

Supporting Sequential Play during Common Center Time Activities

Non-Sequential	Sequential	Facilitation
Children scatter pieces from different puzzles on the floor	Children work on a puzzle together or alone—looking for pieces, rotating pieces to fit	Teach strategies for putting together difficult puzzles (e.g., “Let’s look at the picture on the box...these three pieces are red like the firetruck. I wonder if they belong together.”)
Children randomly and quickly flip through the pages of a book	Children “read” books, turning pages and making comments about pictures	Use self-talk to model how they approach reading a new book. Model strategies for using pictures to “guess” what the story is about.
Children squish play-doh in the art center	Children use play-doh to make shapes such as letters, leaves for a tree, or cookies for a bakery	Introduce art center by suggesting the kinds of things children might want to try making.
Children scribble with markers in the writing center	Children work on their names, a journal prompt, or writing authentic messages	Think about how written text can be related to a unit theme or study. Suggest that children write letters, make lists, or author stories.
Children play together with dinosaur counters, making sounds and talking like dinosaurs	Children count the dinosaurs and/or sort them into groups based on size, color, or some other characteristic	Prompt children to make comparisons about quantity (e.g., “Who has more dinosaurs? How can you tell? How can we make these groups equal?”)
Children are knocking down structures in the block center	Children carefully stack blocks to make recognizable shapes and structures	Help children make plans or blueprints for buildings. Provide pictures or diagrams in the block center to help give children ideas.
Children are using the dramatic play area as a “kitchen”	Children take on the different roles in an ice cream parlor or pretend to follow a recipe	Create variety in the dramatic play center by setting up different scenes. Discuss responsibilities of specific jobs in the community (e.g., “What do people do at the grocery store? How does a post office work?”)