

3 Formulation of an instruction plan (Daily/ Weekly/Monthly /Yearly)

What is the Instruction Plan?

The basics of early childhood education are to respect the life of a child and to promote his/her voluntary activities. However, respecting children's voluntariness does not mean to leave them to play as they like. Teachers should care for children within the objectives and perspectives of early childhood education.

As explained in the previous section, the curriculum is a holistic educational plan which is formulated with the intention of achieving specific aims throughout a child's life at kindergarten.

On the other hand, as is stated below, instruction plans are formulated more concretely in order to achieve the aims stipulated in the curriculum. They show 'when' and 'what kind of activities' children do with the aim of promoting their development and active life. Try hard to understand about children, and especially recognize their interests, attitudes toward their life or play, and relationships with teachers and other children. And so instruction plans should be formulated so that children can have experiences appropriate for their age or development stage.

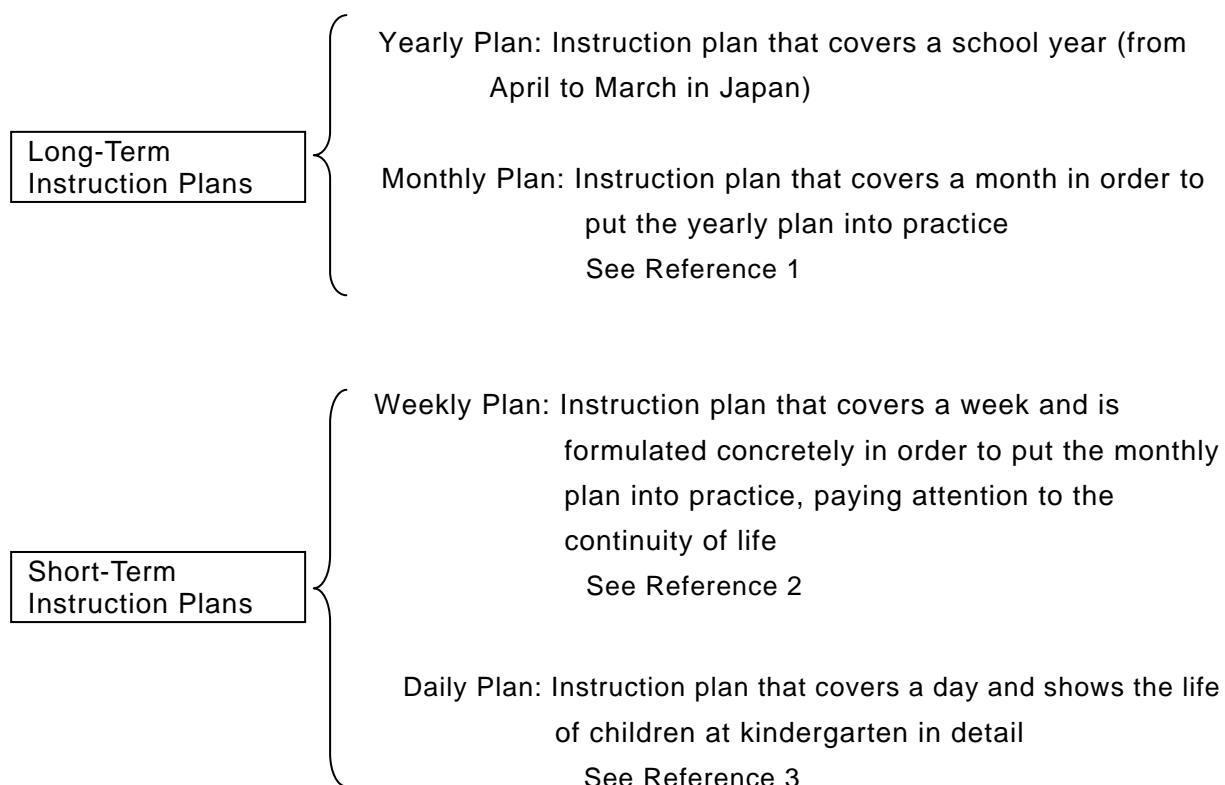
Teachers formulate instruction plans by setting objectives and curriculum content so that the curriculum is put into practice, creating an environment that enables children to achieve the objectives and curriculum content and making sure that teachers' support leads the activities in a favorable direction.

1 Instruction Plans: Long-Term Plans & Short-Term Plans

There are two types of instruction plans - long-term instruction plans: yearly and monthly plans and short-term instruction plans: weekly and daily plans.

