



Children's School Success Plus (CSS+): A Development Project

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Rationale

- Within Early Childhood Education a recent trend is the development of curricula that guide the actions of teachers and specify the content of learning experiences that children receive (Fantuzzo, et al, 2011; Fischel, 2007).
- A key component of IDEA regulations is "participation and progress in the general curriculum" (Federal Register, 2006).
- Thus, we need to know how to implement high quality early childhood curriculum to benefit all young children including those with disabilities and at-risk for developmental delay

Planned Outcomes

CSS+ Curriculum Model will provide:

- strategies for teacher on incorporating principles of universal design for learning, individualization, and progress monitoring that is tied to early learning standards into preschool curriculum content.
- evidence from teachers in Head Start and community-based preschool classrooms that teachers in these settings can and will implement the critical elements of the curriculum model.
- support for the expected outcome that when teachers provide educational programming incorporating these principles that young children with disabilities and at risk for developmental delay will be actively engaged in the curriculum and make meaningful progress.

Design Plan

CSS+ project conducted over 3 years: (Horn, et al, 2010)


- First year, we refined an existing integrated preschool curriculum (CSS) such that it clearly reflected universal design for learning and addressed feasibility of implementations concerns related to teacher perceptions of its use with all children. In addition, we ask teachers to assess feasibility with a particular focus on children with disabilities.
- Second year, teachers from 12 classrooms across 3 states (Kansas, Indiana and Maryland) are implementing CSS+ for one year and providing us ongoing feedback through onsite visits, written communication, and periodic focus group meetings regarding the feasibility of implementing CSS+ as a curriculum. In addition, teacher are providing us with suggestions modifications to ensure the usability and appropriateness of the match with their teaching context. Changes are ongoing with decisions based on maintaining a balance between the integrity of critical elements of the curriculum model and ensuring teacher "buy-in" and willingness to implement.
- Third year, the teachers will implement the refined curriculum. We will assess a sample of preschoolers with disabilities to see whether implementation fidelity is positively related to their learning outcomes. Specifically, we will assess:
 1. Fidelity of Implementation of key aspects of the model
 2. Intervening variables principally teacher and learning environments variables
 3. Child outcome variables

CSS+ Curricular Model

CSS+ Curricular Model Key Components:

1. 110+ Activity Sets – addressing curricular domains of literacy, math, science, and social skills.

2. Activity Plan Sheets which include information on addressing UDL and provide place to plan for and document individualization.

Name of Activity	
	Large Group Activity: Measuring Things
Curricular Objective(s)	
Children measure using different objects	
Materials & Equipment	
Dina, large blocks, paper to record predictions, marker.	
Key Vocabulary Words Associated with the Activity	
Measure	Description of Activity
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review previous Dina Activity in which Wally was frustrated because his tower was knocked down. Ask children if they've ever had some knock down their tower and how they felt. Review Discovery Activity about weather and what clothes to wear – put today's weather on weather chart. 2. Reflect and Ask: Ask the children how big they think the room is and how many steps it will take to walk across the room. Then ask if it will take the same number of steps for you to walk across the room compared to one of them. Ask a child to walk with you across the room with an appointed counter for each of you. Record the number of steps it takes each of you to walk across the room. Ask the children who used more steps. 3. Plan and Predict: Ask the children what else they can use to measure the room. Then ask how many blocks it will take to go across the room. Write down the predicted number. 4. Act and Observe: Measure the room using the blocks and compare the result with the prediction. 5. Reflect and Ask: Ask the children how they can remember what they measured today and how long it was.
Addressing Universal Design for Learning for all Children	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Multiple means of representation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Verbal prediction and written prediction 2. Multiple means of expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Point to answer questions 3. Multiple means of engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Child as walker o Child as counter

