Preschool Lesson Plan Example: Recycling and Nature

Topic of Study: Recycling and Nature	**Week of:**	**Classroom:**	
Learning Centers	**Illinois Early Learning Benchmarks/I Can Statements/Lea rning Goals**	**Materials/Activity**	**Vocabulary**
Art	25.A.ECd Visual Arts: Investigate and participate in activities using visual arts materials. 25.B.ECa Describe or respond to their creative work or the creative work of others.	1. Create mobiles with recycled material bits. *Materials*: branches, yarn, plastic rings, cloth, paper, corrugated cardboard, wire, corks, egg cartons, newspaper strips, magazine clippings, paint. 2. Make recycle bins to use when sorting trash. *Materials*: cardboard boxes, paint, markers. 3. Create contrasting paintings of green forests vs. polluted landfills. *Materials*: easel, paints, magazine photos. **Questions:** What materials from the trash can be used for art and play? How does adding weight on one side balance or unbalance a mobile? What happens to green forests when people leave trash or pollute the water?	Mobile, bin, pollution, polluted, waste, environment, balance, unbalance
Blocks	30.A.ECe Use materials with purpose, safety, and respect. 30.C.ECc Show some initiative, self-direction, and independence in actions.	**Recycled block play**. *Materials*: Tissue, milk, cereal, and other dry-ingredient boxes (e.g., rice, quinoa) taped shut for hollow-block play.	Larger, smaller, above, below, next to
Dramatic Play	14.A.ECb Contribute to the well-being of one's early childhood	**Themes:** Garbage collectors need to keep trash and recycling separate. People sort materials into recycling bins. *Materials*: empty cans, plastic bottles, polystyrene trays, boxes,	Separate, sort, reuse, recycle, landfill, recycling center

Marie Masterson, Ph.D. mmasterson1@nl.edu Released July 20, 2020

	environment, school, and community 14.A. ECa Describe some common jobs and what is needed to perform those jobs. 30.A.ECb Use appropriate communication skills when expressing. needs, wants, and feelings.	newspaper, plastic containers, junk mail, sorting bags. **Questions:** What should we do with our trash? (Separate it and recycle, reuse, or compost it.) Where does the garbage collector take the trash? (Trash goes to the dump, the landfill, or to the recycling center). How do we separate the materials? (Put the same type of material together.)	
Computer	5.A.ECc With teacher assistance, write own first name using appropriate upper- and lower-case letters.	Typing own first name using upper and lower-case letters. Brainpop Junior: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Sort Activity: https://jr.brainpop.com/health/beresponsible/reducereuserecycle/ Magic School Bus Field trip to a recycling plant: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7oPnJ8l-b4	
Library	11.A Develop beginning skills in the use of science and engineering practices, such as observing, asking questions, solving problems, and drawing conclusions. 1.A.ECb Respond appropriately to questions from others.	**Recycling and nature books** 1. Compost Stew: An A to Z recipe for the Earth, by Mary McKenna Siddals 2. Curious George, Trash into Treasure, by H. A. Rey 3. Down the Drain Conserving Water, by Anita Ganeri 4. I Can Save the Earth! One Little Monster Learns to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle, by Alison Inches 5. Recycle: A Handbook for Kids, by Gail Gibbons 6. Recycle Every Day, by Nancy Wallace 7. The Adventures of an Aluminum Can: A Story about Recycling, by Alison Inches 8. The Berenstain Bears Go Green Jan and Mike Berenstain	Reduce, reuse, recycle, resources, compost, waste, litter, landfill, pollution, biodegradable, garbage, conserve, recycle symbol

Marie Masterson, Ph.D. mmasterson1@nl.edu Released July 20, 2020

	1.B.ECb With teacher assistance, participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners (e.g., peers and adults in both small and large groups) about age-appropriate topics and texts.	9. The Adventures of a Plastic Bottle: A Story about Recycling, by Alison Inches 10. We Planted a Tree, by Diane Muldrow 11. Garbage Helps Our Garden Grow: A Compost Story by Linda Gleson 12. Compost Stew: An A-Z Recipe for the Earth, by Mary McKenna Siddals **Questions:** 1. What is trash? 2. Who makes trash? 3. How can people make less trash? 4. What can be reused? (Use jars as vases or storage. Use the back side of paper. Use yarn and fabric for art projects. Give clothing to a sibling or friend. Reuse fabric bags to carry groceries. Use washable water bottles instead of plastic.) 5. What other resources can we reduce or conserve? (Turn off lights. Turn off water. Turn down heat. Share a car ride. Take the bus. Don't waste food. Give clothing to friends.) 6. What happens to plastic, glass, rubber, and metal when these are recycled? (The material is used to make building materials, shoes, containers, furniture, clothing, toys, and other items.)	
Manipulatives **(Fine motor and math)**	11.A. ECa Develop and use models to represent their ideas, observations, and explanations through approaches such as drawing, building, or modeling with clay. 31.B.ECa Interact verbally and nonverbally with other children.	**1. Junk collection (loose parts play)**: Making robots and inventions with recycled materials. *Materials:* tubes, containers, cans, fabric, nuts and bolts, rubber bands, tape, hole punch, scissors **2. Sorting activity**: Reduce, reuse, recycle, compost, trash card sort. *Materials:* laminated cards with plastic bottles, foam cups, paper, glass, cans, boxes, food items, clothing, tires) **3. Math trash game**: Take out the trash board game. *Materials*: File folder game board. Children use counting cubes to move their trash pieces to the recycling center or the landfill.	Fasten, attach, collect, dispose, invent, responsible, filter

