



Frog Street Threes Curriculum Theoretical Foundation

Using child development to optimize children's growth

Frog Street Threes is a developmentally sequenced curriculum built on three key cornerstones to provide instruction that optimizes learning and development for three year olds. The cornerstones include:

- Early Brain Development Research
- Intentionality of Instruction and Interaction
- Social and Emotional Development Research

One of the most dramatic findings from medical research is the significant role the environment plays in the structure and capacity of the brain. Scientists agree that human development is shaped by both nature (biology) and nurture (experience.) The richer the environment and the more intentional and purposeful the interactions and experiences, the greater the number of neurological connections children are able to forge.

Children's growth is optimized when brain cells connect and information is stored in the brain. Developmentally appropriate experiences in *Frog Street Threes* help to forge the connections and repetition strengthens the wiring. During the first ten to twelve years of life wiring and rewiring are regular occurrences in the brain. A chart outlining the Windows of Opportunity for maximum wiring of developmental stages is referenced in *Welcome to Frog Street Threes Guide*, page 21.

Additional strategies related to optimizing children's growth in a brain compatible curriculum are listed in *Welcome to Frog Street Threes Guide*, pages 22-23.

Frog Street Threes integrated developmental domains into each day of instruction. Each week of instruction includes experiences that address all four developmental domains: social and emotional, cognitive, physical and language. See *Welcome to Frog Street Threes Guide*, pages 34 – 52 for a discussion of how the curriculum meets developmental guidelines for three year olds in each domain.

Frog Street Threes incorporates a scientifically-based social and emotional program that creates a learning environment where children feel safe and loved. From this foundation of safety and caring, children begin learning how to manage emotions and interact appropriately with peers. These experiences support developmental stages of three year olds to optimize growth. Conscious Discipline® strategies provide the research base for comprehensive classroom management routines focused on optimal learning for three year olds.

Frog Street Threes focuses on child development stages for three year olds to optimize children's growth in each of the developmental domains in both the classroom environment and family engagement.

Engaging early childhood programs with families and communities

Frog Street Threes curriculum provides multiple opportunities to engage families and communities to optimize children's growth. The focus is to build partnerships with families and extended families. Monthly, weekly and daily communications support the extension of classroom experiences into the home.

A theme overview of theme-based experiences by developmental domains is provided monthly, as well as a PATT (Parents are Teachers, Too) mat that builds on the skills children are developing in the classroom.

Weekly notes in *Frog Street Threes* provide additional experiences that are family friendly and easy to implement in the home. Daily Reports provide opportunities to share critical information and clever and cute things observed each day. Additional resources on saying good-bye, social emotional development, fine motor development and cognitive development encourage age appropriate activities for families to experience with their child. All notes are available in English and in Spanish. See examples of family engagement in *Welcome to Frog Street Threes* guide, pages 60 -61.

Diversity: Fostering appreciation and support

Frog Street Threes curriculum provides intentional experiences and materials to foster and support diversity. Multiple efforts to use full color photographs of diverse families, real-life photos to connect meaning, and literature with cultural ethnicity representations as well as exceptional children round out the array of materials. A few examples include: Books - *The Circus*, *Wheels Are All Around*, and *Eat Green*; Story folders – *We are Safe and Healthy Kids*; Photo Activity Cards and Vocabulary Cards.

Instruction to foster an appreciation of self begins in Theme 1, *Awesome Me*, and extends to identify attributes of others to support Social Foundations, Social Emotional Regulation Strand, Standard C. Recognizes Differences or Similarities Between Self as Compared to Others. See Theme 1, *Awesome Me*, Math, page 8, Days 2 and 3; Science Center, page 11 for examples of instructional activities.

Family diversity continues in Theme 2. See Theme 2, *My Family and Friends*, Literacy, page 6, Day 3 that references the use of the Photo Activity cards depicting family groups and various ethnicities. *Welcome to Frog Street Threes* Guide, page 64, addresses the meaning of Cultural Sensitivity and suggestions to celebrate classroom diversity through concrete experiences.

A safe, secure learning environment based on an appreciation of and respect for unique needs of each child is a goal of *Frog Street Threes*. A daily routine by Conscious Discipline® for beginning the day includes Unite – an activity to strengthen the bond of the school and family and develop a sense of belonging. Calm activities is an activity that offers children an opportunity to calm themselves (self-regulate) and access higher-order thinking. The next step is Connect focusing on activities for children to interact with each other and foster cooperation

and appreciation of others. Commit encourages children to be a helpful member of the school family and follow through to keep their classroom safe.

Frog Street Threes addresses the needs of children with exceptionalities with instructional strategies for each Literacy and Math lesson. Adaptations for each lesson identify specific strategies to promote success of individualized education goals. See Theme 2, page 9. Welcome to Frog Street Threes, pages 64-66, offers detailed suggestions for children with various challenges and how to encourage acceptance of all children by their peers.

