

# Moving forward with Active Learning

## Overview

Children learn best through active involvement with people, materials, events and ideas. Active Learning is the principal element of the HighScope Educational approach. It has 5 active ingredients. In the HighScope classroom Active Learning is made up of conversations between children and between children and adults. There is more movement than sitting. Children are involved in hands-on activities with plentiful materials. The children choose what materials they want to use, how they want to use the materials and who they want to play with. The children and adults work and play together.

## The 5 Ingredients of Active learning

1. **Materials:**  
A variety of interesting materials are readily accessible to children.
2. **Manipulation:**  
Children are free to handle, explore and work with materials
3. **Choice**  
Children have opportunities to set their own goals and select materials and activities.
4. **Language and thought from the children**  
Children communicate, verbally and nonverbally, what they are doing and what they have done.
5. **Scaffolding from adults**  
Adults encourage the children's efforts and help them extend or build upon their work by talking with them about what they are doing, by joining in their play and by helping them learn to solve problems.

## Goals for moving forward

### Carefully and thoughtfully look at the materials and areas in your classroom:

Are there abundant materials that children can use in many ways?

Is there a variety of materials?

Real objects?

Natural and found materials?

Tools?

Messy, sticky, gooey, drippy, squishy, heavy, large materials?

Do children have space to use materials?

### Review your Daily Routine:

Do children have plenty of time to use materials?

Is there a set time for children to initiate activities that grow from their own personal interests and intentions? (Work Time)

Do children choose materials they want to use?

Do children decide what to do with the materials they are using?.

Do children have time to communicate, verbally and nonverbally, what they are doing and what they have done during the day?

### How do you envision the adults and children in your classroom interacting?

Are children talking about their experiences during the day?.

Do children talk about what they are doing using their own words?

Do adults recognize and encourage children's reflections, problem solving and creativity?

## Implementation plan

1. Create an acronym for the 5 ingredients of Active Learning.
2. Read these helpful [resources and watch these videos](#).
3. As you watch each of the videos, look for the 5 essential ingredients of Active Learning in this checklist:

#### Materials:

\_\_\_ There are abundant materials that children can use in many ways.

\_\_\_ Children use a variety of materials

\_\_\_ Children have space to use materials

\_\_\_ Children have time to use materials

#### Manipulation:

- ☐ Adults encourage children to manipulate objects freely.
- ☐ Children discover relationships through direct experience.
- ☐ Children transform and combine materials.
- ☐ Children use age appropriate tools and equipment.
- ☐ Children use their large muscles.

**Choice:**

- ☐ The children choose what to do.
- ☐ Children initiate activities that grow from personal interests and intentions.
- ☐ Children choose materials.
- ☐ Children decide what to do with materials.

**Language and thought from the children:**

- ☐ Do the children communicate verbally about what they are doing?
- ☐ Do the children communicate nonverbally about what they are doing?
- ☐ Do the children communicate what they have done?

**Scaffolding from Adults:**

- ☐ Does the adult follow the children's interests and ideas?
- ☐ Does the adult use Materials the same way children are using them?
- ☐ Does the adult converse with children about what they are doing?
- ☐ Does the adult pause frequently to give the children time to think?