

Plan-Do-Review

Seventh in a series of nine

-Adapted from *All About HighScope* by the HighScope Press.

What is Plan-Do-Review?

The process of **plan-do-review** is central to the HighScope approach and a unique part of the daily preschool classroom routine. As children make plans (“plan”), carry them out (“do”), and talk about what they have done (“review”), they learn many things. They learn to think ahead, make decisions, solve problems and accomplish goals. Children learn to make choices and to assess their progress on their ideas. They also learn how to become involved in the world around them by doing things alone or with other adults and children.

The process of plan-do-review helps children become self-confident and develop a sense of purpose. Instead of wandering around the room or aimlessly dumping things out, children making plans are more purposeful and focused. When children in a HighScope setting plan and follow through with their plans, they feel successful and learn to trust themselves to make choices and talk about their decisions with others. When children choose what they are going to work on, they are interested and participate for longer periods.

The plan-do-review part of the routine also encourages children to form a mental picture of their experiences and put what they have done into words. This helps children remember what lessons they learned from experiences (e.g. cause and effect) or from mistakes and be able to make good choices in the future.

As children get used to participating in the plan-do-review part of the routine they are able to talk more in detail about what they have done. Their

vocabularies grow as they talk about what they are learning, and they become more confident in their communication skills. These language skills are important for entering public school and learning to read.

What Happens At Planning Time?

Planning time occurs in small groups of 8-9 children. During this time, children explain in different ways what they want to do at work time. Younger children may point to what interests them or walk over to the area and begin playing. Other children may talk about where they will play, what they will make, what roles they will act out, and whom they will play with. As children’s skills grow, they are able to make plans that are more detailed. Over time, they make more challenges for themselves and solve more problems.

In HighScope settings, adults support children’s planning. The adults make sure the children can see all the interest areas and the classroom materials while they make their plans. Then the teachers listen with interest as the children tell them about their plans. They use a variety of planning games and materials to help the children stay focused on planning. Puppets, telephones, microphones and other fun props help children stay on task. As soon as each child is finished planning, he immediately leaves the planning area and begins working on doing his plan.

Sometimes a child’s plans may change or he finishes his first plan and is ready to move on. When that happens, the adults encourage the child to make new plans and to move ahead to his next choice.



What Happens At Work Time?

Work time is the ‘do’ part of the plan-do-review sequence and lasts 40-60 minutes. This gives children enough time to follow through on their ideas. As soon as a child plans, he begins to carry out, change, or complete his plans. Children solve problems, learn to get along with other children, work with adults or alone. As they work and play children are actively involved in learning content essential to their development and school readiness.

When following through with their plans, children become involved in many types of play. The children explore materials, build things and pretend. Some children work in only one area while other children move through and work in two or more areas around the room. Work time is full of conversation among children and teachers.

Before the children arrive at school, the teachers have made sure areas have all the supplies they think the children will need. During work time, the teachers are busy observing children’s skills, interacting with individual children and prompting their thinking. The teachers join the children in play during this time. In that way teachers can see how the children think and later can make plans to expand their learning - based on individual interests and skills.

What Happens At Review Time?

Review time occurs in small groups of 8-9 children right after work time. At review time, the children are encouraged to think about what they did during work time and to talk about it. The children share work time problems and solutions. They are encouraged to compare their plans with what they actually did and what other children did. The children tell what was most interesting to them during work time. They may share information by talking, drawing a picture, writing something, using some objects to act it out, or use gestures to help explain what they did. This way, children get to “show and tell” about meaningful things that they have discovered, participated in, and accomplished.

By keeping recall time relaxed, casual and conversational, teachers help children think about what their plans were and what they did during work time. Teachers let children know they are interested in what the children have to say by sitting down with them at their eye level and by listening with interest to what they say. This process helps children remember things they have learned and is an opportunity to hear other children’s ideas. Lastly, being able to share successes with friends and teachers builds children’s positive self-esteem.

How Can Your Family Use a Plan-Do-Review Routine At Home?

You can support your children by having times when you let them chose what to do. Encourage your children to plan what they would like to do. Provide them with the things they need and the time to carry out their plans. Participate with your children as they work. After they have followed through with their plans, ask your children to tell about what they did, how they did it and what they might change if they do it again. Encourage them to tell other family members about their activities.

You can use the time it takes you to drive or walk your child to school or the time you are waiting with them for the bus to ask your child about plans for the day. At the end of each day remind your child about your talk and ask your child to tell you what happened. You might say something like, “This morning you told me you wanted to play in the block area with your friend. Can you tell me what the two of you did there?”

The ability to plan and reflect is a valuable life skill. For example, you plan how to pay your bills, what to buy at the grocery store, or the steps to getting a project done. Reflection helps you evaluate how things went so that you can make corrections for the future. With your help, the **plan-do-review** routine will become a successful way for your child to think and act.

