**Name:** Andrea MacMurray **Grade:** Older Preschool

**Subject Area:** Cognitive/Physical Development **Specific Topic:** Blocks

**Length of Time:** ???? **Date Taught**: 3/22/11

**Purpose**: For children to draw from what they know about certain animals and characteristics and use movement and sound to express those animals.

**Curriculumn Standards:**

NH Early Learning Guidelines

Physical Development

Small muscle development and coordination: children’s ability to use their eyes and hands together to accomplish tasks and solve problems.

Cognitive Development

Focused Exploration: children’s purposeful investigation of their environment and their application of knowledge to guide and deepen their experiences.

**Objectives**:

1. Use hands, tools and/or instruments with skill for a range of purposes.
2. The children will collect and organize materials and information to enhance play.

**Background Knowledge Needed:** Have the children explored the block area before? Are they often there? Or never there? If they do go to the block area what block building stage are they in? Have the children read Peter in the Wolf before today? What do they recall from their earlier learning experiences about the story? Have the children ever seen animal habitats and or zoos?

During block play children will develop the following.

**Physical Development:** “Children’s small muscles develop when they carry and carefully place blocks together to form a bridge or make an intricate design. Children gain eye-hand coordination when they have to balance blocks so they do not fall. (Dodge, Colker, & Heroman, 2008, p. 242)”

**Cognitive Development:** “As children experience the world around them, they form mental pictures of what they see. Playing with blocks gives them an opportunity to recreate these pictures in concrete form. The ability to create these representations of their experiences is the basis for abstract thinking. Moreover, block play promotes a concrete understanding of concepts essential to logical thinking. Children learn about sizes, shapes, numbers, order, area, length, patterns, and weight as they select, build with, and put away blocks. (Dodge, Colker, & Heroman, 2008, p. 242)”

**Stages of Block Play**

**Stage One: Carrying Blocks**- Children are likely to carry them around, make piles with them, tote them around in a truck, and transport them. At this stage children are learning about the blocks. How heavy they are, what it feels like to touch them, and how many they can carry at one time.

**Stage Two: Piling Blocks and Making Roads**- Children are still discovering blocks and how they can be used. They are busy making towers by piling blocks on top of each other. Children are beginning to use their imagination at this stage. They are using props to add to their experience. Children at this stage are moving from simple piling to piling but with an intention.

**Stage Three: Connecting Blocks to Create Structures-**

Bridging- Children set up two blocks, leaving a space between them, while connecting the two blocks with another on the top. When the children make bridges they are practicing balance, exploring spatial relationships, and improve their eye-hand coordination.

Making Enclosures- Children are putting blocks together to enclose a space. At the beginning of this the children will be satisfied with just making the enclosure, this leads into more dramatic play where the children develop ways to extend this such as adding animals for a zoo.

Designs- Children replicate symmetry, balances, and patterns through their block exploration.

**Stage Four: Making Elaborate Constructions**- More experienced block builders are putting blocks together with dexterity and skill. Children have learned to adapt changes in their building area by curving above, around, under obstacles. Children in this stage often extend into their creations into dramatic play making signs, and adding other objects.

( Dodge, Colker, & Heroman, 2008, p. 255-259)

**Materials Needed:**

1. Blocks
2. Animals
3. Peter and the Wolf

**Student Grouping**: Whole class group activity for the introduction. The children will be encouraged to explore in the block area. They will be encouraged to express what they know about Peter and the Wolf.

**Preparation for Experience:**

1. Read Peter in the Wolf
2. Put animals in block area

**Outline of Experience:**

**Introduction**: Today we are going to read Peter and the Wolf. What have we been doing in class with Peter and the Wolf? Oh we listened to music. What do you remember about the music? Were their different instruments? What kinds do you remember? Where do wolves live? What other animals can you think of? Where might they live? That is their habitat. Where might we go to see a lot of animals in cages? A Zoo. Have you ever been to a Zoo? What did you discover when you went to the zoo? Then I will read Peter and the Wolf

**Body of the Lesson:** What animals did you notice in the story? Did you notice where they lived? Could they live in a zoo? I am going to invite some friends to the block area during choice time to represent animals how they think they live.

**Conclusion**: I will be offering this experience for the children to experience open ended. The conclusion will be either a transition to a different time of day such as morning meeting. In that case I will give them plenty of notice and choices on what to do, such as draw a picture with a clipboard of your work or have the teacher take a picture of your work. Another option is to leave it out in the morning because morning meeting can move to another area, telling them that later we will have to clean it up because of rest time.

**Assessment Plan**: I will be able to see if my objectives have been met by glancing at the children. Are they answering questions during the introduction, or nodding their head I agreement? Are they making connections? If so how? Are they voicing their connections or experiences? During choice time what is going on in the block area? Are the children exploring animals, and Peter and the Wolf? I will take pictures of the children’s block creations. I will use a checklist to write down anecdotal records of the children and their block representations of animal homes and or zoo’s.

**Child Guidance/Classroom Management Plan**: For the introduction the children will be already sitting on their circles from morning meeting. This will help the children all be able to see me, and the pictures in the story. I will remind the students about thumbs up if they have something to contribute so that we can hear everyone’s ideas; hence if we all talk at once we can’t hear anyone. In the block play area I will keep the classroom management the same as usual. I will be there to assist in negotiation of materials if needed.

**Adaptions and Modifications**: I will be watching and interacting with the children during their block play. I will be listening to their ideas and asking questions on how we can further extend their creation. I will be taking their ideas and providing with their assistance the tools of what they need to add on.

**Extension Plan**: The children could extend this in many ways. We could have a dramatic play area that was a zoo where the children go to be zoo keepers. In the art area the children could paint pictures of their block creations.

**References**:

Dodge, D, Colker, L, & Heroman, C. (2008). *The creative curriculum – for preschool.*

Washington: Teaching Strategies.