ΔΙΑ δρασις

ΔΙΑ-δρασις | DIA-drasis | ذياذراسيس

Child Center for the Development of Social Skills

مركز الطفل لتنمية المهارات الاجتماعية

# Early Childhood Education and Care curriculum

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS

CITY OF THESSALONIKI

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Χ.Α.Ν.Θ.

Τρόπος ζωής για μια ζωή

# Early Childhood Education and Care Curriculum for refugee children aged 2-4 years old

YMCA of Thessaloniki

Project: "Enhancing the right to education and access to schooling for refugee children"
Under the auspices of the Municipality of Thessaloniki | Lead partner: Major Development Agency of Thessaloniki SA
Action 1: "DIA-drasis" of Early Childhood - Child Centre for the Development of Social Skills"
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YMCA of Thessaloniki

# Early Childhood Education and Care Curriculum for refugee children aged 2-4 years old


Program Supervisor: Aristi Tzoni, MSc
Head of YMCA Thessaloniki Social Action

Scientific Advisor: Roula Tsokalidou
Professor in Sociolinguistics,
School of Early Childhood Education,
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

Editor: Konstantia Liouza, MA, MSc
Coordinator of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) program "DIA-drasis"
YMCA Thessaloniki Social Action



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ECEC Education Team: Olga Dermyshi, Early childhood educator and care worker

Evina Dimitriadou-Badawy, PhD, Education and cultural facilitator

Bayan Rawdan, Education and cultural facilitator

Fotini-Drossia Tzioutziou, MSc, Early childhood educator and care worker

Kely Gounaridou, MSc, Early childhood educator and care worker

Arabic text: Evina Dimitriadou-Badawy, PhD

Photographs: ECEC Education Team



Printing

Chatzilaris Christos & Vlachogeorgakopoulou Anna
"Bezesteni" Traditional Typography Store
Venizelou 33, Thessaloniki t: +30 2310.272.938
fb: Παραδοσιακό Τυπογραφείο στο Μπεζεστένι
info@bezesteni.gr | kalligrammon@gmail.com

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YMCA Thessaloniki | Social Action Sector
N. Germanou 1 & YMCA Square, Thessaloniki
+30 2316001000 ext.0884 | www.ymca.gr
blog: refugees.ymca.gr/category/diadrasis/
socialaction@ymca.gr | diadrasis@ymca.gr

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Developing an Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) curriculum was admittedly a challenging experience, mainly because this curriculum needs to foster bilingualism not as an added element but as an essential component to build on learning. Along the way many people contributed in shaping not only the content but also the pedagogy, the principles, the objectives, the learning outcomes.

First of all, I would like to thank Roula Tsokalidou, Professor in Sociolinguistics and Greek Language (School of Early Childhood Education, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) for the support throughout all our efforts. Her insights and scientific advice, as well as the stimulating discussions over bi/multilingualism and the concept of *translanguaging*, shaped the core of the ECEC program; the perception and use of the variety of spoken languages in the educational practice and how we can all benefit from the diverse cultures that co-exist in our society.

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Konstantia Liouza

# Foreword

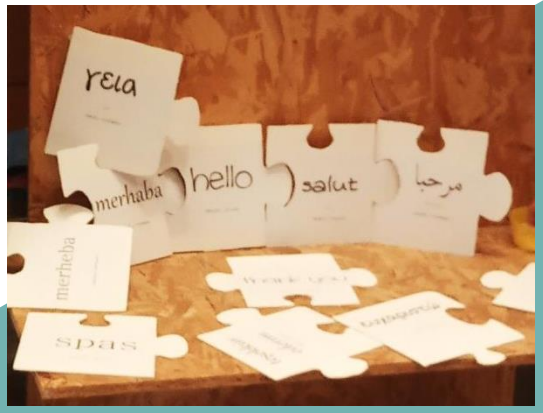
It is a great honour and joy for me to write the forward for this curriculum, which resulted from the great, constant, honest and admirable efforts of a group of young specialists in issues of intercultural dialogue and education who, day in and day out, carried out successfully and fruitfully the 'DIAdrasis Project' during 2018-2019.

Having academically and personally experienced intercultural issues, issues of language and culture contact for most of my life, if not all of it, I can absolutely appreciate the 'DIAdrasis' effort and great results, both in terms of education and personal development for all those involved. The project has been a challenge for all, educators, children and parents, be them either Greek-speaking or not, who had to develop new skills and learn to appreciate newly heard languages and ways of thinking.

The 'DIAdrasis Project' can teach us all that language and culture contact need to be celebrated in order for all people to learn to live and create together for the benefit of every contemporary and multicultural society. This is a necessity that has been expressed very successfully through the words of Amin Maalouf (1998[1]) that go like this: We all have to live in a universe that does not resemble anything where we come from. We all need to learn other languages, other ways of speaking, other codes.

Within the 'DIAdrasis' walls all languages were heard and people learned to accept and celebrate them, even when they coexisted within the same sentence. If this can take place at preschool age, then we can all hope for a better and sincerely multicultural, multi/translingual future for all!

*Roula Tsokalidou*




[1] Maalouf, A. (1998[1]). Les Identités Meurtrières. Paris: Grasset.
In Greek: Φονικές Ταυτότητες [fonikes taftotites] (1999). Trans. T. Tramboulis. Athens: Okeanida.
In English: In the Name of Identity: Violence and the Need to Belong (2001). Trans. B. Bray. New York: Arcade Publishing.

# Social Action YMCA of Thessaloniki

YMCA Thessaloniki was established as a charitable, non-profit organisation in 1921, introducing and promoting team sports and athletic activities such as basketball and volleyball, organising summer camps and lifesaving training, providing youth leadership programmes and training through night classes in accounting, foreign languages and secondary school, and organising volunteer groups to address the needs of the community. YMCA has over 90 years of experience on working in Thessaloniki aiming to integrate communities through recreational and educational activities. Furthermore, YMCA had founded one the first nurseries and kindergarten facilities in the city. Nowadays is still running and meets all the requirements of the Ministry of Education. Therefore, YMCA of Thessaloniki is more than capable, with the necessary experience and expertise, to run a preschool education program (ECEC) with high quality standards.

Since 2015 YMCA Thessaloniki and especially the Social Action sector has been an active actor on the recent refugee crisis context, supporting refugees from countries of the Middle East with numerous actions and programs. Having as our main concern the children, as the most vulnerable to be affected by disasters, we have been encouraging our volunteers to organise non formal educational activities in Edomeni, Diavata reception center and in urban Thessaloniki area. Moreover, we have been a partner in RE.A.C.T program by UNHCR with the Municipality of Thessaloniki as lead partner, taking over sports, creative and other extracurricular activities provided to children of school age residing under RE.A.C.T accommodation scheme. At the same time a volunteer-based program was develop to cover other needs of those refugee families participating in RE.A.C.T., focused on adult learning (language teaching, vocational training etc.). This program has expanded and aims to be part of the newly formed Center for Lifelong Learning (KEDIVIM) licensed and supervised by the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance of the Ministry of Education, so that the participants can acquire valid certifications of knowledge. This recent experience adds value in the ability to design and implement educational and recreational activities and expertise in culturally relevant activities focusing on integration and bringing together families of refugee and Greek background.

The past months, running the program "DIA-drasis" guided by our principles, embracing all cultures and languages, providing holistic benefits for preschoolers and engaging the whole family, proves that we can only do better; benefit our society and promote our values.

Aristi Tsomi

# Introduction

## The project in a nutshell

YMCA Thessaloniki is a partner in the project "Enhancing the right to education and access to schooling for refugee children" along with SolidarityNow and Major Development Agency Thessaloniki SA as lead partner, under the auspices of the Municipality of Thessaloniki, funded by Open Society Foundations. The main objective of the project is to support the educational needs of children and youth whose access to education possibilities are particularly limited. The project has two Actions: Action 1 (under the responsibility of YMCA Thessaloniki) focuses on early childhood interventions and Action 2 (under the responsibility of SolidarityNow) focuses on youth. Action 1 has a twofold aim; firstly, to provide quality preschool education and childcare to refugee children ensuring equity in access to schooling. Formal education in Greece starts at the age of 5 with one year pre-primary education. Action 1 can fill a major gap by providing non-formal education and care to younger refugee children. And, secondly, to enhance social integration through early childhood activities including families of refugee and of Greek background.

Since October 2018 YMCA Thessaloniki (Social Action sector) runs "DIA-drasis: Child Centre for the Development of Social Skills". The name of the Child Centre ("DIA-drasis") is the Greek word for "interaction" reflecting the essence of Action 1 that is to achieve integration through interaction. The Child Centre provides a common ground for language and culture contact, a safe space where children or families interact altogether and a threshold to local community participation. The activities are formed into a model of two distinguished programs: a) Early Childhood Education & Care program for refugee children 2-4 years old (ECEC) and b) Early Childhood Intercultural Activities program for children 2-6 years old (ECIA) of refugee and of Greek background. The two programs have overarching objectives and interact through organized joint activities open to all families (refugee or local) participating in the project.

## Early childhood development intervention

Early childhood care and development is the main foundation for child survival and holistic human development and helps to give all children an equal start in life. Early childhood interventions help children to enter school at the right age, to make a better transition to primary school, to stay there longer, and to improve their learning outcomes and increase their achievement levels. Also, they are strongly linked to better outcomes at all levels: cognitive, social-emotional, and economic (short-term benefits and long-term positive impact in society reducing violence, poverty, anti-social behavior and crime). High-quality education and longer attendance is important especially to children from a disadvantaged background[2]. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has outlined states' responsibilities to protect children's rights in early childhood and UNICEF advocates for universal access to pre-primary education as a priority[3].

In our case, early childhood development intervention is one more step towards social integration of refugees to Greek society. Up to date there isn't any provision of guaranteed access to early childhood education or childcare for younger refugee children (2-4 years old), therefore the vast majority of them do not benefit of any education and care programs. An early start in education enables children to develop their emergent literacy and numeracy skills, which are proven to be essential for children in making a better transition to primary school and have better performance. Also, it is important for children to have opportunities to develop such skills in a learning environment where they can understand and speak their own language and at the same time be immersed in the language of the host community.

[2] Van Belle, J. (2013).

[3] More: https://www.unicef.org/education/early-childhood-education

## Benchmarks

### Education for All

The Education for All (EFA) goals, adopted in Dakar in 2000, provide a clear framework for early childhood education and care programmes. All young children must be nurtured in safe and caring environments that allow them to become healthy, alert and secure and be able to learn. Such programmes should be comprehensive, focusing on all of the child's needs and encompassing health, nutrition and hygiene as well as cognitive and psycho-social development. Vulnerable and hardest-to-reach children should be a priority. They should be provided in the child's mother tongue and activities should be centred on the child, focused on the family, based within the community and supported by national, multi-sectoral policies and adequate resources[4].

[4] Education for all (EFA) Dakar Framework for Action (2000).

## Quality education

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015[5], provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. The 4th sustainable development goal is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Access to early childhood development, care and pre-primary education is one of the main targets. Therefore, humanitarian, educational and economic organizations, such as UNESCO[6], OECD[7], UNICEF[8] etc., promote policies, access and quality in early childhood education and care (ECEC).

[5] The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org.
[6] Education 2030 Framework for Action (2015).
[7] OECD (2017). Investing in high-quality early childhood education and care.
[8] UNICEF SDGS https://sdg4children.or.id/goal/quality-education/

## Multiculturalism and education

One of the main challenging issues of multiculturalism is the diverse world views and values that co-exist in society. Intercultural education accommodates *universalism* in terms of human rights; and *cultural pluralism* in terms of diversity and maintaining cultural difference. This dilemma makes it always hard to decide on curricula that reflect different cultural and linguistic identities. Language diversity reflects cultural diversity and it is essential to culture and value systems; therefore, it becomes central to education. *Bi/multilingualism* should be encouraged in education.

