

Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten  
(VPK) Education Program:

**What I Learned in VPK!**  
*Teacher's Guide*



## Introduction

The *Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Standards* describe skills that four-year-old children should know and be able to do by the end of their VPK experience. Fully recognizing parents as their child's first teacher, the *What I Learned in VPK! Teacher's Guide* and *Child Portfolio* are designed to help families understand what their child learned in the VPK Program, as well as things they can do at home to create developmentally appropriate learning environments for their children.

This *Teacher's Guide* begins by explaining how the *Child Portfolio* is completed, then it describes the characteristics of developmentally appropriate learning environments and how the VPK Education Standards can be used to help children of different backgrounds, abilities, temperaments, and interests to learn and develop. The *Teacher's Guide* also introduces the eight "domains" of development that are included in the VPK Education Standards:

- Physical Health
- Approaches to Learning
- Social and Emotional Development
- Language and Communication
- Emergent Literacy
- Mathematical and Scientific Thinking
- Social Studies and The Arts
- Motor Development.

For each domain, examples of play activities that families can use to support children's development at home are given. At the end of the *Teacher's Guide*, a list of online teacher resources is included.

## How Teachers Can Utilize This Guide

### **Purpose of the *What I Learned in VPK! Teacher's Guide***

The *Teacher's Guide* should be used by teachers to review and reflect on children's progress toward meeting the VPK Education Standards. The *Teacher's Guide* is a helpful resource for teachers to use when completing the *What I Learned in VPK! Child Portfolio* for each child in the classroom.

### **Purpose of the *What I Learned in VPK! Child Portfolio***

VPK Teachers may complete a *Child Portfolio* for each child to share with parents. The *Child Portfolio* is designed to reflect the skills and abilities a child is able to demonstrate by the end of the VPK year. The portfolio should be given to parents at the end of the VPK program.

The purpose of the *Child Portfolio* is to provide parents with information and guidance needed to continue preparing their child for kindergarten. If desired, the *Child Portfolio* can be shared with the kindergarten teacher upon entry.

## How Teachers Can Utilize This Guide (continued)

### Purpose of the *What I Learned in VPK! Child Portfolio* (continued)

The *Child Portfolio* is divided into the eight domains that align with standards and benchmarks included in the 2008 VPK Education Standards. Each domain includes a chart that highlights each child's growth and development during the VPK year. Following the list of standards, each domain has a section available for any additional comments the teacher would like to share with parents about their child's achievements.

In the back of the portfolio, there is a Summary of VPK Accomplishments where the teacher can identify and write a summary of each child's positive accomplishments in the eight domains of the VPK Education Standards.

### How and when the *Child Portfolio* could be used

The *Child Portfolio* may be used in one of the following ways:

- Complete the *Child Portfolio* for each child **once** at the end of the VPK year, and review with parents at an end-of-the year conference.
- Complete the *Child Portfolio* for each child **twice** (e.g., before a fall conference and then before the spring conference), and review with parents at each conference. Use one color of ink to mark where the child is in the fall, and another color of ink to mark where the child is in the spring, or date each entry. Using the *Child Portfolio* in this way can help show parents their child's growth over time.
- Complete the *Child Portfolio* for each child **three times** (e.g., beginning of year, mid-year, and end of year), and review with parents at conference(s). Use a different color of ink to mark where the child is at each point during the year, or date each entry. Using the *Child Portfolio* in this way can help show parents their child's growth over time.

Parents are given the *Child Portfolio* to take with them at the end of the VPK Program, and are encouraged to share it with their child's kindergarten teacher.



## Developmentally Appropriate Learning Environments – Play with a Purpose!

Research shows that young children learn best through hands-on experiences that have been planned by knowledgeable teachers. To parents, this may look like “just play,” but it is actually active learning. When young children explore things directly with their senses and practice new skills through play, they are learning in ways that are meaningful to them at their stage of development.

