



MODULE

4

Supporting Children's Learning Every Day

ESTIMATED STUDY TIME: 4 HOURS



Learn
with purpose



Apply in
real life



Keep children
safe



Grow with
confidence



Become
work-ready

Suggested Study Plan

Session 1 (60 minutes)

- Lesson 1: How Young Children Learn
- Lesson 2: Learning Through Play

Session 2 (60 minutes)

- Lesson 3: Supporting Language and Early Literacy
- Lesson 4: Music, Movement and Creative Expression

Session 3 (60 minutes)

- Lesson 5: Learning with Everyday and Recycled Materials
- Lesson 6: Making Everyday Routines Meaningful

Session 4 (60 minutes)

- Knowledge Check
- End-of-Module Assessment
- My Learning Journal

"Children learn best when they are actively involved, encouraged to explore and supported by caring adults."

Why This Module Matters

Every moment in an ECD centre is an opportunity for learning. Children do not learn only during planned activities. They learn while playing, talking, singing, building, exploring, eating, helping and solving everyday problems.

As an ECD Assistant, you create opportunities for learning throughout the day. You encourage children to ask questions, explore new ideas and develop confidence through meaningful experiences.

You do not need expensive equipment to create rich learning experiences. Your enthusiasm, creativity and positive interactions with children are among the most valuable learning resources in any ECD centre.

This module will help you understand how children learn and show you practical ways to support their development through play and everyday experiences.

By completing this module, you will discover that learning opportunities are everywhere. You will gain practical ideas that will help you turn everyday moments into meaningful learning experiences, using your creativity, curiosity and positive relationships with children

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Explain how young children learn.
- Describe the value of play in Early Childhood Development.
- Support children's language and early literacy development.
- Use music, movement and creative activities to promote learning.
- Create learning opportunities using everyday and recycled materials.
- Recognise learning opportunities during daily routines.
- Encourage children's curiosity, creativity and confidence.



Lesson 1

How Young Children Learn

Why This Lesson Matters

Every child is born with a natural curiosity about the world.

Children learn by exploring, asking questions, making mistakes, trying again and discovering new ideas through everyday experiences.

As an ECD Assistant, understanding how children learn will help you create an environment where every child feels confident to explore and grow.

Children Learn Through Active Participation

Young children are active learners.

They learn best when they are involved in meaningful experiences.

Children learn by:

- playing
- exploring
- asking questions
- experimenting
- talking with others
- listening to stories
- singing songs
- moving their bodies
- using their senses
- solving simple problems.

The more opportunities children have to explore and participate, the richer their learning becomes



REMEMBER

Children learn best when they are actively involved, not when they simply watch adults

Learning Happens Throughout the Day

Learning is not limited to planned activities.

Children learn while:

- greeting their friends
- washing their hands
- helping prepare for snack time
- building with blocks
- painting pictures
- planting seeds
- tidying the classroom
- talking during meals
- playing outdoors.

Every routine can become a learning opportunity when caring adults encourage conversation, curiosity and exploration.

The most powerful learning often happens naturally during everyday routines when children are actively involved and adults encourage conversation, curiosity and problem-solving



IN PRACTICE

At Siyakhula ECD Centre, the children are preparing for snack time. Instead of simply handing out cups, Thandi invites the children to help.

"Can you count how many cups we need?"

The children count together.

They notice that one cup is missing.

Together they find another cup before everyone sits down.

During this simple routine, the children practise counting, problem-solving, cooperation and communication.

Learning happened during an ordinary part of the day

Every Child Learns Differently

Some children enjoy talking about their ideas.

Others learn by watching.

Some learn through movement.

Others enjoy building, drawing or listening to stories.

As an ECD Assistant, your role is to provide different kinds of learning experiences so that every child has opportunities to succeed.

Providing a variety of experiences allows every child to participate in ways that match their interests, strengths and stage of development



SAFETY FIRST

Children learn through exploration, but exploration should always take place in a safe environment.

Check learning materials regularly, supervise activities carefully and encourage children to use equipment safely while still allowing them to explore with confidence.

