



Journaling

A Guide for Teachers



Welcome to SEE Every Child

Our Mission and Vision

Mission: The Somerville Early Education department ensures that young children in Somerville have equitable access to a curriculum approach where they are engaged in joyful, robust, challenging, child-centered experiences grounded in play, discovery, and their own interests, and guided by state and national learning standards.

Vision: Children are born ready to learn and have the right to equitable access to a curricular approach that reflects who they are and what they are interested in. It is the job of the adults in a child's life to prepare an environment and experiences that support a child's ability to grow to their full potential. In order for children to be confident and happy learners in school and life, the adult, environment, and child work together.

Roots of SEE Every Child

This curriculum builds on both current research and established theories[i] about how young children learn. SEE Every Child is...

Centered on the whole child. Research shows that for young children to grow and thrive, teachers need to think of them as whole beings, focusing on social and emotional development to help children build emotional awareness, skills for social interaction, and empathy for others.

Anti-bias focused. Anti-bias goals are integrated into each thematic project and all learning experiences are designed to be flexible and have multiple entry points, so that children with special needs, multilingual learners, and children developing at their own paces all have meaningful ways to engage with the curriculum.

Learning through play. Influenced by the Montessori and Reggio Emilia approaches, children have extended time daily to engage in purposeful, guided play, leading their own learning through active engagement with materials in a prepared environment, with mentoring and support from thoughtful teachers.

Thematic and interdisciplinary. Children understand the world through active exploration, constructing knowledge as they investigate, asking questions, and interacting with people and materials. SEE Every Child is organized around thematic projects that offer opportunities for children to explore concepts and build skills across content areas while investigating topics that matter most to them.

Flexible and adjustable. SEE Every Child is designed with flexibility to be culturally responsive to the children in your class. While each class will take unique paths in the curriculum, cultivating unity and collaboration across our city's many vibrant ECE programs can make children's experiences stronger.

Responsive and co-constructed. Educators have been a part of developing this curriculum from the start, sharing their ideas and visions, generating suggestions for curriculum topics, and giving feedback on draft materials. Educators adapt the curriculum based on the funds of knowledge of children and families.

Classroom Environments and Intentional Teaching

The classroom environment can be referred to as a "third teacher;" (alongside parents and educators) where the environment guides children to make choices, to engage with materials, ideas, and each other, and to behave in certain ways (Gandini, 1998). Preparing environments for learning involves intentional teaching. An intention is a purposeful aim, plan, or provocation that guides teachers' productive action in the classroom. SEE Every Child is grounded in the Four Intentions (Kuh & Ponte, 2021), directly related to practices that all teachers can carry out daily as they work with children and develop purposeful curriculum. The Four Intentions complement each other and when used together, allow a rich curriculum to emerge:

Compelling Materials

Explicit Presentation

Responsive Scaffolding

Following Children's Interests

Key Practices and Routines

While each program will have a unique schedule to fit their context, certain key practices and routines are implemented across programs to allow children a variety of opportunities to learn and explore.

One key practice in SEE Every Child is engaging in thematic project-based learning, guided by Big Ideas. Each month, teachers choose from among several projects, outlined in the Big Idea Guides available on the website. Exploring topics through Big Ideas allow children to develop deeper understanding and to make meaningful connections between learning and their lives. Different times of day act as entry points for children to access curriculum through the project approach and Big Ideas.

Some of these entry points offered by SEE Every Child include:

Meetings Throughout the Day

Choice Time

Small Group Times

Whole Group Experiences

Outdoor Time

Mealtimes

SEE's routines and teaching practices are designed to be flexible. Educators incorporate them into their daily schedules as appropriate to their learners and the structure of their program.