Here are some characteristics of a developmentally appropriate environment in VPK:

- The children look happy, healthy, and involved in activities.
- The prekindergarten teachers are friendly, kind, calm, and patient.
- The prekindergarten teachers get on the children’s eye level to listen, talk, and play with them.
- The prekindergarten teachers give individual attention to each child daily.
- There are various learning centers and play spaces available (e.g., dramatic play, art center, blocks, library, manipulative toys, music, sand/water tables).
- There are plenty of books, blocks, puzzles, toys, and materials for all the children in care.
- The physical layout/classroom arrangement provides enough space for a variety of learning centers and activities.
- The daily schedule is well-planned and includes time for outdoor play and learning.
- The facility is cheerful, clean, and safe, and the equipment is in good repair.
- Instruction is linked to the *Florida VPK Education Standards*.



## Using the Florida VPK Education Standards with Diverse Learners

The *Florida VPK Education Standards* were not developed to be “one size fits all.” Children learn at different rates and have different experiences, abilities, and interests. When adults understand and embrace these differences, trust develops, relationships grow, and healthy learning follows. Teachers must be aware of individual differences and respond to them in ways that will meet each child’s needs. This is especially true when the VPK classroom includes children with disabilities, children of different cultures and ethnicities, and children whose native language is not English.



# Physical Health

Physical health and learning go hand-in-hand. Physical health impacts every aspect of development. With increased coordination, balance, and strength, four-year-old children are great explorers of their environments. They are able to accept learning challenges that were out of their reach just a few short months earlier. When children are physically active and healthy, their social well-being is enhanced. By using their bodies to move, act, and react, children gain self-confidence. Their vision and hearing skills are refined in ways that facilitate language learning. They are also developing skills that enable them to be active partners in managing their health, safety, and physical fitness.

Here are examples of activities that support children’s physical health at home.

- Talk about the importance of brushing and flossing teeth and practice together.
- Encourage children to wash their hands often. Talk about how germs are spread and the impact germs have on us and model good hygiene practices.
- While grocery shopping or fixing a snack, talk about choosing healthy, nutritious foods over unhealthy ones.
- Schedule regular well-child check-ups with a doctor or other health care provider.
- Take your child to the park to play on outdoor equipment.
- Teach your child to swim or take him/her to swimming lessons.

<b>I. Physical Health</b>			
Standard	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>A. Physical Health</b>			
1. Shows characteristics of good health to facilitate learning			
2. Demonstrates visual ability to facilitate learning			
3. Exhibits auditory ability to facilitate learning			
4. Performs oral hygiene routines			
5. Shows familiarity with the role of a primary health care provider			
<b>B. Knowledge of Wellness</b>			
1. Shows that basic physical needs are met			
2. Follows basic health and safety rules			
3. Participates in physical fitness activities			
4. Makes wise food choices			
5. Performs some self-care tasks independently			
<b>Notes:</b>			

## Approaches to Learning

*Approaches to Learning* is not about specific knowledge content or skills. It is about *how* the child learns new skills. Some four-year-olds seem to be bursting with the desire to explore and accept new challenges, while others need more structure and encouragement when trying new things. The role of parents, teachers, and other adults should be to provide opportunities for success. All children, regardless of learning style or special needs, can learn and be successful.

Here are examples of activities that encourage children to explore their environment and actively engage in learning at home.

- Ask questions that will encourage children to think, wonder, and ask more questions. Use open-ended questions that begin with who, what, when, where, why, or how, and that cannot be answered with just “yes” or “no.”
- Include children in planning special events (e.g., birthday parties, family vacation, weekend activities).
- During dinner, in the car, or at bath time, provide opportunities for children to discuss and review what they did during their day.
- Provide age appropriate toys which require thinking. This includes puzzles, blocks, or sorting toys.

