

WF Group Time and Instruction Time

Small Group is a group of 2-8 children that either develops spontaneously or is a planned gathering. Small group tends to be very focused on the interests of a few attentive and invested children who have made the choice to create or join the group. Additionally, small groups offer a more relaxed dynamic that result in fewer behavior management issues.

Large Group is a group gathering with the majority of the children present, usually 12-16 children. We use large group sparingly because the structure of large group in preschool tends to shift to behavior management rather than learning. Therefore, large group is still an invitation to interested children and the teachers keep the group active and the children involved.

Direct Instruction is when a teacher leads the group with a goal of teaching facts, rules, or other content knowledge. Direct instruction definitely serves a purpose and is used daily by our teachers, usually in a small group situation when the lesson is short and designed to complement their level of comprehension over a specific topic. Generally the direct instruction is 2-5 minutes followed by interactive instruction.

Indirect Instruction is when the teacher assists children in the exploration of ideas by answering their questions as they arise and asking questions that are aimed at provoking higher order thinking skills. These skills include problems solving, decision making, discovery, and a strong development of language as the participants are actively engaged in the discussion rather than being passive observers. Indirect instruction is found throughout the classroom as teachers engage children at play. Teachers observe the children and are available to give indirect instruction as they see opportunities arise.

Interactive Instruction is when there is a give and take discussion about the topic. Children are able to learn social cues and behavior expectations to function in a group. Additionally, they learn to listen to others and form their thoughts to share with the group.

Experiential Instruction is another type of instruction that is centered on an activity. Children are invited to explore the activity, share their experiences about the activity, and then extend their experience to further learning. WF teachers design such experiences every day throughout the classroom.