Teachers think about and write down the following three aspects, in the form appropriate for the characteristics of each plan:

1. Contents of activities: what you hope children will experience.
2. Objectives of curriculum content: aspects expected to be developed through the activities.
3. Creation of the environment: how to provide an appropriate environment to achieve the objectives of curriculum content.



It should be remembered that instruction plans are merely ‘plans’. If teachers stick to those plans but the education has little to do with the realities of the children’s lives, they cannot promote proper development. It is important for teachers to be sensitive to - the changes in children’s interests, attitudes towards their life or play, relationships with teachers or other children, or changes of weather/temperature - and then flexibly modify or change plans.

2 Points for Consideration: Formulation of Long-Term/Short-Term Instruction Plans

(1) Understanding of the Child and Child Development

It is firstly crucial to understand the child – who must be the focus of early childhood education.

Try to understand each child by knowing about such aspects as family background, the present development level, his/her interests, the attitude towards life or play and relationship with teachers or other children and so on. One way to achieve this understanding is to learn about the ‘average child’ during early childhood, from the perspective of developmental/children’s psychology. In other words, you understand the nature of the ‘future child’, based on the academic knowledge.

The other aspect is more practical - to recognize child development by closely looking at the state of each child. Even in the same class with children at the same age, each has his/her own pace of development, which should be fully respected. In short, try to see and understand the real state of each child.

(2) Aims and Curriculum content

The ‘aims’ of kindergarten education are to nurture the emotions, will and attitudes that are expected to be developed by the time children leave kindergarten.

The ‘curriculum content’ is developed with the intention of achieving the aims. It should be remembered that not only activities themselves but also psychological aspects such as a sense of achievement, satisfaction or fulfillment that children can feel through the activities are included in the ‘curriculum content’.

(3) Creation of an Appropriate Environment

After making ‘aims’ and ‘curriculum content’ clear, think about how to create an appropriate environment to achieve those aims. Children live and develop through their interaction with the surrounding environment. Key factors of an appropriate environment for early childhood education are ‘free from danger’, ‘appropriate for their development level’, ‘meeting the interests and curiosity of children’ and ‘stimulating children to try tasks that teachers want them achieve’. Teachers try to create an environment that encourages children to voluntarily get involved in their surroundings by combining the factors mentioned above.

3 Points for Consideration: Formulation of Long-Term Instruction Plans

(1) Yearly Plan

The yearly plan is formulated thinking about a year of a child’s life in relation to the curriculum of a kindergarten. When formulating the plan, you firstly have to know about the children. Thinking about the number of children, the ratio of boys and girls, and age difference in your class helps you grasp their interests and curiosity.

Secondly, you have to think deeply how to place annual events that mark the stages of their lives at kindergarten. It is important to formulate a yearly plan which ensures that the children do not feel overwhelmed. In addition, the changes of the seasons should be taken into consideration. A plan should encourage children to notice the changes of the seasons, and to develop their emotions through close contact with nature and the seasons.

(2) Monthly Plan See Reference 1

The school year starts in April and ends in March in Japan. We make a detailed monthly plan based on the yearly instruction plan. The monthly plan is formulated giving consideration to the season, events in the month, children’s developmental stage and so on.

4 Points for Consideration: Formulation of Short-Term Instruction Plans

(1) Weekly Plan See Reference 2

The weekly instruction plan is formulated in order to put the monthly plan into practice. In formulating it, consideration should be given to the continuity of life of the children, because we generally spend our daily life on a weekly basis. And so the weekly plan is very concrete and practical.

(2) Daily Plan See reference 3

The basic unit of a child's life is a day. Teachers formulate a daily plan thinking about children's activities, the creation of a good environment and how to support them, hoping that they can spend a full and enjoyable life at kindergarten. This is the most practical and concrete instruction plan, which shows a day of children at kindergarten in detail.

There is no standardized format for the instruction plan. Although some kindergartens use a standardized format among teachers, it is basically a teacher who is responsible for working out and formulating it. Some experienced teachers who can easily think about various important aspects formulate a 'weekly and daily plan' that literally combines a 'weekly plan' with a 'daily plan'.

5 Tips and Suggestions

- There is no formula for the creation of an environment or the preparation of materials/activities in order to achieve objectives. Think from various viewpoints and formulate a fully worked-out plan making full use of the available environment and materials.
- Children's activities do not always turn out as you have planned. As time goes by and as children experience various things, they develop and change progressively. It is important to observe the children carefully and improve the plan according to their development.
- Activities that are familiar to children encourage their voluntary and active involvement. Think about the activities that are closely linked to their daily life, and the best way to support them.
- Respect the culture, nature and tradition in your country or in the region where you live, and try to integrate these into the instruction plan, which will then be very attractive to children.