	8.A.ECa Sort, order, compare, and describe objects according to characteristics or attribute(s).		
Music	25.A.ECc Music: Begin to appreciate and participate in music activities. 25.A.ECa Movement and Dance: Build awareness of, explore, and participate in dance and creative movement activities.	**Song**: Reduce, reuse, recycle, recycle, recycle. Reduce, reuse, recycle, it's easy to do. For your world is my world and my world is your world. Reduce, reuse, recycle, it's easy to do. (Tune: *The More We Get Together*) **Song:** Oh, I Love Trash (Sesame Street) **Recycled instruments:** Cardboard (oatmeal) containers and plastic (coffee) container drums.	Vibration, steady, percussion, djembe
Nature/ Science	12.E Participate in discussions about simple ways to take care of the environment. - Participate in reusing and recycling materials. - Identify ways to protect the environment (e.g., participate in discussions about conversation and strategies such as turning off lights, turning off water faucets, and not littering.	1. **Coffee can compost**. *Materials*: coffee grounds, paper shreds, vegetable scraps, plastic gloves, gardening dirt, spoons. 2. **Vegetable sprouting.** Sprout carrot top, avocado seed, lettuce top, celery root in saucers of water. Document growth in science journals or on group-generated graph. 3. **Seed sprouting**: Plant lettuce seeds in recycled milk cartons. **Questions:** 1. What happens to left-over food when it's thrown in the trash? 2. What can you do at home to reduce, re-use, and recycle? (Cook and store food so it stays fresh. Put vegetable scraps in the recycle bin. Turn off lights. Turn off the water when brushing teeth. Donate items.) 3. How does nature recycle? Leaves fall from trees and turn into dirt. Worms soften the dirt so new plants can grow. Bark and twigs mix into the leaves and make rich soil.	Compost, soil, sprout, mix, scraps, measure, donate

Sand/ Water	11.A Develop beginning skills in the use of science and engineering practices, such as observing, asking questions, solving problems, and drawing conclusions. 11.A.ECf Make meaning from experience and information by describing, talking, and thinking about what happened during an investigation.	**Water Play Activity:** Track pollution with colored ice cubes. Children track spread of color during melting and experiment with animal models and plastic rings. Caps/no caps: Cut top halves of plastic bottles to be used as funnels with lids. Soda bottle watering cans: (Materials: Poke holes in water bottles to create "spray.") **Sand Play:** Bulldozer, with "trash" to bury in sand mounds. **Questions:** What happens to the color when the cubes melt? What happens to the animals when they find plastic in the water? How can we create new inventions from water bottles?	Pollution, spout, spray, mound, invention
Writing	19.A.ECd Use writing and drawing tools with some control.	Children dictate stories about what families do to reuse, reduce, and recycle at home. Create *Steps in Recycling* books.	Rhyme, reflect, represent
Gross Motor	19.B.ECb Demonstrate body awareness when moving in different spaces. 19.B.ECc Combine large motor movements with and without the use of equipment. 20.A.ECa Participate in activities to enhance physical fitness	Soda bottle bowling. Sock basketball. Trash dash.	Cooperate, coordinate

Marie Masterson, Ph.D. mmasterson1@nl.edu Released July 20, 2020

Topic of Study: Recycling		Week of:		Classroom:		
		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Large Group Instruction	Learning Goal	8.A.ECa Sort, order, compare, and describe objects according to characteristics or attribute(s).	1.D.ECa With teacher assistance, use complete sentences in speaking with peers and adults in individual and group situations. 2.B.ECb With teacher assistance, retell familiar stories with three or more key events.	4.A.ECc Recognize the one-to-one relationship between spoken and written words. 4.A.ECe Recognize that letters are grouped to form words. 4.C.ECd With teacher assistance, isolate and pronounce the initial sounds in words.	2.A.ECa Engage in book-sharing experiences with purpose and understanding. 2.D.ECa With teacher assistance, discuss illustrations in books and make personal connections to the pictures and story.	1.E.ECc With teacher assistance, use new words acquired through conversations and book-sharing experience.
	Large Group Activity	**Whole-Group Reading** Recycle Every Day. **Activity:** Group recycling sort with paper, plastic, metal, glass into bins with corresponding pictures on the front of bins.	**Whole-Group Reading:** I Can Save the Earth! One Little Monster Learns to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle **Activity:** Graphic Organizer sort with activities children do with families to reduce, reuse, and recycle.	**Phonemic Awareness** R words: Reuse, reduce, recycle **Activity:** Object sorting game with items that begin with R and B consonants (bunny, bubble, banana, boy, balloon/	**Whole-Group Reading** We Planted a Tree **Activity:** Book discussion. What do trees give us? (Shade, a place to swing, fruit, wood, paper, pencils,	**Whole-Group Reading** Garbage Helps Our Garden Grow: A Compost Story **Activity:** Create a Soil-arium **Materials:** Clear plastic, Leaves, grass clippings, newspaper, dirt,

