



Five year old children thrive in the here-and-now environment that surrounds them. They learn through their own firsthand experiences. They need many opportunities to touch, feel, handle, create, build, experiment, and explore. Their interests are many and they learn from the familiar as well as the novel. Through play, the children clarify their confusions, orient themselves to their immediate world, accept themselves as creative individuals, solve problems, and build concepts.

In planning programs for young children, their wide diversity of talents, interests, and backgrounds are considered. Establishing a healthy learning environment is most important to meet the individual needs of all children so that they can contribute to the classroom community.

Kindergarten children function best in a well-organized, predictable environment where expectations and limits are clear. This means a place where the child feels secure, respected, appreciated, free to explore, create, grow, and yet allows for temporary regressions. It means a place in which there are many objects to play with again and again and also new materials with which to experiment. It is an environment conducive to learning about oneself and one's world. It is an environment that promotes success.

Adapted from The Elementary School Curriculum: An Overview,
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