Talking Singing

Talking|Singing|Reading|Writing|Playing

Early Literacy Specialists of Eastern Ontario

PRC CRP

Talking Singing

# Circle Time Planning Template

| | |
|---|---|
| **Children's interests** | Frogs |
| **Outcomes** | Differentiate between frogs and other animals<br>Learn about what they eat<br>Count 1-5<br>Don't have props ready |
| **Welcoming song** | "Hello, how are you"<br>"The more we get together"<br>1 very long and boring song |
| **Familiar songs** | Participants will pick 3 songs out of the box. When they choose a song, tell them you don't know the words to that one and make them pick another one.<br>Activity: which one is not a frog?<br>Have different stuffed animals (frogs and other animals) in a pile.<br>Don't have real pictures. |
| **Energizing activities** | **New song:** 5 green and speckled frogs<br>Have children jump into the 'pond'.<br>Use different colored frogs on the floor to jump on. |
| **Calming activities** | **With drums**<br>Ho, ho, Watanay<br>Ho, ho, Watanay<br>Ho, ho, Watanay<br>Ki-yo-ki-na<br>Ki-yo-ki-na<br>Only have a few drums |
| **Closing song** | Don't sing a closing song |
| **Materials needed** | Song box<br>Stuffed animals (frogs and others)<br>Colored frogs for the floor<br>Musical instruments |

***red are mistakes to make on purpose**



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# Songs and Rhymes

## Why are songs and rhymes so important?

Research shows that a child's knowledge of songs and rhymes at age 3 is directly related to his reading ability at age 6.

## How can songs and rhymes help my child learn to read and write?

Songs and rhymes are related to different characteristics related to language development:

- **Repetition:** Songs often repeat the same words and rhymes over and over. This gives children more opportunities to hear and practice each word.
- **Melody and rhythm:** When children can hear rhythms in music, they may find it easier to hear rhythms in language. The music and movement also make it easier for children to learn the words.
- **Language features:** Songs focus on words that rhymes, words that start with the same sound and words divided by syllables. To be ready to read, children must be able to recognize these languages features.
- **Actions:** Action song and rhymes are especially good because they involve the whole body. The child hears the different sounds, sees the actions and feels the movement in their body. When the whole body is involved, the learning experience is stronger.
- **Special closeness:** Singing songs or saying rhymes together can be a time of special closeness that helps the children feel loved and adds to his self-esteem. Having a secure attachment is an important factor affecting healthy brain development. Such early positive experiences have a long-lasting effect on children's attitudes toward learning.

**Singing is fun. Observe your child and stop when they are no longer paying attention or interested.**

- **Repetition** is important. Sings songs and rhymes as often as you can; in the morning, at lunch time, at nap time...anytime!
- Clap or use noisemakers like a drum or shaker to add **rhythm.**
- Note the words that starts with the same sounds, will help develop **language awareness.**
- Include **actions** as you sing a song or say a rhyme.
- To enhance your child's **self esteem**, show your child that you're having fun singing song and saying rhymes.

*Source: «Lullabies to Literacy », MacCauley Child Development Centre*

# Tips for a Successful Circle

## Preparation/Environment

- Reduce all possible distractions when choosing a location for circle time; find a place away from the toys if possible.
- Respect group ratios when facilitating your circle. This will maximize learning opportunities and increase group participation.
- Go over the ground rules with the group. For example: respect each other, take turns to talk, participate, have fun, etc.
    - If children are old enough, have them participate in establishing the ground rules.
- Create a special space for circle time.
- Create visual cues to define the space or particular spots where children can sit, using cushions, rugs, line dots, etc.
- Choose an area that is big enough to accommodate everyone comfortably.
- Try to arrange the children in a half circle in front of you. Be at the same level as the children to maintain closeness and eye contact.
- If there are children with special needs make sure they are well integrated within the group and ensure you can make eye contact with them.

## Welcoming children

- Make sure the children are aware of what you expect of them. Have the "rules" of circle time clearly printed with pictures.
- You can also communicate the importance of your circle time to other staff members that might come in and disrupt your circle. You can make a poster announcing circle time.
- Try to minimize transitions and wait time when moving into your circle.



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## Delivery of circle

- Prior to circle, give yourself enough time to be well prepared. Familiarize yourself with the book, the songs and activities.
- Adapt the book to the children's level. Sometimes it is necessary to talk about the pictures or omit a few lines or words.
- Plan based on the interests and needs of each individual.
- Accommodate individual learning styles and special needs.
- Share the spotlight by encouraging participation by all who want to.
- Support emergent literacy by including numeracy and literacy activities.
- Have more than one early learning activity prepared in order to allow you to adapt to the different age groups.
- Blend songs: funny, surprising, active. Use visual cues to support learning. Use a variety of physical props such as puppets, costumes and instruments.
- Try to offer each child something to hold and use such as a puppet or musical instrument.
- Children need time to process information and questions that are asked, give them time to process this information.
- Ask simple and open-ended questions.
- Be spontaneous and prepared to modify your activity (group with higher energy level will require more songs with movement)
- Have fun!
- Know when it's enough!

