

50 Planning and Recall Strategies

Visibility Games and Tours

1. Train

- ◆ Children line up behind adults and pretend to be a train. Train moves around to each area where adults and children talk about the materials in the area. If a child plans to work in that area, he or she “gets off” the train. Then the train goes to the next area.
- ◆ *Variation.* Instead of a train, the class pretends to move around the room on a boat, car, truck, wagon train, etc.

2. Riding toy

- ◆ Children take turns riding the toy to the area they want to work in.

3. Drum or other instrument

- ◆ The children parade around the room with the leader (a child) playing the drum. The leader stops at the area he or she wants to work in and gives the drum to the next child in line, who repeats the process.
- ◆ Adult or child plays a rhythmic pattern on the drum or any other instrument. One at a time, children echo the rhythm and give their plans.

4. Keys

- ◆ Children pretend to unlock the areas they would like to work in.
- ◆ Children pretend to start up the car and drive over to the area they would like to work in.

5. Tent

- ◆ Children plan or recall in a tent (blanket draped over a table works fine), under a table, or in any other unusual place. (Use this strategy only with children who are *very* familiar with the room and the materials in it.)

Group Games (to decide who will plan/recall next)

6. Hula hoop

- ◆ Everyone holds a hoop marked in one place with a small piece of colored tape or a painted line. Everyone sings a song and passes the hoop through their hands. The group stops rotating the hoop at the end of the song. The child nearest the mark then takes a turn planning or recalling.

7. Rope

- ◆ Adult makes a circle with rope and uses the rope as in the hula hoop activity (#6).
- ◆ With rope still in a circle shape, adult asks, “Anyone planning to work in the playhouse (block area, computer area, book area, etc.) today, step inside the circle.” Children inside the circle describe their plans.
- ◆ All the children and adults grasp the rope and move about the room like a train; each child “gets off” at the area in which he or she wants to work.

8. Bean bags

- ◆ Children and adults play “hot potato”—the child who ends up with the potato tells the adult his or her plan.
- ◆ Each child makes a plan, then tosses the bean bag to a friend so that he or she can make a plan.

9. Shell game

- ◆ Children take turns guessing which shell the ball is under. The child who finds the ball tells his or her plan.

10. Yarn

- ◆ With the planning group sitting in a circle, the group passes a ball of yarn around the circle, unrolling the ball as they pass it. Whoever ends up with the end of the yarn, is the first to plan.

11. Bottle

- ◆ Children take turns spinning the bottle. When the bottle stops, the child it is pointing to gives his or her plan.

12. Colors and other attributes

- ◆ Adult or child says, “Who is wearing blue (green, red, etc.)?” Those wearing the color make their plan.
- ◆ Adult or child says, “Who has buttons on their shirt?” (Or, “Who is wearing sweatpants/jeans?”)

13. Sack

- ◆ Adult puts cards with each child’s symbol in a sack. Children take turns drawing cards. The child whose card is drawn plans next.
- ◆ *Variation:* Instead of children’s symbols, adult puts photographs of children in the sack.

14. Purse

- ◆ Children use a purse to go collect something they want to work with or did work with.

15. Ball

- ◆ Children toss the ball to one another. Whoever catches the ball is the next person to plan/recall.
- ◆ *Variations:* Roll or bounce the ball.

16. Alarm clock

- ◆ Children pretend they are sleeping. Teacher rings the clock to “wake up” each child one by one and ask for his or her plan.

17. “Simon Says”

- ◆ Play “Simon Says” (Example: “Simon Says, if you are going to use the blocks today, you may go . . .”).

18. Balance beam

- ◆ Children take turns walking the balance beam — they can try walking forward, backward, or sideways. As children get to the end of the beam, one by one they tell their plans.

19. String a bead

- ◆ As each child makes a plan, he or she adds a bead to the string of beads the teacher is holding.

20. Paper clip

- ◆ Children make a paper-clip chain. As they tell their plans, they add to the chain.

21. Song or chant

- ◆ Adult makes up a planning song or chant, for example:
*It's planning time, it's planning time,
We're eager and we're gay.
It's planning time, it's planning time,
Where will you work today?*
- ◆ *Variation:* Children and adults make up a similar song or chant for recall time.

Props and Partnerships

22. Pointing/touching (nonverbal)

- ◆ Child points to an area. The adult models planning/recall language by describing where the child is pointing.
- ◆ Child points to or touches an object in an area. The adult models planning/recall language by describing what the child is pointing to.

23. Large & small objects

- ◆ Children bring something they plan to (or did) work with to the table, where there are a large and a small piece of paper (or a large and small box). After each child tells what he or she plans to do (or did) with the object, the adult asks, “Does this fit better on the large paper or the small paper?” Child places object on one of the pieces of paper (or in one of the boxes).

24. Paper cup

- ◆ Child puts something he or she wants to play with in the cup.
- ◆ Child puts a small hole in the bottom of the cup and uses the cup as a telescope to look at the area of the room where he or she wants to play.

25. Telephone

- ◆ Using two telephones, children take turns calling the teacher to discuss their plans.
- ◆ In an extension of this activity, each child chooses a “phone number,” then uses the number when dialing, calling out each number.
- ◆ *Variation:* Children use a string-type telephone.
- ◆ *Variation:* Children use walkie-talkies.

