

Roles for Teachers

Teacher as Intentional Nurturer

- Being present in the moment with children
- Delighting in and being curious about children's ideas and play
- Accepting and protecting children's emotional lives
- Saying yes and...to children

Teacher as Social Justice Educator

- Engaging in an ongoing, personal journey to understand own role in undoing racism and social justice work.
- Demonstrating self-awareness, confidence, family pride and a positive social identity
- Expressing comfort and joy with human diversity; accurate language for human differences; and deep, caring human connections
- Recognizing unfairness, having language to describe unfairness in work with children and other adults
- Demonstrating empowerment and skills to act, with others and alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions with children and other adults.

Teacher as Observer/Documenter/Researcher

- Noticing the details of the children's competence during play
- Observing before intervening or reacting
- Capturing notes and photos of children's play for reflection and study.
- Using technology for collecting documentation and creating documentation products
- Studying documentation to make meaning of what children know and think for own learning as well as collaborating with colleagues and children's families.
- Planning research questions to pursue own learning and further children's learning.
- Using documentation to plan additions to the environment, curriculum experiences and interactions based on children's ideas and interests.

Teacher as Architect

- Planning for and adapting the space for children's lively minds and active bodies.
- Providing open space and an abundance of time and materials for children to pursue big ideas.
- Provisioning the environment with complex, open-ended materials with many possibilities for exploration and learning.

- Creating opportunities to explore magic and wonder, light and shadows, sound, color and texture
- Integrating outdoor and natural elements into the indoor environment
- Rearranging the environment to encourage new interests and investigations.

Teacher as Prop Manager

- Suggesting play possibilities through collections and arrangements of materials
- Encouraging open-ended use and transformation of materials
- Creating order behind the play with casual picking up and reordering the space.
- Providing additional materials to extend play without interrupting the play flow

Teacher as Coach

- Recognizing children's skills and strengths and providing opportunities to practice them
- Encouraging risk-taking with a supportive presence
- Teaching skills to support independence and deeper use of materials.
- Referring children to each other for help and sharing new ideas.

Teacher as Mediator

- Creating a climate of safety for children to express their needs and feelings
- Seeing conflicts as opportunities to learn social skills and see other perspectives.
- Providing support and language for children to solve their own problems
- Focusing on the content of the play rather than on a violation of rules
- Offering children information rather than directions to advance their initiative.

Teacher as Broadcaster and Storyteller

- Describing children's ideas and work to them and others.
- Showing children their ideas through photo and homemade books.
- Making written and pictorial representation of children's play.
- Creating stories for children about their own play activities.
- Taking dictation or transcribing children's language.
- Supporting children's efforts to tell stories or write about their play creations.
- Creating documentation displays and learning stories to share the children's play with families and the larger community.

Teacher as Collaborator

- Seeking multiple perspectives from coworkers, children and families for making decisions.
- Sharing decision making on directions to take with children and curriculum.
- Joining with others in the work to be done.

Teacher as Organizer

- Designing systems and structures to support an easy flow of children and adults throughout the daily routines.
- Keeping materials and equipment organized for easy access and clean up.
- Offering intentional communication systems to ensure families and staff have ways to grow their connections.

Adapted from *Reflecting Children's Lives*
A Handbook for Planning Child-Centered Curriculum
By Deb Curtis and Margie Carter