

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

### **GOAL 16: CHILDREN REPRESENT EXPERIENCES AND THOUGHT THROUGH SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION INCLUDING PLAY, MOVEMENT, ARTS, NUMERACY, AND LITERACY.**

**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](#)

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**DOMAIN 1: APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT**

**SUB-DOMAIN: COGNITION AND COGNITIVE PROCESSES**

**REPRESENTATIONAL THOUGHT AND PLAY**

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Age Range	Developmental Growth	Child Indicators	Caregiver Strategies
<p><b>Birth through 8 Months</b></p>	<p>Infants initiate and respond to sensory stimulation which is a neurological precursor to symbolic representation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Varies intonation in their voices.</li> <li>▪ Tracks objects and sounds that are stimulating.</li> <li>▪ Responds to variations in temperature or taste of food, including breast milk.</li> <li>▪ Initially responds reflexively to touch, and later responds to touch by intentionally reaching out, grasping, and resisting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Play Peek-a-Boo and games that engage and respond to a child.</li> <li>▪ Provide pictures and books, and talk about simple features (baby's nose, the dog).</li> <li>▪ Sing and move with baby.</li> <li>▪ Give animal or other sounds when baby sees animals in a book, picture, or nature.</li> </ul>

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6 to 18 Months	Engages in pre-symbolic play. (See Goal 14, Exploratory Play)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scribbles using very light pressure on the page.</li> <li>▪ Experiments with new uses for familiar objects.</li> <li>▪ Provides simple sounds or words for objects, insects, people, and animals (e.g. child makes a sound similar to a moo if asked what the cow says).</li> <li>▪ Looks for interesting or desired objects when they are removed from view.</li> <li>▪ Reacts to mental images of objects or events (e.g. claps hands when told that a favorite person is coming to visit).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engage in simple reciprocal games with sounds and gestures.</li> <li>▪ Ask “can you find” or “show me” questions when looking at books.</li> <li>▪ Play “where is your nose,” “where is your foot” games. Then, looking at pictures, ask the child to point to and say body parts of own body and photographs.</li> <li>▪ When a child uses symbolic play (e.g. holding brush like a phone), comment by also pretending to use a phone.</li> <li>▪ Provide painting and drawing materials and time for sensory exploration, with adult supervision.</li> <li>▪ Use vocabulary that indicates quantity and number concepts as you carry out daily routines with a child (e.g. one cheerio, two cheerios; one leg in your pants and now two legs in your pants; you have more peas than rice).</li> <li>▪ Learn and use gestural signs with babies and toddlers. Simple signs for more and all done are easy to do and to use.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>16 to 38 Months</b></p>	<p>Uses symbolic expression in dramatic play and creative activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scribbles using large muscles of the arm using light pressure on the page.</li> <li>▪ Scribbles using bold strokes with letter-like shapes evolving including circles, angles, shapes, straight lines, and slant lines.</li> <li>▪ Draws pictures with predominantly circular-like strokes.</li> <li>▪ Draws with a combination of zigzags and circles.</li> <li>▪ Offers brief explanations of drawings (“red” “paint” “sun”).</li> <li>▪ Expresses emotion and experiences through movement, drawing, music, or singing.</li> <li>▪ Uses self-talk in play or painting/drawing.</li> <li>▪ Tells brief stories about an experience or event.</li> <li>▪ Makes animal noises and seeks recognition of that sound from others.</li> <li>▪ Identifies symbols or logos for familiar objects/place (e.g. restaurant or box for favored food).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide opportunities and materials for drawing, painting, and play dough activities.</li> <li>▪ Use descriptive words to describe a child’s play.</li> <li>▪ Play music and suggest movement (e.g. “Jump like a rabbit.” “Fly like a bird.” “Make a noise like a ...”).</li> <li>▪ Use finger plays and songs exaggerating gestures and movement as you do them with children (keep the action slow and deliberate so children can join in, recognizing that they typically either move or sing only, or simply observe).</li> <li>▪ Display child’s work and revisit that work.</li> <li>▪ Offer free-play and gently structured activities to include writing utensils, art media, and rhythm instruments.</li> <li>▪ Provide dress-up clothes and props for free-play.</li> <li>▪ Take pictures and display child’s activities. Have child explain what is in the pictures.</li> </ul>