<b>II. Approaches to Learning</b>			
Standard	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>A. Eagerness and Curiosity</b>			
1. Shows eagerness and curiosity as a learner			
<b>B. Persistence</b>			
1. Attends to tasks and seeks help when encountering a problem			
<b>C. Creativity and Inventiveness</b>			
1. Approaches tasks with flexibility and inventiveness			
<b>D. Planning and Reflection</b>			
1. Shows some planning and reflection			
<b>Notes:</b>			

## Social and Emotional Development

Social and emotional readiness is critical to a child’s successful transition to kindergarten. Young children who are able to understand and express their own feelings, understand the viewpoint and feelings of others, cooperate with peers and adults, and resolve conflicts, are more likely to be successful in school. Positive relationships with adults lead to positive relationships with peers. Four-year-old children are developing important skills related to joining in conversations, asking questions, and listening to other people. They learn how to interact with a variety of people and in different situations.

Here are examples of activities that encourage children’s social and emotional development at home.

- Support children when they make mistakes. Acknowledge their efforts (e.g., tell child, “I see you worked hard on that.” or “You almost made it.”).
- Model respect for others and good conversational skills (e.g., not interrupting others when they are speaking).
- Introduce children to other adults in the community.
- Help your child find words to describe feelings.
- Set the tone that learning is good, fun, and important.

<b>III. Social and Emotional Development</b>			
Standard	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>A. Self-Concept</b>			
1. Demonstrates self-concept			
2. Shows some self-direction			
<b>B. Self-Control</b>			
1. Follows simple classroom rules and routines			
2. Uses classroom materials carefully			
3. Manages transitions			
<b>C. Relationships with Adults</b>			
1. Interacts easily with familiar adults			
2. Seeks adult assistance appropriately			
<b>D. Relationships with Peers</b>			
1. Interacts easily with one or more children			
2. Develops special friendships			
3. Participates in the group life of the class			
4. Shows empathy and caring for others			
<b>E. Social Problem-Solving</b>			
1. Seeks adult help when needed to resolve conflicts			
<b>Notes:</b>			

## Language and Communication

When placed in environments that are rich in language, new experiences, and conversation, children develop skills in understanding what others say to them and in using spoken language to express their own ideas and experiences.

Here are examples of activities that encourage children’s language and communication development at home.

- Ask children questions (e.g., “What was your favorite part of the day?” “What did you do at school?” “Whom did you play with?”).
- Read stories to children and ask who, what, where, when, and why questions about the stories.
- Speak clearly at a comfortable pace and an easily heard volume, inside and outdoors.
- Let your child know what she/he says is important. You do this by listening to your child.

<b>IV. Language and Communication</b>			
Standard/Benchmark	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>A. Listening</b>			
<b>1. Gains meaning by listening</b>			
Benchmark: Child shows understanding by asking and answering relevant questions, adding comments relevant to the topic, and reacting appropriately to what is said.			
<b>2. Follows two- and three-step directions</b>			
Benchmark: Child has mastery of two-step directions and usually follows three-step directions.			
<b>B. Speaking</b>			
<b>1. Speaks clearly enough to be understood without contextual clues</b>			
Benchmark: Child’s speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar adult			
<b>C. Vocabulary</b>			
<b>1. Shows an understanding of words and their meaning</b>			
Benchmark a: Child has age appropriate vocabulary in several categories and demonstrates a wide variety of words within each category (e.g., world knowledge, names of body parts, feelings, colors, shapes, jobs, tools, plants, animals and their habitats, and foods; words that describe, adjectives and adverbs; and action words, verbs).			
Benchmark b: Child has mastery of instructional language of the classroom and objects in the classroom (e.g., same and different, in front of and behind, next to, opposite, below).			
Benchmark c: Child understands or knows the meaning of many thousands of words, many more than he or she uses.			
<b>2. Uses an expanded vocabulary to describe many objects, actions, and events</b>			
Benchmark a: Child uses a large speaking vocabulary, adding new words weekly.			
Benchmark b: Child uses category labels (e.g., fruit, vegetable, animal, transportation, tools).			

## Language and Communication (continued)

<b>IV. Language and Communication (continued)</b>			
Standard/Benchmark	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>D. Sentences and Structure</b>			
<b>1. Uses age-appropriate grammar in conversations and increasingly complex phrases and sentences</b>			
Benchmark a: Child typically uses complete sentences of four or more words, usually with subject, verb, and object order.			
Benchmark b: Child uses regular and irregular plurals, regular past tense, personal and possessive pronouns, and subject-verb agreement.			
<b>2. Connects phrases and sentences to build ideas</b>			
Benchmark a: Child uses sentences with more than one phrase.			
Benchmark b: Child combines more than one idea using complex sentences.			
Benchmark c: Child combines sentences that give lots of detail, stick to the topic, and clearly communicate intended meaning.			
<b>E. Conversation</b>			
<b>1. Uses language to express needs and feelings, share experiences, predict outcomes, and resolve problems</b>			
Benchmark: Child demonstrates varied uses of language (e.g., requesting, commenting, using manner words, problem-solving).			
<b>2. Initiates, asks questions, and responds to adults and peers in a variety of settings</b>			
Benchmark a: Child follows another's conversational lead, appropriately initiates or terminates conversations, or appropriately introduces new content.			
Benchmark b: Child provides appropriate information for the setting (e.g., introduces himself or herself; requests assistance such as asking for help; answers questions such as providing name and address to a police officer or other appropriate adult).			
<b>3. Uses appropriate language and style for context</b>			
Benchmark a: Child demonstrates knowledge of verbal conversational rules (e.g., appropriately takes turns, does not interrupt, uses appropriate verbal expressions, and uses appropriate intonation).			
Benchmark b: Child demonstrates knowledge of nonverbal conversational rules (e.g., appropriate eye contact, appropriate facial expressions, appropriate distance in conversation).			
Benchmark c: Child matches language to social contexts (e.g., uses volume appropriate to context, addresses adults more formally than he or she addresses other children).			
<b>Notes:</b>			

## Emergent Literacy

Learning to read and learning to write are among children’s most important achievements. These skills open the door to a world of learning, discovery, and creativity. Children who have early experiences with books and other forms of print (e.g., recipes and road signs) are more likely to come to school excited about learning to read and write.

Here are examples of activities that support emergent literacy in children at home.

- Create comfortable, inviting spaces for reading. Provide good lighting and make the space cozy by adding throw pillows, bean bag chairs, and a book basket.
- Play a clapping game with the children, clapping once while saying each syllable in children’s names.
- Provide your child with materials (e.g., crayons, pencils, paper) and a space for writing.
- Let your child see you write.
- Provide magnetic letters for your child to practice forming her/his name and words she/he wants to know.
- Encourage your child to invent her/his own spelling for words (e.g., shopping lists, reminder notes, messages, signs, and stories).
- Give your child books as gifts and take your child to the public or school library to get a library card and check out books.
- Accept your child’s “pretend reading.”
- Read your child’s favorite stories over and over again.

<b>V. Emergent Literacy</b>			
Standard/Benchmark	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>A. Emergent Reading</b>			
<b>1. Shows motivation for reading</b>			
Benchmark a: Child enjoys reading and reading-related activities (e.g., selects reading and reading-related activities when given a choice, pretends to read to others).			
Benchmark b: Child uses books and other written materials appropriately (e.g., pretends to read, looks at books in an orderly fashion, turns one page at a time, goes from front to back).			
Benchmark c: Child asks to be read to or asks the meaning of written text.			
<b>2. Shows age-appropriate phonological awareness</b>			
Benchmark a: Child combines words to make a compound word (e.g., “foot” + “ball” = “football”) and deletes a word from a compound word (e.g., “starfish” – “star” = “fish”).			
Benchmark b: Child combines syllables into words (e.g., “sis” + “ter” = “sister”).			
Benchmark c: Child can delete a syllable from a word (e.g., “trumpet” – “trum” = “pet” or “cand” – “dy” = “can”).			
Benchmark d: Child combines onset and rime to form a familiar one-syllable word with pictorial support (e.g., when shown several pictures, and adult says /c/ + “at,” child can select the picture of the cat).			