Strategies for Dual Language Learners are also provided for each Literacy and Math lesson in *Frog Street Threes*. See Theme 2, page 9. Additional strategies for supporting Dual Language Learners can be found in Welcome to Frog Street Threes, page 63.

Importance of Play and subject matter for teaching young children

Children learn by doing. Practice centers offer opportunities for children to apply what they have learned in group lesson to demonstration their understandings using hands-on exploration. Play-based centers enhance theme and skill development with explorations specifically designed to support daily Learning Outcomes and concepts. Each week, eight center suggestions enhance independent and peer interactions. Practice centers offer choices which allow children opportunities to follow their interests.

Practice centers:

- Accommodate different levels of abilities and experiences so that all children feel successful.
- Provide opportunities for children to make choices and develop decision-making skills.
- Support the social nature of the child's world by offering interaction with peers.
- Offer practice with cooperation and collaboration to enrich oral language and vocabulary development.
- Match activities with developmental needs to support differentiated instruction.

Subject matter for three year olds is integrated within and across disciplines in nine thematic guides in *Frog Street Threes*. Language Arts integrates listening, speaking, literacy, oral language and writing skills through Morning Message time, Read-Aloud Time and learning centers. Cognitive skills are integrated in Math and Science lessons as well as STEAM explorations each week. Social Emotional domain activities are enhanced in each theme with daily routines and creating a safe environment for children. Physical domain explorations in both gross and fine motor skills in learning centers and through Moving and Learning activities and Outdoor play. Examples include: Theme 1, page 31 – Centers that support shape attributes in a variety of hands-on choices.

Daily instruction in *Frog Street Threes* combines topics and disciplines into a seamless learning experience.

Planning and managing the environment for development and learning

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Frog Street Threes offers support of children's cognitive, social, emotional, physical and linguistic development with planning and organization strategies to facilitate the development and learning of young children. Center management and lesson planning to provide meaningful content is discussed in *Welcome to Frog Street Threes*, pages 53 – 59.

Frog Street Threes curriculum is responsive to an environment for developing and learning in three important ways. Content: Meeting children where they are requires modifications in instruction to address the needs of children. Whole-group and small group activities are age appropriate for a three year old's attention span (approximately nine minutes.) Literacy and Math lessons are extended for a week to allow children to slowly and effectively build skills and develop concepts. Other disciplines such as social emotional and physical domains are integrated throughout the weekly explorations for children to follow their interests. Conscious Discipline® strategies offer an environment of safety, caring, and cooperation with peers.

A range of instructional resources and technology are provided in *Frog Street Threes*. Nine thematic activity guides provide a range of learning experiences with accommodations for children with diverse learning styles. See *Welcome to Frog Street Threes*, pages 5 – 7 for resources and thematic guides.

Process: *Frog Street Threes* curriculum focuses on each child's ability to participate in activities. Strategies to adapt the instruction process include Special Needs Adaptations and Dual Language Learner suggestions.

Product: A child's exploration and discovery experience is far more valuable than an end result or product. Children are encouraged to engage in activities at whatever level they are capable with meaningful content to enrich their understandings.

Frog Street Threes curriculum focuses on problem-solving strategies with modeling, oral language and explorations. Higher level thinking and questioning skills are integrated across all disciplines in group and practice centers. A child's curiosity, initiative, persistence, attentiveness, and ability to cooperate are crucial skills for development and learning. *Frog Street Threes* provides opportunities to develop these critical learner characteristics with meaningful content in an age appropriate environment.

Making instruction thoughtful, intentional, and differentiated

Intentionality is one of the cornerstones of *Frog Street Threes* curriculum. Intentional teachers focus on developmental domains and are aware of the Windows of Opportunity for brain wiring in each domain. An intentional teacher understands the sequence of development and uses continuums as the framework to help children use previously developed skills to master new skills.

In addition, intentional teachers provide a balance of thoughtful classroom experiences to meet the needs of all learners. Activities and experiences offered to children with developmental domains in mind enhances intentionality and optimizes learning. *Frog Street Threes* provides Learning Outcomes in each developmental domain. Weekly lessons introduce objectives and provide experiences for whole group, small group and practice centers to strengthen concepts and skills. Special needs adaptations and suggestions for Dual Language Learners are integrated in each Literacy and Math lesson.

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A tour of *Frog Street Threes* thematic activity guide instruction is provided in Welcome to Frog Street Threes, pages 8 – 18. *Frog Street Threes* curriculum is designed to promote ongoing development and learning with materials and intentional instructional strategies to facilitate children's success and joy of learning.