

Missouri Early Learning Standards (MELS)
Outline Format – Preschool (Ages 3–5)
Revised February 2021

I. Approaches to Learning

A. Show Curiosity

1. Express interest in people
2. Show interest in learning new things
3. Ask questions

B. Take Initiative

1. Initiate interactions
2. Make independent choices
3. Develop independence in routines and play

C. Exhibit Creativity

1. Try new ways of doing things
2. Use imagination to generate ideas
3. Exhibit a sense of humor

D. Show Confidence

1. Express ideas and opinions
2. View self as competent and capable

E. Display Persistence

1. Sustain attention to tasks
2. Pursue challenges
3. Cope with frustration

F. Use Problem-Solving Skills

1. Recognize problems
2. Attempt solutions
3. Work with others to solve problems

II. Social-Emotional Development

A. Exhibit Self-Awareness

1. Show respect for self
2. Develop personal preferences
3. Know personal information

B. Develop Self-Control

1. Follow rules and routines
2. Accept transitions
3. Express feelings appropriately
4. Adapt to different environments

C. Develop Personal Responsibility

1. Care for personal and group belongings
2. Accept consequences of actions

D. Build Relationships of Mutual Trust and Respect

1. Respect rights of others
2. Seek comfort from trusted adults
3. Develop friendships
4. Use courteous words and actions
5. Respect similarities and differences

E. Work Cooperatively with Others

1. Participate in groups
2. Share ideas and experiences
3. Consider others' perspectives
4. Resolve conflicts

III. Language & Literacy

A. Spoken / Expressive Language

1. Communicate in a variety of ways
2. Participate in conversations
3. Use language to pretend or create
4. Use sentences of varying length

B. Listening / Receptive Language

1. Listen to others
2. Follow directions
3. Respond to books and stories
4. Listen for environmental sounds

C. Written Language

1. Experiment with writing tools
2. Use marks, shapes, and letters
3. Explain drawings or writing

D. Knowledge of Print and Books

1. Show interest in books
2. Handle books appropriately
3. Understand print represents spoken words
4. Develop sense of story
5. Identify some letters

E. Sounds of Language (Phonological Awareness)

1. Repeat rhymes and songs
2. Participate in word games
3. Identify sounds in words

IV. Mathematics

A. Number Sense

1. Show interest in counting
2. Explore quantity

B. Numerical Representation

1. Identify numerals
2. Represent numbers through drawings
3. Write some numerals

C. Geometry and Spatial Sense

1. Describe positions and locations
2. Identify and describe shapes

D. Patterns and Relationships

1. Recognize patterns
2. Duplicate and extend patterns
3. Create patterns

E. Measurement

1. Explore measurement tools
2. Compare objects
3. Use measurement language

F. Data

1. Collect information
2. Display data using charts or graphs

V. Science

A. Physical Science

1. Ask questions
2. Make predictions
3. Experiment
4. Reflect on results

B. Life Science

1. Observe living things
2. Understand basic needs of living things
3. Explore life cycles

C. Earth and Space Science

1. Observe weather and seasons
2. Explore earth materials
3. Investigate natural phenomena

VI. Physical Development

A. Gross Motor Development

1. Run, jump, climb, and balance

B. Fine Motor Development

1. Use hands and tools effectively

C. Health and Safety

1. Practice healthy behaviors
2. Follow safety rules

VII. Expressive Arts

A. Creative Expression

1. Art
2. Music
3. Movement
4. Dramatic play