26. Paper towel tube

- ◆ “I Spy” — Child looks through the “spy glass” at the area he is going to work in.
- ◆ *Variation:* Children use real binoculars.

27. Video camera

- ◆ With a pretend video camera, children point to the area where they want to work and describe what they will do.
- ◆ If the program has a real video camera, the adult takes short clips of each child’s work-time activities and then shows it to the children during recall. Children love seeing themselves on television and talking about what they were doing.

28. Flashlight

- ◆ Children spotlight the area they want to work in.
- ◆ Children take turns spotlighting one another to indicate who tells their plans next.

29. Tape measure

- ◆ As the adult holds one end of the tape measure, the children take turns pulling the end of the tape to the areas they are going to work in. Children read tape and pretend to measure how far they had to go.
- ◆ Adult makes a pointer by extending the tape measure several inches and pushing the button to keep it extended. Children use this to point to areas and objects that are involved in their plans.

30. String or yarn

- ◆ As the adult holds one end of a long piece of string or yarn, the children take turns stretching their end of the string or yarn to the area they want to work in.

31. Tape

- ◆ Put a piece of tape on the object or area where you want to play.
- ◆ Children can draw small pictures on the tape or they could use the tape to indicate on a map or planning/recall board what they did that day.

32. Hats

- ◆ Children take turns pulling objects (that they've brought from different areas of the classroom) out of a hat. As children identify the area an object comes from, the adult asks who brought that particular object and what they plan to do with it.
- ◆ Each child wears the "planning hat" while giving his or her plan.

33. "Feelie" box

- ◆ Adult places objects that children used during work time in a box. Children take turns guessing objects by how they feel, naming the object, describing how the object was used, recalling what they did with it.

34. Boxes

- ◆ Adult sets out boxes of different sizes. Each child finds an object from the interest area where he or she is planning to work that fits in one of the boxes.
- ◆ Adult makes a tunnel out of one or more large boxes. Children crawl through the tunnel, and as each child comes out the other side, he or she tells the adult a plan and then goes to work.

35. Stuffed animals

- ◆ One by one, children tell the stuffed animal their plans.

36. Puppet

- ◆ Each child tells their plans to a puppet (teacher).
- ◆ The child controls the puppet while telling his or her plan.

37. Role play

- ◆ Children play the role of the teacher at planning time. Children take turns being the “teacher” who is asking for and listening to individual children’s plans.

Representations

38. Path

- ◆ The adult draws large squares with symbols representing each area on a long roll of paper or cardboard. The adult rolls out the “area path” on the floor and asks each child to walk down the path and stop on the square that contains the name of the area in which he or she would like to work. As an alternative, the children leave their names or symbols on the square.
- ◆ *Variation:* Children stay on the squares, waiting to see who else will be going to the area; they then talk with peers about their plans; they may also count how many are going to each area.

39. Written plans

- ◆ Child traces around an object he or she plans to use at work time.
- ◆ Child draws a picture showing what he or she plans to use or do at work time (representations may be of the objects or materials to be used, the planned activity, or the finished product that is anticipated).
- ◆ Child dictates plans to an adult or attempts to write letters or words about the planned activity or area in which he or she is planning to work.
- ◆ Child keeps a planning journal or notebook.
- ◆ Child fills in a planning form. (Example: “*Today, I would like to work in the _____ area.*”) The form may also have room for the child to draw a picture.

40. Chalkboard

- ◆ Children draw representations of their plans on the chalkboard using white or colored chalk.

41. Planning board

- ◆ Children gather around a large poster depicting the interest areas through drawings, magazine pictures, or photographs. Children can point to, touch, write their names near, or clip a clothespin to the picture of the area they choose to work in.

42. Area cards

- ◆ Adult creates a flashcard set showing all the areas (using drawings, magazine pictures, or photographs). Children use the cards as they discuss where they are going to work or the sequence of areas they will work in.
- ◆ Adult puts area cards face down or places them in a hat or bag. Adult then draws out a card and asks who would like to work in that area and what each child will do there.

43. Pockets

- ◆ Adult makes a planning board with pockets representing each area. Child puts his symbol in the pocket for the area in which he or she is going to work. (Pockets can be made by children from paper, or you can use real ones cut from old clothing.)

44. Tape recorder

- ◆ Children take turns using a tape recorder to record their plans.
- ◆ At recall time, children listen to the plans they made and discuss whether they followed their plans or made changes.

45. Clue game

- ◆ At recall time, adult says, “I saw someone using something long, pointed, shiny, and sharp today. What did that person use? . . . What area did it come from? . . . Who used the material? . . . What did you do with the material?”

46. Hammer a nail

- ◆ Teacher sketches a simple planning board on a piece of wood. Children hammer a nail in the section showing the area where they want to work. Styrofoam and golf tees may be used as a “low impact” alternative.

47. Computer

- ◆ Adult types in each child’s plan as children dictate them.
- ◆ Children print out their plans and draw pictures to go with them.

48. Pantomime

- ◆ Children pantomime what they plan to do (or did) during work time.

49. Robots

- ◆ Using robot-like voices and movements, children give their verbal plans and go to the areas.

50. Graph

- ◆ Adults and children make picture graphs to show which areas children are planning to (or did) work in. They discuss which area had the most/least children.

List additional planning and recall strategies: