



# *Special Needs PreK*

## STARTER PACK

by  
Ms.P



# Overview

Welcome to the Special Needs PreK Starter Pack, a comprehensive resource designed to support early childhood educators, specialists, and staff in creating meaningful and individualized learning experiences for young children with diverse needs. Whether you're setting up a new classroom or seeking strategies to enhance your current teaching practices, this toolkit offers practical insights and ready-to-use materials to guide you every step of the way.

This resource aims to help educators:

- Develop and implement developmentally appropriate curriculum plans.
- Design individualized instruction strategies tailored to each child's strengths and needs.
- Create structured schedules that balance learning, play, and sensory activities.
- Maintain an inclusive and engaging instructional environment.
- Utilize sensory regulation techniques to support students' sensory processing needs.
- Define clear roles and responsibilities for staff collaboration.

The sections in this packet are thoughtfully arranged to guide you through key components of a successful PreK SpecialEd program. Each section provides practical examples, templates, and strategies to make implementation seamless. Here's a quick overview of what you'll find:

- Curriculum Overview: Framework for creating an inclusive learning program.
- Individualized Strategy Guide: Tools for personalized learning plans.
- Sample Schedule: Daily structure templates for effective time management.
- Lesson Plan Templates & Samples: Ready-to-use and adaptable examples.
- Instructional Environment Setup: Guidelines for creating a nurturing classroom space.
- Sensory Diet & Strategies: Sensory support techniques for young learners.
- Staff Roles and Duties: Practical suggestions for effective teamwork.

I hope this Starter Kit empowers you to build a classroom that fosters growth, inclusion, and joy for every child. Thank you for your dedication to shaping the minds and hearts of our youngest learners.

Let's get started!

*Ms. P*

# Curriculum Overview

A well-structured and inclusive curriculum is essential for fostering growth and learning in a PreK special education environment. This section outlines key components and strategies for developing a curriculum that meets the diverse needs of young learners.

## 1. Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP)

Ensure the curriculum aligns with the developmental stages of children while taking into account their unique abilities. Incorporate activities that support cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development.

## 2. Inclusive Learning Objectives

- Promote language and communication skills
- Develop fine and gross motor abilities
- Foster social interaction and emotional regulation
- Introduce early literacy and numeracy concepts
- Encourage sensory exploration and problem-solving skills

## 3. Thematic Units Design

thematic units to engage learners through hands-on activities. Example themes may include seasons, animals, community helpers, and colors. Align activities with learning objectives to provide a cohesive learning experience.

## 4. Differentiated Instruction

Recognize and accommodate each child's strengths, challenges, and interests. Use varied teaching strategies such as small group instruction, visual supports, and sensory activities to cater to different learning styles.

## 5. Play-Based Learning

Integrate purposeful play into the curriculum. Play-based activities promote creativity, problem-solving, and social interaction while making learning enjoyable.

## 6. Assessment and Progress Monitoring

Implement simple, ongoing assessments to track student progress. Use observations, checklists, and portfolios to gather data on each child's development and adjust instructional approaches as needed.

## 7. Family Engagement

Collaborate with families to reinforce learning at home. Share simple strategies and resources for parents to support their child's growth.

By using this curriculum framework, educators can create a supportive and engaging environment that encourages every child to thrive.



SEPTEMBER	
Theme	Back to School All About Me
Holidays	Labor Day
Math (Shapes)	Circle
Math (Colors)	Purple
Math (Numbers)	1, 2
Literacy (Letters)	A, B, C
Science	Life Science (People)



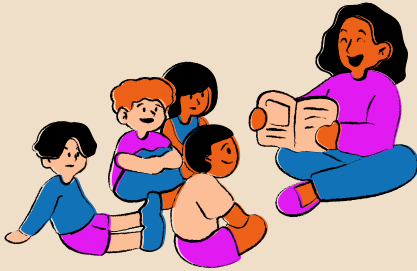
OCTOBER	
Theme	Signs of Fall
Holidays	Halloween Columbus Day
Math (Shapes)	Square
Math (Colors)	Black
Math (Numbers)	3, 4
Literacy (Letters)	D, E, F
Science	Life Science (Plants)