Activity 1

Learning Is Everywhere

Complete the Table below

Everyday Routine

What Children Could Learn

Washing hands.	_____
Snack time.	_____
Outdoor play.	_____
Story time.	_____
Packing away toys.	_____

Suggested responses

Washing hands - *Healthy habits, independence and following routines*

Snack time - *Counting, conversation, healthy eating and sharing*

Outdoor play - *Balance, teamwork, problem-solving and confidence*

Story time - *Language, listening, imagination and new vocabulary*

Packing away toys - *Responsibility, sorting and cooperation*



READY FOR WORK

Look for learning opportunities throughout the day.

Every ordinary moment has the potential to become an extraordinary learning opportunity when you encourage children to think, explore and participate.

Key Idea

Children learn through active participation, caring relationships and meaningful everyday experiences.

As an ECD Assistant, you help turn ordinary moments into valuable opportunities for learning.

Looking Ahead

In the next lesson you will explore one of the most powerful ways young children learn: **play**. You will discover why play is serious learning and how you can support children's development by joining their play with purpose, encouragement and respect.

Lesson 2

Learning Through Play

Why This Lesson Matters

Play is one of the most important ways young children learn.

When children play, they explore ideas, solve problems, practise new skills, use their imagination and build relationships with others.

As an ECD Assistant, you have an important role in creating opportunities for play and supporting children's learning without taking over.

Why Is Play So Important?

For young children, play is serious learning.

Through play, children learn to:

- think and solve problems
- communicate with others
- develop large and small muscles
- express feelings
- build friendships
- become creative
- develop confidence
- make sense of the world around them.

Children often learn more during meaningful play than by simply listening to instructions.



REMEMBER

Play is not a break from learning.

Play is learning.

Different Types of Play

Children enjoy many different kinds of play.

Each type supports learning in different ways.

Physical Play

Running, climbing, jumping, dancing and balancing help children develop strength, coordination and confidence.

Creative Play

Drawing, painting, building and creating with recycled materials encourage imagination, creativity and problem-solving.

Pretend Play

Children enjoy pretending to cook, visit the doctor, drive a taxi or care for a baby.

Pretend play helps children develop language, social skills, creativity and an understanding of everyday life.

Construction Play

Building with blocks, boxes or other materials helps children develop thinking skills, planning, creativity and fine motor skills.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play encourages movement, exploration, curiosity and cooperation. Children also learn about nature, weather and the environment.



IN PRACTICE

At Siyakhula ECD Centre, the children decide to turn the outdoor area into a small vegetable market.

Using empty food boxes, bottle tops, leaves and small baskets, they pretend to buy and sell fruit and vegetables.

Thandi joins the play by asking,

"Who is buying vegetables today?"

"How much does the cabbage cost?"

"What should we cook with these tomatoes?"

The children begin counting, describing colours, taking turns, solving problems and using new vocabulary.

Without interrupting their play, Thandi has helped extend their learning

Your Role During Play

As an ECD Assistant, your role is not to control children's play.

Instead, you support learning by:

- preparing interesting play spaces
- making sure children are safe
- encouraging children to explore
- asking questions that make children think
- introducing new words
- helping children solve problems
- encouraging children to include others
- observing children's interests.

Sometimes the best thing you can do is simply watch, listen and encourage.

Your role is to enrich children's play through thoughtful questions, encouragement and careful observation while allowing children to remain active leaders in their own learning.



REMEMBER

Join children's play without taking it over.

Let children lead their own learning while you provide encouragement and support



SAFETY FIRST

Check all play equipment before children begin.

Make sure:

- equipment is safe and in good condition
- children are appropriately supervised
- outdoor areas are free from hazards
- recycled materials are clean and safe to use
- small objects are not accessible to children who may swallow them.

Safe play allows children to explore with confidence

What This Means in Practice

When children are deeply involved in play, avoid interrupting them unless it is necessary.

Instead, observe what they are doing and think about how you can extend their learning by asking questions, introducing new ideas or providing additional materials.

Children learn best when they remain actively involved in their own play

Activity 2

What Is the Toddler Learning?

Read each situation.

Write one thing the child is learning.

Situation 1

A group of children builds a bridge using blocks.

What Are They Learning?

Suggested Response

Problem-solving, cooperation, creativity and fine motor skills.