Learning Opportunities in All Domains

Within the daily routines and practices outlined above, children are engaging in integrated learning across all domains. Projects, guided by Big Ideas, connect and integrate the learning. These domains consist of:

- **Social Emotional Learning.** SEE Every Child uses the *Second Step Early Learning* program (*Second Step*, n.d.) which encourages children to explore social emotional skills through storytelling, songs, games and group activities.
- **Balanced Literacy.** SEE Every Child's Literacy component was designed with researchers from the Lectio group (Lectio Group, n.d.) and includes evidence-based practices to help children become strong emergent readers, writers and communicators.
- **Mathematical Thinking.** Based on the *Building Blocks Pre-K* curriculum (Clements & Sarama, 2013), SEE embraces math as a language through which children can better communicate and understand their experiences.
- **Science and Engineering.** SEE Every Child aligns with *Next Generation Science Standards* (NGSS Lead States, 2013) and allows children to investigate the world around them through hands-on, play-based exploration.
- **Artistic Expression.** SEE Every Child encourages making connections to Big Ideas through artistic expression in order to allow children to explore artistic media and to communicate their ideas creatively.
- **Physical Development.** SEE Every Child's dedication to educating the whole child means mindful incorporation of physical development. Children spend regular time outdoors, as well as play games and participate in activities that allow for movement and that make connections to Big Ideas in new ways.

Woven throughout SEE's curriculum is an emphasis on Anti-Bias Education (Derman-Sparks, Edwards, & Goins, 2020), which is integrated into projects and Big Ideas in order to promote positive self-image, empathy for others and an understanding of fairness. Anti-bias education is centered on 4 main goals for children: **Identity, Diversity, Justice and Action.** Through incorporation of these concepts, children are encouraged to be confident, understanding and compassionate, as well as develop their ability to identify injustices and use their voice to work towards fairness for themselves and others.

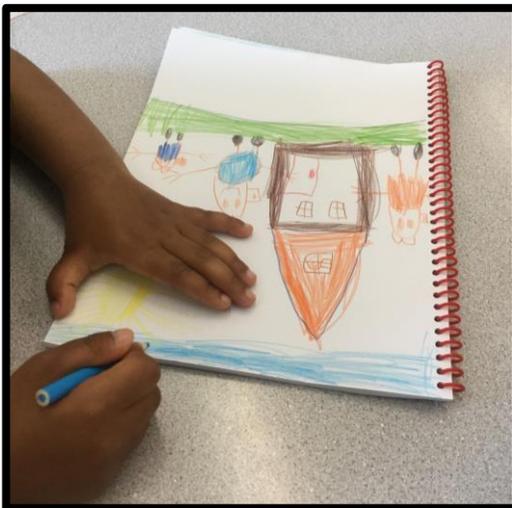
We hope you enjoy working with SEE Every Child. Feedback is welcome on our website.

[i] For a full reference list and additional research that underpins the SEE Every Child approach, please see the full Preschool Curriculum Guidelines on the SEE website.

Table of Contents

Developmental Stages of Drawing and Writing	Page 4
What does journaling look like in the classroom?	Page 5
Establishing the Journaling Environment	Page 6
Explicit Presentation of Journaling	Page 7
Ways to Inspire Journaling	Page 8
The Writing Process	Page 9-11
During Journaling Assessments	Page 12-13
Post-Journaling Assessments	Page 14

Pages 3 through 10 of this guide are an overview of Journaling practices in SEE classrooms. The additional pages serve as resources and assessments to help teachers assess and further children's journaling.

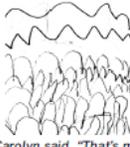
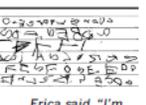