NOVEMBER	
Theme	Harvest Time
Holidays	Thanksgiving Veterans Day
Math (Shapes)	Triangle
Math (Colors)	Brown
Math (Numbers)	5, 6
Literacy (Letters)	G, H
Science	Physical Science



DECEMBER	
Theme	Signs of Winter
Holidays	Hanukkah Kwanzaa Christmas
Math (Shapes)	Star
Math (Colors)	White
Math (Numbers)	7, 8
Literacy (Letters)	I, J, K, L
Science	Earth & Sky Science



JANUARY	
Theme	Zoo/ Wild Animals
Holidays	New Year Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Math (Shapes)	Diamond
Math (Colors)	Blue
Math (Numbers)	9, 10
Literacy (Letters)	M, N, O
Science	Life Science (Animals)





FEBRUARY	
Theme	Dental Health Community
Holidays	Chinese New Year Valentine’s Day Mardi Gras President’s Day
Math (Shapes)	Heart
Math (Colors)	Pink
Math (Numbers)	11, 12
Literacy (Letters)	P, Q, R, S
Science	Technology/ Engineering <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• using tools &amp; developing fine motor skills</li><li>• gravity, balance</li></ul>



MARCH	
Theme	Nutrition (Fruits & Vegetables)
Holidays	St. Patrick's Day Easter (can be moved to April)
Math (Shapes)	Oval
Math (Colors)	Green
Math (Numbers)	13, 14
Literacy (Letters)	T, U, V
Science	Oil & Water



APRIL	
Theme	Signs of Spring
Holidays	Earth Day
Math (Shapes)	Hexagon
Math (Colors)	Yellow
Math (Numbers)	15, 16
Literacy (Letters)	W, X, Y, Z
Science	Recycling



MAY	
Theme	Make Believe (Fairytale/ Fables/ Folktales)
Holidays	Cinco de Mayo Mother's Day Memorial Day
Math (Shapes)	Octagon
Math (Colors)	Red
Math (Numbers)	17, 18
Literacy (Letters)	Review of the alphabet Blending
Science	Five Senses



JUNE	
Theme	Signs of Summer
Holidays	Father's Day
Math (Shapes)	Rectangle
Math (Colors)	Orange
Math (Numbers)	19, 20
Literacy (Letters)	Review of the alphabet Blending
Science	Floating & Sinking

# Individualized Strategy Guide

Creating a supportive and inclusive classroom requires tailoring instruction to meet the diverse needs of every learner. This section provides strategies to design and implement individualized learning plans effectively.

## 1. Conducting Initial Assessments

- Gather information through developmental screenings, observations, and family interviews.
- Identify each child's strengths, interests, and areas for growth.
- Collaborate with specialists (e.g., speech therapists, occupational therapists) if needed.

## 2. Setting SMART Goals

- Create Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) goals for each child.
- Ensure goals address cognitive, motor, social, and communication development.
- Break goals into manageable steps to track progress.

## 3. Differentiated Instruction Techniques

- Use visual supports, social stories, and tactile materials to engage diverse learners.
- Offer multiple modes of instruction, such as verbal instructions, hands-on activities, and modeling.
- Provide choices to promote autonomy and engagement.

## 4. Small Group and One-on-One Sessions

- Implement small group activities to foster peer interactions and cooperative learning.
- Schedule one-on-one sessions to target specific skills or provide additional support.

## 5. Adaptive Materials and Assistive Technology

- Incorporate adaptive tools like weighted pencils, fidget items, or communication devices.
- Use interactive whiteboards and educational apps tailored to young learners.

## 6. Positive Behavior Support Strategies

- Reinforce positive behaviors with praise, visual cues, and reward systems.
- Establish clear expectations and use consistent routines.
- Implement calming strategies for sensory regulation (e.g., quiet zones).

## 7. Collaborating with Families

- Share individualized strategies and progress regularly with families.
- Provide simple activities parents can do at home to reinforce learning.

## 8. Data Collection and Monitoring

- Maintain records of assessments, observations, and progress toward goals.
- Use checklists and anecdotal notes to track growth.

# Sample Gameplan

This gameplan was created for a preschool student who is nonverbal, has speech and language disability, and has mobility issues.

## **Classroom Goals:**

1. Johannah will follow directions and imitate actions or gestures during circle time activities including music, finger play, and verbal response activities.
2. Johannah will practice appropriate ways to interact or seek attention from peers and adults independently.

## **Physical Therapy Goals (to be integrated in classroom):**

1. Johannah will be able to access her playground apparatus including upstairs or climbing surfaces and slide down slide safely with minimal assistance and supervision for safety.

### Strategy:

- Holding Johannah by 1 wrist (keeping wrist at or below her shoulder height and slightly in front of her
  - Facing Johannah and holding her by 2 hands while taking small steps towards her
2. Johannah will be able to sit in a typical classroom chair or adapted classroom chair for at least 20 minutes as required to participate in circle time with standby assistance.

### Strategy:

- Spandex blanket wrapped around the adapted chair during small group centers
- Regular chair during large group activities

## **Occupational Therapy Goal (to be integrated in classroom):**

1. Johannah will demonstrate improved sensory modulation and reduced sensory seeking responses by initiating and sustaining participation to curricular task for 10 minutes, with or without sensory strategies.

### Strategy:

Sandwich bag, Shape sorter & stacking cups

## **Speech Therapy Goal (to be integrated in classroom):**

1. Johannah will use a multimodal communication system (e.g. picture icons, pointing, gestures, verbalizations, and vocalizations) to make choices from a field of 2 options to express her wants/ needs and make requests during classroom activities/ routines.

### Strategy:

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)

### Sensory Diet:

- Swing activity during Gross Motor Skills (after lunch)
- Swing activity during Recess (After School)

# Sample Schedule

This schedule was created for a blended class (kids with special needs and typical kids). The kids with special needs in this schedule had an afternoon schedule.

8:30-9:00 Breakfast/ Self-Help

9:00-9:20 Motor & Mind Skills

*Table-top games/ toys (Friday)*

9:20-9:40 Circle Time

9:40-10:00 P.E.

10:00-10:45 Literacy Workshop

*Science/ Snack Time/ Art (Friday)*

10:45-11:00 Music & Movement/ Dance/ Library

11:00-11:30 Basic Math

*Social Stories (Friday)*

11:30-11:45 Recess

11:45-12:15 Lunch

12:15-12:45 Sign Language video

12:45-1:45 Science (M)  
Collab w/ Speech Therapy (Tue)  
Collab w/ Occupational Therapy (W)  
Fine Motor Art (TH)  
Health (F)

1:45-2:15 Gross Motor Skills

2:15-2:30 Self-Help Skills

2:30 Departure



# Lesson Program Sample

This 1-day lesson program was created for a preschool in a therapeutic setting. The kids/ students had severe disabilities (autism, speech impairments, multiple disabilities, Angelman Syndrome, Mowat-Wilson Syndrome and non-compliant behavior).

## Literacy Centers

### MONDAY

#### 1. Alphabet: Letter K

**Teacher presents the K video to child; repeating the K words to the child.**

**Teacher lets the child touch the tactile letter K, tells the child the letter sound and points to the picture card.**

**Teacher presents the letter tiles and tells child they will be forming Letter K.**

***FP prompt for ISLO, LINI, COSM & OGOG.***

***Modeling (then let the child do it independently) for MOME & VAVI.***

#### 2. Shape: Star

***"Q-Tip Star Art"***

**Teacher presents the materials to the kid and tells them that they will make a Star art.**

**Teacher assists kids to trace the star template onto black paper with a white crayon/ chalk.**

**Teacher squirts white and yellow paint to small cups. Teacher assists kids to use q-tip to create dot painted stars.**

***FP prompt for ISLO, LINI, COSM & OGOG.***

***Modeling (then let the child do it independently) for MOME & VAVI.***

#### 3. Pre-Writing Skills: Diagonal Lines (Zig-Zag)

**Teacher presents worksheet and marker to child. Teacher tells child they will be tracing horizontal lines.**

***FP prompt for ISLO, LINI, COSM & OGOG.***

***Modeling (then let the child do it independently) for MOME & VAVI.***

### AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT:

Phonological Awareness

Letter Knowledge

Vocabulary

Direction Following

Fine Motor

Mathematical/ Shape Knowledge

### MATERIALS:

Ipad (Storybots via YouTube)

Letter K tactile letter

Letter construction tiles

Black paper

White crayon/ chalk

Yellow and white paint

Small cups for paint

Star template

q-tips

# Lesson Program Sample

CONTINUATION...

