail once children understand.
- Plan for movement. Make sure it's meaningful.
- Learning feels so good, children couldn't dream of a better reward!
- It's not about you. It's about the children.

Facilitator:

A person or thing that helps make thinking visible. Someone who helps to bring about an outcome.



Observation:

A record of what one sees or hears, absent of opinion, judgement, assumption, or belief. Observations contain only facts.

Principles:

Natural laws. Timeless, unchanging truths. Gravity is an example of a principle.

Provocation:

Something that incites (provokes) interest. A provocation might be as simple as an open book, a question, a bowl of snow, or a basket of pinecones.

Thinking:

_	es of using one's mind to consider or reason ab e or something, use one's mind actively to form	



The Things that Don't Change.

We focus on the positive change for children when teachers' thinking is guided by early education principles.

Principles were defined as natural laws or timeless, unchanging truths. Some principles we thought of were:

	Gravity makes dropped objects fall to the ground	d.
	Water runs downhill.	" The reason
	The sun sets in the west.	WHY people see difference in
What other		principle-based classrooms is
natural laws or		invisible. What they're noticing
unchanging truths		the difference in
can you name?		think about children."
		-Risha McLella

DON'T MISS	Have you ever observed children in your class having "a love affai with learning" as Risha describes? What did you notice? How might you produce more love affairs in your classroom?
THE TAKE AWAY There are many materials and pieces of equipment in	with learning" as Risha describes? What did you notice? How might you produce more love affairs in your classroom?
There are many materials and pieces of equipment in early education classrooms. This video makes	with learning" as Risha describes? What did you notice? How might you produce more love affairs in your classroom?
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fall and hear a PLOP as they hit the ground. An apple (and everything else) falls to the ground if dropped because of the unchanging natural law (or principle) of gravity. Whenever you hear a PLOP, use it as a powerful reminder of principles, natural laws, and timeless unchanging truths.

Ask yourself - "Do I even give myself time to think in my classroom?" If so, is my thinking built on principles?" " If my thinking isn't based on principles what is it based on?"

Do this today in your classroom:

Stand quietly and watch the children. Try to free your mind of what you know (or think you know) about the children, and simply watch what they do. Write down exactly what the children do, exactly what they say, what materials they use, and how they use them. When you finish documenting what the children do and say, reflect on what you wrote and think about what may have been revealed to you about the children's thinking.

Going further: Find out if a class about early education principles is available near you. Sign up with a friend. Take a field trip to a classroom where principles are implemented. Take along our glossary and look for the child development principles we've included there.

Re-watch this video if you've ever had a tough day in your classroom. Principles might just give you a clue for making things better.



Read to learn even more:

Theories of
Childhood
By:
Carol Garhart
Mooney

Mind in the Making
By:
Ellen Galinsky

Montessori: The science behind the Genius
By:
Angeline Stoll Lillard

The Best Schools

By:

Thomas

Armstrong

Daring Greatly

By:

Brene Brown

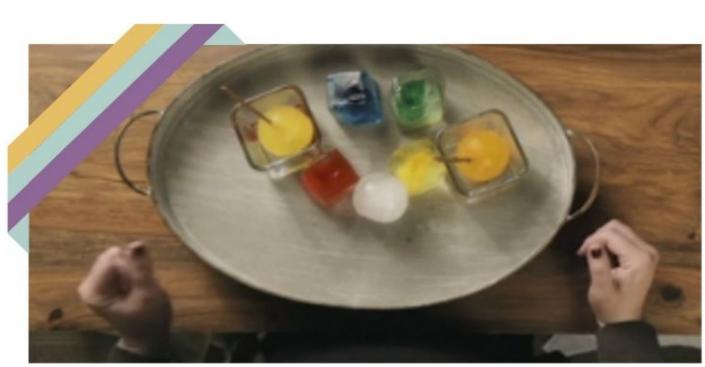


We present inspirational evidence that babies think - and offer ideas for how teachers can use that truth to maximize learning.

Kim and Risha shared stories showing that, even though babies are not able to speak, they are capable of thinking and making complex connections. Share one of our stories with your coworkers. Ask them if they have any stories that reveal the thinking power of babies.			
dily stories	- That reveal the thinking power of babies.		

"When we see babies as thinkers we begin to respect them and think, 'This is their work, I can't interrupt."
- Beth Heimann

In this video, we introduce the concept of provocations: items that can be placed in the classroom to incite student interest. We use colored ice as an example of something that might be placed within a baby's reach. Do you think this is an engaging provocation? What ideas do you have for provocations that you might place in an infant classroom?