"DIA-drasis" ECEC program adapts principles of Intercultural Education, aiming beyond passive coexistence, to achieve a sustainable way of living together in multicultural societies through *understanding* of, *respect* for and *dialogue* between the different cultural groups. *Interculturality* is a dynamic concept referring to evolving relations or the interactions between cultural groups in society. In order to strengthen democracy, education needs to take into account the multicultural face of societies, and achieve positive interaction and peaceful coexistence[9].

[9] UNESCO (2006). Guidelines on intercultural education.

# "DIA-drasis" ECEC program

## Setting the standards

"DIA-drasis" ECEC program is formed as a bilingual curriculum aiming on holistic benefits for children –cognitive, language and communication, social and emotional, physical development. ECEC principles are based on various Early Childhood / Pre-primary Curricula that foster care and education as a whole; and on guidelines for Intercultural / Inclusive Education.

## Key actions to build a quality ECEC program

The groundwork for "DIA-drasis" ECEC program had already been set since the need for such a program was raised in the community by municipal situation analysis. Therefore YMCA Thessaloniki undertook the design, organization and implementation of an ECEC program following the steps below[10].

- Establishing the preschool: The location was a former municipal nursery. Renovation works took place and then YMCA staff set up the learning environment.

- Designing an ECEC curriculum: Set principles, aims, methods, content, activities, routines and teaching guidelines mainly based on the national Early Childhood Curriculum in Greece[11] and other ECEC curricula across the world[12]. Ensure that the curriculum is culturally relevant, i.e. include stories, songs, traditional customs or celebrations from all cultures involved.

- Establishing the ECEC environment: Staff sets up the appropriate learning environment with various materials and equipment to attract interest and curiosity, creates a safe space and promotes healthy behaviour. An ECEC environment is a whole including not only built facilities but also the community of educators, families and immediate neighbourhood.

- Training staff: Improve teaching and learning practices for teachers, childcare staff and education/cultural facilitators. A quality learning experience for children requires a quality

[10] The steps are based on Save the Children (2017) *Quality Preschool Package*.

[11] Institute of Educational Policy 2003 & 2011.

[12] Mentioned in the Resources Annex.

workforce. A well-qualified, skilled staff strongly increases the potential of any individual setting to deliver the best possible outcomes for children[13]. Staff receives induction training by the program coordinators as well as training in child safeguarding and child protection policies, so that can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect and respond in a timely and appropriate way. Whenever an issue is raised from the educators a short training can take place from an expert to improve competence and educators well-being.

- Active engagement of the whole family: Provide parenting programs, involve family in activities and organize regular parents-teachers meetings.

- Monitoring and evaluating: It is very important to develop tools for monitoring and evaluating outcomes and quality of the program to ensure that the program is on track, continues to improve and reaches the desired outcomes. Such tools were created and monitored enrollment and attendance data, staff attendance and training, lesson plans and activity reports. Focus groups, questionnaires, teacher learning circles were some of the methods evaluating the program by providing the necessary feedback.

[13] Department for Education. UK, 2017.

## Overarching principles

The guiding principles and underlying values that shape "DIA-drasis" ECEC program draws on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child[14] and relatable pedagogic theories that have shaped modern curricula and education policies[15]:

- Non-discrimination and equal treatment: Each child should be respected regardless of culture, language, religion, beliefs, gender etc.
- Full development: Children have the right to life and full development. Knowledge and skills are perceived through a holistic approach for child development and it is important to help children to achieve their full potential.
- Positive personal relationships: Children learn to be strong and independent through warm personal relations that create a safe and trusting environment. Children's needs should be addressed and the best possible conditions for growth, learning and development should be ensured.
- Enabling environments: Healthy, secure and positive environments that enable growth, development, well-being and learning. Learning experiences respond to children's individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Diversification: Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. Educators should diversify activities or use different materials to be able to respond to each child's needs and support them.
- Understanding and expression: Children should receive understanding and feel free to express their views. Daily planning can involve children by taking into account their interests and let them participate in decision-making according to their age and maturity.
- Sense of belonging: Children are connected and belong to a family, a community, a cultural group, a neighborhood and a wider community. Their earliest development and learning takes place through these relationships, defining their identities.
- Personal identity: Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Children will strengthen their identity, construct their self-image, boost their self-esteem and build their identity

[14] United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx

[15] Based on national curricula of UK, Australia, Finland, South Africa, Iceland, Greece, Cyprus mentioned in the annex Resources / national curricula.

- Safeguarding and well-being of children: Children learn and develop best when the learning setting is of high quality, welcoming, safe and secure and children's needs are met and they grow in confidence. Coordinator of ECEC ensures the suitability of adults who have contact with children by a Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy and Code of Conduct. It is imperative to draw up a plan for safeguarding children against violence, bullying and harassment, and to supervise adherence to its implementation.

## Integrative education - Holistic approach of knowledge

Integrative education or holistic approaches to teaching and learning acknowledge children's physical, personal, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing as well as cognitive aspects of learning as a whole. Children's learning is integrated and learning outcomes are always interconnected. Educators recognise the connections between children, families and communities and the importance of reciprocal relationships and partnerships for learning. They see learning as a social activity and value collaborative learning and community participation.

"DIA-drasis" ECEC curriculum is theme-based that encourages children to form patterns since all learning activities are connected around a theme and knowledge is inter-connected. So, learning is organized in themes / thematic units related to children's sphere of life and to contents expanding and structuring children's views of the world. A theme is a topic that can be explored by the teacher and children in many ways. Different branches of knowledge are taken into account in planning and implementation and they are examined as part of the theme chosen each time. Under a theme, literacy, numeracy, science, art and other subject fields can be integrated. The division into subject fields is intended to guide the teacher's work. An activity planned can combine different learning areas, subject fields and content. The length of time spent in a theme can vary, usually from 1 week to a month. Themes should be based on young learner's culture, environment or shared experiences. Sometimes,

a theme can be an idea to address issues that are visible in the classroom.

## Learning environment and child-centred approach

The learning environment refers to the physical, psychological, social, cognitive and emotional environment in which activities are carried out. It includes built facilities, immediate neighborhood, psychological and social settings, materials and equipment. The essential factors of the learning environment include interaction between the teacher and each child and between the children, different operating methods and learning assignments. Environments that support learning are responsive to the interests and abilities of each child. They cater for different learning capacities and learning styles and invite children and families to contribute ideas, interests and questions.

It is important that the learning environment should be a child-friendly, safe and secure, aesthetically pleasing and inviting space for children to play, learn and grow in. Children need to be able to move around the room freely while also having assigned stations for engaged play. Staff defines spaces as learning stations i.e. reading corner with a bookcase, puppet theatre stage, building station, pretend play stations (grocery's). Children need an accessible space for their personal belongings, as well as a large enough space available for the whole group to gather together in a circle, i.e. for the morning meeting routine and other group activities. A well-designed ECEC environment promotes activities in small groups where everyone has an opportunity to take part in discussions and interactions. Display areas are also significant, not only for the children's work, but also for print-rich materials, pictures or educational posters related to themes, attendance chart, etc.

The child-centred approach in pre-primary education entails guiding education, where adults set limits, expectations and demands for children[16]. A good learning environment guides children's curiosity, interest and learning motivation and promotes their active involvement and self-direction. It provides diverse support for children's growth and learning and assessment of their own actions. It provides children with opportunities for play, other activities as well as peace and quiet. It also constitutes a stimulating linguistic environment and enables organisation of activities to support children's linguistic development.

[16] Finnish National Board of Education (2010). National Core Curriculum for Pre-primary Education.

## The role of educators

The educators' role is important and multilevel in ECEC. The preferred pedagogical practices draw on the mentioned above principles and overarching objectives. Educators need to be committed, sensitive and responsive, that means to be able to react to the child's feelings and needs. Professional and vocational knowledge and experience provide a solid foundation for competence. Adopting holistic approaches is the main pedagogical practice. Educators can enable an inclusive environment fostering the feeling of togetherness, the sense of belonging and create a positive impact on children's learning.

The basic task of the educators is to plan activities and build up suitable learning environments. Educators should encourage children to act independently so the children feel good about being able to do things by themselves and feel secure when they receive support when they need to. Apart from planning, teaching and implementing is also assessing and monitoring children's learning. Usually, educators need to record, analyzing and reflect on their own work too, to help themselves act consciously in accordance with the pedagogic values and principles.

Cultural awareness and competence is an asset for educators. First of all, they should be aware of their own prejudice and stereotypes, and be tolerant and accept different mentalities. They should respect cultural diversity, value the cultural context of children and their families, or their colleagues' as well, celebrate the benefits of multiculturalism and multilingualism and be able to understand, communicate and interact with people across cultures[17]. In this context, educators need to foster a welcome environment for the parents too, to share experiences and views, and form a fruitful two way partnership.

"DIA-drasis" ECEC education team includes educators that are bilingual or speak the children's first language. Usually educators work in pairs, one Greek-speaking, one Arabic-speaking or other languages that the children may speak (i.e. Kurdish, Farsi, Turkish). The role of the educators is a catalyst to an effective bilingual program since languages are spoken without barriers, children and educators can switch between languages and let communication thrive in any form. The only time when a specific language is asked is during language learning activities. Working in a multicultural context with colleagues of different cultural background can be very challenging in terms of daily practice and mentality as well. During Teacher Learning Circles a lot of issues, including cultural issues are discussed in an effort to resolve any difficulties.

[17] Australian Government Department of Education and Training. (2009). The Early Years learning Framework for Australia "Belonging, being & becoming".

## The role of the family

Educators' practices and the relationships they form with children and families have a significant effect on children's involvement and success in learning. Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning. Children's first learning environment is their home and their family is responsible for their upbringing. It is required for that the two 'educational communities' (family and school) to co-operate and interact to support children's positive growth and development. Building mutual trust and respect could be challenging due to differences in pedagogy, values and principles between the different parties.

Educators should inform parents about the curriculum and the learning processes giving them the opportunity to be involved in planning or decision-making. They should address any learning and development need in partnership with parents, and any relevant professionals. Parents can be encouraged to share information from the child's learning experiences at home and discuss with educators its progress.

The ECEC program use various ways of communication with the parents, such as notices, discussions often with the assistance of a cultural facilitator, and group meetings in the form of Parents and Teachers Circle. During these meetings/ circles parental participation is enhanced because achievements, learning contents and expectations are discussed. Also, such meetings are educational in terms of sharing concepts, perceptions and beliefs about educational practice, methods and purpose of learning. For instance, physical punishment may be perceived as an acceptable method for some parents, but in this ECEC program is not acceptable; instead positive reinforcement and alternative methods of discipline are used.

## The role of language

Language has a vital role in supporting the development and cognitive processes of the child by enabling the communication of meanings. In early childhood, play and fairy tales are of core importance for the development of the child's language skills and world view. Language learning is always a creative and personal process, where imitation plays a major role. Children learn cultural and social customs, and communication models through their peer and adult relationships. Young children express themselves holistically by means of facial expressions, gestures and movements. Through daily routines young children learn situation-specific language. While growing up, children make links between language and action when playing, which gives a greater emphasis to their own experiences, especially play, in the learning of language. Children use language to give shape to the purpose of their play, to describe how it proceeds, and to regulate their relationships.

Children's play with words, rhymes, funny non-sense words provides practice in the area of linguistic awareness. Storytelling

by children themselves or adults, creative activities inspired by fairy tales and stories told by the educators, increase children's confidence in their own capabilities. Literature offers children a wide range of insights into the world around them and the richness of languages. The learning environment should allow both spoken and written form of language to be used[18].

Language(s) is/are integral component of literacy and communication. During the early years of the child, emerging literacy comprised of what children have heard and listened, that they have been heard, they have spoken and been spoken to, people have discussed things with them, and that they have asked questions and received answers. In such an environment, children will subconsciously develop their vocabulary, literacy and communication skills. Children's earlier experiences and skills form the basis for the process of learning to read and write in pre-primary education. These different skills and knowledge, including possible literacy skills already learnt before pre-primary education, will be taken into account by providing an open learning environment, which allows each child to grasp written language in accordance with his or her own abilities. The material should consist of diverse texts, which provide opportunities to read alone and together with other children or adults.