Situation 2

Two children pretend to run a restaurant.

What Are They Learning?

Suggested Response

Language, social skills, imagination, counting and cooperation.

Situation 3

Children collect leaves, stones and sticks during outdoor play.

What Are They Learning?

Suggested Response

Observation, curiosity, language, early science concepts and respect for nature.

Situation 4

Creativity, language, confidence and fine motor skills.

What Are They Learning?

Suggested Response

Creativity, language, confidence and fine motor skills.



READY FOR WORK

You do not need expensive toys to create meaningful learning. Children can learn through boxes, bottle tops, fabric scraps, natural materials, recycled containers and their own wonderful imaginations.

Key Idea

Play is one of the most powerful ways young children learn.

By creating safe, stimulating opportunities for play and responding with curiosity and encouragement, you help children develop the skills, confidence and creativity they need for life.

Looking Ahead

In the next lesson you will discover how stories, conversations, songs and everyday experiences help children develop language and early literacy skills. You will also learn simple ways to encourage a lifelong love of books and learning.

Lesson 3

Supporting Language and Early Literacy

Why This Lesson Matters

Language is at the heart of learning.

Long before children learn to read and write, they are learning to listen, understand, communicate and enjoy stories.

Every conversation, song, rhyme and story helps children build the language skills they will use throughout their lives.

As an ECD Assistant, you have many opportunities every day to support children's language and early literacy development.

What Is Early Literacy?

Early literacy does not mean teaching young children to read and write before they are ready.

It means helping children develop the skills they need to become successful readers and writers in the future.

These skills include:

- listening carefully
- speaking with confidence
- enjoying books
- learning new words
- recognising pictures and symbols
- understanding that stories have a beginning, middle and end
- developing an interest in books and print



REMEMBER

Children learn language by hearing language.
Talk with children throughout the day.

Everyday Conversations Matter

Some of the best learning happens during ordinary conversations.

Talk with children while they:

- wash their hands
- eat meals
- play outdoors
- tidy the classroom
- paint pictures
- build with blocks.

Ask open-ended questions such as:

- "What do you think will happen next?"
- "Tell me about your picture."
- "How did you build your tower?"
- "What was your favourite part of the story?"

These questions encourage children to think, speak and share ideas.

Children learn language best when conversations are meaningful, enjoyable and connected to their everyday experiences.

Sharing Stories Every Day

Reading stories is one of the most valuable experiences you can offer young children.

Stories help children to:

- develop vocabulary
- improve listening skills
- build imagination
- understand emotions
- learn about different people and places
- develop a love of books.

You do not have to read every word exactly as it appears.

Talk about the pictures.

Ask questions.

Invite children to predict what might happen next.

Encourage them to tell parts of the story in their own words.



IN PRACTICE

At Siyakhula ECD Centre, Thandi reads a story about a little bird building a nest. Instead of reading the story straight through, she pauses and asks, "Where do you think the bird will find more sticks?"

The children eagerly share their ideas.

After the story, they go outside to look for birds' nests in the trees.

A simple story becomes an opportunity to develop language, observation and curiosity.

Supporting Children Who Speak Different Home Languages

Many South African ECD centres include children who speak different home languages. This diversity is something to celebrate.

You can support all children by:

- speaking clearly and respectfully
- learning simple greetings in children's home languages where possible
- using songs, pictures and actions
- encouraging children to share words from their home language
- valuing every child's culture and identity.

Children learn best when they feel respected and included.

Valuing children's home languages strengthens their confidence, identity and sense of belonging while supporting language development.



SAFETY FIRST

Choose books and learning materials that are clean, age appropriate and in good condition.

Check that books do not have loose pages or damaged parts that could be unsafe for very young children

What This Means in Practice

You do not need a special "language lesson."

Every conversation, every story and every song helps children develop communication skills.

Activity 3

Building Language Every Day

Read each situation.

Write one way you could encourage language development.

Situation 1

A child points to an aeroplane flying overhead.

My Response

Suggested Response

Talk about the aeroplane, ask where it might be going and introduce new words such as "sky," "pilot" or "journey."

Situation 2

A group of children is looking at a picture book together

My Response

Suggested Response

Ask questions about the pictures, encourage children to describe what they see and invite them to tell the story in their own words.

