

## ***IDAHO EARLY LEARNING EGUIDELINES***

### **GOAL 10: CHILDREN IMITATE BEHAVIORS THAT THEY HAVE OBSERVED.**

**Domain 1:** Approaches to Learning and Cognitive Development

**Sub-Domain:** Cognition and Cognitive Processes

[Birth through 8 Months](#)

[6 to 18 Months](#)

[16 to 38 Months](#)

[36 to 60 Months](#)

[60 Months through Kindergarten](#)

[First, Second, and Third Grades](#)

DOMAIN 1: APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT			
SUB-DOMAIN: COGNITION AND COGNITIVE PROCESSES			
IMITATION			
GOAL 10: CHILDREN IMITATE BEHAVIORS THAT THEY HAVE OBSERVED.			
Age Range	Developmental Growth	Child Indicators	Caregiver Strategies
Birth through 8 Months	Initiates, sustains, and replicates brief interactions and expressions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Looks at objects and faces.</li> <li>▪ Responds to adult facial expressions with same expression (sticking out tongue, pursing lips).</li> <li>▪ Mimics sounds.</li> <li>▪ Stares, smiles at, or shows concern or puzzlement to a caregiver.</li> <li>▪ Wiggles, kicks, increases rate of breathing in response to observation.</li> <li>▪ Babbles in tandem with caregiver's sounds.</li> <li>▪ Imitates other's action or expression and looks to that person for next cue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spend time holding and gazing at the child, responding to baby's cues for sustained action.</li> <li>▪ Recognize child's cues and need to self-regulate or disengage from activity (e.g. child closes eyes, looks away or gets fussy).</li> <li>▪ Initiate and respond in reciprocal interactions.</li> <li>▪ Describe what the child is doing to the child.</li> <li>▪ Exaggerate facial expressions.</li> <li>▪ Hold facial expressions for a sustained time as you engage the baby.</li> </ul>

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6 to 18 Months	Initiates, sustains, and replicates interactions and expressions of familiar people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Repeats actions in functional play (e.g. pours and dumps water in bathtub play; bangs a toy on a surface; picks up objects and drops them).</li> <li>▪ Waves bye-bye.</li> <li>▪ Plays imitation games (clapping and marching, jumping to music).</li> <li>▪ Imitates whole body actions.</li> <li>▪ Observes others as they sing or recite finger plays, and may attempt one or two of the actions or words in the song.</li> <li>▪ Prefers objects frequently used by caregiver (keys, cell phone).</li> <li>▪ Offers objects to others, often taking the object back.</li> <li>▪ Imitates actions from daily routines of the family or early childhood program (e.g. rocks a baby doll, puts on a hat, attempts to feed the caregiver).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide scripts and cues, especially during routines.</li> <li>▪ Provide time, action, and physical support.</li> <li>▪ Give verbal and physical cues for action (e.g. stretch arms overhead, saying "So BIG.&gt;").</li> <li>▪ Play games with imitation and actions (e.g. "Hop like a ___" and "Hokey Pokey").</li> <li>▪ Plan times for music and activities that offer repetition such as marching, clapping, and drumming. Provide safe common objects for play (bowl and spoon, cardboard boxes, clean laundry, cups and small pitchers, dolls, and blankets).</li> <li>▪ Make plenty of space available for children to replicate full body actions.</li> </ul>

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16 to 38 Months	Observes and replicates expressions, words, and actions of others in functional play, including familiar people, and characters from books, poetry, songs, or media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imitates a single action from a finger play or dance movement.</li> <li>Demonstrates a sequence of behavior after observing another child or adult.</li> <li>Imitates parent or caregiver’s familiar behavior or gestures (e.g. pulls clothes from dryer, puts hands on hips, or strikes a familiar pose).</li> <li>Uses imitation to play (e.g. pouring water in the bathtub and identifying it as making tea, or pretending to hammer nails with a paper towel role, or digging in the sandbox and “planting a flower” using a stick as the flower).</li> <li>Displays behaviors, replicates play themes, says words from characters from a book or media, and may pretend the character is a playmate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide tools, props, and opportunities for imitative tasks and behavior.</li> <li>Use actions, songs, finger plays sung or recited at a slow pace, so that children can “sing” along for at least part of the song.</li> <li>In child care, provide everyday tasks for toddlers to do (e.g. set the table, put blocks in a tub for cleanup, or pick up coats to put in the cubbies).</li> <li>Support play with open ended materials (cups, measuring spoons, pitchers, dolls).</li> <li>Read books and poems, talking about and showing children what reading concepts you are using (e.g. “Here is the title; here is the way I gently turn the pages; here is the front of the book; and here is the back of the book.”).</li> <li>Offer activities that mimic daily life, such as “washing babies” at the water table.</li> </ul>

