

Gee Whiz Education Curriculum & Supporting Evidence for California Quality Counts

The Gee Whiz Education curriculum is a comprehensive approach designed to help educators address the unique needs of mixed-age groups. This document details specifically how utilizing the Gee Whiz curriculum can help providers points in many areas.

California Counts Rating Matrix Criteria	Gee Whiz Education can help by...
Core 1: Child Development and School Readiness	
<p>1) Child Observation</p> <p>4 points: DRDP (minimum twice a year) and results used to inform curriculum planning</p> <p>OR</p> <p>5 points: Program uses DRDP twice a year and uploads into DRDP Tech and results used to inform curriculum planning</p>	<p>The Gee Whiz curriculum is aligned with the DRDP. Here is a link to that alignment documentation:</p> <p>https://geewhizeducation.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/CA-DRDP2022.pdf</p>
<p>2) Developmental and Health Screenings</p> <p>3 points: Program works with families to ensure screening of all children using a valid and reliable developmental screening tool at entry and as indicated by results thereafter AND meets criteria from point 2</p> <p>4 points: Program works with families to ensure screening of all children using ASQ at entry and as indicated by results thereafter AND meets criteria from point level 2</p> <p>5 points: Programs works with families to ensure screening of all children using ASQ & ASQ-SE, if indicated, at entry, then as indicated by results thereafter AND program staff uses children’s screening results to make referrals and implement strategies and adaptations as appropriate AND meets criteria from point level 2.</p>	<p>Because of the comprehensive nature of the Gee Whiz curriculum, it can be successfully utilized with any formal child assessment tool (e.g., GOLD®, Ages & Stages®, DRDP, etc. Our “Connecting the Dots” component (included with each unit) helps providers connect activities to specific skills. This makes connecting to formal assessment tools quite easy.</p> <p>Additionally, the Gee Whiz curriculum includes tools to help providers gather and reflect upon anecdotal notes. We include an Observe & Reflect grid with all units. There is also extensive information about anecdotal notes and reflections in our User’s Guide (https://geewhizeducation.com/gee-whiz-users-guide/).</p> <p>Our new onboarding webinar series includes 2 webinars designed to help providers learn more about authentic assessment. Please see onboarding webinars #3 and #4 on this page of our website: https://geewhizeducation.com/onboarding-training-webinars/.</p>

Core II: Teachers and Teaching

4. Effective Teacher-Child Interactions:

CLASS Assessments

3 points: Independent CLASS assessment by reliable observer to inform the program's professional development/improvement plan OR informal assessment and results used to inform Quality Improvement Plan and staff professional development

4 points: Independent CLASS assessment by reliable observer with minimum CLASS scores:

Pre-K

Emotional Support – 5

Instructional Support – 3

Classroom Organization – 5

Toddler

Emotional & Behavioral Support – 5

Engaged Support for Learning – 3.5

Infant

Responsive Caregiving (RC) – 5

5 points: Independent assessment with CLASS with minimum CLASS scores:

Pre-K

Emotional Support – 5.5

Instructional Support – 3.5

Classroom Organization – 5.5

Toddler

Emotional & Behavioral Support – 5.5

Engaged Support for Learning – 4

Infant

Responsive Caregiving (RC) – 5.5

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT/EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT/RESPONSIVE CAREGIVING:

Interactions between provider and child are a huge part of the Gee Whiz curriculum. Lesson plans include open-ended questions providers are prompted to ask children that start back-and-forth conversations. When providers ask children questions as they engage in experiences and activities, it shows interest in what they are doing and helps to build an emotional connection between the provider and the child.

Additionally, the answers to these open-ended questions also help the provider to learn more about a child's interests, needs and motivations. This information can then be used by the provider as he/she plans experiences and activities.

The included Individualization Web and Customized/Individualized Lesson Planning Sheets included with each Gee Whiz unit provide a tool providers can use to plan experiences based on each child's interests and/or adapt experiences within the curriculum to meet each child's individual needs. Doing this show the children emotional support and recognizes them as individuals.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT/ENGAGED SUPPORT FOR LEARNING:

Once again, the open-ended questions included in the curriculum are designed to help providers engage in discussions with children that encourage them to think beyond simple one-word answers. These types of questions also encourage the children to share their thoughts and ideas. We utilize questions that begin with "why" and "how" quite frequently because these questions challenge children to think creatively and at a higher level. These types of questions also open the door for the provider to scaffold learning.