## **Arts & Crafts**

## **Science**

- Melted Snowman Shape Craft Collage

**Teacher presents the pre-cut white squares and black circles and triangle cutouts to kids.**

**Teacher assists kids in gluing the cutouts all over the blue construction paper.**

***FP for ISLO, LINI, OGOG & COSM. Modeling ((then let child do it independently) for MOME & VAVI.***

AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT:

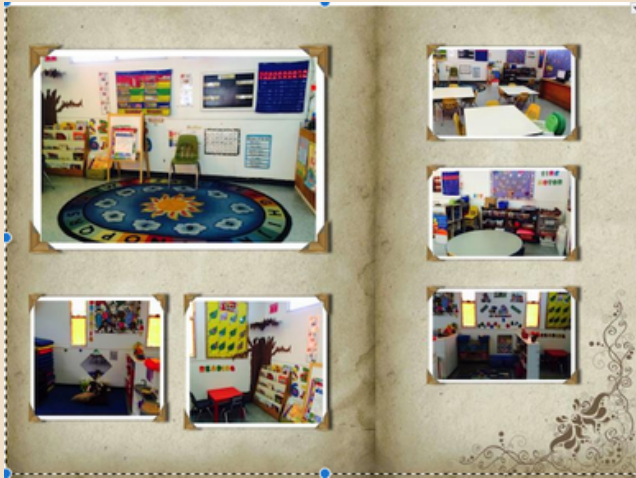
Fine Motor

Creativity

MATERIALS:

Blue, white, black, brown and orange construction paper; glue sticks

# ***Instructional Environment Setup***



***I taught a “blended” class of typical kids and kids with special needs in the preschool level. I made sure that my classroom environment will be inviting for both students and parents alike. I used bright colors in the classroom, and divided the classroom into different areas/ centers. I took into consideration the furniture I chose --- like, the tables and chairs should be small and low for the students’ comfort; that the shelves are just enough for them to reach. I wanted my students to have the freedom to move around and be able to explore the different manipulatives/ books/ materials available in the classroom.***

***I created an environment to support active learning --- a busy place. Children can make choices and engage in activities independently.***

***My materials were varied, interesting and easily accessible.***

***I believe that if the learning environment is organized, children can find, use, and return things on their own to their designated spaces, they will feel motivated to play, problem-solve, explore and experiment. I did it in a way that provides consistency, comfort, and well-being while promoting the development of physical, cognitive, language and social skills.***

# ***Sensory Diet & Strategies***

Supporting young learners with sensory needs is vital for fostering engagement and self-regulation in the classroom. A sensory diet involves a structured set of sensory activities tailored to meet the individual needs of each child, helping them maintain focus and emotional balance throughout the day.

**1. Understanding Sensory Processing** Children process sensory information differently. Some may seek sensory input, while others may avoid it.

Recognizing sensory preferences is key to designing an effective sensory diet.

- **Sensory Seekers:** May crave movement, touch, or noise.
- **Sensory Avoiders:** May become overwhelmed by bright lights, loud noises, or unexpected touch.

**2. Components of a Sensory Diet** A well-balanced sensory diet includes activities that target various sensory systems:

- Proprioceptive Activities (Body Awareness)
  - Push-ups against a wall
  - Carrying heavy objects
  - Playing with resistance bands
- Vestibular Activities (Balance and Movement)
  - Spinning on a chair
  - Swinging
  - Jumping on a trampoline
- Tactile Activities (Touch)
  - Playing with sensory bins (e.g., rice, sand, water)
  - Finger painting
  - Handling textured objects
- Auditory Activities (Sound)
  - Listening to calming music
  - Using noise-canceling headphones for quiet time
- Visual Activities (Sight)
  - Watching calming visual patterns
  - Using color-coded materials
- Oral Motor Activities (Taste and Chewing)
  - Chewing gum or crunchy snacks
  - Blowing bubbles

# ***Sensory Diet & Strategies***

Continuation...