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about the story? Have you experience	is knowledge blew her mind. Why do you think she became so emotional ed similar emotions when children exceeded your expectations? Share y with your coworkers or on social media.
y our story	, with your coworkers or on social incura.
	Talk about a time when you successfully put this principle to work in your classroom. How did the children respond? Was there a time when
	you didn't start basic enough? Share what happened and what you
DON'T MISS	learned.
THE	
PRINCIPLE	
Charet weigh	
Start with	
basics.	
Add detail	
once children	
understand.	
A classroom a-ha!	
In the video, Risha says, "When teache	ers have a
moment of realizing who their children of	
aha moments. In these moments we cele	
of learning. We begin to see children as because we recognize them as thinkers	
as thinkers, we put more complex work	
classroom environment for them so that	they can
	se next week he
discover their own greatness." During th	
discover their own greatness." During the especially aware in your classroom. Look moment when you realize something new	k for an aha

thoughtful guidance helped the children reach this point.

In another video moment, Risha says that applying principles of child development is liberating. But she also acknowledges that it can be a bit lonely because a principle-based teacher's classroom won't match what it is seen in other's classrooms. Ask yourself, "Do I understand enough about the principles of children's development yet to advocate for principles? Or do I need to seek more information and support? Should I try to make my classroom look like others that I've seen?"

Do this today in your classroom:



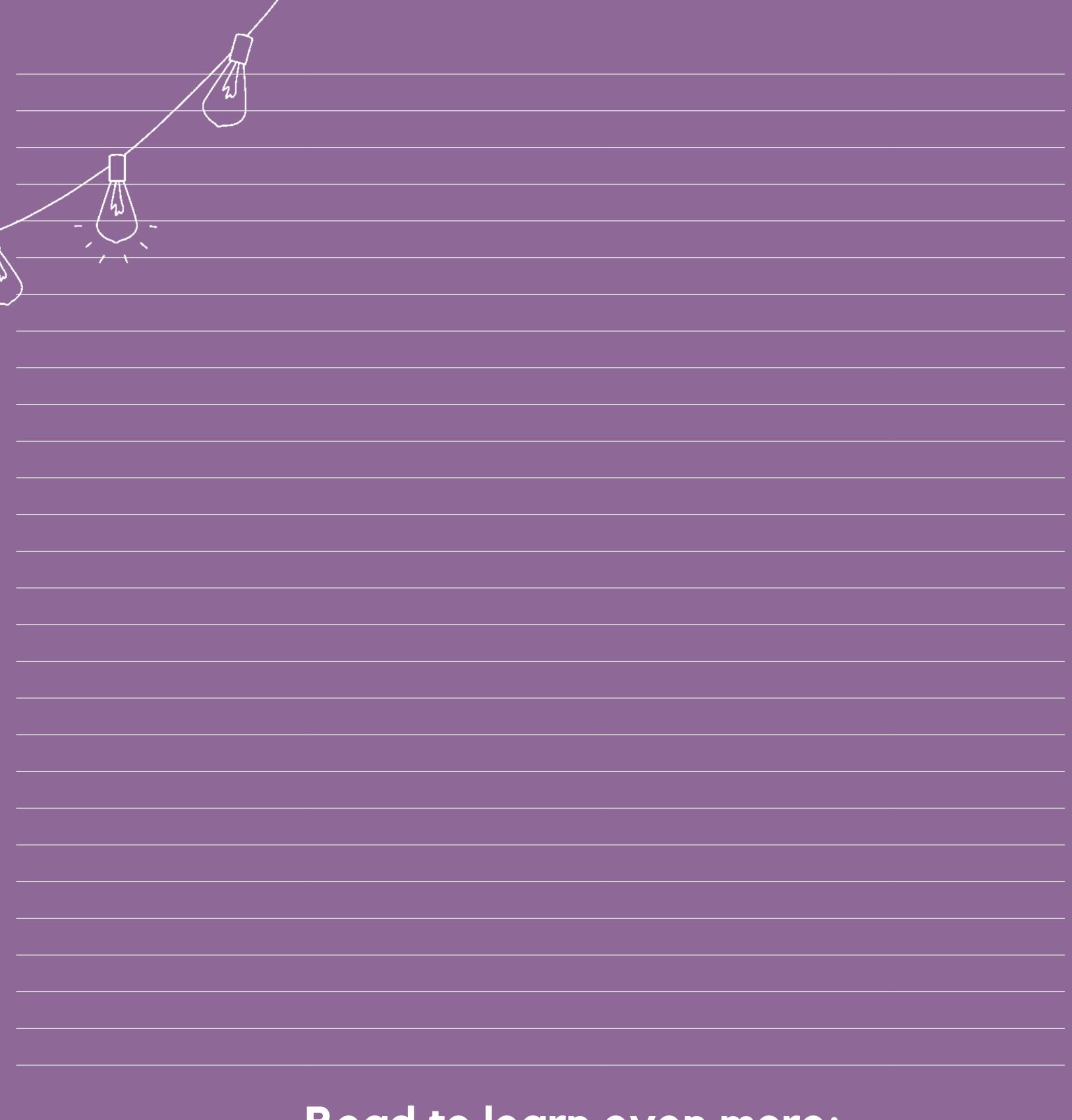
SOUND CUE: In this video we see a clock and hear the distinctive ticking sound. When you hear the ticking of a clock in like future, use it as a reminder of the powerful fact that babies can, and do, make complex connections.