## Emergent Literacy (continued)

<b>V. Emergent Literacy (continued)</b>			
Standard/Benchmark	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>3. Shows alphabetic knowledge</b>			
Benchmark a: Child recognizes almost all letters by name (e.g., when shown a group of letters, can accurately identify the letter that is named).			
Benchmark b: Child names most letters (e.g., when shown a letter, can accurately say its name).			
Benchmark c: Child names some letter sounds (e.g., when shown a letter, can accurately say the sound the letter makes).			
Benchmark d: Child recognizes some letter sounds (e.g., when shown a group of letters, can accurately identify the letter of the sound given).			
<b>4. Shows understanding of text read aloud</b>			
Benchmark a: child retells or reenacts story after it is read aloud.			
Benchmark b: Child asks and answers appropriate questions about the story (e.g., "What just happened?" "What might happen next?" "What would happen if...?" "What was so silly about...?").			
<b>B. Emergent Writing</b>			
<b>1. Shows motivation to engage in written expression</b>			
Benchmark: Child intentionally uses scribbles/writing to convey meaning (e.g., signing artwork, captioning, labeling, creating lists, making notes).			
<b>2. Uses letter-like shapes, symbols, and letters to convey meaning</b>			
Benchmark a: Child independently uses letters or symbols to make words or parts of a word.			
Benchmark b: Child writes own name (e.g., first name, last name, or frequent nickname), not necessarily with full correct spelling or well-formed letters.			
<b>3. Demonstrates age-appropriate ability to write letters</b>			
Benchmark: Child independently writes some letters on request.			
<b>4. Shows knowledge of structure of written composition</b>			
Benchmark: When writing or dictating, child uses appropriate writing conventions (e.g., a letter starts with "Dear" or the idea that a story has a beginning, middle, and end).			
<b>Notes:</b>			

## Mathematical and Scientific Thinking

*Mathematical and Scientific Thinking* involves the skills and strategies that children use to explore and learn about their world. Children begin to count, sort and manipulate sets of objects. Children also begin to identify and compare two- and three-dimensional shapes and to explore symmetry as they build with blocks and other concrete objects. The natural world and physical events are fascinating to four-year-old children. When adults respond to children’s questions, inquisitiveness and scientific thinking are fostered.

Here are examples of activities that support children’s mathematical and scientific thinking at home.

- Incorporate math into everyday activities (e.g., counting body parts, how many places to set at the dinner table, counting as high as possible before the traffic light changes from red to green).
- Provide supervised opportunities to examine how tools work (e.g., looking at and discussing pulleys, taking apart broken appliances).
- With close supervision, involve children in the meaningful use of household tools (e.g., eggbeaters, magnets on the refrigerator, funnels).

<b>VI. Mathematical and Scientific Thinking</b>			
Standard/Benchmark	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>A. Mathematical Thinking</b>			
<b>A(a). Number Sense</b>			
<b>1. Demonstrates understanding of one-to-one correspondence</b>			
Benchmark a: Child demonstrates one-to-one correspondence when counting.			
Benchmark b: Child demonstrates one-to-one correspondence to determine if two sets are equal.			
<b>2. Shows understanding of how to count and construct sets</b>			
Benchmark a: Child counts sets in the range of 10 to 15 objects.			
Benchmark b: Child constructs sets in the range of 10 to 15 objects.			
<b>3. Shows understanding by participating in the comparison of quantities</b>			
Benchmark a: Child compares two sets to determine if they are equal.			
Benchmark b: Child compares two sets to determine if one set has more.			
Benchmark c: child compares two sets to determine if one set has less.			
Benchmark d: Child determines one set of objects is a lot more than another set of objects.			
<b>4. Assigns and relates numerical representations among numerals (written), sets of objects, and number names (spoken) in the range of five to ten</b>			
<b>5. Counts and knows the sequence of number names (spoken)</b>			
Benchmark a: Child counts and recognizes number names (spoken) in the range of 10 to 15.			
Benchmark b: Child counts up through 31 by understanding the pattern of adding by one, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.			

## Mathematical and Scientific Thinking (continued)

<b>VI. Mathematical and Scientific Thinking (continued)</b>			
Standard/Benchmark	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>6. Shows understanding of and uses appropriate terms to describe ordinal positions</b>			
Benchmark a: Child demonstrates the concept of ordinal position with concrete objects (e.g., children or objects).			
Benchmark b: Child names ordinal positions (e.g., first, second, third, fourth, fifth).			
<b>A(b). Number and Operations</b>			
<b>1. Shows understanding of how to combine sets and remove from a concrete set of objects (receptive knowledge)</b>			
Benchmark a: Child indicates there are more when they combine (add) sets of objects together.			
Benchmark b: Child indicates there are less when they remove (subtract) objects from a set.			
<b>2. Shows understanding of addition and subtraction using a concrete set of objects (expressive knowledge) or story problems found in everyday classroom activities</b>			
Benchmark a: Child combines sets of objects to equal a set no larger than ten.			
Benchmark b: Child removes objects from a set no larger than ten.			
Benchmark c: Child uses concrete objects to solve complex problems (e.g., fingers, blocks).			
<b>3. Begins to develop an understanding of separating a set into a maximum of four parts, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.</b>			
<b>A(c). Patterns and Seriation</b>			
<b>1. Recognizes patterns and non-patterns (e.g., red/blue, red/blue vs. rainbow)</b>			
<b>2. Duplicates identical patterns with at least two elements</b>			
<b>3. Recognizes pattern unites (e.g., red/blue, dog, cat; red/blue/yellow, dog/cat/cow)</b>			
<b>4. Orders, compares, and describes objects according to a single attribute (seriation)</b>			
Benchmark a: Child places objects in increasing order of size where the increasing unit is constant (e.g., unit blocks).			
Benchmark b: Child verbalizes why objects were placed in order (e.g., describes process of how and why), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.			

## Mathematical and Scientific Thinking (continued)

<b>VI. Mathematical and Scientific Thinking (continued)</b>			
Standard/Benchmark	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>A(d). Geometry</b>			
<b>1. Understands various two-dimensional shapes, including circle, triangle, square, rectangle, oval, and other less common shapes (e.g., trapezoid)</b>			
Benchmark a: Child categorizes (sorts) examples of two-dimensional shapes.			
Benchmark b: Child names two-dimensional shapes.			
Benchmark c: Child constructs examples of two-dimensional shapes.			
Benchmark d: Child identifies the number of sides of two-dimensional shapes.			
<b>2. Shows understanding that two-dimensional shapes are equivalent (remain the same) in different orientations</b>			
Benchmark a: Child slides shapes, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.			
Benchmark b: Child flips shapes, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.			
Benchmark c: Child rotates shapes, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.			
<b>3. Understands various three-dimensional shapes, including sphere, cube, cone, and other less common shapes (e.g., cylinder, pyramid)</b>			
Benchmark a: Child categorizes (sorts) examples of three-dimensional shapes.			
Benchmark b: Child names three-dimensional shapes.			
<b>4. Analyzes and constructs examples of simple symmetry and non-symmetry in two-dimensions, using concrete objects</b>			
<b>A(e). Spatial Relations</b>			
<b>1. Shows understanding of and uses several positional words (e.g., above, below, next to, beside, on top of, inside, outside)</b>			
Benchmark a: Child shows understanding of positional words (receptive knowledge).			
Benchmark b: Child uses the positional terms verbally (expressive knowledge) (e.g., above, below, next to, beside, on top of, inside and outside), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.			
<b>2. Describes relative position from different perspectives (e.g., "I am on top of the climber and you are below me.")</b>			
<b>3. Understands and can tell the difference between orientation terms such as horizontal, diagonal, and vertical</b>			
<b>4. Uses directions to move through space and find places in space (e.g., obstacle courses, <i>Simon Says</i>, <i>Mother May I?</i>, hop scotch, giving simple directions)</b>			