Language(s) is/are integral component of constructing the identity too. Children develop their sense of self through relations with other peers and adults. Teachers and language play an important role in these interactions. Negotiating their identity is crucial in the learning environment[19]. When teachers address the language and culture of their students as equal and important, not without critical thinking though, they empower the children to be active learners and later active participants in their communities. They strengthen their identity, build their self-confidence and become empowered future citizens.

[18] STAKES (2004). National curriculum guidelines on early childhood education and care in Finland.

[19] Cummins, J. (1996). Negotiating Identities: Education for Empowerment in a Diverse Society. California Association for Bilingual Education.

## Bilingual - bicultural teaching

Given that our modern societies are multilingual and multicultural, we have to be educated into multilingualism and multiculturalism. Children should learn to respect the different languages and cultures. On one hand, one of the main objectives in language and communication learning is the refugee children to be able to consolidate knowledge of the Greek language and to be encouraged to use it. This aims to increase children's capabilities to function in the Greek-speaking community they live in and later to transition into formal education that Greek is the main (if not the only in most cases) used language. On the other hand, another important objective is children to appreciate and embrace their own language, culture and heritage. Refugee children have different backgrounds that should be taken into account.

Teaching will ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in Greek language but at the same time, they should have the opportunity to develop their own language of origin and thereby grow into two cultures. If children acquire a solid foundation in their first language, usually they find it easier to learn more languages as they will have already found out how language is structured and how to communicate with others[20]. This means that during ECEC program children should be cared for in an environment where more than one language is spoken. Children's home language is part of the everyday practice through instruction or play. Children's home language is usually Arabic and/or Kurdish (Kurmanji or Sorani). Since language is developed better in natural communication situations, bilingual educators / cultural facilitators were essential part of the teaching staff. Language teaching is interwoven with all areas of preschool education. During almost all activities languages are used at the same time or interchangeably. Thus, Greek language learning has immersive characteristics and Arabic / Kurdish most of the times can be the instruction language.

In terms of literacy, communication, identity construction through teaching, the intension of "DIA-drasis" ECEC program is to respect and use to the fullest children's linguistic and cultural capital. Therefore, there is space for all linguistic resources to find expression. This is the space of what it can be defined as *translanguaging*. Creativity, humour, code-switching, translation, transference etc. are all possible means that can be employed in order to promote multilingual communication and language learning[21].

[20] Department of Basic Education (2015). The South African national curriculum framework for children from birth to four.

[21] Tsokalidou/Τσοκαλίδου, R./P.. (2017) SiDaYes! Beyond bilingualism to translanguaging/ Πέρα από τη διγλωσσία προς τη διαγλωσσικότητα. Αθήνα/Athens: Gutenberg.

## Assessment

Assessment plays an important part to acknowledge children's progress, understand their needs, and plan activities and support. A learning plan should be in place for each child and formed in such a way that all factors are considered (age, maturity, developmental level). However, the focus should be in assessing the child's growth and learning rather than mere achievement of skills and objectives. Educators can employ various strategies to gather data and information about children's learning. Educators should keep in mind that children demonstrate their learning in different ways.

Assessment can be carried out on a continuous basis, based on teacher-child interaction during the learning process. So, ongoing (formative) assessment based on observation is the main evaluation tool of children's learning. Educators can have an assessment report for each child with comments for improvement in specific areas. In addition, children's portfolio can add information on children's progress in specific areas, such as fine motor skills.

Regular discussion between the educators and the parents can provide significant feedback. Parents should be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development. *Parents and Teachers Meetings* is the main method for giving feedback and build cooperation.

Also, educator's own reflection upon planning and teaching can be constructive. *Teacher's Learning Circles* is an important method of sharing, learning from each other and giving feedback in a constructive way. When it is needed interventions or special trainings can improve the vocational competence and effectiveness of the education team.

# Learning processes

Children's learning is dynamic, complex and holistic. Children act, think and learn in various ways. Teachers should support learning process by guiding children in learning, experimentation, exploration, active participation, information acquisition, problem-solving efforts, self-expression. Children's living environment and experiences should be the starting point of learning.

Educators can organise learning experiences creating specific contexts: Play, routines, daily life situations, planned (organised) activities. Children should participate equally in these contexts and work individually, within a small group or with a whole group.

## Learning through play

Play is essential for children's development. Playing is a way of acting and at the same time a meaningful experience to the children. Although children do not play in order to learn, they learn through imagination and play.

Early childhood educators take on many roles in play with children and use a range of strategies to support learning. They engage in sustained shared conversations with children to extend their thinking. They provide a balance between child led, child initiated and educator supported learning. Educators use routines and play experiences to interact with children and build attachment. They also recognise spontaneous teachable moments as they occur, and use them to build on children's learning. They actively support the inclusion of all children in play, help children to recognise when play is unfair and offer constructive ways to build a caring, fair and inclusive learning community[22].

Different types of play, including structured and unstructured, planned, purposeful, guided by an adult or child-initiated, allow children to practice different skills in different ways. Social or drama play can be real life situation setting with a purpose; imaginary play can allow children to create stories and imaginary scenarios; educational games such as puzzles, construction sets, building or stacking blocks; games based on rules such as board games, motor games, traditional group games; games based on inquiry and curiosity using various materials and experiment with their uses.

The balance between activities led by children and activities led or guided by adults is an issue of concern. As children grow older it is expected that more activities will be led by adults, as organised and planned activities, so that children can prepare for formal learning. Time for free play will always be a part of ECEC but how long and how often varies depending on age and development of children.

[22] Australian Government Department of Education and Training. (2009).

*When children play, they:*

- learn as they discover, create, improvise and imagine;
- build their confidence as they learn;
- make sense of their social worlds, as they engage with objects, representations or actively with people;
- can solve problems and enhance creative thinking;
- can test out ideas and engage in critical thinking;
- enhance their desire to know and learn by enabling curiosity;
- immerse in their play and transition in imaginary play;
- gain a sense of wellbeing and having fun;
- make connections between prior experiences and new learning.

*When children play with others, they:*

- create social groups, develop relationships and form friendships;
- express their personality and unique qualities and abilities;
- participate in decision-making;
- challenge each other's thinking and contribute to each other's learning;
- construct their own understandings or build new concepts;
- learn to take turns, cooperate and acknowledge good and bad behaviour.

## Significance of routines

Routines are repetitive activities that are carried out every day in a similar way around the same time. It is an important prerequisite for ECEC program and will help later in transition to more formal school settings. Routines are age appropriate and address children's needs and learning experiences. Routines support the sense of responsibility and self-control due to their predictable nature. Completing a daily attendance chart, describe the day/season and weather, greetings in a circle, a welcome or farewell song, breakfast or lunch time and attending personal hygiene such as washing hands before eating, storytelling or reading time can be examples of a routine.

# Learning and content areas

All areas of learning content and development that shape the ECEC program are important and inter-connected. The first three are the main areas of development for ECEC and the rest are more specific, subject oriented.

## Communication and language

Language is a medium of thought, expression and communication. Children should have opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; to speak and listen in a range of situations; to interact though language; to narrate and describe situations; to participate in conversation and waiting for their turn to talk when necessary. Children should engage in dialogue and converse as much as possible. The different spoken languages can teach respect and enrich instruction and understanding.

## Personal, social and emotional development

This area is crucial for early age because children lay the foundation of constructing their identity and build their relations with others. It involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour within a group; and to have confidence in their own abilities. Also, independence and control themselves is a significant part of this area of development, as well as show respect and acceptance of cultural diversity.

## Physical and psychological health and growth

Children should be provided with opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop basic (gross and fine) motor skills, their hand-eye co-ordination and movement control; to be helped to understand the importance of physical activity. Also, children will learn how to make healthy nutrition choices and grow healthy eating habits; to be guided in good table manners and learn to take care of their daily personal hygiene.

## Literacy

It refers to emerging literacy as the foundation for literacy. It involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. Genre-based activities and multimodal texts that combine oral/written language, images, sound or music, moving pictures or performance can be of value during activities and develop critical literacy. Language learning is an integral part of literacy.

## Numeracy

Children will be introduced to pre-math and mathematical phenomena; and should be provided with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and to describe shapes, spaces, and measure. Mathematics can help develop concepts and critical thinking, recognize and use patterns, sorting and categorizing, understand spatial concept and dimensions, even reading a simple map.

## Science, environment and nature

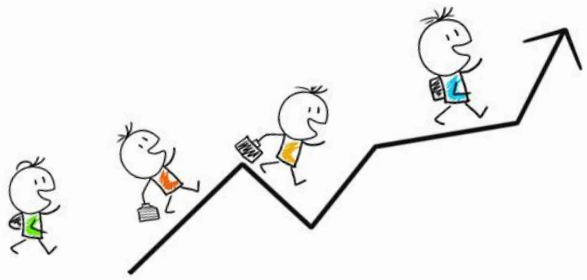
Children can understand the environment around them and be guided to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about different people, cultures, places, technology, built-up and natural environment. Science and natural phenomena stimulate children's curiosity and inquiry-based learning is encouraged, problem-solving and exploration. Living organisms, different materials and their features, the solar system are a few basic subjects to be explored. Environmental education can be a part of this area; recycling and protection of the environment as a habit.

## Arts and culture

Children should have visual and performing / expressive arts experiences. Children will develop creativity, imagination, perception and spatial orientation, and sensitivity and self-expression by enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities; art, design, making pictures, music, movement, dance, role-play, sing. Arts can be a form of communicating and sharing, relating with the past and culture, carrying values and principles. Children can also learn about famous art work or traditional arts.

# Learning goals of the early age

Children in "DIA-drasis" ECEC program are between 2 to 4 years old. Two year olds and four year olds have different development progress and different learning experiences. Although there are some typical milestones of the early age development according to many Psychology theories, each child passes through the various stages at its own pace. Children's development is affected by a range of factors and aspects. In this case, the group of children is a group of mixed abilities and mixed ages. Most of them may have not been exposed to other school environments, so the adjustment period is a great deal. Adjustment can be challenging even for parents, especially if traumatic experiences come to surface. Teachers should be flexible and adapt to children's different educational needs.



What is roughly expected from a preschool program is that the children will:

- be introduced to the learning environment and adjust to new situations
- learn to interact with other children and adults, thus separation from parent/guardian will be more easy
- become more independent and expressive.

