[The logo for the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, and the Victorian State Government.]

TITLE: Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. Video 4: Children are confident and involved learners.

DR CAROLINE COHRSSEN: The VEYLDF tells us that children learn in the context of their families and communities. Responsive learning relationships with all children supports them to learn successfully. They are encouraged to be curious and enthusiastic about their learning. With encouragement, guidance, experience and learning, children further develop the capacity to reflect on their own thinking processes and approaches to learning. This is fundamental to maintaining positive learning and development trajectories.

Metacognition begins to develop as children begin to think aloud and discuss learning in ways that help to deepen their knowledge of information and processes. Children benefit from many opportunities to generate and discuss ideas, make plans, exercise skills, brainstorm solutions to problems, reflect and give reasons for their choices. They investigate what products and systems can do and how they work. Increasingly, they begin to use information and communication technologies to assist their thinking and to represent what they know and understand.

In the planning resource documents relating to learning, you will see one entitled Ballerina Elephant. It presents an observation of Blake, who has built a symmetrical structure using blocks. Let's read the observation together.

While constructing the tower in the block area, Blake said, ‘The Eiffel Tower has four legs. Two in the front and two other legs at the back.’

Then he put two unit blocks next to each other on the rug, added another six unit blocks on top of each, and a long rectangle unit in the middle. Then he said, ‘These are its front legs.’ Then he did the same for the back legs.

When analysing the observation, we can see that Blake demonstrated awareness of mathematical symmetry by making his construction with identical parts facing each other. Young learners often use symmetry when playing with unit blocks. Blake's understanding of symmetry could be extended by playing simple symmetry games to explore the concept and rehearse new words.

A link has been made to one evidence marker in the VEYLDF. Learners follow and extend their own interests with enthusiasm, energy and concentration. When planning a learning experience based on this observation, two aims have been identified. For the learners:

* To explore symmetry through a mirror dance, and
* To match and extend their actions with a peer's body movements.

You will see that the first learning intention could be adapted to any activity that provides opportunities to recognise symmetry. This may include looking at plants in our natural environment, buildings around us, or images in books. In this way, we focus on the intended learning, but the vehicle for learning will follow learners' interests.

The text that describes the learning experience provides opportunities for learners to demonstrate the aims or learning intentions that were identified. Suggestions of open-ended questions and new words are also provided. In the final step, educators are encouraged to reflect and review the learning experience. Specific provocations are provided to demonstrate the types of questions educators may ask themselves. One key question is, ‘What will you plan next to consolidate or extend this learning?’

This question is important. By intentionally continuing to focus on these learning aims in many different contexts, learners are supported by educators to generalise the learning, to transfer the concepts or capabilities from one experience to another. By providing multiple opportunities to rehearse these capabilities or concepts in ways that follow learners' interests, the planning cycle keeps on turning.

[The five circles of the planning cycle rotate clockwise around the central circle labelled ‘Context’.]

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