## Mathematical and Scientific Thinking (continued)

<b>VI. Mathematical and Scientific Thinking (continued)</b>			
Standard/Benchmark	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>A(f). Measurement</b>			
<b>1. Compares continuous quantities using length, weight, and height</b>			
Benchmark a: Child measures or compares the length of one or more objects using a non-standards reference (e.g., paper clips), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.			
Benchmark b: Child measures or compares the weight of one or more objects using non-standard reference (e.g., beans), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.			
Benchmark c: Child measures or compares the height of one or more objects using non-standards reference (e.g., pencils), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.			
Benchmark d: Child uses measurement vocabulary (e.g., length, weight, height) and comparative terminology (e.g., more, less, shorter, longer, heaviest, lightest), with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.			
<b>2. Represents and analyzes data</b>			
Benchmark a: Child assists with collecting and sorting materials to be graphed.			
Benchmark b: Child works, with teacher and small groups, to represent mathematical relations in charts and graphs.			
Benchmark c: Child analyzes, with teacher and small groups, the relationship between items/objects represented by charts and graphs.			
Benchmark d: Child predicts the results of a data collection, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.			
<b>B. Scientific Thinking</b>			
<b>B(a). Inquiry</b>			
<b>1. Asks questions and uses senses to observe and explore materials and natural phenomena</b>			
<b>2. Uses simple tools and equipment for investigation</b>			
<b>3. Makes comparisons among objects</b>			
<b>Notes:</b>			

## Social Studies and The Arts

Prekindergarten children demonstrate knowledge of social studies by identifying attributes of familiar people and understanding family roles and relationships. They are developing new ways of examining and noticing places and the environment. Group rules are becoming easier to understand and follow, and four-year-old children have a beginning understanding of leadership.

The arts provide children with opportunities to express ideas and feelings, use words, manipulate tools and media, and solve problems. Through the arts, children learn to express what they know, pursue their own interests and abilities, and appreciate the contributions of others. They begin to understand that others can be creative in different ways and show appreciation for differences by asking questions and commenting.

Here are examples of activities that support children’s understanding of social studies and the arts at home.

- Ask children to dance or move to different tempos and styles of music (e.g., classical, rock, and jazz).
- Allow children to use markers, chalk, finger paint, etc., to express themselves.
- Play different types of music in the CD player on the ride to and from school and sing songs in the car.
- Save scraps, bits, boxes, and other things from around the house to use for creative experiences.

<b>VII. Social Studies and The Arts</b>			
Standard	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>A. Social Studies</b>			
<b>A(a). People, Past and Present</b>			
1. Identifies similarities and differences in personal and family characteristics			
<b>A(b). Human Interdependence</b>			
1. Begins to understand family needs, roles and relationships			
2. Describes some people’s jobs and what is required to perform them			
3. Begins to be aware of technology and how it affects life			
<b>A(c). Citizenship and Government</b>			
1. Demonstrates awareness of rules			
2. Shows awareness of what it means to be a leader			
<b>A(d). People and Where They Live</b>			
1. Describes the location of things in the environment			
2. Shows awareness of the environment			
<b>B. The Arts</b>			
<b>B(a). Expression and Representation</b>			
1. Uses a variety of art materials for tactile experience and exploration			
2. Participates in group music experiences			
3. Participates in creative movement, dance, and drama			
<b>B(b). Understanding and Appreciation</b>			
1. Responds to artistic creations or events			
<b>Notes:</b>			

## Motor Development

Four-year-old children love to move, and their increasing coordination and motor skills open up new opportunities for active exploration of their environment. Research and experience confirm that free play alone is not sufficient for the development of physical skills; planned movement activities are needed. Exposure to many different types of movements should be the goal, rather than high performance in particular skills.

Here are examples of activities that support children’s motor development at home.

- Provide daily unstructured times for physical activities (e.g., going on a bike ride, kicking a ball back and forth, taking a walk).
- Provide children with opportunities to use a variety of tools (e.g., writing tools, tongs, egg beaters, screwdriver).
- Display children’s writing and artwork on the fridge or display board, or frame as gifts for relatives.

<b>VIII. Motor Development Standards</b>			
Standard	Help Me Learn	Help Me Practice	Look What I Learned
<b>A. Gross Motor Development</b>			
1. Moves with balance and control			
2. Coordinates movements to perform simple tasks			
<b>B. Fine Motor Development</b>			
1. Uses strength and control to perform simple tasks			
2. Uses eye-hand coordination to perform tasks			
3. Shows beginning control of writing, drawing, and art tools			
<b>Notes:</b>			

### Acknowledgements

*A special thank you to Polk County Schools for the use of several of their parent tips from their Kindergarten Readiness Checklist.*

## Summary of VPK Accomplishments

### VPK Domain Summary

**Physical Health**

**Approaches to Learning**

**Social and Emotional Development**

**Language and Communication**

**Emergent Literacy**

**Mathematical and Scientific Thinking**

**Social Studies and The Arts**

**Motor Development**

## Online Resources for Teachers

### **Florida Department of Education Resources:**

**Bright Beginnings:** This Florida Department of Education Web site includes resources and strategies designed to help teachers with planning, instruction, and assessment in the areas of Emergent Literacy/Reading and Mathematical Thinking, from VPK through third grade.

<http://www.brightbeginningsfl.org/>

**Sample Lesson Plan Website:** The FDOE Office of Early Learning offers sample lesson plans linked to the VPK Education Standards, free of charge. The site is regularly updated, and providers can submit their own lesson plans for inclusion on this site.

<http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/plans.asp>

**VPK Teacher Toolkit:** The FDOE Office of Early Learning hosts free online teacher resources that are regularly updated to reflect the latest research and developments of VPK in Florida.

<http://www.flvpkonline.org/teachertoolkit>

### **Other Resources of Interest:**

**Center for Early Literacy Learning (CELL):** Promotes the adoption and sustained use of evidence-based early literacy learning practices by early childhood intervention practitioners, parents, and other caregivers of young children.

<http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org>

**Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children:** Promotes policies and advances evidence-based practices that support families and enhance the optimal development of young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays and disabilities.

<http://www.dec-sped.org>

**Early Childhood: Where Learning Begins:** Mathematical activities for parents, teachers, and 2- to 5-year-old children.

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/EarlyMath/title.html>

**Get Ready to Read!:** Provides an easy-to-administer, research-based screening tool to early childhood educators, child care providers, and parents in order to help them prepare all children to learn to read and write.

<http://www.getreadytoread.org>

**Helping Your Child Learn Math:** Resource for parents to help their children learn math in everyday events.

<http://www.math.com/parents/articles/helpmath.html>

**National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):** Focuses on the quality of educational and developmental services for all children from birth through age eight.

<http://www.naeyc.org>

**National Center for Early Development and Learning:** Focuses on enhancing the cognitive, social and emotional development of children from birth through age eight.

<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncedl>

**National Center for Learning Disabilities:** Promotes high quality early education services and supports all children, including those who struggle with learning.

<http://www.nclld.org>

**PBS Parents:** Child development tracker with a list of general goals for children ages 4-5 in preparation for kindergarten.

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/childdevelopment>

**Zero to Three:** Supports the healthy development and well-being of infants, toddlers, and their families.

<http://www.zerotothree.org>

This document was developed by the Florida Department of Education,  
Office of Early Learning.

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For further information, please contact:

Florida Department of Education  
Office of Early Learning  
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1524  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400  
[earlylearning@fldoe.org](mailto:earlylearning@fldoe.org)  
1-866-447-1159

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