



## Assess your practice first.

Read the below description and evaluate it in relation to your practices.

Utilising place-based sciences, we once explored a local creek, integrating it with stories of the Indigenous connection to land. This sparked a realisation of the importance of connecting children's learning to their local environment and community. It underscored the need to critically reflect on incorporating local knowledge and environmental stewardship into our curriculum, ensuring that children not only learn about their world but also how to care for it, fostering a sense of belonging and responsibility.

If you are doing similar practices to the example, use the below question to help you write your **'exceeding practice for embedded'** description so you can add it to your QIP or SAT (NSW only).

### **Critical Reflection**

*Give an example of the theories that influence the development and implementation of the curriculum.*

**If you and your educators need to learn how to achieve exceeding – embedded practice, proceed here and do below.**

**Week 2, 5 - 9 February 2024** – 1.1.1 Approved learning framework. Copyright Centre Support Pty Ltd 2024 The service who has purchased this product is the only service that can use this document. No part of this document can be copied, distributed, passed on or given to a friend outside the service who has not purchased the Centre Support Product. If this occurs Centre Support will take legal action against you personally and the person who has received it.

The following section outlines the steps to ensure you are exceeding in Embedded Practice. If you have already successfully completed the previous section demonstrating how you are exceeding in Embedded Practice, you do not need to complete this section.

## Look at the words in detail to identify what is exceeding.

### **Theories Influencing Curriculum Development:**

This part asks you to identify and briefly explain a theory (or theories) that have shaped how the curriculum is developed. Theories could range from educational, psychological, to social theories that provide a foundation for understanding how children learn and develop. You're being asked to pinpoint which theoretical frameworks you draw upon when planning and creating educational content and experiences.

**Implementation of the Curriculum:** Here, you need to discuss how the theory (or theories) mentioned in the first part is applied in practice. This involves giving an example of how these theories guide the day-to-day activities, interactions, and overall educational approach within your setting. It's about showing how the chosen theoretical framework translates into tangible actions and decisions that affect the learning environment.

In simple terms, the question is asking you to name a theory that helps shape your curriculum and then describe how you use this theory in real-world teaching and learning activities.

It is important to ensure that we make it **very clear how these above concepts have created change in your service.**

*Give an example of the theories that influence the development and implementation of the curriculum.*

Given the complexity and depth we have provided a structured approach to addressing these prompts in

relation to the EYLF 2023 V2 and MTOP 2023 V2, focusing on developmental theories, socio-cultural theories, practice theories, ancestral knowledges, place-based sciences, critical theories, and feminist and post-structuralist theories.

## Developmental Theories

**Example:** While observing children's play, I noticed varying levels of social interaction which reminded me of Erik Erikson's stages of psychosocial development. This observation made me reflect on the importance of fostering a sense of initiative and industry among preschoolers.

**Reflecting Theorist:** Erik Erikson's theory helped me understand the critical role of nurturing each child's ability to lead activities and take on challenges.

**Changes to Practice:** I introduced more group projects and leadership opportunities, encouraging children to take turns leading activities, thereby fostering their independence and confidence.

**Further Reflections:** This process made me consider the balance between guiding children and allowing them the autonomy to explore their capabilities and interests.

## Socio-Cultural Theories

**Example:** When incorporating multicultural books into our reading corner, I reflected on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, recognising the impact of cultural tools in shaping children's learning and development.

**Reflecting Theorist:** Vygotsky's emphasis on the social context of learning encouraged me to integrate more culturally responsive materials and activities.

**Changes to Practice:** Enhanced cultural representation in curriculum resources, and facilitated discussions that allow children to share their cultural backgrounds.

**Further Reflections:** This has led me to continuously seek ways to make our environment more inclusive and representative of the diverse cultures within our community.

## Practice Theories

**Example:** Observing children's engagement with outdoor play areas made me reflect on Gibson's

Affordance Theory, especially the opportunities the environment provides for risk-taking and exploration.

**Reflecting Theorist:** Affordance Theory underlined the importance of designing spaces that challenge yet ensure the safety of children.

**Changes to Practice:** Redesigning outdoor play areas to offer varied physical challenges appropriate for different age groups, encouraging exploration within safe boundaries.

**Further Reflections:** It highlighted the significance of observing children's interactions with their environment to continuously adapt and improve our practice.

## Ancestral Knowledges

**Example:** During a storytelling session with Aboriginal elders, the deep connection between the stories and the land prompted me to reflect on the importance of ancestral knowledges in children's learning.

**Reflecting Theorist:** The concept of songlines and embodied cognition provided a framework for understanding how these practices could enhance memory and learning.

**Changes to Practice:** Incorporating more Indigenous storytelling and outdoor learning experiences that connect children with the land and local Indigenous culture.

**Further Reflections:** This reflection has deepened my appreciation for the richness of Indigenous pedagogies and their potential to enrich our curriculum.

## Place-Based Sciences

**Example:** A project on local ecosystems made me realise the importance of connecting children with their immediate natural environment, reflecting John Dewey's ideas on experiential learning and the relevance of place-based education.

**Reflecting Theorist:** Dewey's emphasis on learning through experience influenced me to integrate more hands-on, exploratory activities related to the local environment.

**Changes to Practice:** Developing a curriculum that includes regular excursions to local parks and nature

reserves, fostering a connection with and understanding of the local ecosystem.

**Further Reflections:** It prompted me to consider how our curriculum can further support children in becoming environmentally responsible citizens.

### Critical Theories

**Example:** Observing interactions during free play, I noticed some children dominating play scenarios, which made me reflect on the power dynamics at play, drawing on Critical Theory to question our practices around inclusivity and equity.

**Reflecting Theorist:** Critical Theory helped identify areas for improvement in facilitating equitable play experiences for all children.

**Changes to Practice:** Implementing structured reflections and discussions with children about fairness, inclusion, and respect during play.

**Further Reflections:** This has made me more vigilant in recognising and addressing subtle forms of exclusion or bias within our setting.

### Feminist and Post-Structuralist Theories

**Example:** The absence of gender-neutral toys and activities in our centre made me reflect from a feminist and post-structuralist perspective on how our environment might be reinforcing traditional gender roles.

**Reflecting Theorist:** These theories prompted a re-evaluation of our resources and activities to ensure they promote gender equity and challenge stereotypical roles.

**Changes to Practice:** Introducing a wider range of play options that encourage all children to explore interests freely, regardless of gender.

**Further Reflections:** This reflection process has made me more conscious of how our choices as educators can either challenge or perpetuate societal norms and biases.

**Your example. Select a point from above and break it down into the subsections.**

**What are the theories influencing curriculum development?**

**How did you implement this in your curriculum?**