Because babies are thinkers, they need stimulation and benefit from uninterrupted time to reflect.

Provide a provocation. Stand quietly and watch the children. Try to free your mind of what you know (or think you know) about the children and simply watch what they do.

Write down exactly what children do, exactly what they say, and how they use the provocation you provided. When you are done documenting, reflect on what you wrote and think about what may have been revealed about the children's thinking.

Compare what you documented and what you think the child is thinking about to what you are learning about child development. What did you discover? How could you use this discovery to support the children's learning goal?



Read to learn even more:

Brain Rules for
Baby
By:
John Medina

Flash Cards
By:
Kathy Hirsh-Pasek

The Diary of Laura:
Perspectives on a
Regio Emilia Diary
By:

Caroly P. Edwards and Carolina Rinaldi

Infants and
Toddlers at Work:
Using Reggioinspired Materials
to Support Brain
Development
By:

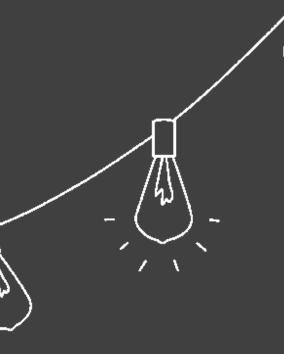


Children can be Self-Sufficient!

We inspire with examples of children's independence.

	"Children know the difference between something artificial
	and something real. Put both in front of them and they will
	always go to the real." - Beth Heimann
DON'T MISS	- Dem Heimann
THE PRINCIPLE	Compare this early education principle with today's culture of stickers, high-fives, and a chorus of 'job." How might you step back and make sure that students in your classroom experience the joy learning?
Learning	
feels so	
good,	
good,	
abilduan	
children	
couldn't	
dream of a	
better	
reward.	
icha ucoc a put arindor c	as an example of an effective provocation for an early education classroom. Consider the
•	bout why a child might be excited to learn how peanut butter is made. What benefit is the
•	and where things come from or how they are made? Why do you think this understanding
	makes people happier?

eriais/ equipiliene ii	night you want to have available for the children? What are other simple thing could do to gain comfort in your role as a facilitator?
	SOUND CUE: In this video, we see a coffee maker and hear it's unique WHIR. In the future when you brew your 1st cup of the day, use the WHIR as a reminder that, with a bit of planning by teachers and parents, children can be astoundingly self-sufficient.



Do this today in your classroom:

Reflect on what a typical day looks like for a child. What percent of their day is spent playing with toys and what percent of their day is spent doing essential housekeeping? Do the children take care of everyday tasks such as preparing their own snack, cleaning up their area after snack, watering the plants, or putting on their own clothes? If you want to offer more real experiences, how might you begin to make the switch? Do you think it would be expensive?

Going further: Watch our "Miscellaneous" video for fascinating principle-based information about children and how and when they can truly learn to share. These Videos can be found on The Dekko Foundation You Tube page, they are titled Oh! The Power Of Thinking: Miscellaneous.