[Monthly Plan]

Class: _____ Month: _____

Teacher: _____

Long-term objective(s): Write down long-term objective(s) for this term		Objective(s) in this month: Write down the objective(s) for this month
Children last month Describe the state of children last month from various perspectives (e.g. behaviour, interests, what they say they want to do next)	Children's experiences and activities Write down what you hope the children will experience, or activities that the children can do	Consideration (Environment & Instruction) Write down what you have to consider in creating an appropriate environment for children to gain experience and to do the activities

[Weekly Plan]

Class: _____ Mon/Date – Fri/Date/Week/Month

Teacher: _____

Children last week Describe the state of children last week	Objective(s) in this week: Describe the aspects (e.g. children's emotion, will, and attitude) that you hope to develop through activities of this week, with reference to their state last week
Outcomes	Write down what you hope children experience (concrete activities) in order to achieve the objective(s)
Environment	Write down how to create an appropriate environment for children to enjoy the activities
Activities of children	Write down the detailed activities that you have planned with reference to children's state last week
Points	Write down the following points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete instruction plans in carrying out activities • How to behave toward each child • Consideration that should be given when taking care of children

[Daily Plan]

Reference 3

Class: Tulip, Four-year-old children /23 (12 boys/11 girls)

Teacher : Aiko SATO

Wed/15/May Weather : Fine			
Objectives : • Touch various musical instruments and feel the difference in tone and rhythm • Enjoy self-expression and playing musical instruments with other children			
Write down the objective(s) of the day			
Contents : Touch various musical instruments, make a sound and feel the difference in sound			
Activity : Experience many kinds of musical instruments and enjoy an easy musical performance together			
Describe the planned activities in detail from the point of view of what and how children do			
Time	Children & Environment	Instruction & Aid	Tips & Suggestions
9:00	Come to kindergarten • Exchange greetings with teachers and friends	Say 'Good morning' to children and parents cheerfully and encourage children to exchange greetings as well	Pay attention to the mental, emotional and physical condition of each child when greeting
	Daily routine • Put away their towel and cup • Affix an attendance seal to their notebook • Leave their bag and outdoor clothes in the locker	See how each child has put away their towel, cup, bag and outdoor clothes etc. • Help children who have a difficulty in affixing an attendance seal	Let the children know who forget to put away their belongings and encourage them to do it by themselves • Show the date of the day clearly on the wall or desk
	Free Play • In the classroom(Enjoy artwork, pretended play, and building blocks etc.) • In the playground (Play soccer, tag, swing, slide, jungle gym, sandbox, and horizontal bar etc.)	See how each child is playing and pay attention to their several assistance by providing an appropriate environment so that they can develop their play	Make sure that children are out of danger by watching and thinking about how each child is playing and moving around • Pay enough attention to those who have difficulties in playing with other children or who are a bit confused
10:00	Tidy up the room • Put toys back Wash hands, gargle, and go to the lavatory	Tell them that tidying up is a part of their duty in life • Show how to put back play tools by doing it together	Make sure to have children understand that they have to tidy up after activities • Let them feel that it is comfortable to tidy up before next activity
10:20	Get together • Exchange greetings again • Answer when called by his/her teacher • Sing songs	Tell them to get together with their chair and sit drawing a semicircle • Call the roll • Sing a song together with a cassette tape accompaniment	Encourage them to answer clearly when called • Choose a song of which children can easily get into the rhythm in advance
10:40	Touch musical instruments (bell, castanets, and tambourine etc.) • Listen to the story about musical instruments • Make a sound freely with a musical instrument a child wants to try • Sing songs and make a sound to the tune of them • Children with the same musical instruments get together and form a group • Each group with the same musical instrument plays with pauses between bars • Enjoy an easy musical performance together • Try another musical instrument and enjoy a musical performance once again	Show boxes that various musical instruments are in so that children can easily pick up • Show each musical instrument and tell the name and how to play it • Tell them to pick up the one they want to try and make a sound freely • Suggest making a sound with singing a song • Tell them to get together forming a group of the same musical instruments • Suggest that each group with the same musical instrument play with pauses between bars • Tell each group to play a bar so that they can enjoy a musical performance • Suggest trying a different musical instrument and enjoy a musical	Sort out and put the same musical instrument into the same box beforehand • Prepare enough number of musical instruments for children • Let them realize that if everyone goes his/her own way and make a sound, it's just noisy • Let them realize the difference between 'just making a sound as one likes' and 'playing to the tune of a song' • Make sure that they can have enough space to sit down • Tell each group to play by turns and let them realize the difference in sound • Make a gesture and tell each group when they play • Let them try many kinds of musical instruments and feel the pleasure of musical performance