## **3. Implementing Sensory Strategies in the Classroom**

- Create sensory stations for different types of input.
- Schedule sensory breaks throughout the day.
- Provide fidget tools, noise-canceling headphones, or weighted blankets as needed.

## **4. Developing Individual Sensory Plans**

- Collaborate with occupational therapists to design personalized sensory plans.
- Document sensory preferences and effective strategies for each child.
- Adjust plans based on ongoing observations.

## **5. Sensory-Friendly Environment Setup**

- Maintain a clutter-free and organized space.
- Use dimmable lights or natural lighting.
- Designate quiet areas for calming breaks.

## **6. Collaboration with Families**

- Share sensory strategies that parents can use at home.
- Encourage communication about changes in sensory needs.

*By incorporating sensory diets and strategies, educators can create a supportive environment that fosters self-regulation, engagement, and success for all learners.*

# Sensory Diet Sample

Challenge	Activity	Benefit	Outcome	Sensory Activity
Wiggly or restless behavior	Push, pull, stretch, crawl, or move objects with resistance or weight	Provides proprioceptive input to the muscles and joints	Helps with self-regulation and focus	Transformer Sensory Sack
Hyperactive behavior	Interact with accessories that have adjustable amounts of weights	Provides soothing deep pressure and orients body in relation to space	Calming movement when constantly touching, crashing, or mouthingSupports with limited body awareness who bump into things or slump.	Weighted sack/ vest/ ankles
Distracted behavior	Toss, catch and touch objects with different texturesSit on gel-filled cushions or seating cushions with adjustable air inflation, each with tactile features	Provides tactile experiences in a playful, non-threatening wayProvides subtle movement to improve blood flow to the brain and the entire body	Helps interpret touch sensations and stimulation, and supports relaxationSupports high energy in an active approach to learning	Hand-eye coordination scarvesSpiky tactile ballsTactile weighted bean bagsSensory binWiggle cushionWedge cushion
Tense or tired behavior	Massage or apply gentle vibration to the back, shoulders, arms and legs	Provides deep pressure and joint compression	Helps children relieve stress, re-energize and focus	Pet massager

# ***Staff Roles & Duties***

## **Practical Suggestions for Effective Teamwork in a Special Needs Pre-K Classroom**

***Creating a supportive, well-functioning team is essential in a Special Needs Pre-K classroom. Each staff member plays a vital role in fostering a positive, inclusive learning environment. Clear roles, open communication, and collaboration are key to meeting each child's unique needs.***

### ***Lead Teacher***

#### ***Primary Responsibilities:***

- Plans and implements individualized and group instruction based on IEPs and developmental needs.***
- Oversees classroom management, ensuring routines and expectations are clear and consistent.***
- Collaborates with therapists, specialists, and families to support student progress.***

#### ***Teamwork Tips:***

- Set daily goals with your team during morning briefings.***
- Be approachable; foster a problem-solving atmosphere.***
- Delegate tasks according to team members' strengths.***

# ***Staff Roles & Duties***

## ***Practical Suggestions for Effective Teamwork in a Special Needs Pre-K Classroom***

### ***Teaching Assistants (TAs) / Paraeducators***

#### ***Primary Responsibilities:***

- *Provide direct support to students during instruction, therapies, and activities.*
- *Assist with data collection for IEP goals and behavior tracking.*
- *Support self-help skills (feeding, toileting, dressing) and ensure safety protocols.*

#### ***Teamwork Tips:***

- *Stay proactive—anticipate needs and step in where help is needed.*
- *Ask clarifying questions during prep time or debriefs to stay aligned with the lead teacher's plans.*
- *Share observations regularly to help fine-tune strategies for individual students.*