3. Teacher Manual

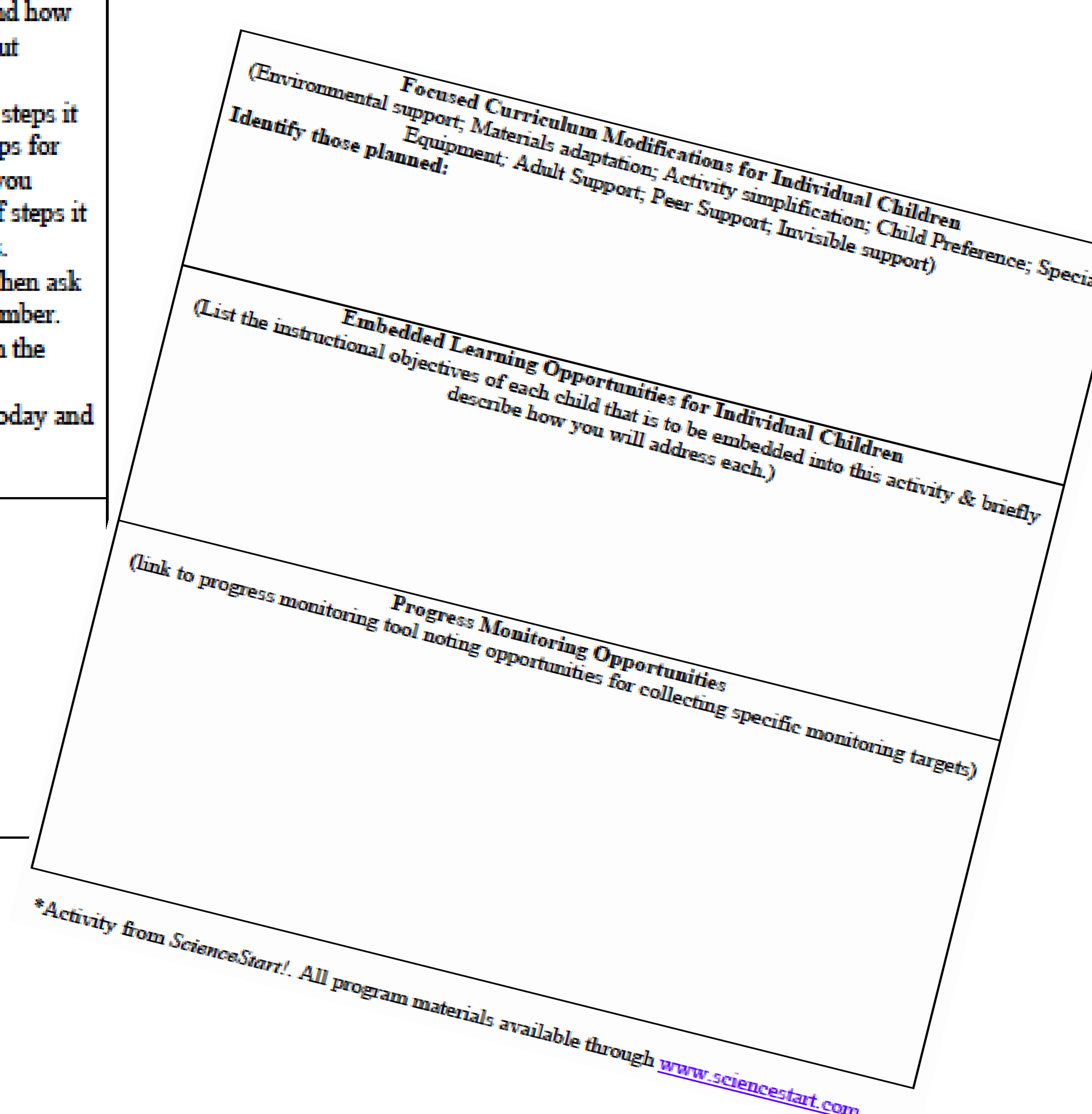
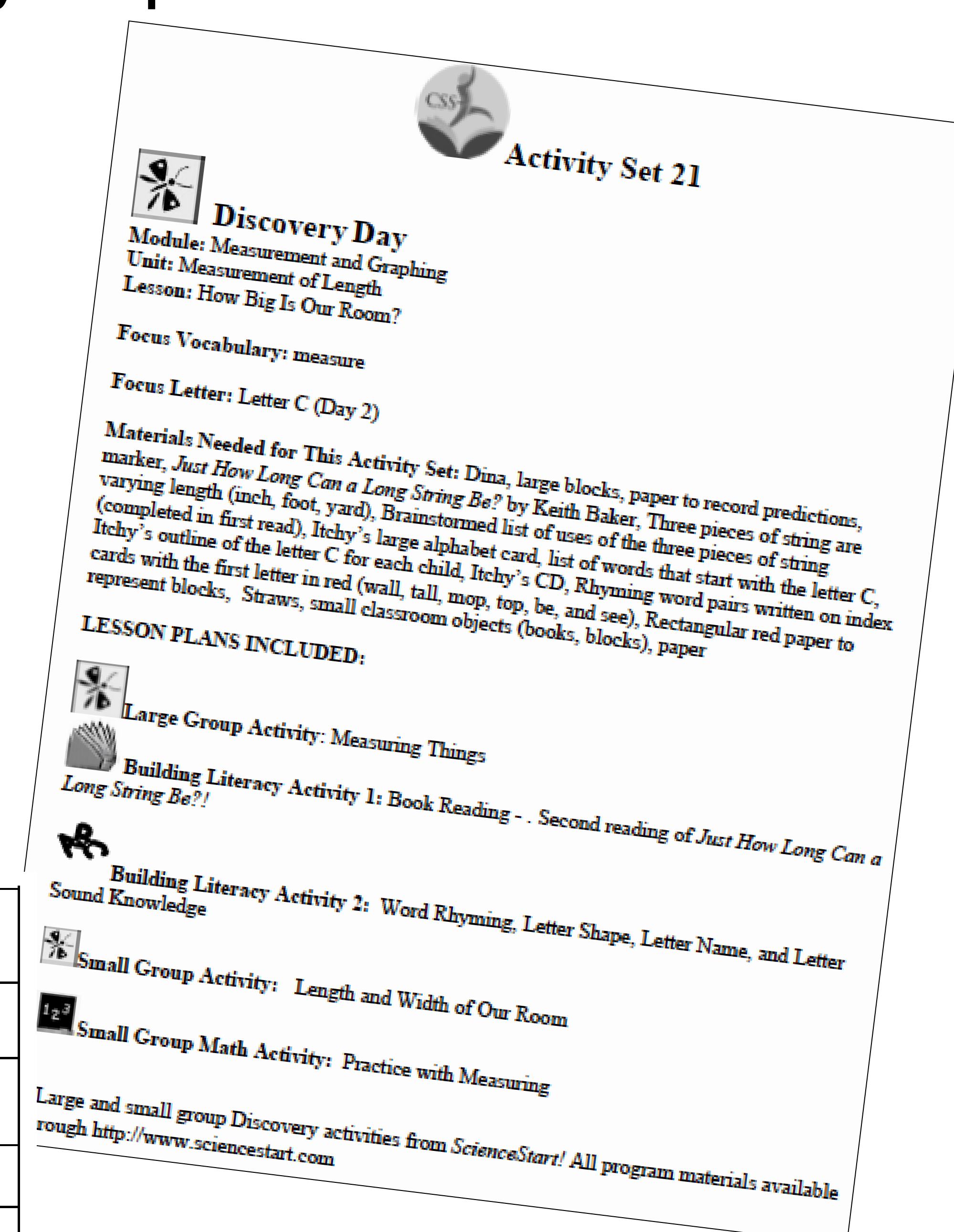
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Tackling Feasibility

Implementation of CSS+ Curricular Model requires changes in teaching practices that for many early childhood educators requires a range of changes to their current practice. Some teachers may find less drastic changes while others will see the changes as very substantial. Even small changes, however, have the potential to raise questions around the feasibility of implementation.

Thus it is important to carefully analyze the feedback provided by the teachers to provide guidance on how to make appropriate modifications. To guide our decision making, we are guided by Heifetz & Linsky (2002) organizational change framework. Specifically consideration of the:

- **Technical Changes required by implementation.** i.e. understanding of the changes need in concrete tasks of curricular content, classroom organization, daily schedule, and lesson planning, implementation, and assessment.
- **Adaptive Changes required for implementation** (i.e., changes educators beliefs, values, expectations, and attitudes of their work and role as early childhood educators)

Current Issues to Resolve

Linking Fidelity and Expected Outcomes of Implementation of the CSS+ Model:

- What are the key/substantial /unique features of the CSS+ curricular model that we anticipate to lead to significant positive outcomes?
- 2. What intervening variable (components of the teaching learning enterprise) do we anticipate that these key features will directly impact ?
 - Teacher Behavior
 - Learning Environment
 - Curricular Content Offered
- 3. How will child outcomes/learning be effected above and beyond what would occur if the changes did not occur?