

DAP Discussion Prompts

Keeping the principles of developmentally appropriate practice in mind, read the following prompts. As a group, choose one that you're interested in exploring together then share your thoughts with each other. Move on to another prompt when you finish; you probably will not have time to discuss all three scenarios.

SCENARIO: USING FOOD FOR SENSORY EXPLORATION

Consider these different points of view about using food for sensory exploration:

- A. "I don't think that food should be used for play. We are sending children mixed messages about food when on one hand we ask them to eat what they take and not waste food, then on the other hand we let them paint with pudding mix, or put beans in the sensory tub and then throw it all away when we are done. Food is a precious resource, and many people are not lucky enough to have enough food to eat, let alone to play with. Food is seen differently in different cultures and playing with food may be offensive to some people. We need to teach children to be respectful of food and not wasteful."

- B. "I don't agree that using food for sensory play and art is "wasting." It's being used, meaningfully and with great purpose. Are kids wasting colored rice? No they are using it in an alternative way. They are learning with it. It is valuable. I appreciate the need to be sensitive to families both socio-economically and culturally but I reject the idea that using food is waste. I do understand that it may be seen as a luxury to use food for play, but then surely having a huge variety of paper, handfuls of crayons and pens and many more craft materials could be considered a luxury too? Consider, too, that the bag of rice you buy in your developed world grocery store won't otherwise be going to someone living in hunger."

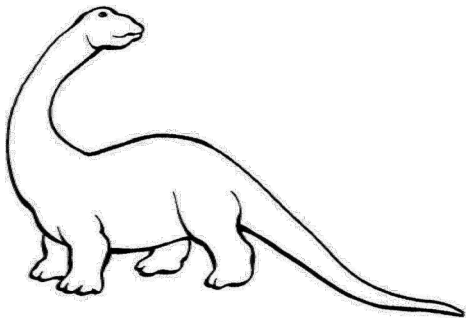
Discussion Prompt: How do these two different points of view relate to the core ideas of Developmentally Appropriate Practice?



SCENARIO: ARE DINOSAURS APPROPRIATE IN PRESCHOOL?

Leo was a new teacher at a preschool. At a staff meeting to plan curriculum, he mentioned that several of the children in his class of 4-5 year olds were really into dinosaurs. He suggested that they choose dinosaurs as a topic of focus. As a child, Leo had loved learning about dinosaurs, and as an adult, he was still a dinosaur enthusiast. He had lots of ideas for a doing a project on dinosaurs with the students. As he started to talk about his ideas, another teacher, Gladys, cut him off saying that “dinosaurs are not developmentally appropriate for preschoolers.”

Discussion Prompt: Imagine you are another teacher at the meeting. Would you say anything? If so, what?



SCENARIO: DISCOVERY BOTTLES FOR DIFFERENT AGES

In this class, you have been introduced to Discovery Bottles and experienced their potential for developing young children’s science skills and knowledge. Think about your own experience making your discovery bottle and the examples shared by your classmates.

Discussion Prompt:

- What are the different ways a teacher could use Discovery Bottles with children from infants to first graders? What factors need to be considered?
- How would learning goals and outcomes be different for children at various developmental levels?

