

# Curriculum Framework



Curriculum Framework specifies what is to be taught for each subject in the curriculum. In Pennsylvania, Curriculum Frameworks include Big Ideas, Concepts, Competencies, and Essential Questions aligned to Standards. All of these components can be found within the Learning Standards for Early Childhood. Listed below are the component definitions.

## Big Ideas

Big Ideas describe the primary information that children should acquire across all age levels. Big Ideas are essential to provide focus on specific content for all children. Big ideas within the Learning Standards for Early Childhood are located in the cream color box directly under the standard.

## Concepts (Standard Statement)

Concepts describe what students should know (key knowledge) as a result of instruction (through large group, small group, free play, environment etc.). Concepts are specific to age level. Concepts within the Learning Standards for Early Childhood are written as standard statements and are located in the first column within each strand.

## Competencies (Exemplars)

Competencies describe what students should be able to do (key skills) as a result of instruction (through large group, small group, free play, environment etc.). Competencies are specific to age level. Competencies within the Learning Standards for Early Childhood are written as exemplars (examples) and are located in the second column within each strand.

## Essential Questions

Essential questions are questions that are specifically linked to the Big Ideas. They should frame student inquiry and promote critical thinking. Essential Questions within the Learning Standards for Early Childhood are located in the cream color box directly under the standard.

## Vocabulary (Glossary)

The Glossary houses the definitions for content-specific terms and is located at the end of each key learning area.