Situation 3

A child tells you about a visit to their grandmother.

My Response

Suggested Response

Listen carefully, ask open-ended questions and encourage the child to share more details.



READY FOR WORK

Talk with children, not only to children.
Conversations build language, confidence and strong relationships

Key Idea

Language grows through everyday conversations, stories, songs and caring relationships.

As an ECD Assistant, every word you share with a child can help build a lifelong love of learning.

Looking Ahead

In the next lesson you will discover how music, movement and creative activities support children's development while making learning active, joyful and memorable.

Lesson 4

Music, Movement and Creative Expression

Why This Lesson Matters

Children love to sing, dance, move and create.

These enjoyable activities help children develop language, coordination, confidence, creativity and social skills.

As an ECD Assistant, you can use music, movement and art to create exciting learning experiences every day.

Learning Through Music

Songs and rhymes help children to:

- develop language
- remember new information
- improve listening skills
- recognise patterns and rhythm
- participate as part of a group.

Simple songs can also help children move smoothly between activities.

For example, a tidy-up song or a handwashing song helps children know what comes next.



REMEMBER

Children do not need to sing perfectly.

The joy of participating is what matters most

Learning Through Movement

Young children need opportunities to move every day.

Movement activities help children develop:

- balance
- coordination
- strength
- confidence
- body awareness
- cooperation.

Movement can include:

- dancing
- obstacle courses
- action songs
- throwing and catching balls
- balancing games
- animal walks
- stretching.

Learning Through Creative Expression

Creative activities allow children to express their ideas and feelings.

Children can create using:

- crayons
- paint
- clay
- recycled materials
- leaves
- sticks
- boxes
- fabric scraps.

Remember that there is no single "correct" way to create.

Celebrate children's ideas rather than expecting every picture or model to look the same.

Creativity is about expressing ideas, not producing perfect artwork. Every child's work should reflect their own imagination and thinking



IN PRACTICE

At Siyakhula ECD Centre, the children collect leaves, seed pods and small sticks during outdoor play.

Back in the classroom, Thandi invites them to create nature collages.

Each child's picture is different.

Instead of saying,

"That is a beautiful tree,"

Thandi asks,

"Tell me about your picture."

The children proudly explain their ideas while developing creativity, language and confidence.

Encouraging Participation

Some children enjoy singing loudly.

Others may prefer watching before joining in.

Respect each child's personality and encourage participation without forcing it.

Children become more confident when they feel accepted and supported.

Some children join in immediately, while others prefer to observe before participating. Both approaches are part of healthy learning and development.



SAFETY FIRST

Always check that creative materials are clean and safe.

Avoid sharp objects or materials that could cause injury.

Supervise children closely when using scissors, paint, glue or natural materials collected outdoors.

Wash hands after creative activities

What This Means in Practice

The process is more important than the finished product.

Focus on children's enjoyment, creativity and learning rather than producing identical artwork

Activity 4

Learning Through Music, Movement and Art

Read each situation.

Write one area of development being supported.

Everyday Item

Example Activity

Bottle Tops.

Cardboard Box.

Leaves.

Egg Carton.

Fabric Scraps.

Suggested responses

Bottle tops - *Counting, sorting or pattern making*

Cardboard box - *Building a house, bus or shop*

Leaves - *Nature collage or sorting by size*

Egg carton - *Counting game or colour matching*

Fabric scraps - *Dressing dolls, texture exploration or pretend play*



READY FOR WORK

Look at everyday objects with a creative eye.

Before throwing something away, ask yourself,

"Could this become a learning resource?"

Before throwing something away, ask yourself, "Could this help a child learn?" If it is clean, safe and appropriate, it may become a valuable learning resource

Key Idea

Excellent learning does not depend on expensive equipment.

With creativity, planning and safe everyday materials, you can create rich learning experiences that encourage curiosity, confidence and imagination.

Looking Ahead

In the next lesson you will discover how everyday routines such as arrival time, meals, handwashing, outdoor play and going home can become valuable opportunities for learning, independence and relationship building.

Lesson 5

Learning with Everyday and Recycled Materials

Why This Lesson Matters

Young children do not need expensive toys to learn.