Developmental Stages of Drawing

Perspectives						
Drawing Development in Children						
Viktor Lowenfeld Betty Edwards						
2 3 4 6 8 12 14 yrs	2 years	3 years	4 years	6 years	8 years	10 years
<p>Viktor Lowenfeld <i>Creative and Mental Growth</i></p>	<p>Scribbling stage</p> <p>First disordered scribbles are simply records of enjoyable kinesthetic activity, not attempts at portraying the visual world. After six months of</p>	<p>The preschematic stage</p> <p>First conscious creation of form occurs around age three and provides a tangible record of the child's thinking process. The first representational attempt is a person, usually with circle for head and two vertical lines for legs. Later other forms develop, clearly recognizable and often quite complex. Children continually search for new concepts so symbols constantly change.</p>	<p>The schematic stage</p> <p>The child arrives at a "schema," a definite way of portraying an object, although it will be modified when he needs to portray something important. The schema represents the child's active knowledge of the subject. At this stage, there is definite order in space relationships: everything sits on the base line.</p>	<p>The gang stage: The dawning realism</p> <p>The child finds that schematic generalization no longer suffices to express reality. This dawning of how things really look is usually expressed with more detail for individual parts, but is far from naturalism in drawing. Space is discovered and depicted with overlapping objects in drawings and a horizon line rather than a base line. Children begin to compare their work and become more critical of it. While they are more independent of adults, they are more anxious to conform to their peers.</p>		

*<http://thevirtualinstructor.com/blog/the-stages-of-artistic-development>

Developmental Stages of Writing

Objective 19 Demonstrates emergent writing skills							
b. Writes to convey meaning							
Not Yet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<p>Scribbles or marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scribble writes deliberately Makes marks that appear to adults to be in random order  <p>Maya said, "Here Mommy. Read this."</p>	<p>Controlled linear scribbles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scribbles lines, circles, or zigzags in rows Often repeats action and forms  <p>Carolyn said, "That's my phone number. You can call me."</p>	<p>Mock letters or letter-like forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writes segments of letter forms, e.g., lines, curves May use too many segments to create a letter, e.g., five horizontal lines on the letter E May not orient letter segments correctly  <p>Erica said, "I'm writing my ABCs just like my sister."</p>	<p>Letter strings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writes strings of letters Writes some letters correctly Writes letters in unconventional order Begins to separate groups of letters with spaces May copy environmental print  <p>Jordan said, "Here's a ticket! You're under arrest!"</p>	<p>Early invented spelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses first letter of word to represent whole word Writes initial and/or final sounds of a word to represent the whole word <p><i>*Note: In Spanish, early invented spelling may consist primarily of vowels.</i></p>  <p>Meir wrote, "Uncle Clay. I love you."</p>	<p>Late invented spelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to include beginning, middle, and ending sounds in words Represents most of the sounds heard in words in the correct order  <p>Jenna said, "I need to buy some blackberries and grapes at the store."</p>		

*Teaching Strategies Gold

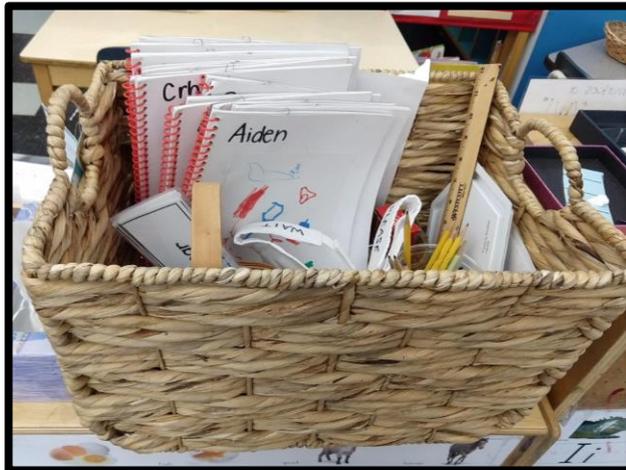
What does journaling look like in the classroom?

- A journal is a place for children to express themselves through drawing and mark making. The adult's job is to support and scaffold, based on each child's need.
- A journal can be a small teacher-made booklet with a few blank pages stapled together, a blank composition book, or a small spiral notebook.
- A journal is a place where children can write stories about themselves, things that happened in their lives, their families, experiences, etc.
- Some children also will want to write stories about fictional events.
- Labeling and dictation are at the heart of young children's early journaling experiences.
- Initially the child may begin with a drawing and teachers can label the drawing with a few words.
- Eventually children will tell longer stories and may need gentle scaffolding to expand their narratives.



