



Professional Learning Module
Developing a Reflective Practice through Quality Teaching and Learning

Small Group Learning

Planning for small groups can be as simple as inviting a few children to play a game with you during learning centers or scheduled for 15 or 20 minutes as part of the daily routine. Here is one example of how to manage small groups with a group of 10-12 children:

1. Divide the children into two groups.
2. One group will work with you and the other with the second teacher.
3. After about 10 or 15 minutes, switch the groups and repeat the same activity.

Below is a plan for three days of small group activities. This example is specifically for math but you can switch it up with literacy or other planned activities. When you are planning your learning goals, think of your small groups as a way to do similar learning activities that you may be doing during whole group. Small groups provide a more manageable way to engage all children as well as time to observe children’s learning more closely.

Day	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
Day 1	Materials: Variety of counters, egg cartons or ice trays for children to place objects as they count. Learning goal: To practice one-to-one correspondence	Materials: Math Puzzles Learning goal: Matching numerals to number of objects on puzzle pieces.
Day 2	Materials: Linking cubes (or other objects to count) Learning goal: Counting objects using one to one correspondence and knowing that the last number counted tells how many in all.	Materials: Counting Book Read the book first then do the activity. Learning goal: Reading and responding to numerals on the page or selecting a numeral card to match the objects counted.
Day 3	Materials: Linking cubes Learning goal: Understanding that adding a cube increases the tower by one.	Materials: Modeling clay; numeral cards Learning goal: Forming numerals using modeling clay.

If you do not have a second teacher or have more than 12 children you can create an independent activity for children to rotate too. (See Small Group Learning video) Some ideas for this group could be puzzles, books, drawing a picture, or playing a quiet game. A listening center or multiple computers would work too if they are available. It is not recommended that you use worksheets.

Note: The small groups demonstrated here are for the purpose of target instruction in which children are grouped for a small group of time focused on a specific learning goal. You want to make sure that once the children have met the goal, then the small groups will change. It is not recommended that you “ability” group children for a long period of time. Small groups need to be flexible.

