

Section 1: Your Role



The Importance of...

- Questioning
- Modeling Language
- Teachable Moments
- On-Going Training & Self-Assessment

Effective Teaching Involves...

Asking Questions

Asking the right questions challenges children to think and uses their own creativity to solve problems. While very young children may only be able to answer comprehension questions (e.g., "What was the boy's name in the story?"), older children should be asked questions that invite them to think. For instance, "How are you going to use those materials to make a boat that will float?"



Modeling Language

Children build vocabulary and language skills by listening to you! Think of them as little sponges...absorbing everything they hear long before they can speak the words themselves.

Be sure to model language during the ENTIRE day...not just during "teaching time." Talk with children about what they are doing as they engage in free play or during routine times such as snack. For instance, you might say something like this when the children are playing outside: "You are using that small bucket as a shovel to fill the large bowl." Doing this helps the child link your spoken language with his/her actions.



Teaching "Intentionally!"

Know your children and teach with them in mind. Each child is different and has his/her own background of knowledge. Keep this in mind when planning activities and experiences each day. Many times, this may mean that "one size does not fit all" and you may need to modify or adjust activities to meet the individual needs and interests. Pages 9-20 of this guide provides concrete examples of how you can individualize the Gee Whiz Education curriculum. This section also helps you learn how to record anecdotal notes and reflections to help you build a curriculum that is responsive to the each child's needs.

Teachable Moments

What Is a Teachable Moment?

ANY moment can be a teachable moment...

- *Jules just found a butterfly in the backyard*
- *Andrew fell and bumped his knee*
- *Juanita went to the dentist for the first time*
- *Max and his friend are having trouble sharing the tricycle*
- *Isabella desperately wants to carry a bucket full of water but it is too heavy for her to carry by herself*

As an educator, your job is to keep your eyes and ears open for these types of moments. Take the opportunity to use them as a time for children to learn, develop and grow. Teachable moments are not limited to cognitive areas but instead encompass all other areas of development...social, emotional, and physical. Asking open-ended questions and engaging children in conversation is a sure-fire way to turn an everyday moment into a teachable one. Taking advantage of these teachable moments can help children become confident and successful.



The photo above shows a "teachable moment!" While interacting with the child, you could ask questions such as, "What do you already know about butterflies?" and "Where do you think that butterfly lives?" Expand upon the discovery by helping the child locate books about butterflies or invite him/her to create a picture or model of his/her discovery using art supplies. The possibilities are truly endless!

On-Going Training & Self-Assessment

On-going training and self-assessment are a big part of the *Gee Whiz* curriculum. At *Gee Whiz*, we recognize that it is extremely important for you, the provider, to have access to information about child development, best practices and more. To help you be, "the best provider you can be," you will find the following training and self-assessment tools included in the curriculum. Plus, this User's Guide is also a very important training resource.

The "Why" Behind Experiences:

Each activity in the *Gee Whiz* curriculum explains the "why" behind it in the first bullet point. In addition, picture codes are used to identify the developmental areas (p. 21-34) addressed by the experience. Here is an example:

First bullet point explains the "why"

Exploring Together: Scurry Like a Squirrel

(all ages, 😊 🖐️ ❤️ 🔑 🖋️ 🎵 📖 🗣️)

- Squirrels are a forest animal that also lives in parks, neighborhoods and backyards. If squirrels frequent your backyard, plan to watch them from the window with the children as part of the experiences planned for today. During this activity, the children will have the opportunity to pretend to be squirrels as they engage in dramatic play. In the process, they will build gross motor skills and practice self-regulation.

Developmental areas addressed



Introduction to *Gee Whiz* Training Webinar: Available 24/7 on our website, this webinar will help you better understand how to implement the curriculum in your program. A certificate of attendance is available after viewing. You can find the video in our Video Gallery on our homepage, www.geewhizeducation.com.

Provider Monthly Review Sheet: Taking time to reflect on how things are going is very important. This simple, easy-to-complete document is designed to help you do just that. Some ECE Specialists with QRIS programs may require completion of this document if you are participating in their quality programs. Even if you are not, it is VERY important to take a step back and evaluate how things are going.

In addition, *Gee Whiz* Education offers our current paid subscribers access to complimentary training webinars on a wide variety of ECE topics throughout the year. See p. 50 of this guide for details.