"Adult support in a child's life is like salt in a well

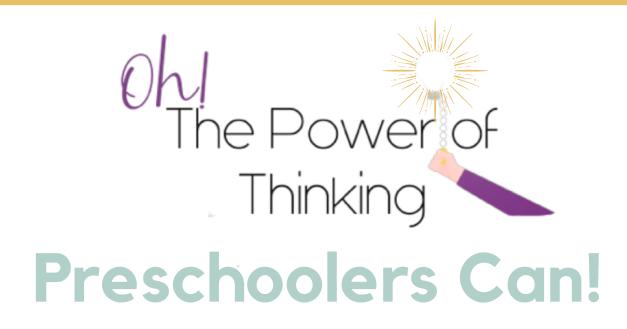
prepared dish. Too much ruins it. Too little makes it dull."
- Risha McLellan

Some Sunday evening, binge watch Oh! The Power of Thinking. It'll rev you up with ideas for a great week.

Read to learn even more:

Nurture Shock:
New Thinking about
Children
By:
Po Bronson and
Ashley Merryman

Punished by
Rewards
By:
Alfie Kohn



We elevate teachers from exhausted to exhilarated.

Think about a time when you had complete freedom to choose and complete a task and another time when you were required to ask for approval each step of the way. Make a list of feelings you experienced in each situation.

Do you think children would experience similar feelings? Why do you think the opportunity to initiate is so powerful?

Autonomy is	"The big
classroom	difference you notice in a classroom is, are children allowed to go forward with learning and ideas? Or, do they always have to wait? It seems simple, but it's profound." -Risha McLellan

	er steps the background and gives children the time to think and figure ngs might the principle,"give children what they need to learn," possible have?
DON'T MISS THE PRINCIPLE	Take a moment to watch Preschoolers Can! again, where Risha talks about how exhausting it is for teachers to be the judge, jury, and police in their classroom. Look for her ideas for teachers to move from exhausted to exhilarated at the end of their workday. This is a profound example of the power of thinking!
Give	
what they need to	
Nothing less.	
Nothing more.	
	SOUND CUE: In this video, we
	see a cricket up quite close, and hear it's unmistakable CHIRP. In the summertime, you'll hear plenty of crickets. Let their CHIRP remind you of the need to sit quietly often and simply and thoughtfully observe your
	classroom.

