

Questions in a Developmentally Appropriate Classroom:

In a DAP classroom, a teacher should seek out and initiate interactions, but make your contributions relevant to what the child is doing. Keep questions simple and do not always offer multiple choice answers within your question. Let the child think while you wait patiently and expectantly for answers. Answer questions when a child asks, but avoid doing the child's thinking for him as you guide him to discover answers for himself.

- Is there another way you could try it?
- Would it help to have some rope? ...tape?
- How did you make that happen?
- Tell me about your painting.
- What could you do with these things?
- How many more do you need?
- What would make it easier?
- Can you change it?
- Here is our problem (issue). What can we do?
- Can you make it move?
- Why do you think your plan didn't work?
- What else could you do when you are angry?

In an infant or toddler classroom, the teacher can incorporate the same teaching style with her actions as much as her words. For example, after a child has been playing with a shape sorter box for a few minutes, the teacher can add another level by placing the busy box under a blanket for the child to find or add a few items that will not fit into the shape sorter along with an empty plastic tub. The child will eventually sort the non-fitting items into the tub, or place all of the items in the tub. Both are acceptable "answers" to the problem!

The developmentally appropriate classroom environment is one where children most often:

- Lead...rather than follow the teacher.
- Create...rather than duplicate.
- Move...rather than wait.
- Make the lines...rather than color in the lines.
- Speak...rather than listen passively.
- Initiate...rather than imitate.
- Raise questions...rather than answer the teacher's questions.
- Solve their own problems...rather than the teacher's problems.
- Make art...rather than do crafts, and Emphasize the process...rather than the product.
- Use authentic skills...rather than drill and practice.
- Make books...rather than fill in workbooks.
- Decide...rather than submit.
- Choose wisely...rather than being told.
- Make a plan...rather than follow the teacher's plan.
- Try again...rather than fail.