

## Activity planning – an example

An alternative time schedule can be set out thus:

09.00 Self-selected indoor activities  
10.00 Clear away and clean up  
10.15 Break  
10.30 Story group or groups  
11.00 Self-selected outdoor activities  
11.45 Clear away and clean up  
12.00 Dismissal

Hildebrand (1997) suggests dividing the day into time blocks, for example thus:

- Time Block 1 Self-selected indoor activity  
Curriculum areas, wet and dry areas, table activities, home corner, role-play, book corner
- Time Block 2 Teacher-structured/directed activity  
Quiet time, e.g. looking at books, story, music, discussion, video
- Time Block 3 Self-selected outdoor activity  
Climbing apparatus, slides, soft play, running, large riding and travelling toys (e.g. tricycles, cars, tractors, trains, carts), sand play
- Time Block 4 Lunch  
Preparing for lunch (toileting, washing, setting out lunch facilities), eating, washing hands, preparing for a short sleep
- Time Block 5 Resting
- Time Block 6 Self-selected activity or outdoor play
- Time Block 7 Whole group activity  
Story

It is essential, then, for the student teacher to find out:

- (a) which children come for the morning, which for the afternoon, and which for both;
- (b) the way in which the children are organised (e.g. into groups) and for which activities the groups operate;
- (c) the way in which groups are attached to adults;
- (d) the schedule of the day and of the week;
- (e) who plans what, and for which children (including the planning time when all the adults meet together);
- (f) those activities over which children have open choice, and those over which children have constrained/scheduled choice;
- (g) the actual sequence of each day.

A central feature is that the adults must know exactly what they are going to be doing, with whom. This requires collaborative planning time, and this will need to be scheduled. It may also mean that the teacher will need to make it clear what curriculum and pedagogic matters need to be addressed, so that the time that the adults spend with the children is used most effectively to maximise learning. Typically, as the children move through the foundation years there are fewer adults in the classroom.

A session plan might identify key activities and key adults (Gardner 1999). Such a morning session plan might appear thus:

Session Plan: Tuesday morning, 5 December                      Topic: Winter

09.15 Key-worker groups talk about objects of interest that children have brought in about winter.

09.30 Mixed activities

10.00 Winter activity: making pictures and collages of:

- (a) different winter games (e.g. sledging)
- (b) winter clothing
- (c) winter weather
- (d) winter scenes.

10.45 Break

11.00 Winter activity: 'The Snowman' (film)

- (a) preparing for the film by reminding the children of the story from a previous session;
- (b) identifying the main sequence and characters;
- (c) watching the video;
- (d) follow-up discussion of what we liked in the film;
- (e) how to make a snowman – sequencing activity.

11.45: Key-worker groups draw clothes onto a snowman outline design.

## References

Gardner, H. (1999) *The Disciplined Mind: What All Students Should Understand*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p. 87.

Hildebrand, V. (1997) *Introduction to Early Childhood Education* (sixth edition). New Jersey: Simon and Schuster.