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36 to 60 Months	Use symbols in arts, communication, and numeracy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provides a description of a person or object that is not present (e.g. child describes the toy bear as big, soft, and brown).</li> <li>▪ Uses symbols or pictures as a representation of oral language.</li> <li>▪ Uses many gestures to represent meaning (e.g. stop!, rain, points for desired objects, shakes head vigorously, claps hands to show enthusiasm, holds hands up to show they are sticky, or folds hand across chest to show negativity).</li> <li>▪ Uses objects to represent real items in make-believe play, but also chooses real objects when available.</li> <li>▪ Recognizes objects, places, and ideas by symbols (gender signs for restrooms, commercial signs, stop signs).</li> <li>▪ May use shapes and letters to “write messages.”</li> <li>▪ May use movement and drama to recreate experiences or express emotions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide opportunities for child to engage in symbolic play (act happy, imitate a sad puppy).</li> <li>▪ Provide opportunities for child to draw pictures of people, feelings, family, animals, and objects.</li> <li>▪ Tell stories without pictures and encourage child to visualize, imagine, and express what he/she feels.</li> <li>▪ Identify and point out symbols during daily activities; demonstrating and explaining what they mean.</li> <li>▪ Encourage child to draw a story, with caregiver as “scribe,” writing dictated words. Child tells the story and draws to represent the story.</li> <li>▪ Read stories and provide props for dramatizing the plot (e.g. Three Billy Goats Gruff with blocks, pictures of bridges, and some writing utensils and paper for signs).</li> </ul>

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<p><b>60 Months through Kindergarten</b></p>	<p>Use symbols to represent numbers, letters, and some words; and for expression in creative arts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Combines drawing and art expression with words.</li> <li>▪ Uses art, music, and movement to create expressions of self and feelings that are beyond verbal expression.</li> <li>▪ Responds empathetically to books and pictures that express emotions and social roles.</li> <li>▪ Represents simple objects through drawings, movement, mime, and three-dimensional constructs.</li> <li>▪ Uses physical objects to demonstrate symbolic vocabulary (using blocks or food at the table to demonstrate how much and more and less).</li> <li>▪ Independently chooses new and different materials to represent original thoughts, ideas, and feelings.</li> <li>▪ Expresses ideas using marks that are approximation of letters and numerals.</li> <li>▪ Uses some recognizable letters and numerals to communicate ideas.</li> <li>▪ Represents numeracy concepts such as addition and subtraction with objects, fingers, mental images, drawings, and sounds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engage child in creating symbols to represent familiar objects (e.g. “What would a symbol for your bed look like?”).</li> <li>▪ Provide opportunities for child to participate in culture specific representational activities (storytelling, oral history, dance, songs).</li> <li>▪ Use written symbols liberally to show how words help us function in daily life (e.g. do a project on “signs;” have children make a sign to send messages to others about saving a structure or to tell others when the class is outside or on a field trip; have children make up gestures to represent the weather each day; or use a roll of adding machine tape to record a sequential numeral each day to show how many days we have been in school this year).</li> <li>▪ Offer a writing center with the alphabet and numerals printed and taped to the table.</li> <li>▪ In dramatic play centers, have a blank cookbook where children create and record “recipes.”</li> <li>▪ In block play, supply paper and writing tools where children can draw their plans, or draw their final construction.</li> <li>▪ Offer measurement tools with “data sheets” where children can show the results of experiments.</li> <li>▪ Post a “waiting list” in popular spots (such as computer stations or water table) for children to sign up for the next available spot.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>First, Second, and Third Grades</b></p>	<p>Uses symbols to operate on, represent, and communicate creative thought, number concepts, and to express ideas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recognizes self and personal feelings as being similar to a character in a book, movie, or play.</li> <li>▪ Uses unique ways of expressing emotion and thoughts through art, literature, movement, singing, and drama.</li> <li>▪ Takes multiple perspectives when drawing or map drawing (e.g. child can draw both a floor plan “bird’s eye view,” and an elevation or frontal view and know they both represent the same object).</li> <li>▪ Uses humor with the realization that words have multiple meanings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide stories that have more than one meaning and talk about multiple meanings with child.</li> <li>▪ Provide folk tales and cultural stories for dramatic presentations or artistic representation.</li> <li>▪ Provide opportunities for perspective taking when drawing, building, and creating, including some models.</li> <li>▪ Use map making and symbol drawing sequences (story pictures) as a means of extending child’s thinking and perspective taking.</li> <li>▪ Engage child in playing with the sounds and meanings of words for expressing humor (e.g. offer and respond to riddles and jokes such as knock-knock jokes).</li> <li>▪ Provide structured activities for making up songs, dances, and poetry.</li> <li>▪ Bring artists to the classroom for performances that include child participation.</li> <li>▪ Offer field trips to museums, galleries, and concerts.</li> <li>▪ Offer literature rich activities throughout the curriculum.</li> <li>▪ Offer plenty of hands-on building and manipulation activities to represent number and number concepts, measurement, and geometry.</li> </ul>