




Pedagogical Prompts for

PEDAGOGICAL DOCUMENTATION



Invitation to Engage

Dear Reader,

We invite you to critically think about pedagogy using the six pedagogical approaches provided in [How Does Learning Happen?](#)

As you move through the document, feel free to engage with it on your own terms. Jump to pages that speak to you by clicking on the flower icons or underlined text.

Don't be scared to stand still and sit with a quote, question, or concept, and remember that learning can be non-linear.



The term “pedagogy” may be unfamiliar to some in early years settings. Thinking about pedagogy provides a new way for educators to consider their work. It helps educators to:

- Look more carefully at **what** they do each and every day;
- Think about the **why** of their practice;
- Understand more deeply **how** their actions have an impact on children and their families.



Excerpt from [How Does Learning Happen?](#)

You may also keep a journal to record your thoughts all in one place; this will help you return to your reflections and see your learning process and progress. If you prefer an online journal, here are some options:

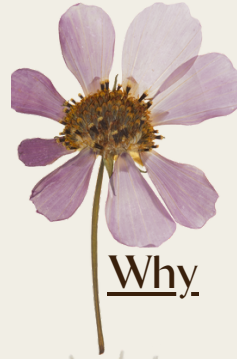
- [Penzu](#)
- [Journey Cloud](#)
- [My Journalate](#)

Pedagogical Prompts

What



Why



How



Extend



What are we trying to understand?

What are we asking pedagogical documentation to help us look for?



What does the documentation reveal about children's working theories, feelings, attachments and interests?

What do we see when we look closely and attentively at the documentation?

What do we wonder about?



A photograph of a green plant with a cluster of small yellow flowers at the top and fern-like leaves below. The plant is positioned on the left side of the image, partially overlapping a light pink textured paper that contains text.

Rather than striving for polished pieces of writing that focus on assessing children, we are interested in **how educators can learn how to use documentation to help them learn more about themselves and the impact of their practice.** In actual fact, what we write about someone else says more about us than the person we write about. It reveals the things that are most relevant to us in that moment. **It provides glimpses into what we value.**

Creating a Culture of Reflective Practice: The Role of Pedagogical Leadership in Early Childhood Programs
Authors: Anne Marie Coughlin & Lorrie McGee Baird



Developmental Observation

Assessing children's psychological development

Used to identify developmental norms and milestones

May utilize an observation tool or checklist

Initiated due to particular developmental concerns

Observation for Pedagogical Documentation

What is the child capable of without any pre-determined expectations?

Used to further understand the child's individuality

Follows the flow or direction of the child

An ongoing practice of studying children's processes



Click the flower!

Gunilla Dahlberg emphasizes in *Beyond Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care*, **pedagogical documentation should not be confused with 'child observation'**. The latter, she argues, is a 'technology of normalization', whose purpose 'is to assess children's psychological development in relation to already predetermined categories produced from development psychology, and which define what the normal child should be at a particular age. (Dahlberg et al., 2013, p.146)

Pedagogical documentation, by contrast, 'is mainly about trying to see and understand what is going on in the pedagogical work and what the child is capable of without any pre-determined framework of expectations and norms'.

(Excerpt from *Alternative Narratives*, p. 85)



Podcast Recommendation:
Can we Talk?
Conversations about
Pedagogical
Documentation



- Affiliated Services For Children and Youth. (Executive Producer). (2022, Jan 10). A Conversation About Pedagogical Documentation. (12) [Audio podcast episode]. In Can We Talk?: Conversations In Early Childhood Education. <https://podcasts.google.com/feed/aHR0cHM6Ly9mZWVkcyc5idXp6c3Byb3V0LmNvbS8xODI0MDExLnJzcw/episode/QnV6enNwcm91dC05ODYxOTQy?hl=en-CA&ved=2ahUKEwjYoZvepeD6AhVTk4kEHXwdDOgQjrkEegQICBAR&ep=6>
- Baird, L., & Coughlin, A. M. (2021). *Creating a Culture of Reflective Practice: The Role of Pedagogical Leadership in Early Child Programs*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.
- Dahlberg, G., Moss, P., & Pence, A. (2013). *Beyond Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care: Languages of Evaluation*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Milton Community Resource Centre. (2019, March 13). *How Does Learning Happen? In Action: A Story of Toddler Research* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TiHo0ehMn_0&t=2s
- Moss, P. (2019). *Alternative Narratives in Early Childhood Education: An Introduction for Students and Practitioners*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2014). *How Does Learning Happen*. <https://files.ontario.ca/edu-how-does-learning-happen-en-2021-03-23.pdf>