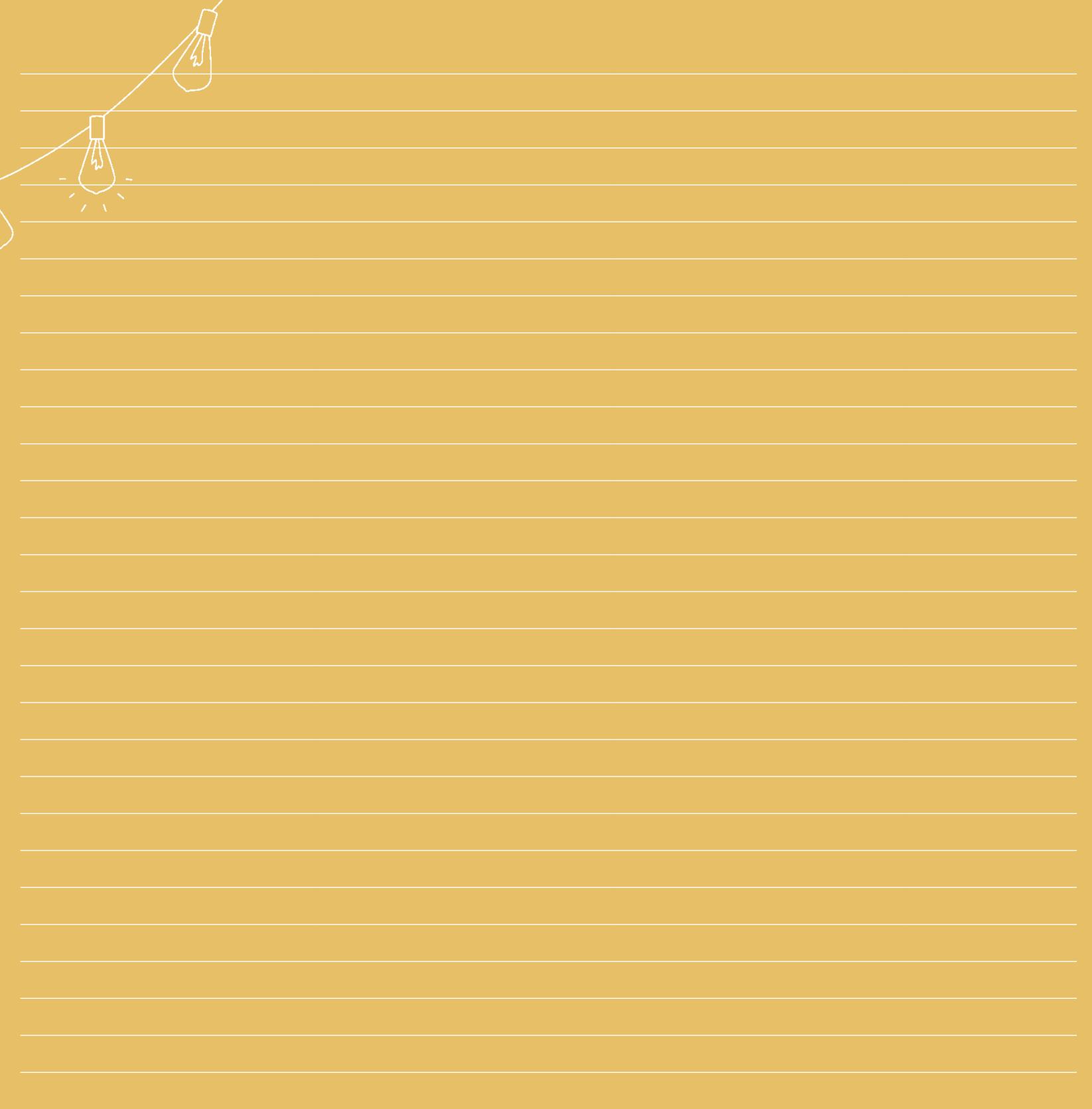


Do this today in your classroom:

Provocations and independent learning go hand in hand because provocations spur thoughts and set children up to explore on their own. Where might you place provocations in your classroom, so that children see them when they enter in the morning? If a provocation interests a group of children on a Monday, what might you do on Tuesday to sustain their engagement and challenge them to go deeper?

Do you think you've ever stolen joy from a child?

Going further: Several national education initiatives today emphasize the importance of children hearing lots and lots of words. We're saying that children need uninterrupted time to think and consider what they're learning and how they can solve the problem in front of them. Which idea do you think is right? Are they both right? How might you balance a child's need to hear words and still have abundant time to think?



Read to learn even more:





We take this observation thing to a whole new level and explain why you'll never be finished thinking!

ia tells a revealing story about a teacher who labels a child as 'sneaky' when he takes another child's Lego. Watch Be Clueful! (Video 5) again. Ri iks us to consider, "Why is the child taking the Lego?" "What need does that child have that is causing him to take the Lego?" Observation without dgement changes our question from "Why is this child being sneaky?" To, "What does this child need next so that he can learn?" A teacher who i primarily a thinker and a facilitator sees this subtle difference and is ready to support the child.			
	"If school is anything it's a place where we learn how to think. In order for me to learn how to think as a student, I have to have a teacher who's thinking with me. That IS the power of thinking."		
	-Risha McLellan		

What does observation look like in an early education classroom?

The children go about their chosen learning,

You, the teacher, disappear into the classroom, watch the children carefully and record what they say and do.

Children offer us clues to their learning needs. A thoughtful teacher sets aside bias, past experience, and beliefs and simply observes factually. Then she uses child development principles to make sense of what she's seen.

DON'T MISS THE PRINCIPLE It's not about you. It's about the children.	
	Think about your motive



Beth says, "The motive we observe children with impacts what we see. When we observe with the motive of wanting to know what a child is thinking or desiring to learn, then observations become a tool we can use to study the intricacies of the child. However, when the observations are used to see deficiencies in what children know or can do, it results in the tool being used by the teacher to fix the imperfections they see." The message is clear. When you observe children, leave your baggage behind.

"Observation is one of our least-used and most powerful tools!"
-Risha McLellan



SOUND CUE: In this video we see a magnifying glass and hear the familiar DUN-DUN-DUN sound from whodunnit TV shows and movies. DUN-DUN-DUN reminds us that one of the most important ways teachers can boost learning is to carefully observe the clues children offer us and then apply the principles of child development.

Do this today in your classroom:

In this video, observation is described as "one of our least used and most powerful tools." Why do you think we observe so rarely in our classrooms? How might you incorporate the use of observation more often in your classroom? If you are looking for an opportunity to observe, try documenting how a child is using materials rather than quizzing them on how many pieces they have. What other things might you stop doing to free up time for observation.

Going further: Parents and teachers repeatedly say they wish there was an instruction book for children.

We have that! It's called child development principles!



Read to learn even more:



Return often to these resources on child development principles:





There is freedom
waiting for you on the
breezes of the sky.
And you ask,
"What if I fall?"
Oh but my darling,
What if you fly?



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