



Transcript for the Video:

Guiding Young Children's Behavior

Segment 3: Selecting Classroom Materials and Planning the Schedule

TRANSCRIPT for Objective 5

Graded Challenges

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Host: Let's look at one last idea on the topic of materials. Providing graded challenges—that is, offering materials that meet the needs of children at different levels—promotes positive behavior.

Dr. Sudha Swaminathan, Eastern Connecticut State University: The concept of graded challenges refers to materials or learning activities in the classroom that offer a wide range of difficulty for the children. So, within the same learning center, you'll have materials that are fairly simple, that all children can do, as well as some that are more difficult, and a few that are quite challenging for children. A good example for graded challenges would be puzzles. So, if you have a manipulatives center, you could have puzzles that are fairly simple—just four or five pieces where the image is clear—and this would be simple enough for all children to use. But then you should also have puzzles that have eight to ten pieces, the image is a little more complex. This would be a challenging puzzle for some children. And then you would have puzzles that are more challenging with 20-24 pieces, where the boundaries are not clear, the image is more complex, and this would be something that your high achieving children could reach up to and that would challenge them. When you have graded challenges in your classroom curriculum, you make sure there is always something for every child to do. So let's say in your classroom you have a child who has special needs, say a child with Down Syndrome, or maybe a child with physical limitations or a child with lower functioning abilities. These children could choose a material that is simple enough for them to do and yet challenging for them, and work along side another peer who might choose a material that is more challenging for themselves. But they would be working side by side with each other.

Host: Before we move on, let's quickly review what we've covered about materials. When choosing materials, centers should include open-ended, self-expressive materials, materials that are relevant to family and culture, and a balance of quiet and active materials. Centers should also have enough materials and choices and materials that provide graded challenges.