The main areas of learning and development (as mentioned above) for the early years are:

- Communication and language
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical and psychological health and growth

At the following tables there are the general learning goals for each development area and more specific goals for 2 or 4 year olds when applicable. It is not a totally thorough table that covers everything; a lot can vary depending on the wide range of factors of children's development.

| *General goals* | *2 - 2½ years* | *3 - 4 years* |
|---|---|---|
| Listening and attention<br>✓ listen actively within a range of situations<br>✓ pay attention to what others say<br>✓ respond<br>✓ participate in conversation | ✓ can point to an object or picture when it's named<br>✓ can concentrate for a short period of time | ✓ can name an object when it is shown to them<br>✓ can increase concentration time on new voices and sounds |
| Understanding<br>✓ follow instructions<br>✓ ask and answer "how" and "why" questions<br>✓ be aware of the theme of talking | ✓ follow one step directions i.e. "sit down"<br>✓ understand names of familiar objects, body parts, and people | ✓ follow two step directions i.e. "take your shoes off and sit down"<br>✓ understand what others say and respond |
| Speaking<br>✓ express themselves effectively<br>✓ use language(s) more accurately when speak about the past, the present or the future<br>✓ develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas and events | ✓ talk in short sentences (2 - 4 words)<br>✓ try to pronounce new words<br>✓ converse dual in small groups | ✓ talk in sentences that make sense (use 5-6 words)<br>✓ reuse heard sentences<br>✓ converse in a proper way with others<br>✓ realise that sounds connect to letters (i.e. letters in their names)<br>✓ identify their name |

# Personal, social and emotional development

| *General goals* | *2 - 2½ years* | *3 - 4 years* |
|---|---|---|
| Self-confidence and self-awareness<br>✓ become confident and try new activities<br>✓ express what they like and why<br>✓ speak confidently in a group<br>✓ talk about their ideas<br>✓ choose materials and resources for an activity<br>✓ say when they need help | | |
| Managing feelings and behaviour<br>✓ talk about their feelings or others'<br>✓ talk about their behaviour or others'<br>✓ understand consequences of behaviour<br>✓ distinct acceptable / unacceptable behaviour and understand boundaries | ✓ begin to use words for their needs<br>✓ recognize they have emotions<br>✓ realize others have feelings too | ✓ ability to recognize different feelings<br>✓ begin to feel empathy<br>✓ use words to state feelings |
| Making relationships<br>✓ play together and co-operate<br>✓ work as part of a group and develop the sense of belonging<br>✓ understand and follow the rules<br>✓ take account of others' ideas<br>✓ show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings<br>✓ form positive relationships with others | ✓ realise they are part of a bigger group<br>✓ begin to play with others (instead of playing side by side)<br>✓ develop trust with other adult caregivers (i.e. educators, childcare staff) | ✓ increase imaginative play<br>✓ taking turns with others and share<br>✓ develop friendships independent of family<br>✓ understand the concept of gender |

| *General goals* | *2 - 2½ years* | *3 - 4 years* |
|---|---|---|
| Moving and handling<br>✓ show good control and co-ordination in movements<br>✓ move and use their body with confidence<br>✓ develop hand-eye co-ordination, listen and move<br>✓ handle equipment and tools effectively<br>✓ develop fine motor skills<br>✓ sit and focus on an activity | ✓ use crayons or markers<br>✓ begin scribble write<br>✓ fist hold of pencils<br>✓ sit and focus for 5-10 minutes on an activity | ✓ use pencils and colored pencils properly<br>✓ trace shapes, letters, numbers<br>✓ pretend to write (pencil control)<br>✓ sit and focus for 10-15 minutes for an activity<br>✓ begin to use scissors |
| Health and self-care<br>✓ know the importance of physical exercise<br>✓ know about healthy nutrition<br>✓ manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs | ✓ wash their hands using soap<br>✓ undress themselves<br>✓ (maybe) show an interest in toilet training (i.e. imitating others' bathroom habits)<br>✓ feed themselves (i.e. imitating eating habits), use a spoon or hold a cup with some help | ✓ dress and put shoes on<br>✓ be ready for toilet training or go to the toilet independently<br>✓ use a spoon and fork to eat, hold a cup<br>✓ brushes teeth (with help or supervision) |
| Separation and independence<br>✓ control separation anxiety | ✓ shows a desire for independence<br>✓ test limits | ✓ become more independent<br>✓ understand boundaries |

# Daily schedule

Schedule is important because it has great influence on the children's feeling of security and can affect their performance and accomplishments. A good schedule should provide balance between sessions of planned activities and free play, give time for physical activities as well as relaxed activities, group work and individual time, and at any circumstances to be flexible. Educators should take into account the age of the children when they plan activities of even for free play time sessions. Younger children usually need more time for free play but for older children more time spent for guided play and organised activities is better. Also, it is advised that three and four year olds should spend 4-5 hours per day in ECEC program. Younger children should start attending on a daily basis for 1½ - 2 hours per day and gradually increase to 4-5 hours per day.

This is a rough schedule as it has been formed up to date:

| | Monday - Friday |
|---|---|
| 8:30-9:45 | arrival time - free play<br>Children can have individual time in learning stations or playing with puzzles, together or alone. |
| 9:45-10:15 | breakfast time<br>Children follow washing hands routine, sit around the table and practice table manners. |
| 10:15-11:00 | morning circle routine<br>Children sit in a circle and begin with a welcome routine, usually a bilingual rhyme and introducing/greet each other, sharing and discuss in the circle with their peers and educators, talk about the week's theme, check to the attendance chart, talk about the weather etc.<br>Short break for water or going to the toilet before starting an activity. |
| 11:00-11:30 | planned activity<br>Educators can organise an activity addressing the theme of the week. It can be motor activities, music, art, drawing, science, numeracy or literacy related. |
| 11:30-12:00 | free play |
| 12:00-12:30 | lunchtime (same routine as breakfast time) |
| 12:30-13:00 | storytelling activity - reading routine |
| 13:00-13:30 | planned activity<br>Educators can organise an activity addressing the theme of the week. It can be motor, music, art, drawing, science, numeracy or literacy. |
| 13:30-14:00 | guided play / group activity |
| 14:00-15:00 | departure - free play |

# Thematic units - curriculum map

The following table shows some of the thematic units taught during "DIA-drasis" ECEC program. For each theme, the basic aim and main objectives are stated, basic content and resources, recycling material and suggested duration. These are suggestions that have been based on real practice and planning by the Education Team of "DIA-drasis" ECEC program. Of course there are some ideas that were not realized as such or activities that had been carried out in a different way or period. These are just a few of the possible activities that an educator can carry out. The same applies for the resources, since there is so much material that can be used as educational, adapted from or in any language. The planning was ongoing, emerging and reflective. Some of the activities based on other themes were repeated and improved. Here, we don't have the opportunity to refer to activities in detail but we are looking forward to creating additional material or an educational guide with details on activities and planning. Also, the language content that is suggested is not exclusive. Arabic is showcased because it was the language spoken by the majority of the children. Maybe in the future, given the necessary professionals we could build a suggested vocabulary in Kurdish or other spoken languages of the children, to help educators with their teaching.

| Thematic Unit | Basic Aim<br>Main objectives<br>*Children are expected to…* | Content / Resources | Recycling | Duration |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| All about me | Personal identity<br>✓ become aware of themselves and develop a positive self-image<br>✓ acknowledge differences and similarities with others<br>✓ learn and use greetings in all spoken languages in the group<br>✓ be able to introduce themselves<br>✓ create symbols for identity recognition | Suggested Activities<br>Morning circle with greetings and games to get to know each other (tell their names or ask the name of their peers).<br>Self-portraits (make shapes of faces with paper, mixed medium collage).<br>Hand or finger prints and create personal symbols.<br>Take pictures of children and display in class.<br>Observe / remember peers' face - discuss differences and similarities.<br>Classroom tree / attendance chart.<br>Use a mascot (i.e. a puppet).<br><br>Vocabulary and expressions | | 2 weeks (Oct.) |

| *English*[23] | *Greek* | *Arabic*[24] |
|---|---|---|
| Good morning | Καλημέρα [kalimera] | صباح الخير [sabah alkher] |
| Hello | Γεια σου [ya su] | [marhaban] مرحبا |
| How are you? | Τι κάνεις; [ti kanis] | [keyfa/ik] كيفكَ؟ |
| Fine | Καλά [kala] | [bikhayr] بخير |
| I am [name] | Είμαι ο/η… [ime o/i] | [ana] أنا |
| What's your name? | Πώς σε λένε; [pos se lene] | ما/شو اسمك؟ [shu/ma ismak/ik] |
| My name is… | Με λένε… [me lene] | [ismee] اسمي |
| Nice to meet you | Χαίρω πολύ [hero poli] | [tasharafna] تشرفنا |

[23] English was not used for instruction. Here it is used as translation. During the ECEC program it is used sometimes if children used English to communicate or sing etc.

[24] Arabic here is written in the official literary form (الفُصْحَى, al-fuṣḥā) but in everyday practice the spoken varieties were more common to use. In some cases, despite the fact that the spoken form is not common to be written, there are words of the spoken language in written form, because (only) this type was used.

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

'Kalimera ti kanis' [=Goodmorning, how are you?] by Children's Choir Spiros Lamprou
https://youtu.be/ljY-7Ic3IsY
'Ego ime ego' [=I am Me] (Trigonopsaroulis) https://youtu.be/kHPxgSLras0
Music story "Όταν αρρώστησε ο ήλιος" (=when the sun got sick) in Greek
https://youtu.be/WfiTcLdeTJY

# School

**Adjustment to the learning environment**

- ✓ adjust to the new learning environment by learning and following simple school rules and routines
- ✓ learn new words related to the school environment
- ✓ develop a common communication code using non-verbal elements, such as gestures
- ✓ be able to hold a pencil and get familiar with print
- ✓ develop fine motor skills by

## Suggested Activities

Simple school rules poster (dos and don'ts).
Follow routine activities - create a timetable with pictures.
Create a code to facilitate communication i.e. hand in the ear when someone has to listen, two fingers up when someone has to go to the toilet etc.
Pencil control activities and tracing with markers, crayons or colored pencils.

## Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| school bag | τσάντα [tsanda] | [shanta] شنطة |
| school | σχολείο [scholio] | [madrasah] مدرسة |
| chair | καρέκλα [karekla] | [kursi] كرسي |

Greetings and introductions

2 weeks (Oct.)

- tracing simple lines in pre-writing worksheets
- ✓ count 1-5

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| pencil | μολύβι [molivi] | [qalam rasas] قلم رصاص |
| glue/stick | κόλλα [kola] | [lsiq] لاصق |
| scissors | ψαλίδι [psalidi] | [maqas] مقص |
| book | βιβλίο [vivlio] | [kitab] كتاب |
| What's in your bag? | Τι έχεις στην τσάντα σου; [ti ehis mesa stin tsanda sou?] | شو عندك في الشنطة؟ [shu aynda/ik fi shanta?] |
| everybody sit around the table | καθόμαστε όλοι στο τραπέζι [kathomaste oli] | نجلس جميعا على الطاولة / قاعدين كلنا على الطرابيزة / [najlis jamyan ala al-tawla] |
| sit on the chair | κάθισε στην καρέκλα [kathise stin karekla] | اجلس على الكرسي [ajlis ala al-kursi] |
| (get in line) one by one | ένας ένας (στη σειρά) [enas enas - sti sira] | واحد واحد بالدور [wahad-wahad bi-dur] |
| time for breakfast/lunch | ώρα για φαγητό [ora ya fayito] | حان وقت الأكل [han waqt al-akl] |
| let's eat (Arabic trans.) | | |
| (let's) make a circle | κάνουμε κύκλο [kanoume kyklo] | ياالله نعمل دائرة / ياللى نقعد دايرة [yalla naamil da'irah / yalla naod dairah] |
| be quiet | ησυχία [isihia] | الهدوء [hudu'] / بلاصوت [balasot] |
| (I want) to go to the toilet | (θέλω)να πάω τουαλέτα [thelo na pao toualeta] | بدي اروح للحمام /التواليت bidi aruh al-twalet / al-hamam |
| (I want) water please | (θέλω) νερό παρακαλώ [thelo nero parakalo] | اذا سمحت ماء [idha samahti ma] |

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Student song (in Arabic) [shater shater = smart - smart]
https://youtu.be/F1c8Hwpuuzk
First day at school song (in Greek) https://youtu.be/Z3uunknz2xA

# Favorite toys and games Numbers

**Acknowledge the learning environment and the objects around**

- ✓ name and categorize surrounding objects / toys
- ✓ learn new vocabulary of surrounding objects / toys
- ✓ make choices of favorite toy / game
- ✓ sort out objects / toys
- ✓ put toys and materials in order, tidy up the space after playing
- ✓ count 1-10
- ✓ recognize the print numbers in Greek / Arabic
- ✓ describe the position of an object (on, in, under, out)

## Suggested Activities

Talk about favorite toys or games and express liking.
Sorting and categorizing activities i.e. stacking blocks into categories by size or color.
Games to learn the numbers i.e. piles of x objects.
Observation game: Let children spot an object i.e. Where is the ball?
Drawing my favorite toy. Make a poster of favorite activities and games.
Motor games with balloons i.e. race blowing the balloons on the floor.
Learn and play traditional games from the countries of origin. Parents can be also involved by asking them about a game they used to play as children.

## Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| I like playing! | Μου αρέσει να παίζω! [mou aresi na pezo] | [baheb al-laab] بحب اللعب |
| toys/games | παιχνίδια [pehnidia] | [alaab] ألعاب |
| ball | μπάλα [bala] | [kura] كرة |
| balloon | μπαλόνι [baloni] | [balona] بالونة |
| puzzle(s) | παζλ [pazl] | [bazl] بزل |
| building blocks | τουβλάκια [touvlakia] | [mukaabat] مكعبات |

Numbers 1-5

2 weeks (Nov.)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| kitchenware | κουζινικά [kouzinika] | [aadat matbakh] عدة مطبخ |
| teddy bear | αρκουδάκι [arkoudaki] | [dob/dabdub] دب دبدوب |
| little house | σπιτάκι [spitaki] | [bayt sagheer] بيت صغير |
| What's this? | Τι είναι αυτό; [ti ine afto] | شو هذا / ما هذا [shu/ma hadha?] |
| This is... | Αυτό είναι... [afto ine] | [hadha hwa...] هذا هو... |
| in(side) | μέσα [mesa] | [jwa] جوه |
| out(side) | έξω [exo] | [bara] بره |
| on / over | πάνω [pano] | [fawq/fo] فوق |
| down / under | κάτω [kato] | [taht] تحت |
| Where is ...? | Πού είναι ...; [pou ine] | [wen...] وين... |

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

I'm a little teapot (in Arabic) https://youtu.be/BIe7GSHhN-U
Μου αρέσει το παιχνίδι [I like playing] (in Greek) https://youtu.be/rMOCi_aFwuA
I learn to count up to 5 (in Greek) https://youtu.be/H0GMbs2Q2j8
Song for numbers 1, 2, 3 (in Arabic) https://youtu.be/LVDswdoNTgk
Marah channel - Numbers (in Arabic) https://youtu.be/o43ZteVMQHQ
Story in Arabic "Time for school trip [ وقت النزهة ]"

## Children's Rights

**Introduction to children rights**

- ✓ explore basic rights of the child (Convention on the Rights of the Child - CRC)
- ✓ develop listening and speaking
- ✓ encourage critical and creative thinking
- ✓ practice good manners and acceptable social behavior
- ✓ name their own needs and wants

### Suggested Activities

Group poster with children's rights / Class charter
Categorize needs and wants / memory game with cards of needs and wants.
Cut outs pictures depicting children's rights and create a card with what each child thinks as the most important needs and wants.
Talk or sing about good manners and appropriate behavior.
Making choices i.e. hitting/helping/sharing/playing with friends etc.
Parents involvement[25]

### Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| right | δικαίωμα [dikeoma] | [haq] حق |
| child(ren) | παιδί/ιά [pedi/a] | [walad-awlad] أولاد/ ولد |
| I need... | χρειάζομαι... [hriazome] | [ahtaj ila] إلى أحتاج |
| I want... | θέλω... [thelo] | [bidi-aayz] بدي/ عايز |
| water | νερό [nero] | [ma'] ماء / ميه |
| food | φαγητό [fayito] | [akl] أكل |
| play | παιχνίδι [pehnidi] | [laaba] لعبة |
| school | σχολείο [sholio] | [madrasa] مدرسة |
| education | εκπαίδευση [ekpedefsi] | [taaleem] تعليم |
| love | αγάπη [agape] | [hob] حب |
| family | οικογένεια [ikoyenia] | [usrah] أسرة |
| hygiene | υγιεινή [iyeini] | [nadhafa-sahi] نظافة/صحي |
| health | υγεία [iyea] | [saha] صحة |
| equality | ισότητα [isotita] | [musawa'] مساواة |
| clothes | ρούχα [rouha] | هدوم/ملابس [malabis/hudum] |

Numbers 1-10

Link with previous theme about school and focus on the right on education.

Link with previous theme on personal identity development.

2 week (Nov.)

20th of November United Nations Universal Children's Day

[25] During ECEC program, after a Parents and Teachers Meeting, in which parents were informed for the activities and the respective theme, one parent shared with us the idea to make good use of his hobby and skills on video/photography. He suggested shooting a short film based on Children's Rights and especially how education is a right and all parents should take care of their children's education of early age. We were positive and all teachers on board. The outcome was a short film available here https://youtu.be/LTUWzAEvd5k that can be used for awareness on early childhood right to a safe learning environment.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Books / Stories / Videos / Songs**<br>Story based on "All I really need" songbook.<br>Pictures for memory game: https://photofestivalleiden.com/2014/05/30/ifl-joins-leiden-child-right-week/?lang=en<br>"What are child rights?" video by UNICEF Australia https://youtu.be/V1BFLitBkco | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Family** | **Family relations**<br>✓ learn and use vocabulary about family<br>✓ recognize the family relations<br>✓ describe the members of the family<br>✓ tell their age<br>✓ tell their origin<br>✓ recognize gender and classify boys/girls<br>✓ practice the opposites old≠young, big≠small | **Suggested Activities**<br>Family tree (with immediate members of family).<br>Family quilt / bring something of or create symbols for their families.<br>Family portraits - observe and discuss differences and similarities.<br>Parents can be involved by bringing pictures or other memorabilia of their families.<br>People puppets / play dough family figures.<br>Role play with dolls or puppets as members of a family.<br>Boys/girls classification motor activities.<br>Count how many boys/girls / Make object or drawings chart (pre-math). | Numbers 1-10<br><br>Introductions | 2 weeks (Dec.) |

## Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| mother (mum) | η μαμά [i mama] | [umm/ mama] أم/ ماما |
| father (dad) | ο μπαμπάς [o bambas] | [ab/ baba] أب / بابا |
| sister | η αδελφή [i adelfi] | [ukht] أخت |
| brother | ο αδελφός [o adelfos] | [akh] أخ |
| boy | αγόρι [agori] | [walad] ولد |
| girl | κορίτσι [koritsi] | [bint] بنت |
| Have you got any siblings? | Έχεις αδέλφια; [ehis adelfia] | عندك اخوات؟ [aynda/ik ikhwat?] |
| How many siblings have you got? | Πόσα αδέλφια έχεις; [posa adelfia ehis] | كام اخ عندك؟ [kam akh aynd/ik?] |
| What's the name of your (mother/father…)? | Πώς λένε τη μαμά σου / τον μπαμπά σου; [pos lene ti mama sou/ ton bamba sou] | ما /شو اسم ماما؟ [ma/shu ism mama?] ما/ شو اسم بابا؟ [ma/shu ism baba?] |
| How old are you? | Πόσο χρονών είσαι; [poso hronon ise] | كم عمرك / عندك كام سنة؟ [kam omra/ik? / [aynda/ik kam sanah?] |
| I am … years old. | Είμαι… [ime] | [omri…] …عمري |
| Where are you from? | Από πού είσαι; [apo pou ise] | من أين أنت؟ [min ayna anta/i?] |
| I am from… | Είμαι από… [ime apo…] | [ana min…]….أنا من |

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Peppa Pig: Mum's birthday (in Greek) https://youtu.be/eYLYbiM4iQo
The Family Book by Todd Parr https://youtu.be/AyVL9bH0guk
Song about mother (in Greek) https://youtu.be/-niQYBRvkZA
Το βιβλίο της μαμάς [to vivlio tis mamas] (= Mother's Book) by Todd Parr
The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein (in Greek) https://youtu.be/UmZulvbllPU

## Seasons and weather

**4 seasons and weather conditions**

- ✓ learn about the four seasons of the year
- ✓ get familiar with the concept of time (day, night, week etc.)
- ✓ connect the seasons with the weather conditions
- ✓ use simple vocabulary about weather
- ✓ explore the concept of temperature (the nature of hot and cold)
- ✓ share myths and stories about seasons as a cultural aspect
- ✓ practice the opposites cold≠hot/warm, day≠night

### Suggested Activities

Creative group activity: make a sun out of paper collage.
Play with the snow / messy play / create snowman.
Simple science experiments with hot and cold water.
Use a globe ball to explain seasons and time or cold and warm areas.
Make a weather chart to help tell the weather on a daily basis.
Watch a weather report on TV and imitate telling the weather.
Prepare Christmas decorations.

### Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| winter | χειμώνας [himonas] | [shita'] شتاء |
| spring | άνοιξη [anixi] | [rabya] ربيع |
| summer | καλοκαίρι [kalokeri] | [seyf] صيف |
| autumn | φθινόπωρο [fthinoporo] | [khareef] خريف |
| What's the weather today? | Τι καιρό κάνει σήμερα; [ti kero kani simera] | كيف الجو اليوم؟ [keyf al-jaw al-yum?] |
| It's cold. | Κάνει κρύο. [kani krio] | [al-jaw bard] الجو برد |
| It's warm. | Κάνει ζέστη. [kani zesti] | [ al-jaw har] الجو حر |

Numbers

Introductions

Opposites

2 weeks (Dec.-Jan.)

(Christmas break)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| It's sunny. | Έχει ήλιο. [ehi ilio] | [fee shams] فيه شمس |
| It's cloudy. | Έχει συννεφιά. [ehi synefia] | [fee ghuyum] فيه غيوم |
| It's raining. | Βρέχει. [vrehi] | فيه مطر / بتمطر [fee matar/bitmatar] |
| It's snowing. | Χιονίζει. [hionizi] | [fee thalj] فيه ثلج |
| It's windy. | Φυσάει. [fisai] | [fee hawa] فيه هو |

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Song based on Aesop's fable "The North Wind and the Sun" (in Greek)
https://youtu.be/jOv8lKba0us
Song "Ήλιε μου" [=My Sun] https://youtu.be/AuLw39bkKHo
"Το πρωί ο ήλιος βγαίνει" (song in Greek) [=The sun rises in the morning]
Four Seasons music by Vivaldi https://youtu.be/GRxofEmo3HA
Aesop's fable "The North Wind and the Sun" https://youtu.be/d66Bk9512wQ
It's Raining!: A Pop-up Book with Patterns by Catherine Grimaldi
Weather conditions for kids in Arabic https://youtu.be/ACYx4roqXl4
Weather conditions in Arabic https://youtu.be/UVO3KgkKkYw
Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter in Arabic https://youtu.be/6DFk09svDwM
Learn Four Seasons in Arabic for Kids https://youtu.be/53oHBQt1nHg
Important facts about seasons and change in Greek
https://youtu.be/iOyA6xVqJYU
Song four seasons and months in Greek
https://youtu.be/ZuK4QLyMiRY?list=PLDqFuMfxJdqze4DCXv6-vXQRL56VEGAfM
Story from Greek Mythology "Persephone" - 4 seasons
https://youtu.be/rptxvqaJOO4
Energiser song "The skier" in Greek https://youtu.be/XRhndR2sh7Q

# My body 5 senses Personal hygiene

**Self-knowledge, self-awareness and taking care of themselves**

- ✓ learn parts of the body and facial features
- ✓ develop hand-eye movement coordination
- ✓ learn to express any discomfort or pain they may feel
- ✓ explore and name their senses
- ✓ learn how to care of themselves in terms of personal hygiene
- ✓ comprehend the opposites clean≠dirty, bitter≠sweet etc.

## Suggested Activities

Motor games to learn parts of the body and coordinate moves i.e. versions of twister.
Role play: Visiting the doctor - Doctor's set of plastic toys.
Activities for prevention of child abuse or violent behaviour among peers.
Sensory play / children can feel/taste/see/smell/listen to different objects and materials.
Dramatize personal hygiene routines i.e. washing hands, brushing teeth

## Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| head | κεφάλι [kefali] | [ra's] رأس |
| legs / feet | πόδια [podia] | [aqdam] اقدام |
| arms / hands | χέρια [heria] | [ayadi/yadeyn] يدين / ايادي |
| eyes | μάτια [matia] | [ayun] عيون |
| nose | μύτη [miti] | [anf] انف |
| ears | αφτιά [aftia] | [aadhan] آذان |
| mouth | στόμα [stoma] | [fam] فم |
| shoulders | ώμοι [omi] | [katifeyn] كتفين |
| knee | γόνατο [ghonato] | [rukbah] ركبة |
| hair | μαλλιά [malya] | [shaar] شعر |

Numbers

Opposites

Weather

Children's Rights

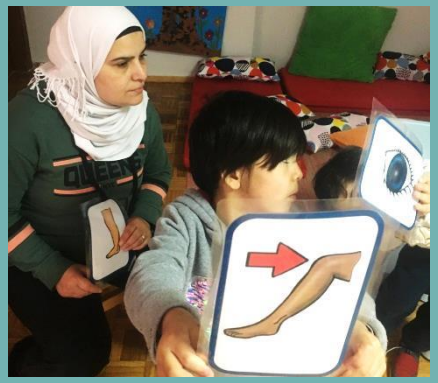
3-4 weeks (Jan./Feb.)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (with my eyes) I see | (με τα μάτια) βλέπω<br>[me ta matia vlepo] | أرى بعينية/بطلّع بعينيه<br>[araa bi ayney/batlaa bi ayney] |
| (with my ears) I listen | (με τα αφτιά) ακούω<br>[me ta aftia akouo] | اسنع بأذنيه /بسمع بودنيه |
| (with my nose) I smell | (με τη μύτη) μυρίζω<br>[me ti miti mirizo] | بشم بأنفي<br>[basham bi unfee] |
| sour | ξινό [xino] | [hamid] حامض |
| salty | αλμυρό [almiro] | [malih] مالح |
| bitter | πικρό [pikro] | [mur] مّر |
| sweet | γλυκό [gliko] | [helw] حلو |
| soft | μαλακό [malako] | [tari/layan] لين/ طري |
| hard | σκληρό [skliro] | [qasi/shaded] قاسي/ شديد |
| turn on the tap | ανοίγω τη βρύση | افتح الحنفية<br>[aftah al-hanafyah] |
| use soap | βάζω σαπούνι | [adaa sabun] اضع صابون |
| wash my hands off | πλένω τα χέρια μου | [aghsil ayadi] اغسل إيديه |
| clean | καθαρό | [nadheef] نظيف |
| dirty | βρώμικο | [wasikh /qadhar] وسخ / قذر |

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Song "Βόλτα στο σώμα" [Volta sto soma] (=head, shoulders, knees and toes) in Greek https://youtu.be/lwJNb9MRrwo and in Arabic https://youtu.be/7PGJszHQJvg
Song "Χαρωπά τα δυο μου χέρια να χτυπώ" [haropa ta dio mou heria ta chtipo] (=If You Happy and You Know It Clap Your Hands) https://youtu.be/_uvcRaR20K8
Song "Χόκι Πόκι" (=Hokey Pokey) https://youtu.be/P7kyL1H_lUE
Song: "Μόλις σηκωθώ" [Molis sikotho] (=When I wake up) in Greek with mimic movements of the morning personal hygiene routine.
How to brush your teeth properly https://youtu.be/hDZXSMU2lAk
Kindergarden Songs - Body Parts in Arabic https://youtu.be/UMCRSS0Xiww
The Five Senses song in Arabic https://youtu.be/WFcXa0n7RNY
My body is my body https://youtu.be/lGC0cbB0NAM
Protect Yourself Rules - Safe Touch / Unsafe Touch

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | https://youtu.be/zNTUMNKSNwk<br>"Kiko and the Hand" - Council of Europe (in various languages)<br>https://rm.coe.int/16806b073c<br>Book story "Hands are not for hitting" by Martine Agassi<br>Personal hygiene https://youtu.be/jEy0Ltlm3nU<br>Germ busters in Greek https://youtu.be/2WsooFlS5Vk | | |



| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Farm and wild animals | **Understand the environment around and learn other living organisms**<br>✓ learn farm animals and wild animals<br>✓ sort and categorize<br>✓ describe parts the body of the animal<br>✓ understand the importance of every living thing<br>✓ realize that animals have 'homes' and 'families' too | Suggested Activities<br>Narrate stories with animals or their favorite pet. Parents can be involved if asked about personal stories i.e. of their farm or if they had a pet etc.<br>Categorize animals based on their habitat (forest, sea, jungle etc.) or their abilities (i.e. fly, swim, run) or what they eat (herbivorous or carnivorous).<br>Mimic sounds of animals (in various languages) and their characteristic movements.<br>Match animals with their 'homes' / nests or young ones with the parent or their food.<br>Count animals and simple additions.<br>Drawing or collage activities with animals and parts of their body.<br>Describe animals' needs and how to take care and protect them.<br>Activities on diversity based on the story of the Ugly Duckling. | Numbers<br>Opposites<br>Family members<br>Parts of the body | 3-4 weeks (Feb.) |

## Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| dog | σκύλος [skilos] | [kalb] كلب |
| cat | γάτα [gata] | [qita/ota] قطة |
| bird | πουλί [pouli] | [aasfur] عصفور |
| fish | ψάρι [psari] | [samaka] سمكة |
| tortoise | χελώνα [helona] | [sulhafa'] سلحفاة |
| horse | άλογο [alogo] | [hosan] حصان |
| cow | αγελάδα [ayelada] | [baqarah] بقرة |
| hen | κότα [kota] | [dajajah] دجاجة |
| rooster | κόκορας [kokoras] | [deek] ديك |
| duck | πάπια [papia] | [battah] بطة |
| sheep | πρόβατο [provato] | خروف/نعجة (م.) [kharuf/noajah (f)] |
| lion | λιοντάρι [liondari] | [asad] أسد |
| elephant | ελέφαντας [elefandas] | [feel] فيل |
| zebra | ζέβρα [zebra] | زيبرا/الحمار الوحشي [zebra/al-husan al-wahshi] |
| monkey | μαϊμού [maimou] | [qarad] قرد |
| giraffe | καμηλοπάρδαλη [kamilopardali] | [zarafah] زرافة |
| tiger | τίγρης [tigris] | [namr] نمر |
| bear | αρκούδα [arkuda] | [dob] دب |
| Which animal is this? | Ποιο ζώο είναι αυτό; [pio zoo ine afto] | شو /ما هذا الحيوان؟ [shu/ma hadha al-hayawan] |
| This is... | Είναι... [ine] | [hadha...] هذا |

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Aesop's fables with animals
Book story (=the stubborn donkey) الحمار العنيد
Book story (the horse flies) الحصان يطير
The Ugly Duckling by Hans Christian Andersen in Greek and Arabic
Names and voices of animals in Arabic https://youtu.be/_BHN2fllKvA
Bob train farm visit https://youtu.be/GeLPONwZ3sk
Learn names of animals in Arabic https://youtu.be/0xYTcZvVCuI
Τα ζωάκια της φάρμας και οι ήχοι τους (=farm animals and their sounds) in Greek https://youtu.be/xpz0iUVMmfE and song https://youtu.be/mwweVZofisM
Song in Greek "Το κοκοράκι" [to kokoraki] (=the little cock / Old MacDonald Had A Farm) https://youtu.be/pcH4C0SzhKY
Song in Greek "Το Ελεφαντάκι" [to elefandaki] (=the little elephant) https://youtu.be/V8bUPNE1mhg
Energiser song in Greek "The Bear" https://youtu.be/zkKo3f0VMg0
Song in Arabic "Tiri Tiri Ya 3asfoura" https://youtu.be/7KjeCzFuUGI
The Carnival of the Animals (Le carnaval des animaux) - humorous musical suite by Camille Saint-Saëns https://youtu.be/k2RPKMJmSp0
https://www.kindykids.gr/images/stories/karnavali/to-karnavali-twn-zwwn.pdf

## Clothes

**Self-help skills in dressing**

- ✓ learn clothing vocabulary
- ✓ recognise basic clothing items and basic colors
- ✓ describe what they are wearing or what their peers are wearing
- ✓ sets and classifying
- ✓ identify clothing items to wear considering the weather conditions
- ✓ practice getting dressed and undressed with drama costumes
- ✓ learn about differences and similarities of clothing in the past or present, around the world or because of gender

### Suggested Activities

Recognize clothes on themselves or others (what do you wear? / I wear...)
Listen / see a flashcard and find the piece of clothes in the room.
In groups: categorize clothes by color - color and cut small pieces of paper clothing - use clothespins to hang them in a rack.
Practice how to hang their jackets before entering the learning space.
Reading books: recognize clothes in pictures and tell what the characters are wearing.
Pictures of how people dress in the country of origin or in the past (parents can be involved in such activities: i.e. bring pictures of traditional clothing).
Observe differences or similarities between men / women clothing.
Count how many girls/boys wear i.e. a T-shirt?
Play a version of "I-Spy" i.e. I spy with my little eye, someone who is wearing red socks.
What clothes do they wear if it is cold / warm weather?
Cut outs of boy/girl and dress them up - color and stick clothes.
Make a paper hat and decorate it.

### Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| trousers | παντελόνι [pandeloni] | [bantalon] بنطلون |
| skirt | φούστα [fousta] | [tanura] تنورة |
| dress | φουστάνι [foustani] | [fustan] فستان |
| shirt | πουκάμισο [poukamiso] | [qamis] قميص |
| T-shirt | μπλούζα [bluza] | [bluza] بلوزة |
| jacket | ζακέτα [zaketa] | [jaket] جاكت |
| socks | κάλτσες [kaltses] | [jawarib] جوارب |
| shoes | παπούτσια [papoutsia] | [bot] بوط |
| hat/cap | καπέλο [kapelo] | [qabwah] قبعة |
| What are you wearing today?<br>I am wearing... | Τι φοράς σήμερα;<br>[ti foras simera]<br>Φοράω... [forao] | ماذا تلبس اليوم؟<br>[madha talbis alyum?]<br>[albis...] ...البس |

Numbers

Opposites

Parts of the body

Gender

Weather

1-2 weeks (Mar.)

During the end of February or during March, usually is the carnival season in Greek tradition. Masked/ costume parties are common.

During March is usually the "Mardi Gras" (Monday, beginning of Lent) in Greek tradition. Flying a kite is a children and adults custom of the day.

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Book story in Greek "Όταν ντύνομαι" [otan dinome] (=Putting my clothes on)
Book story in Arabic (=I put on my clothes myself) ألبس وحدي
Learn the clothes in Greek https://youtu.be/1Tk4HKzG618

Peppa pig - masked party (in Greek) https://youtu.be/8g1ynV_IOPI
Children's carnival song in Greek https://youtu.be/6t2Y2tnRTa0
The Carnival of the Animals (Le carnaval des animaux) - humorous musical suite by Camille Saint-Saëns https://youtu.be/k2RPKMJmSp0
https://www.kindykids.gr/images/stories/karnavali/to-karnavali-twn-zwwn.pdf

The kite song in Greek https://youtu.be/2PRE740th5M
Peppa Pig - Flying A Kite (in Greek) https://youtu.be/wwOfy3IyWIk
Let's Go Fly A Kite song form Mary Poppins movie https://youtu.be/BA-g8YYPKVo

# Colors of the Rainbow Springtime

**Learn colors**

- ✓ learn colors and recognize them
- ✓ learn about nature in spring (plants, insects etc.)
- ✓ experience different art techniques
- ✓ explore the phenomenon of rainbow
- ✓ learn about traditions during springtime across countries

## Suggested Activities

Recognize colors on objects or pictures i.e. flowers.
Group poster about spring and flowers using a mixed media collage.
Make a paper rainbow to decorate the space.
Simple experiments with light and water to explore nature of rainbow.
Counting flowers or petals of flowers.
Reading books: recognize flowers in books, bees or butterflies.
Categorize books by (salient) color.
Color flowers using watercolors.
Motor activity in groups: find and give the flower to the next person.
Arabic motor game in a circle 'open flower / close flower'.
Visit Honey Park: lean about beekeeping and honey producing.

## Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| red | κόκκινο [kokkino] | [ahmar] أحمر |
| orange | πορτοκαλί [portokali] | [bortoqali] برتوقالي |
| yellow | κίτρινο [kitrino] | [asfar] أصفر |
| green | πράσινο [prasino] | [ahkdar] أخضر |
| blue | μπλε [ble] | [azraq] أؤرق |
| light blue | γαλάζιο [galazio] | [azraq faith] أؤرق فاتح |
| purple | μωβ [mov] | [mov] موف |
| white | άσπρο [aspro] | [abyad] أبيض |
| black | μαύρο [mavro] | [aswad] أسود |
| pink | ροζ [roz] | [zahri] زهري |
| rainbow | ουράνιο τόξο [ouranio toxo] | [qus kozah] قوس القزح |
| flower | λουλούδι [louloudi] | [warda] وردة |
| butterfly | πεταλούδα [petalouda] | [farashah] فراشة |
| ladybug | πασχαλίτσα [pashalitsa] | خنفساء حمراء [khunfasa' hamra'] |
| bee | μέλισσα [melissa] | [nahlah] نحلة |

Numbers

Colors

Seasons

2 weeks (Mar.)

21st of March is Mother's Day in the Arabic World / first day of the New Year (Newroz) in Kurdish and Persian tradition.

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Colours in Arabic https://youtu.be/gS691j9fntg
Learn Colors for Kids in Arabic https://youtu.be/8_4_F8EunRI?list=PLLuA-X--i6BKBv5y69--nCDXFJTbNHqho
Bob The Train - Learn Colours https://youtu.be/aNcceC6vHGE
Learn the colours of the rainbow in Greek https://youtu.be/KO-54p8H_8w
Butterfly song - الفراشة https://youtu.be/kOrocU9Ag04
Butterfly song in Greek "Μια ωραία Πεταλούδα" [mia orea petalouda] https://youtu.be/SIes1bZimqE
The Hungry Caterpillar https://youtu.be/75NQK-Sm1YY
Book story "Μια μέρα στην εξοχή" [mia mera stin exohi] (=a day at the countryside) translated from Spanish (Un dia en el campo) by Paramon & Rius.

# Fairy Tales, Fantasy and children's books

**Enhance reading habits**

- ✓ narrate or retell stories
- ✓ read stories through pictures
- ✓ listen to a story and ask or answer to questions
- ✓ describe book illustrations and comment on the story
- ✓ use and enhance their imagination
- ✓ use theatre techniques to play the stories they read
- ✓ get comfortable with using books and get accustomed to the reading corner
- ✓ share family stories, bed-time stories and realize similarities across cultures

## Suggested Activities

Activities inspired by the books or fairy tales read in the group.
Motor activities, crafts, role play.
Creating stories in a circle. Fairy tale mixer.
Chinese whispers in various versions.
Filling 'gaps' of stories.
Books domino: match the book covers by size, color, elements of the pictures.
Use the picture of a cover of a book and have a group drawing by extending the 'story' of the book covers. Narrate an imaginative story based on the drawings.
Make puppets of favorite heroes/heroines of a fairy tale and play the story.
Use costumes or other props to dramatize a story.
Change the story i.e. change the ending, change the gender of the lead character, change a feature of a character.
Family favorite fairy tales i.e. bed-time stories (parents involvement).

## Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| book | βιβλίο [vivlio] | [kitab] كتاب |
| fairy tale | παραμύθι [paramithi] | [qusah] قصة |
| story | ιστορία [istoria] | [hikayah] حكاية |
| I read | διαβάζω [diavazo] | [aqra'] اقرا |
| I listen | ακούω [akouo] | [asmaa] اسمع |
| Once upon a time… | Μια φορά κι έναν καιρό… [mia for a ki enan kero] | كان يا مكان في قديم الزمان [kan ya makan fee qadeem azaman] |

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Ideas for activities with books: 1001 activités autour du livre - Philippe Brasseur (in Greek)
The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore https://youtu.be/Ad3CMri3hOs
Elmer the patchwork elephant (in Greek) https://youtu.be/qSqQzKcr4VM

Numbers

Colors

Animals

Opposites

1 week (Apr.)

2nd of April is International Children's Book Day

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | The Ugly Duckling (or other well-known fairy tales) by Hans Christian Andersen in Greek, Arabic and other languages.<br>Little red riding hood (European version and Arabic)<br>Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves (in Greek and Arabic)<br>All the Colors of the Earth by Sheila Hamanaka (a multicultural story)<br>https://youtu.be/xmL93MAlmQ4<br>Greek song "Book is my best friend" https://youtu.be/QD2OfNawHPM | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fruits and Vegetables | Learn fruit and vegetables<br>✓ name fruits and vegetables and learn new vocabulary<br>✓ categorize fruits and vegetable<br>✓ understand the nutritional value of fruits and vegetables<br>✓ develop their motor and self-care skills<br>✓ identify the different tastes<br>✓ express liking<br>✓ develop communication skills in real life situations | Suggested Activities<br>Let them pick and name their favorite fruit or vegetable and describe the taste.<br>Talk about fruits or vegetables they like or don't like.<br>Sort out and categorize fruits and/or vegetables based on color, on shape, on size.<br>Squeeze lemons and make simple experiments with lemon juice.<br>Taste lemon juice or sugar to separate the taste of sour and sweet.<br>Color paper fruits or pick plastic fruits and make a big fruit salad: count and divide.<br>Visit a grocery store in the neighborhood and buy some fruits for snack break.<br>Role-play grocery's store using imaginative money (pre-math).<br>Wash and cut fruits to make a real fruit salad and share it.<br>Make fresh fruit juice and taste it or make popsicles from it. | 5 Senses (taste, smell)<br><br>Seasons<br><br>Numbers<br><br>Colors<br><br>Like/Don't like | 2 weeks (Apr.)<br><br>(Easter break) |

## Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| fruits | φρούτα [frouta] | [fawakeh] فواكه |
| apple | μήλο [milo] | [tufah] تفاح |
| orange | πορτοκάλι [portokali] | [bortoqal] برتقال |
| banana | μπανάνα [banana] | [moz] موز |
| strawberry | φράουλα [fraoula] | [frawla] فراولة |
| cherry | κεράσι [kerasi] | [karaz] كرز |
| kiwi | ακτινίδιο [aktinidio] | [kiui] كيوي |
| watermelon | καρπούζι [karpouzi] | [batikh] بطيخ |
| pomegranate | ρόδι [rodhi] | [roman] رمان |
| grape | σταφύλι [stafili] | [aynab] عينب |
| pear | αχλάδι [ahladhi] | [ijas] إجاص |
| berries | μούρα [moura] | [tut] توت |
| | | |
| vegetables | λαχανικά [lahanika] | [khudrawat] خضراوات |
| tomato | ντομάτα [domata] | [banadura] بندورة |
| potato | πατάτα [patata] | [batata] بطاطا |
| cucumber | αγγούρι [agouri] | [khyar] خيار |
| carrot | καρότο [karoto] | [jazar] جزر |
| lemon | λεμόνι [lemoni] | [laymun] ليمون |
| pepper | πιπεριά [piperia] | [felfel] فلفل |
| aubergine / eggplant | μελιτζάνα [melitzana] | [betinjan] بتنجان |
| zucchini | κολοκυθάκι [kolokithaki] | [kosa] كوسا |
| onion | κρεμμύδι [kremidhi] | [basal] بصل |
| peas | αρακάς/μπιζέλια [arakas/bizelya] | [bazalya] بازيلا |
| | | |
| Do you like...? | Σου αρέσει ...; [sou aresi] | [hal tuheb] هل تحب...؟ |
| I like... | Μου αρέσει... [mou aresi] | [uheb] أحب... |
| I don't like... | Δεν μου αρέσει... [den mou aresi] | [la uheb] لا أحب... |
| What are you eating? | Τι τρως; [ti tros] | [madha takul?] ماذا تاكل |
| I am eating... | Τρώω... [troo] | [akl] أكل |

Opposites
big≠small,
sour≠sweet
hard≠soft

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Μαθαίνω τα φρούτα [matheno ta frouta] (=learn the fruits) in Greek
https://youtu.be/CGdLxl21Mok?list=PL7vvGzNYtxfCASDeZVWcvoEq9wSG1E_xd
Greek kids song fruit fruit https://youtu.be/BgZX9xBK7vk
Vegetables' song in Arabic https://youtu.be/Pf1Y0JtfMPU
Vegetables' song 2 in Arabic https://youtu.be/tVmqLm47DJ0
Fruits in Arabic https://youtu.be/0FejQcjuvfM
Learn Fruits in Arabic https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEGsRKDsd1k

## Healthy nutrition

**Explore eating habits**

- ✓ learn new vocabulary
- ✓ understand the importance of a healthy diet
- ✓ create food pyramid
- ✓ categorize different types of food based on nutritional value (healthy and unhealthy food)
- ✓ make a daily diet diary
- ✓ learn to wash and cut their fruits
- ✓ share recipes from different cultures

## Suggested Activities

Describe their favorite meal / what do they like to eat.
Taste or describe the taste of the food they like.
Make a craft - chart of their daily eating routine.
Color food items and stick the proportion of each one on paper plates.
Motor game i.e. the sandwich hunt.
Discuss about healthy nutrition and what they should involve daily in their diet (involve parents by asking the family's eating habits).
Observe different types of food and discuss if they are healthy or not.
Create food pyramid.
Healthy bodies, healthy teeth: what consumption of sugar or other unhealthy ingredients can do to their health.

5 Senses (taste, smell)

Colors

Like/Don't like

Fruits - Vegetables

Animals

2 weeks (May)

Think of products / food items that animals (or insects i.e. bees) can provide.
Cooking a typical Greek / Arabic / Kurdish dish involving parents by giving a recipe, or help in cooking.

## Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| fish | ψάρι [psari] | [samaka] سمكة |
| meat | κρέας [kreas] | [laham] لحم |
| sandwich | σάντουιτς [sandwich] | [sandwitsh] سندويتشة |
| pizza | πίτσα [pizza] | [bidza] بيتزا |
| salad | σαλάτα [salata] | [salata] سلطة |
| pasta | μακαρόνια [makaronia] | [maakaarona] معكرونة |
| rice | ρύζι [rizi] | [roz] رز |
| milk | γάλα [gala] | [haleeb] حليب |
| juice | χυμός [hymos] | [aaseer] عصير |
| bread | ψωμί [psomi] | [khobz] خبز |
| eggs | αβγά [avga] | [bayd] بيض |
| honey | μέλι [meli] | [aasal] عسل |
| ice-cream | παγωτό [pagoto] | [bozah] بوظة |
| candy | καραμέλα [karamela] | [sakakir] سكاكر |

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Song on vegetables and healthy nutrition (in Greek)
https://youtu.be/F4GFIWqDEmE?list=PL7vvGzNYtxfCASDeZVWcvoEq9wSG1E_xd
Video puppet story on healthy nutrition (in Greek)
https://youtu.be/1nkkd29mlsU?list=PL-MuJbQH3Wj6rvjr7dRFkcp9ba_ax0gVX
Food pyramid in Greek https://youtu.be/BoOPz-4Sou8
Book story "Η παρέλαση των φρούτων" [I parelasi ton frouton] (=Fruits parade) by Sofia Tsiami (in Greek) about healthy nutrition.

## Friendship and Emotions

**Making relations and managing feelings**

- ✓ recognize feelings and emotions
- ✓ use words to express their feelings and talk about them
- ✓ understand the concept of friendship
- ✓ cooperate and build trust among peers
- ✓ promote good manners and positive attitude
- ✓ distinct fair / unfair behaviour
- ✓ begin to show empathy and understand the feelings of others
- ✓ ask for permission or say sorry

### Suggested Activities

Name one or more of their friends and what they can do together i.e. play at the park.
Discuss why they are best friends.
Describe their best friend: boy/girl, color of hair, short/tall etc.
Activity with measuring their height on the wall and create a wall-chart (pre-math).
Play funny motor games - Friend bingo.
Play a real version of 'Guess Who' game with the children in two groups.
Create group craft with pictures of all children i.e. the hot air balloon of friendship.
Stories about friends / friendships and discuss feelings.
Create puppet feelings faces i.e. sad/happy/angry face with play-dough.
Role-play with puppets situations between friends.
Dramatize the story book "Teddy helps"
Based on story of "Mr. Grumby" discuss what can someone do to make others happy.
Team building activities.

### Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| I am happy | είμαι χαρούμενος/η<br>[ime haroumenos] | أنا سعيد (فرحان)<br>[ana saaeed / farhan] |

Introductions (name, age, origin etc.)

Favorite toys / games / activities

Numbers

Opposites

2 weeks (May)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I am sad | είμαι λυπημένος/η [ime lipimenos] | أنا حزين (زعلان) [ana hazeen/zaalan] |
| I am tired | είμαι κουρασμένος/η [ime kourasmenos] | أنا تعبان [ana taaban] |
| I am angry | είμαι θυμωμένος/η [ime thimomenos] | أنا غضبان [ana ghadban] |
| very much ≠ very little | πολύ ≠ λίγο [poli, ligo] | [ktir≠qaleel] قليل ≠كثير |

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Book story (the true friendship=) الصداقة الحقيقية

Book story (nobody plays with me=) لا أحد يلعب معي

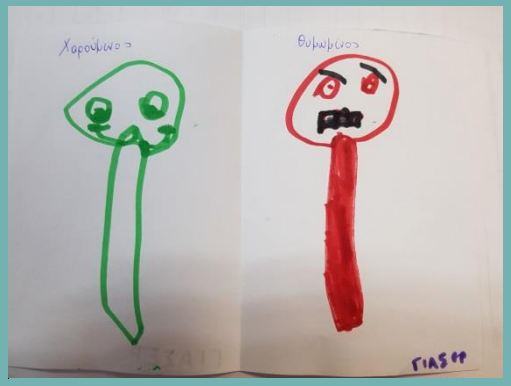
Book story "Teddy helps" by Reynolds Alison in Greek version.

"Το πρώτο μου βιβλίο για τα συναισθήματα" (=My first book on feelings) in Greek.

Song on friendship (in Greek) «Εγώ κι εσύ μαζί» [ego ki esi mazi] (=I and you together) https://youtu.be/9hPv_LgyKEE

Adapt a version of the song "If you're happy and you know it…" with other feelings and imitate i.e. "If you're angry and you know it…" children clap in an angry way.

Story on video "Mr. Grumpy" in Greek https://youtu.be/m1-y-0wyK_E



## Environment Life cycle

**Understand of the natural environment**

- ✓ experiment with various natural materials (water, soil, plants, seeds) using their senses
- ✓ learn about life-cycle or the rain cycle
- ✓ describe changes occurred in (con)sequence
- ✓ protect the natural environment i.e. recycling
- ✓ observe how a plant is growing, its needs and how they can take care of them

### Suggested Activities

See the life cycle of a plant or an insect through videos or books. Make a chart or a strip of pictures / drawings to depict the stages.
Simple science experiments to show the rain cycle or the states of materials (gas, liquid, solid).
Measure water and other materials.
Imitate sounds of rain - motor activities
Shape letters in soil / sand.
Plant seeds and grow a small garden. Children can take over the responsibility of taking care of them (i.e. watering). Parents can be involved if children have their own plant at home and take care of it together.
Solar energy and protection of the sun during summertime.
Visit an environmental park / a farm / biology exhibition / recycling unit.

### Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| water (n.) | νερό [nero] | [ma'] ماء |
| river | ποτάμι [potami] | [nahr] نهر |
| soil/ dirt | χώμα [homa] | [turbah] تربة |
| seed | σπόρος [sporos] | [bidhrah] بذرة |
| flower | λουλούδι [louloudi] | [wardah] وردة |
| tree | δέντρο [dendro] | [shajarah] شجرة |
| grow | μεγαλώνω [megalono] | [yanmu] ينمو |
| water (v.) | ποτίζω [potizo] | [isqee] اسقي |
| every day | κάθε μέρα [kathe mera] | [kul yum] كل يوم |
| plastic | πλαστικό [plastiko] | [blastik] بلاستيك |
| paper | χαρτί [harti] | [waraqah] ورقة |
| recycle | ανακύκλωση [anakiklosi] | إعادة تدوير [iyadat tadweer] |
| litter | σκουπίδια [skoupidia] | زبالة/قمامة [qumamah/zibalah] |

Weather

Rainbow

Seasons

Colors

1 or 2 weeks (Jun.)

5th of June World Environment Day

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Book story (Sammy loves nature=) سامي يحب الطبيعة
The Very Hungry Caterpillar (1979) by Eric Carle http://www.eric-carle.com/rev-VHC.html
The water life cycle (in Greek) https://youtu.be/ZWRDQscGLRc
Song story "The little river" (in Greek) https://youtu.be/OgVTO3UbCmQ
Video on recycling in Greek https://youtu.be/jUXWKk3JLCU

# My neighborhood

**Understand buit-up environment**

- ✓ describe their immediate surroundings
- ✓ recognize places they have been to
- ✓ realise the importance of community
- ✓ learn about different people, cultures, materials

## Suggested Activities

Walk around the neighborhood and observe the built up environment (shops, roads, houses, etc.). Draw a map of the neighborhood.
Share or take pictures of the neighborhood of the Child Centre / their neighborhood / other neighborhoods (from the present or the past). Parents can be involved.
Children can observe different types of housing in different parts of the world.
Draw a house with door(s), window(s), yard, roof and anything they like.
Build their own neighborhood / world (mixed media collage).
Simple engineering / building experiments i.e. toothpicks and a soft material like eco packing peanuts to build towers or bridges that stand.
Tell stories related to events or experiences in the neighborhood (play in the park, meet friends). Discuss the importance of building trust in a community.
Invite children from another preschool in the neighborhood for a joint activity.

Numbers

Colors

Opposites

Environment (land, sky, ground)

1 or 2 weeks (June)

## Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| house / home | σπίτι [spiti] | [bayt] بيت |
| garden | κήπος [kipos] | [hadeeqah] حديقة |
| trees | δέντρα [dendra] | [ashjar] اشجار |
| park | πάρκο [parko] | [hadeeqah] حديقة |
| shops | μαγαζιά [magazia] | [mahalat] محلات |
| road | δρόμος [dromos] | [sharia] شارع |
| Near my house there is... | Κοντά στο σπίτι μου υπάρχει... [konda sto spiti mou iparhi] | جنب بيتي... [janb baytee] |

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Houses around the world video or pictures i.e. https://youtu.be/rj3HU7_Y8Io or Sesame Street https://youtu.be/eFYH7xj-EhQ
Our neighbourhood | Environmental studies https://youtu.be/iwxkwPA8c68
What makes bridges so strong? https://youtu.be/oVOnRPefcno
Mickey Mouse - House Painters (funny cartoon) https://youtu.be/GtDYEkXwzVk

## Road Safety and means of transport

**Understand and follow rules**

- ✓ learn to keep themselves safe when walking in the street
- ✓ learn about traffic light signifiers
- ✓ learn vocabulary of means of transport
- ✓ learn to cycle and understand that bicycle is an eco-friendly mean of transport
- ✓ learn the opposites slow≠fast, old≠new, right≠left

### Suggested Activities

Motor games for road safety using the colors of the traffic light and signs such as STOP or Turn Left/Right etc.
Build cars or other means of transport with stacking blocks. Make roads to move them on the floor.
Imitate sounds i.e. of a heavy big bus or a train or a plane and use them in motor games or matching the sound with a picture and name them in any language spoken.
Craft of cars with moving wheels from recyclable materials (toilet paper rolls, plastic bottle cups). Use them to do car races and experiment with different surfaces (inclined plane, sleek or rough to observe friction).
Match the means of transport with their ability to travel in air/land/sea.
Imitation game - train: children in a row like train carriages.
Create mazes on the floor with signs and play to find a route.
Group craft: bicycle.
Visit Road Safety Park / Rent bicycles and split in two groups: drivers (bikers) and pedestrians to play at routes at the park.

### Vocabulary and expressions

| *English* | *Greek* | *Arabic* |
|---|---|---|
| traffic light | φανάρι [fanari] | اشارة المرور [isharat al-murur] |
| red light stop | στο κόκκινο σταματώ [sto kokkino stamato] | الاشارة حمراء نقف [isharat hamra' naqif] |
| green light walk | στο πράσινο περνώ [sto prasino perno] | الاشارة خضراء نمشي [isharat khadra' nimshi] |
| bicycle | ποδήλατο [podilato] | بسكليت /دراجة [daraja/bisiklet] |
| car | αυτοκίνητο [aftokinito] | سيارة [sayarah] |
| train | τρένο [treno] | قطار [qitar] |
| aeroplane | αεροπλάνο [aeroplano] | طيارة [tayarah] |
| boat | καράβι [karavi] | سفينة [safeenah] |
| bus | λεωφορείο [leoforio] | باص [bas] |

Numbers

Colors

Opposites

Environment (land, sky, ground)

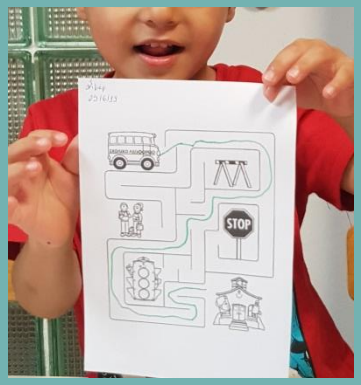
Neighbourhood and city setting

1 or 2 weeks (June)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| left<br>right | αριστερά [aristera]<br>δεξιά [dexia] | [yasar] يسار<br>[yameen] يمين |

## Books / Stories / Videos / Songs

Learn the vehicles / means of transport in Greek https://youtu.be/FSXrbnMf2mo
Road Safety video https://youtu.be/_NeEF1fwT4k
Road Safety rules in Greek https://youtu.be/umvidnKqms4
Song in Greek "Ο κύριος ΚΟΚ" [o kyrios kok] (=Mr Road Safety)
https://youtu.be/nEFng1Nv3kE
Book story "Ο φίλος μου ο ποδηλατάκιας" [o filos mou o podilatakias] (=my friend the cyclist boy) https://youtu.be/5jWGlumX_JQ



## Morning routine

Apart from activities related to the theme, routine activities or games are carried out daily or on a usual basis, such as a "welcome - good morning song" in all spoken languages during the morning circle i.e. "kalimera - sabah alkher" if the child speaks Arabic, "kalimera - sabah bikheir" if the child speaks Farsi, "kalimera - rojbas" if the child speaks Kurdish and so on. Also, kinesthetic songs or energisers to get children active i.e. songs with mimics or musical chairs.

## Alphabet learning

Alphabet teaching is not a priority for this age, but some letter recognition activities and activities that promote letter - sound connection can be carried out. For example, the teacher can choose a letter that a word begins related to the theme i.e. during the theme 'fruits and vegetables' choose to teach the letter 'L' - the Greek word 'lemoni' and the Arabic word 'leymun'. Pre-writing activities can take place often such as writing letters with play-dough or tracing letters on worksheets. Recognize the letter among others can create a lot of fun activities, i.e. alphabet bowling: children play bowling targeting plastic bowling pins with an Arabic letter on them. They have to recognize or say a word beginning with the respective letter that they hit.

*Resources:*

Alphabet song (in Greek) https://youtu.be/FYn38P7n9eI
Music stories on each letter of the Greek alphabet by EducationalTVGreece https://youtu.be/266f39_Fers?list=PL347F1F33BFE8AF9B
Teach the letters of the Greek alphabet through words and sounds https://youtu.be/O6BuTVqnuBM?list=PLvPvPIQf5-v1cVEotPBmMRuxkhVtncV0d
Alphabet song (in Arabic) https://youtu.be/5yO433hdR2M
Songs about each letter i.e. Alef https://youtu.be/j4cYP6LqiEA or BA https://youtu.be/dHzoxTSnQZQ or TA https://youtu.be/srhFSoGjXig and so on.
Music stories based on a letter i.e. Alef - the hare and the tortoise https://youtu.be/gSvxH0N9hS0

# Resources

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