		performance once again	
	Put the same musical instruments into the same box	Tell them to put the same musical instruments into the same box carefully	Put the boxes in the center so that children can easily put these instruments back
11:10	Line up tables and chairs	Tell them to line up tables and chairs together	See the number of children who carry a table and how they do it
11:20	Prepare for lunch • Go to the lavatory • Wash hands and gargle • Go and get their bag • Set the table (lunch box and cup)	Tell them to go to the lavatory, wash hands and gargle • Prepare for something to drink • Pour tea into their cup when they are ready	See how each child washes his/her hands and gargles • Tell them not to drop their lunch box when putting it on the table • Pour tea carefully
11:40	Say 'Itadakimasu' and have lunch • Children who have finished lunch put back their lunch box, cup and bag and play in the classroom calmly	Have the children in charge say 'Itadakimasu' in the front of the class • Visit each group and speak to them so that they can enjoy the lunch time • Tell them to play in the classroom calmly after having lunch	Make sure children do not play while waiting until everyone is ready • Make sure that they can have plenty of time and enjoy the meal • Make sure that children who are still having lunch can take their time
12:40	Clear the table and put away chairs	Each group carries tables and put away chairs together	See that children carry tables without getting hurt
	Free play • In the classroom (Enjoy picture books, drawing, artwork, pretended play, and building blocks etc.) • In the playground (Play soccer, tag, swings, slide, jungle gym, sandbox and horizontal bar etc.)	Tell them to go wherever they want to and play there • Join and play with them or watch them play and assist when necessary • Give play tools when necessary	Pay attention to time allocation so that they can have plenty of time to play with other children • Tell them to stop when they expose themselves to danger
13:30	Tidy up	Tell everyone to tidy up	Take enough time to tidy up
	Prepare to go home • Go to the lavatory, wash hands and gargle • Put the towel and attendance book into their bag • Put on a hat and sit down	Tell them to make preparations to go home • Encourage them to go to the lavatory and wash hands • Tell them to put the towel and attendance book into the bag, and sit down after putting on hat and the bag	Place chairs in the form of semicircle in advance • Say a word to the children who forget to pack something and try to let them realize by themselves
	A teacher reads a picture book on a concert	Reads a picture book that can be associated with music or musical instruments	Choose a book that can be associated with musical instruments in advance
	Listen to a song that a teacher sings • Try to sing the song together following the teacher's example	A teacher sings a song for children • Encourage them to sing the song together	Sing clearly • Encourage them to sing the song with the teacher and tell them not to worry about making mistakes
13:50	Exchange greetings • Say 'Good-bye' cheerfully	Confirm the children who are in charge tomorrow Call the children in charge today and have them say 'Good-bye' in the front of the room	Talk in a positive way so that children can look forward to coming to kindergarten tomorrow
14:00	Leave kindergarten • Go home in order of the group that is called by teachers	Call the each group one by one so as not to get confused	Make sure to see parents and let children go with them and to give a message to parents when necessary

*This Daily Plan is only an example of one particular day. The timing and content of activities every day can be flexible depending on the duration of the children's play or various other circumstances.

[Weekly and Daily Plan]

Reference 4

Class: Weekly & Daily Plan: Mon/Date/Month - Fri/Date/Month

Teacher : _____

Children last Week : Describe the state of children last week	Objective(s) for this week : Describe the aspects (e.g. children's emotion, will, and attitude) that you hope to develop through the activities of this week, with reference to their state last week				
Date	(Mon)	(Tue)	(Wed)	(Thu)	(Fri)
Outcomes	Write down what you hope children experience (concrete activities) in order to achieve the objective(s)				
Environment	Write down how to create an appropriate environment for children to enjoy the activities				
Activities of children	Write down the detailed activities that you have planned with reference to children's state last week				
Points	Write down the following points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete instruction plans in carrying out activities • How to behave toward each child • Consideration that should be given when taking care of children 				
Review & Evaluation	Write down the review and evaluation everyday				