Some of the best learning experiences happen when children use everyday and recycled materials to explore, create and solve problems.

As an ECD Assistant, your creativity can turn simple objects into exciting learning opportunities.

This lesson will help you see the learning possibilities that exist all around you.

Learning Is Everywhere

Everyday materials encourage children to explore, imagine and create.

Many useful learning resources can be found in homes, schools and communities.

Examples include:

- cardboard boxes
- bottle tops
- yoghurt containers
- egg cartons
- fabric scraps
- newspapers
- cardboard tubes
- plastic lids
- sticks
- stones
- leaves
- seed pods
- shells
- clean plastic containers.

With imagination, these simple materials become valuable learning resources.

Encouraging children to use open-ended materials allows them to imagine, experiment and solve problems in many different ways.



REMEMBER

It is not the cost of the resource that matters.

It is how the resource is used to encourage children's learning.

What Children Learn Through Everyday Materials

Simple materials can support many areas of development.

Children learn to:

- solve problems
- sort and classify objects
- count and compare
- build and create
- strengthen fine motor skills
- develop imagination
- work together
- communicate their ideas.

One basket of bottle tops can become a counting activity, a colour-sorting game, a pattern-making exercise or part of a pretend shop.



IN PRACTICE

At Siyakhula ECD Centre, Thandi places a basket filled with clean bottle tops, cardboard tubes, small boxes and fabric pieces on a table.

She does not tell the children what to make.

Instead, she asks,

"What could we create with these materials today?"

One group builds a bus.

Another group creates a family home.

A third group designs an animal shelter.

As the children work together, they count, compare, plan, solve problems and explain their ideas.

The materials were simple.

The learning was rich.

Choosing Safe Materials

Before using recycled or natural materials, always make sure they are:

- clean
- safe to handle
- free from sharp edges
- large enough not to create a choking hazard
- suitable for the children's ages
- free from harmful substances.

If you are unsure whether something is safe, do not use it.



SAFETY FIRST

Never use:

- broken glass
- rusty metal
- sharp objects
- medicines or medicine containers
- chemicals
- batteries
- plastic bags for children's play
- anything that could easily be swallowed by young children.

Always supervise children while they use recycled and natural materials

Creating Learning Areas

Children learn best when materials are organised and easy to reach.

Simple learning areas might include:

Building Area

Boxes, blocks, cardboard tubes and recycled containers.

Creative Area

Paper, crayons, paint, fabric scraps, leaves and glue.

Reading Area

Books, cushions and story props.

Nature Area

Leaves, stones, shells, feathers and seed pods.

Pretend Play Area

Empty food boxes, old clothing, baskets, containers and safe household items.

An organised environment encourages children to make choices and learn independently.

What This Means in Practice

Do not ask,

"What resources do we need?"

Instead ask,

"How can we use what we already have to create meaningful learning?"

Creativity often grows from simple beginnings.

Activity 5

From Everyday Object to Learning Resource

Read each item below.

Write one learning activity you could create.

Situation 1

Children work together to build a bridge using blocks.

Area of Development

Suggested Response

Cognitive development, social development and language development.

Situation 2

A child tells the group about a visit to their grandmother.

Area of Development

Suggested Response

Language development and emotional development.

Situation 3

A child carefully cuts out shapes for an art activity.

Area of Development

Suggested Response

Physical development, particularly fine motor skills.

Situation 4

Two children work together to solve a disagreement about whose turn it is.

Area of Development

Suggested Response

Social development and emotional development.



READY FOR WORK

Ask children questions that encourage them to think.

Instead of asking questions that have only one correct answer, try asking:

"What do you think will happen next?"

"How could we solve this problem together?"

These conversations help children develop confidence, language and problem-solving skills.

Key Idea

Children between three and four years are becoming confident, capable learners.

By providing rich opportunities for play, conversation, creativity and problem-solving, you help prepare children not only for Grade R, but for lifelong learning.

Looking Ahead

In the final lesson of this module, you will learn how to observe children's development respectfully and professionally.

You will discover how careful observation helps the ECD team celebrate children's progress, plan meaningful learning experiences and identify when a child may need additional support.