Additionally, the experiences within the lesson plans prompt the provider to incorporate each child's own life experiences and family background into the activities. This is extremely important.

CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION

The Gee Whiz curriculum provides comprehensive experiences that address 10 key areas of development. Having this "foundation" in place enables the provider to spend more time engaging directly with the children. If a provider needs help establishing a daily schedule, we provide this information in our User's Guide:

<https://geewhizeducation.com/gee-whiz-users-guide/>

This guide also has key information about setting up the learning environment (both inside and out). We also provide a transition idea each day into the lesson plans.

The Gee Whiz curriculum is written to cover 10 developmental areas in an extremely comprehensive fashion. We use picture codes in the lesson plans to help providers quick associate each experience with the areas of development they address. Please see our User's Guide for more information on how we achieve this goal: <https://geewhizeducation.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Developmental-Areas-and-Learning-Indicators.pdf>

Additionally, each Gee Whiz unit includes a component called Add & Enhance. This component helps providers add materials to their interest centers that enhances the monthly unit. Please see our Components slide deck for a sample: <https://geewhizeducation.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/GeeWhizcomponents2022-2023.pdf>

The experiences included in the lesson plans are hands-on, interactive and engaging for children. We provide numerous options each day from which a provider can pick and choose based on his/her children.

Core III: Program and Environment

6. Program Environment Rating Scale (s)

2 points: Familiarity with ERS and every classroom uses ERS as a part of a Quality Improvement Plan

3 points: Assessment on the whole tool Results used to inform the program's Quality Improvement Plan

4 points: Assessment on the whole tool. Results used to inform the program's Quality Improvement Plan and staff professional development plan.

Please see the sections above which detail how Gee Whiz addresses the following areas of ERS:

Talking with children
Encouraging vocabulary development
Responding to children's communication
Encouraging children to communicate

Additionally, the first Gee Whiz unit each month includes an original story with props to help the provider encourage a love for literacy while building language skills. A Book List is also provided in the back of each guide to further promote growth in this area.

Additionally, as mentioned earlier, the Gee Whiz curriculum is comprehensive. We address 10 key developmental areas and 40 Learning Indicators. We use picture codes in the lesson plans to help providers connect activities to developmental areas. For more details on how we do this, please see this section of our User's Guide: <https://geewhizeducation.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Developmental-Areas-and-Learning-Indicators.pdf>

As mentioned above, we also include a component in each unit called “Connecting the Dots” which enables providers to go deeper and connect each activity included in the lesson plans to specific skills. We call these Learning Indicators. There is a recorded webinar on our website that walks providers how to use this component. Here is the link: <https://geewhizeducation.com/webinar-training/>

Our User’s Guide has a wealth of information on individualization as well. We also include several components to help providers individualize. These include our Individualization Web and our Customized/Individualized Lesson Planning Sheet. For more information on these components, please see this section of our User’s Guide: <https://geewhizeducation.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Individualization-and-Authentic-Assessment.pdf>

Additionally, the lesson plans contain adaptations for different developmental levels. Please see any Teaching Guide for examples or view our onboarding webinars: <https://geewhizeducation.com/onboarding-training-webinars/>

Diversity is also built into the Gee Whiz curriculum. Providers are prompted to incorporate each child’s culture into the experiences. In our User’s Guide, under the Meeting the Needs of All Children & Gee Whiz section, we address working with families and incorporating diversity. We also have a recorded webinar about diversity available in our website.

Free play is a very important aspect of any early childhood program. There is an entire section in our website that discusses the differences between free play and “guided” play. Here is the link to that section: <https://geewhizeducation.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Gee-Whiz-and-Your-Day.pdf>

In the Gee Whiz curriculum, we do not have “Circle Time.” Instead, we have “Exploring Together.” This is a time for the provider to engage with the children as a group while everyone learns together. Please see our sample lesson plan for what an “Exploring Together” activity looks like. Here is a link: <https://geewhizeducation.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/One-Day-Lesson-Plan.pdf>

A copy of the Quality Counts California Adapted Rating Matrix – May 2022 was used to create this document.