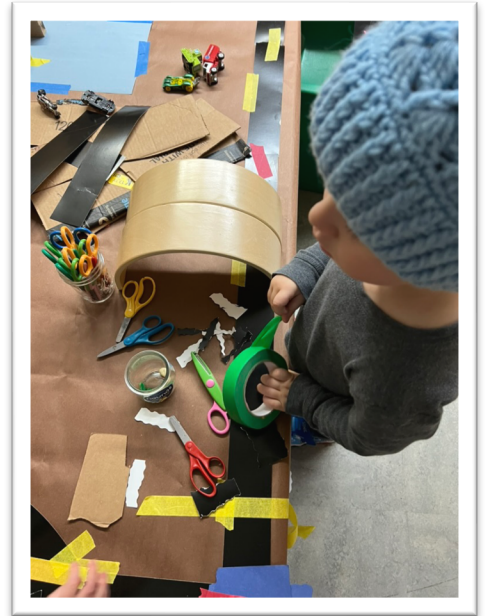


A Closer Look at Habits of Mind: Thinks strategically, creatively, and reflectively follow an interest or tackle a challenge.

Traits: The child ...

- Gathers data through the senses and uses it to interpret experiences.
- Exhibits curiosity and imagination – creates novel ideas and solutions.
- Takes responsible risks to tackle challenges and make discoveries.
- Poses questions (verbally or non-verbally) and develops strategies to identify and tackle intriguing problems/challenges.
- Demonstrates flexible thinking – can change his/her mind based on new information.
- Demonstrates reflective thinking to learn from experiences.



Supporting the Emergence of Strategic Thinking

Ask yourself ...

- What child-friendly words and phrases can we use to communicate about strategic thinking? E.g. *You could try a "how about" strategy to invite your friend to play with you.*
- How might children connect to strategies developed over the course of the year? Children's successful strategy use reflects their gifts and talents. Where are the opportunities to link children to each other through their talents? E.g. *Ben has a great strategy for cutting tape. See if Ben will help you.*
- Where are there opportunities to practice Thinking Strategically? Framing problem solving and strategic thinking through a *practicing* lens encourages children to persist in the face of challenges. E.g. *At the assembly, we are going to practice patience.*
- What could I read? Use children's picture books, such as *What Do You Do With An Idea?* And *What Do You Do With A Problem* by Yamada & Besom, *Iggy Peck, Architect* by Beaty & Roberts, or *The Most Magnificent Thing* by Spires, to explore strategies for responding to ideas and challenges.

Making Connections: Language to notice, spotlight, and reflect!

I am noticing that you are...(traits)

- using your sense of ____ (touch, smell, sight) to discover something new.
- curious about ____.
- coming up with interesting ideas such as _____.
- asking questions to find out more.
- taking a risk with something new.
- willing to change your mind to try something new.
- trying a strategy to solve a problem/figure something out.
- thinking about what happened to learn more.



I can tell you noticed ____ because you ____.

You are being flexible right now. I can tell because you ____.

I saw that you noticed a problem. What strategy did you use to solve it?

What solutions can you imagine for this challenge/problem?

You made a new discovery. How is that making you feel?

You stayed with ____ for a really long time. You are building stamina for ____.

____ asked an interesting question. I wonder if ____ question sparked any new ideas. What could we do with this question?

I notice that you were brave/showed courage when you tried _____. How does that feel?

Notes on Documenting and Assessing Children's Expression of Thinking Strategically

Observation is a vital practice when determining children's expression of Thinking Strategically. What challenges are children seeking to solve? What are they curious about?

When you have a child in your classroom who seems to shy away from challenges or quickly expresses frustration, observe them closely in the places and experiences that engage them. How do you notice them solving problems that emerge in their play? Observe for how they find what they seem to need to continue playing or what they do to figure out where to place the materials within their play – these are the micro problems they are solving.

There is an important element of Joy in successfully solving problems. How might you create low risk, high reward exploration invitations appealing to a specific hesitant child, growing robust stamina for familiar problem solving, before you encourage them to experiment with something new? Honor and celebrate each child's curiosity and discovery no matter how small.