Lesson 6

Making Everyday Routines Meaningful

Why This Lesson Matters

Every routine in an ECD centre is an opportunity for learning.

Children learn during arrival time, meals, handwashing, outdoor play, rest time and when they prepare to go home.

As an ECD Assistant, you help turn these everyday routines into moments that build independence, language, confidence and positive relationships.

Learning Happens Throughout the Day

Children enjoy routines because they help them feel safe and secure.

Predictable routines also provide many opportunities to learn.

During everyday routines, children can practise:

- communication
- independence
- problem-solving
- cooperation
- healthy habits
- responsibility
- confidence.

The goal is not to finish the routine as quickly as possible.

The goal is to help children learn while taking part.

Everyday routines become powerful learning experiences when adults slow down, involve children and encourage them to participate rather than simply completing tasks for them.



REMEMBER

Every routine is a learning opportunity.

Slow down, talk with children and encourage them to participate

Arrival Time

A warm welcome helps children feel safe and ready for the day.

You can:

- greet every child by name
- welcome parents and caregivers warmly
- encourage children to put away their own belongings
- help children settle into the classroom
- notice how children are feeling.

A positive start helps children feel that they belong.

Meals and Snack Time

Meals are about much more than eating.

Children can learn to:

- wash their hands
- set the table
- count cups and plates
- serve themselves when appropriate
- practise good manners
- talk with others
- try healthy foods.

These everyday experiences support independence and social development.

Handwashing and Personal Care

Handwashing is an opportunity to teach healthy habits.

Talk with children about:

- why we wash our hands
- when we wash our hands
- how to wash our hands properly.

Encourage children to become increasingly independent while providing support when needed.



IN PRACTICE

Before lunch at Siyakhula ECD Centre, Thandi asks,

"Who remembers the first step before we eat?"

The children reply,

"We wash our hands!"

As they wash their hands together, they sing a handwashing song while rubbing soap over their hands.

Thandi encourages the children to help one another remember each step.

A simple routine becomes a lesson in health, language, cooperation and independence

Outdoor Play

Outdoor time provides opportunities for:

- physical development
- exploration
- cooperation
- problem-solving
- curiosity
- confidence.

Join children's play by encouraging conversation and asking thoughtful questions while allowing children to lead their own exploration.

Going Home

The end of the day is another valuable opportunity.

Encourage children to:

- collect their belongings
- say goodbye politely
- reflect on something they enjoyed
- leave the classroom feeling successful and valued.

Warm farewells help strengthen relationships with both children and families.

A positive end to the day helps children leave feeling successful, valued and excited to return.



SAFETY FIRST

Routines are often busy times.

Pay extra attention during:

- arrival and departure
- meals
- toileting
- transitions between activities
- outdoor play.

Careful supervision during these times helps prevent accidents and keeps children safe

What This Means in Practice

Children learn best when they are involved.

Whenever possible, encourage children to do things for themselves instead of doing everything for them.

Support independence with patience, encouragement and praise.

Activity 6

Finding the Learning Opportunity

Read each routine.

Write one thing children could learn.

Arrival Time

My Action

Snack Time

My Action

Outdoor Play

My Action

Going Home

My Action

Suggested Response

Arrival Time - *Greeting others, belonging, independence and communication.*

Snack Time - *Healthy habits, counting, sharing and conversation.*

Outdoor Play - *Movement, cooperation, curiosity and problem-solving.*

Going Home - *Responsibility, organisation and respectful communication.*



READY FOR WORK

The most effective ECD Assistants do not wait for "teaching time."

They recognise that every moment of the day is an opportunity to encourage learning, confidence and positive relationships.

Key Idea

Meaningful learning happens throughout the day.

By making everyday routines purposeful, you help children become confident, capable and independent learners.

Looking Ahead

You have now completed all the lessons in Module 4.

Next, you will review what you have learned before moving on to Module 5, where you will explore how to keep children safe, healthy and thriving.

MODULE 4 SUMMARY

Congratulations on completing Module 4. You have discovered that meaningful learning does not happen only during planned lessons. It happens throughout the day, during play, conversations, routines, creative activities and everyday experiences. As an ECD Assistant, you have the opportunity to turn these ordinary moments into rich learning experiences that help children grow with confidence and curiosity.