# Circle Time Planning Template

| | |
|---|---|
| **Children's interests** | |
| **Outcomes** | |
| **Welcoming song** | |
| **Familiar songs** | |
| **Energizing activities** | |
| **Calming activities** | |
| **Closing song** | |
| **Materials needed** | |

# Circle Time Self-Assessment Tool

| Setting/Environment | Yes | No | NS (Not Sure) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Circle time rules were posted for all to see | | | |
| Did you use visuals props and cues? (Mats, pictures, etc.) | | | |
| Did you engage the children by asking them to help set up? | | | |
| Did you have all your materials prepared? | | | |

| Welcoming Children | Yes | No | NS |
|---|---|---|---|
| Did you sing a transition song to invite the children to the circle? | | | |
| Did you sing an opening song? | | | |
| Did you try to minimize the distractions by putting toys away, turning shelves around, etc? | | | |
| Did you communicate your expectations and rules to the children? | | | |

| Circle Delivery | Yes | No | NS |
|---|---|---|---|
| Did you establish learning outcomes? | | | |
| Did you try to engage all participants? | | | |
| Did you adapt the activities according to the age and attention span of the children? | | | |
| Was the length of the circle time appropriate to the age of the children? | | | |
| Did you apply shared reading techniques when reading the story? | | | |
| Did you have a consolidating activity (Example: memory game, find the shapes, discussion, etc.) | | | |
| Did you have enough materials to deliver a good quality circle? | | | |
| Did you use finger puppets, action songs or dramatic play activities? | | | |
| Did you offer props to children? (Puppets, instruments, etc.) | | | |

| | | | |
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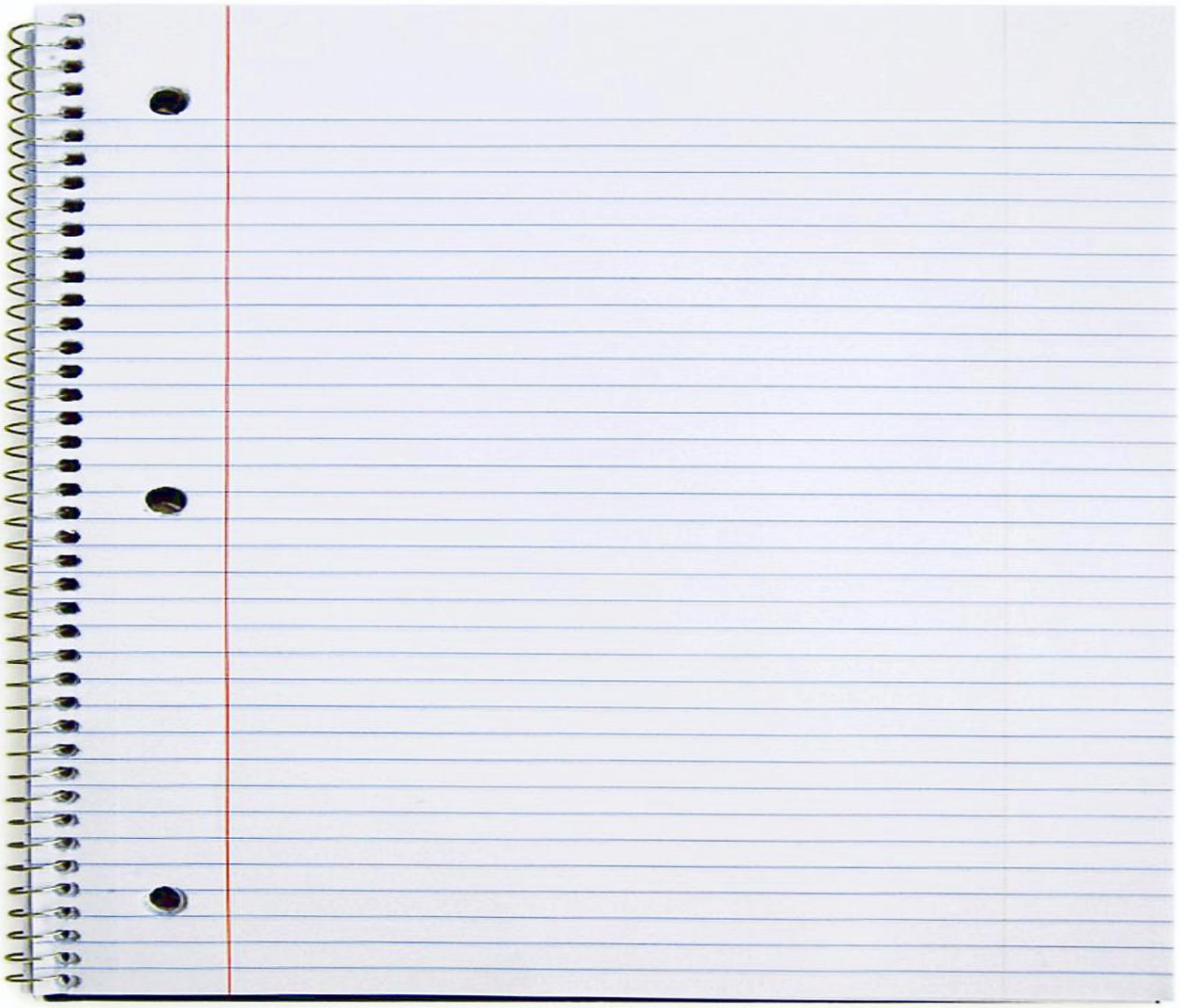
| Did you maintain flexibility by embracing the teachable moments, or changing your plan when your plan was not working? | | | |
| Did you give an appropriate wait time for children to think and give their answer? (20-30 seconds) | | | |
| Did you acknowledge the child's response with eye contact and positive feedbacks? | | | |
| Did you face children when speaking? | | | |
| Did you feel the children were easily distracted? | | | |

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