# ***Staff Roles & Duties***

## ***Practical Suggestions for Effective Teamwork in a Special Needs Pre-K Classroom***

### ***Related Service Providers (SLPs, OTs, PTs, etc.)***

#### ***Primary Responsibilities:***

- *Deliver therapy services per IEP schedules.*
- *Provide strategies and tools for classroom staff to support therapy goals.*

#### ***Teamwork Tips:***

- *Maintain open communication through shared notebooks or quick check-ins.*
- *Offer modeling or in-the-moment coaching for TAs or teachers to implement strategies consistently.*

# ***Staff Roles & Duties***

## **Practical Suggestions for Effective Teamwork in a Special Needs Pre-K Classroom**

### ***Classroom Aide (If Applicable)***

#### *Primary Responsibilities:*

- *Assist with classroom organization, materials preparation, and transitions.*
- *Provide general support during activities, ensuring smooth operations.*

#### *Teamwork Tips:*

- *Take initiative during set-up and clean-up times.*
- *Communicate any safety or behavioral concerns promptly to the lead teacher.*

# ***Staff Roles & Duties***

## **Practical Suggestions for Effective Teamwork in a Special Needs Pre-K Classroom**

### ***Behavioral Specialist (If Assigned)***

#### *Primary Responsibilities:*

- *Develop and monitor Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs)*
- *Train staff on behavior support techniques and data collection.*

#### *Teamwork Tips:*

- *Provide positive, constructive feedback during team meetings.*
- *Reinforce consistency by collaborating with the whole team on strategies.*

# ***Staff Roles & Duties***

## *Creating a Positive Team Culture*

- ***Value Every Voice:***

*Foster an environment where everyone feels heard and respected.*

- ***Celebrate Small Wins:***

*Recognize both student and staff successes, no matter how small.*

- ***Problem-Solve Together:***

*When challenges arise, address them as a team with solution-focused discussions.*

- ***Build Trust:***

*Keep communication open, be reliable, and show appreciation for each team member's contributions.*



# ***Staff Roles & Duties***

## ***Teamwork Strategies for Success***

- ***Daily Briefings (10-15 min):***

*Quick check-in before the day starts to review goals, clarify roles, and share updates.*

- ***Clear Communication Channels:***

*Use communication logs, walkie-talkies, or a shared whiteboard to track tasks and updates in real-time.*

- ***Respect & Flexibility:***

*Appreciate each role and pitch in when a team member needs extra support.*

- ***Consistent Routines:***

*Establish clear transitions and expectations to create predictability for students and staff.*

- ***Ongoing Professional Development:***

*Encourage the team to learn together—host mini-trainings or invite specialists to model techniques.*

- ***End-of-Day Debriefs:***

*Take 5-10 minutes to discuss what worked, what didn't, and how to adjust for tomorrow.*

## *Your Journey Begins*

Thank you for exploring the Special Needs PreK Starter Pack. This resource is designed to empower educators in creating a supportive, inclusive, and engaging learning environment where all children can thrive. By implementing the strategies, templates, and insights shared throughout this packet, educators will be better equipped to foster growth, celebrate individuality, and support each child's unique journey.

Education is a collaborative effort, and I encourage you to continuously adapt, learn, and seek partnerships with families, specialists, and your educational community.

Remember, every small step you take contributes to building a nurturing space where young learners feel valued and empowered.

Your dedication makes a lasting impact — thank you for teaching with heart and compassion.

Wishing you a successful and meaningful teaching journey!

For more free resources, teaching tips, and expert guidance, visit my website:

★ Special Needs & Early Ed with Ms. P. ★

<https://specialneedsearlyedwithmsp.com/>

On my website, you'll find:

- ✓ Practical strategies for individualized instruction
- ✓ Professional insights for teachers & parents

COMING SOON:

- ✓ Downloadable teaching tools & templates
- ✓ Upcoming webinars & courses, and more

💡 Let's Build a Supportive Community!

Join me in making early education more inclusive and effective. Connect with me on Facebook [specialneedsearlyedmsp]\_and Instagram [special\_needs\_early\_ed\_w\_M for updates, discussions, and shared learning experiences!

✉ Have questions or feedback? I'd love to hear from you! Contact me through my website or send me a message on social media.

💙 Together, we can empower every child to thrive!