Establishing the Journaling Environment

1. Think about when you might do journaling, such as in a small group during morning choice or rest time.
2. Create a place in the classroom for all of the journaling materials to be located, such as a basket or a shelf in the writing area. This place should be accessible to children and have:
 - A journal for each child
 - Short writing pencils, colored pencils and crayons
 - A date stamp and ink pad
 - A basket of familiar pictures/words to give children inspiration and words to copy (mom, dad, cat, etc.)
3. Develop systems for tracking who has had a turn and who needs a turn, each week. Some teachers:
 - Use a “To Do” basket and a “Completed” basket
 - Create a weekly checklist
 - Divide children into Journaling Groups, for each days of the week





Explicit Presentation of Journaling

Explicit presentations can be done in either small or whole group setting. Usage and care of journals should be reinforced during the first few journaling sessions.

The presentation:

- “I have something new to show you today. It is a special book. I am going to open it. Tell me what you notice about this book.” (Prompt: It does not have any pictures or words, but it does have a line across the bottom section.)
- “This is a special book called a journal. Journals are special books where people keep stories about themselves, and things that happen in their lives and in their families. Stories can be about things you did, are going to do, like to think about, or favorite things that are interesting to you.”
- “I’m going to show you how to use your journal, so pretend that I’m a student. I am going to find the first blank page, and stamp today’s date (demonstrate). Then, I am going to think about what to draw. Once I have an idea, I’m going to draw my picture.” (Model drawing picture, while talking through your work.)

- Model labeling the picture, with another adult playing the role of the teacher. The ‘teacher’ points to parts of the picture and asks, “What is this? . . . Oh, would you like us to label it? . . . Let’s write . . .” (demonstrate writing the word next to the object in the picture).
- “Now, let’s write the story. Tell me about your picture.” Have the teacher take dictation, slowly writing each word, using neat handwriting, proper letter formation and conventions of print.
- While pointing carefully to each word, the teacher reads back the labels and dictation and asks, “Is there anything else you want to add?”
- End by modeling how to close and put away journaling materials in the classroom.

Ways to Inspire Journaling

In whole or small group lessons, teachers could:

- Model journaling using a shared group experience.
- Generate journaling topics (Morning Meeting discussion is a good time for this).
- Create anchor charts of topics for journaling. Some may be:

Favorite things	Family
School	Food
The Playground	Animals
Home	Current theme topic



The Writing Process

Drawing with Labeling

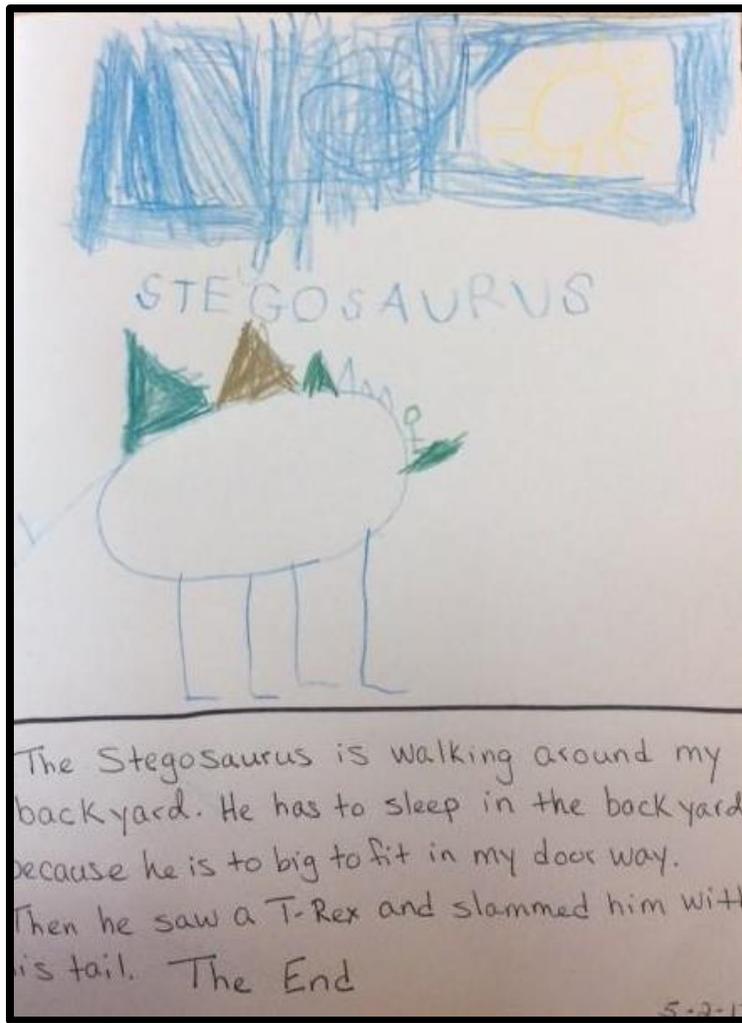
- The child draws a picture related to the theme, a prompt or something they are interested in.
- A teacher can label the child's picture.
- Some children may want to label some of the pictures themselves, such as their name, or words they are very familiar with such as 'mom' and 'dad'.
- At this stage, word cards with familiar and/or themed related words are a useful resource.



The Writing Process

Drawing with Dictation

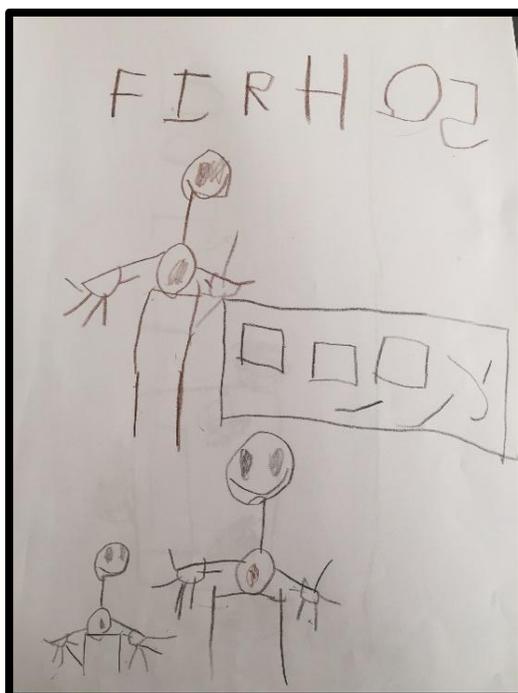
- The child draws a picture related to the theme, a prompt or something they are interested in.
- The teacher carefully writes down what the child says about the picture. This includes labeling and narrative writing.
- While pointing at each word, read what you have written back to the child and ask - “Do you want to add anything else”?



The Writing Process

Children's Early Attempts - Inventive Spelling

- The child draws a picture related to the theme, a prompt or something they are interested in.
- The teacher points to a part of the picture and ask something such as, "Tell me about this piece of your drawing?"
- When the child responds, the teacher can encourage the child to begin to think about the sounds in the word. The teacher might then prompt, "Let's have you try to write it!"
- The teacher then exaggerates and stretches the word out slowly so that the child can hear all the sounds.
- The teacher encourages the child to write down each letter that corresponds with the sound they hear.
- Encouraging inventive spelling allows children to take risks.



During Journaling Assessments

Below are examples of assessments to use during journaling with students.

Journaling Rubric to Determine Level and Scaffolding

Key Question in Determining Level: Is child representing any sounds in his or her writing?

Level	Teaching Strategies Gold Emergent Writing Rubric	Scaffolding Techniques (adapted from readingrockets.org)
Not yet		
1	Scribbles or Marks- scribble rights deliberately, makes marks that appear to adults to be in random order.	Once child is finished, ask them to tell you about their writing.
2	Controlled linear scribbles- scribbles, lines circles, or zigzags in rows. Often repeats actions and forms.	In addition to taking dictation, ask child to sign their work. Praise child for any scribbles or attempted name writing.
3	Mock letters or letter-like forms- writes segments of letter forms (lines, curves), May use too many segments (letter E), May not orient letter segments correctly.	Provide prompts that inspire and support children to write about themselves and their family. Support child to verbalize what they would like to write first, then ask them to identify initial sounds/letters in some of the words and ask them to help you by writing those letters.
4	Letter Strings- writes strings of letters, writes some letters correctly, writes letters in unconventional order, begins to separate groups of letters with spaces, may copy environmental print.	Provide prompts that support child labeling parts of their writing/drawing. Use vocabulary cards to help children copy and label words onto their entry (such as words branch and leaf if a child has drawn a tree).
5	Early Invented Spelling- uses first letter of word to represent whole word, writes initial and/or final sounds of a word to represent the whole word.	Ask children to verbalize what they want their teacher to write and say you want them to help you write. Have child identify the first sound in one of the words, then say the word again and identify the ending sound.
6	Late Invented Spelling- begins to include beginning, middle, and ending sounds in words. Represents most of the sounds heard in words in the correct order.	Draw attention to middle sounds and ask what sounds the children hear in the words they are dictating. Ask child for more details. The more words the child says and attempts to write the more practice he or she will have stretching out sounds.

Journaling Checklist

Name:	Date 1	Date 2	Date 3		Date 1	Date 2	Date 3
Drawing/ Writing				Language			
Handedness				Talks about picture while drawing			
Grasp, posture, pressure				Verbally labels parts of drawing			
Makes scribbles				Describes drawing in one sentence			
Makes lines, shapes				Tells a cohesive, detailed story			
Makes letter like forms				Discusses drawing with peers			
Creates recognizable drawings				Offers/accepts peer support			
Includes details and/or setting				Shares journal in small or whole group			
Uses many colors							
Uses resources to attempt labeling							

Post-Journaling Assessments

Below are examples of assessments to use post-journaling with students.

Journal and STSA Assessment Tool

Child's Name: _____

Date: _____

	Drawing	Story dictation, labeling, child attempts
Describing the Student Work What do you see? Avoid judgement or interpretation		
Interpreting the Student Work What is the child is working on? What level of emergent writing are they at		
Implications for Classroom Practice The next steps for this child's learning is.... Tools to get to next level		

Development Sequence of Personal Event Narratives				
*Structural type	Two event At 3 1/2 years children generally combined only two events even in their longest narratives, resulting in what is called the Two-Event Narrative.	Leap-Frog By 4, children's narratives tend to consist of more than two events that occurred on one occasion, but they narrate the events out of sequence in what is called a Leap-Frog Narrative. Children who use Leap-Frog Narratives also often omit some events necessary for the listener to make sense of their personal narratives.	End at High Point Five-year-olds do, nonetheless, tend to end their personal narratives prematurely, dwelling on a climactic event at the end of their narration in what is called an End-at-High-Point Narrative.	Classic Narrative goes on to resolve itself by telling how things turned out

Rubric

Element	Beginning	Developing	Mastered
Uses vocabulary and language for a variety of purposes 5b	Names familiar people, animals, and objects	Describes and tells the use of many familiar items	Incorporates new curriculum related or technical words in everyday conversations
Speaks clearly enough to be understood by others 5a	Can make needs and wants known through gestures and some word approximations, is understood by most familiar people	Uses 2 or 3 words to express an idea and is understood by most people	Uses simple sentences and is understood by others who are not familiar to the child
Represents ideas and stories through pictures, dictation, and/or play 5h	Representations have characters	Representations have characters and loosely developed plot lines	Representations have character development, coherent plot lines, and a beginning, middle, and end
Uses shapes, symbols, and letters to convey meaning (writes name, uses drawing and symbols to tell a story) 5i	Makes letter like forms	Makes letter strings in unconventional order and name is partially accurate	Writes name accurately and attempts early invented spelling

*Aligned with SPS Pre-k Report card

*Source: http://www.sih.org.tw/upload/files/04%20McCabe_Assessment%20of%20preschool%20narrative%20skills.pdf