				raccoon, rabbit, reindeer, rock, rake, round, rope)	furniture). What do we need to do to protect trees? (Plant and replant trees in our neighbor-hoods)	vegetable scraps, water. **Method:** Toss every 2 weeks and record changes in soil.
Small Group Instruction	Learning Goal	8.A.ECa Sort, order, compare, and describe objects according to characteristics or attribute(s).	5.B.ECa With teacher assistance, use a combination of drawing, dictating, or writing to express an opinion about a book or topic.	8.A.ECa Sort, order, compare, and describe objects according to characteristic s or attribute(s).	7.C.ECa With teacher assistance, explore use of measuring tools that use standard units to measure objects and quantities. 7.A.ECc Use vocabulary that describes and compares length and height.	8.A.ECb Recognize, duplicate, extend, and create simple patterns in various formats.
	Small Group Activity	**Activity:** Memory Game. Square game cards include recycled materials (paper, glass and plastic bottles, clothing, food, recycle symbols, etc.).	**Activity:** Children dictate stories about what families do to reuse, reduce, and recycle at home.	**Activity:** Read Curious George: Trash into Treasure. Color sort items George kept as treasures *Materials:* Photo cards with pirate ship, scooter, fire hat, cap,	**Activity:** Read The Three R's: Reuse, Reduce, Recycle by Nuria Roca Assist children to measure cardboard tubes with	**Activity:** Create patterns with recycle symbols in green, black, blue, yellow, and red. Ask children to follow and

				fire hat, clock, ducks, pigs, glasses, balls, pencils, fruit.	a ruler. Ask children to line up tubes from shortest to tallest.	generate patterns.
Individualize/ Differentiate	Students	J.E. Provide additional space with support for sorting.	A.B. Reinforce questions with picture cards. Invite pointing as well as verbal answers.	G.B. Support letter identification. Provide alternate writing tools.	A.Y. Provide non-slip mat with larger-sized tubes.	M.L. Support color identification with additional color cards.
Small Group Material/ Resources	Materials by Day	Memory game cards.	Picture cards, dictation paper, digital recording.	Photo cards for color sorting. Color chart.	Ruler, tube collection, tape.	Color pattern cards, crayons, blank pattern pages.
Assessments	Work Samples/ Obser-vations	Checklist for vocabulary words.	Work sample with dictation and children's illustration.	Checklist for color identification.	Observa-tional notes.	Photo record of patterns.

Note: While individualization notes are located in this lesson plan underneath the small and large group planning section, the content is applicable to support children during play-based activities, as well. The goal is to write specific strategies to support learning that address physical, cognitive, language, processing, and skill needs. These adaptations can be used across multiple teaching formats and should be updated frequently to keep pace with the needs of individual children.

In the same way, family connections, reflections, and notes for the week (located below) should be updated to reflect the current focus of learning. While posted lesson plans (those available to families and other staff) will not include individualization details, the lesson plans you use to teach will have as much detail as possible to help you personalize support that leads to each child's success in participation and learning.

Family Connections: Provide book list for families. Include reduce, reuse, recycle activities to engage children at home. Provide web-links for children's exploration. Include community events for children.
Reflections: I notice that when children have a variety of interesting choices that extend the learning from group times into play, there are fewer behavior issues and children engage for longer periods of time. Talk to pre-K colleagues to brainstorm additional gross-motor activities for inside play days.

Special Events/Notes for the Week
Friday: Visit from park district naturalist who will read a book and demonstrate how to compost materials with the children.

Lesson Planning Resources:

Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards:
https://www.isbe.net/Documents/early_learning_standards.pdf

Illinois Early Learning Project Adapting Lesson Plans to Meet IELDS Benchmarks:
https://illinoisearlylearning.org/ields/ields-plans/adapting-1ceca/

Masterson, Marie. 2021. *Transforming Teaching: Creating Lesson Plans for Child-Centered Learning in Preschool*. Washington D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Preschool Lesson Plan Template District 186: https://www.isbe.net/documents/lesson-plan-ecdec.pdf

Webinar - Developmentally Appropriate Lesson Planning:
https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/9106045728647278595