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36 to 60 Months	Use imitation as a foundation for symbolic and constructive play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Imitates sequences of action (songs with gestures, movement games).</li> <li>▪ Observes and replicates use of common everyday tools in a functional way (e.g. sweeps up spilled sand with a small broom and dust pan, sets a table in dramatic play, and then puts dishes onto it).</li> <li>▪ Uses phrases or plays out plots from favorite books or movies.</li> <li>▪ Sings and gestures to songs with both actions and words (e.g. Wheels on the Bus, folk songs with gestures).</li> <li>▪ Constructs play themes based on routines and activities from their daily lives (e.g. makes a fire truck from big block to represent the one they saw on a field trip, attending to the details the firefighter showed).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encourage child to participate in everyday tasks (stirring, pouring, and wiping up).</li> <li>▪ Use action songs with sequences of motions (use a slow pace as children first learn to do both words and actions).</li> <li>▪ Post picture cards to help child see actions they can imitate.</li> <li>▪ Offer puppets and stages where children can create plays and themes.</li> <li>▪ Teach children to observe others as they play, and then help them enter into that play.</li> <li>▪ In child care, be certain there are ample props so that children can practice play without undue waiting or pressure to hurry.</li> <li>▪ Provide music and props that children can access independently for creating their own dancing and marching schemes.</li> </ul>

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60 Months through Kindergarten	Shows increasing skill in coordinating physical and cognitive abilities to realistically imitate and create events and situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engages in pretend role play with peers and alone.</li> <li>▪ Creates and uses objects to mimic adult roles, themes, and use of tools (e.g. wears helmet to ride a bike, just like mom does; makes a fence for the toy horse barn with a big gate, because dad couldn't get the horse trailer through this little one; or changes a physical stance for batting a ball with an eye toward the way a Seattle Mariners baseball player bats).</li> <li>▪ Narrates play and roles, taking on multiple roles and themes in play.</li> <li>▪ Plays with the intention to imitate roles and themes of adults, book characters, everyday people, dancers and singers, and movie or TV characters.</li> <li>▪ Chooses and successfully play games or songs with imitation and simple rules ("Simon Says").</li> <li>▪ Practices physical skills and actions observed in favored settings and people (e.g. father/mother favorite ball player, musician, super-hero, or community helpers).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide experiences for concerts, art, sporting events, museums, parades, theatre, and community events.</li> <li>▪ When children experience a performance or community event or situation, offer time for talking about that experience and provide props for that theme for play (e.g. the county fair is in town, so you offer some vegetables for playing judging booth, or a weather event occurs and you offer props for community helper play).</li> <li>▪ Include resources, activities, and props for making music, art, and drama as you plan environments.</li> <li>▪ Provide opportunities to see and imitate different kinds of work.</li> <li>▪ Provide real and pretend activities involving work that adults do (cooking, cleaning, raking leaves).</li> </ul>

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<p><b>First, Second, and Third Grades</b></p>	<p>Imitates, expands, explains, alters, and rejects or accepts behaviors they observe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Elicits adults' explanations of what they are doing (as authorities) rather than simply imitating them.</li> <li>▪ Creates word plays and rhymes to narrate and explain their actions.</li> <li>▪ Explains and defends the behaviors they are imitating.</li> <li>▪ Predicts what will happen if they imitate a behavior (e.g. "If I ski with my knees bent, I can turn better.").</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expose child to many and varied adult models and roles (stories, visitors, field trips).</li> <li>▪ Provide opportunities for child to re-enact historical events or retell stories.</li> <li>▪ Provide engaging literature rich with word play, rhymes, and contradictions.</li> <li>▪ Provide many and varied activities that draw on child's imagination (musical experience, literature, science, nature).</li> <li>▪ Provide time to listen to children's real and imagined experiences imitating other's behaviors.</li> <li>▪ Provide reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities for children to explain what they observed and how they replicated that behavior or action.</li> </ul>