In this module you discovered that children learn through play, relationships and everyday experiences.

You explored practical ways to support children's language, creativity, movement and thinking using stories, songs, conversations, play and everyday materials.

You also learned that meaningful learning does not depend on expensive resources. It depends on caring adults who recognise learning opportunities throughout the day.

As an ECD Assistant, you help children become curious, confident and capable learners by encouraging them to explore, ask questions and participate in everyday activities.

Key Messages

As you prepare to move on, remember these important ideas.

- Children learn best through active participation.
- Play is one of the most powerful ways children learn.
- Conversations, stories and songs build language and early literacy.
- Music, movement and creativity support the whole child.
- Everyday and recycled materials can become valuable learning resources.
- Daily routines provide meaningful learning opportunities.
- Caring relationships are at the heart of every learning experience.



Knowledge Check

Complete these questions before reading the Suggested Answers.

Question 1

True or False

Play is an important way for young children to learn.

Answer: _____

Question 2

List three ways you can support children's language development.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Question 3

Why are everyday routines valuable learning opportunities?

Question 4

Name three everyday or recycled materials that can be used for learning.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Question 5

True or False

Children need expensive toys to have meaningful learning experiences.

Answer: _____

Suggested Answers

Question 1 : True.

Question 2 : Possible answers include talking with children, reading stories, singing songs, asking open-ended questions and encouraging conversations.

Question 3 : Everyday routines help children develop independence, language, healthy habits, cooperation and confidence.

Question 4 : Possible answers include bottle tops, boxes, egg cartons, fabric scraps, leaves, stones and cardboard tubes.

Question 5 : False.

Creativity and meaningful interactions are more important than expensive equipment

End-of-Module Assessment

These questions will help you apply what you have learned.

There may be more than one good answer.

Scenario 1

The children have become interested in collecting leaves after outdoor play.

How could you extend their learning?

Scenario 2

During snack time, one child wants you to do everything for them, even though they are able to pour their own water.

How would you respond?

Scenario 3

Your ECD centre has very few toys.

List four everyday or recycled materials you could safely use to create learning activities.

1

2

3

4

Suggested Answers

Scenario 1

Encourage sorting, counting, comparing sizes and colours, creating nature collages, reading books about trees or talking about seasons and the environment.

Scenario 2

Encourage the child to try independently, offer gentle support if needed and praise their effort rather than doing the task for them.

Scenario 3

Possible answers include cardboard boxes, bottle tops, fabric scraps, egg cartons, sticks, leaves and clean plastic containers.

My Learning Journal

Complete these reflections.

The most valuable thing I learned about supporting children's learning is:

One idea I am excited to try in an ECD centre is:

One everyday routine I will use as a learning opportunity is:

Glossary

Key words you will use throughout this Module.

Word	Meaning
Play	A natural and enjoyable way that children learn and develop.
Early Literacy	The skills that prepare children to become readers and writers.
Creative Expression	Using art, music, movement and imagination to communicate ideas and feelings.
Open-ended Question	A question with more than one possible answer that encourages thinking and conversation.
Learning Environment	The space, materials and relationships that support children's learning.



Ready for Work Checklist

Before moving to Module 5, ask yourself:

- ☐ I understand how young children learn.
- ☐ I can support learning through play.
- ☐ I know how to encourage language development.
- ☐ I can use music, movement and creative activities to support learning.
- ☐ I can create learning opportunities using everyday and recycled materials.
- ☐ I understand that everyday routines are valuable learning opportunities.
- ☐ I am ready to continue my learning

Looking Ahead

In Module 5 you will explore how to keep children safe, healthy and thriving.

You will learn about safeguarding, nutrition, hygiene, supervision, child protection, inclusion and your important role in creating a safe and nurturing environment for every child.



CONGRATULATIONS!

You have completed Module 4 of Starting Strong.

Every encouraging conversation, every story, every song and every opportunity to explore helps build a child's confidence and love of learning. As you continue your journey, remember that your enthusiasm, creativity and caring relationships are among the most valuable resources you bring to an ECD centre.

Never underestimate the difference you can make.