



# Family Day Care: Not the poor cousin of the Education and Care Sector



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# STEM in FDC



*(Registered with Northern Beaches Family Day Care)*



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# Definitions, Purpose and Assumptions



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# Pedagogy



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K-6  
Syllabus,  
Early  
Stage  
One,  
STEM  
Activity 10  
(NSW  
Education  
Standards  
Authority).

**Vocabulary list**

**Curved** – bent

**Flat** – having a level surface

**Object** – a three-dimensional figure

**Roll** – to move by repeatedly turning over

**Round** – shaped like a circle

**Shape** – a two-dimensional figure

**Size** – overall dimensions of an object or shape

**Key inquiry questions**

**How does a ball or egg move?**

Students observe the movement of a variety of round objects.

Encourage students to use specific language, eg curved, flat, pointy, round, roll, slide

**How is the movement of an egg shape different from that of a ball?**

Encourage students to experiment and describe using specific language, eg round, roll, even, uneven, expected

**How do some products suit their purpose?**

Students examine the features of products designed to stop unstable people and objects from falling.

**Why did Humpty Dumpty fall off the wall?**

Encourage students to make a link between the movement of an egg and the shape of Humpty Dumpty.

**If Humpty wanted to sit safely on the wall, what can be added to the wall to keep him upright?**

Encourage students to make suggestions and justify their choices.



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How does  
a ball  
move?

How does  
an egg  
shape  
move?



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## Pedagogy

From learning dispositions,  
thinking skills and processes to  
gaining scientific knowledge



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The children have been interested in all things relating to spiders for a couple of weeks now. I initially didn't want to encourage this interest in case it was dangerous, but the topic has been incredibly persistent! I realised it probably 'follows on' from the interests in beetles and ants last year.

We have been monitoring a web in the garden for a while now. The children actively search for 'daddy long legs' with tools and doctor's supplies. Today I thought it was time to support this ongoing theme with a little bit of scientific research and discussion.

We began by watching two short information clips on spiders. We learnt that spiders have eight legs, many eyes, and lay eggs. Then I took the children to see a 'daddy long legs' who had been hiding behind the bathroom door.

Florence wanted to tap it with a toy screwdriver. Joel wanted to roar at it. Polly wanted to have a quiet look. Kai wanted to keep coming back and checking on the slider throughout the morning.

We talked about the spider. What was he doing? Where was he going? Did he like the tapping? Did he like the roaring? We counted his legs and wondered how many eyes he had.

If this topic remains interesting to the children, we can dig a little deeper next week.

## Spiders Learning Story, Episode One



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# Spiders Learning Story, Episode Two



After our spider group time, I wondered how we could consolidate and extend on what we had learnt.

At the play dough table in the afternoon, I began to make a spider.

Instantly, every child was interested in making a spider, too!

We talked about how many legs our spiders would need, and how many eyes. We even attempted to make a dough web!

What a great way to re-visit and talk about what we had learnt that morning.



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# Spiders Learning Story, Episode Three



Florence remembered the work we did with spiders last week. Today she arrived at the play dough table, and announced she was making a spider.

I was keen to observe Florence make her spider, as this would show me what she had learned last week. Flo collected some things from the garden to use in her creation, and I assisted her with some suggestions. Then, without any help, Flo put together her spider.

*What had Florence learnt?*

- that spiders have many long legs
- that spiders have many eyes
- that spiders might hide in the curl of a leaf

*What learning dispositions had Florence gained?*

- that she has the ability and the confidence to engage in scientific observation
- that she has the ability and the confidence to engage in scientific research
- that she has the ability and the confidence to produce an approximation of a scientific model.

Well done, Florence!



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# Spiders Learning Story, Episode Four



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Today we noticed two new spiders in the garden. They were hiding in the curl of a leaf. We watched them for a while, wondering why they were sleeping in the day. Will they come out during the night?

Then the children went back to the topic of spider eggs. We decided to use the iPad to have another look at images of spider eggs. We realised some spider eggs are different shapes, colours and sizes. We noticed there was a video of a spider making an egg sac. We marvelled at how the web came out of the tiny spider.

We learnt a new word - spiderlings. We practised using this new word as we talked about the spiders. Next we watched a video of spider eggs hatching. They were so tiny! They moved very quickly, all together.

Later, at the play dough table, Florence thought it was a good idea to use an old Easter egg as a spider sac. We helped her make tiny spider eggs to fill it.

The children were clearly able to represent their scientific understanding of what we had discovered, by once again using the play dough as a method of recording ideas.



## Spiders Learning Story, Episode Five



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# Conclusion



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# ‘Every Child Is An Artist’



Bright Owls Learning Cottage

*(Registered with Lake Macquarie Family Day Care)*



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# Children need to play in order to develop to their fullest capacity as learners and as members of society

*'Conventions on the Rights of The Child' (Australian Human Rights Commission)*

Creativity is encouraged at Bright Owls through:

- Outdoor play
- Art
- Blocks
- Music



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“Go and open the door. Maybe outside there’s a tree, or a wood, a garden, or a magic city.”

*‘The Door’ (Miroslav Holub – Scottish Poetry Library, 2016)*



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# Outdoor Summary: “Play is the work of a child”

*(Maria Montessori)*



Outdoor activities at Bright Owls include:

- Mud Kitchen
- Made-up games
- Collaboration
- Special Events



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“Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up.” *(Pablo Picasso)*



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# Art Summary: “The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge, but imagination” *(Albert Einstein)*

Art activities at Bright Owls include:

- Painting
- Play dough
- Collage
- Special events



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**“Creative people are curious, flexible, persistent and independent, with a tremendous spirit of adventure and a love of play.”** *(Henri Matisse, 1896 - 1954)*



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# Building summary: “Free the child’s potential, and you will transform him into the world.” *(Maria Montessori)*



Building activities at Bright Owls include:

- Wooden blocks
- Construction
- Carpentry
- Sensory



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# “A child who sings is a happy child.”

*‘The Door’ (Elder Enrique Falabella)*



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# Music summary: “Creativity is intelligence having fun.”

*(Albert Einstein)*

Music activities at Bright Owls include:

- Dancing
- Instruments
- Singing
- Movement
- Auslan



**“The child who concentrates is immensely happy”**  
*(Maria Montessori)*



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# Language and Literacy in Family Day Care

*La Petite Crèche*  
*(Registered with Marrickville Family Day*  
*Care)*



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# Language rich environment

I consider the influence of the environment: language and literacy are embedded in all the areas of my family day care service.



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Make literacy accessible by rearranging the room to empower children to access books.



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Place relevant books in different play areas:

- Above the train tracks, wooden blocks and wooden farm animals we have books about trains, shapes, farm animals.
- The books in French and those available in both language are arranged on the same shelf.



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Integrate language and literacy in daily routine experiences: whether to find their hats or when they wash their hand the children have individual hooks with their names and photos above them.



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Use written language in  
the garden



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# Exposure to language

Children learn language by being with people who encourage their efforts to communicate. Do the children have the opportunity to express themselves verbally?



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Regardless of the children's age, we talk about letters and numbers to develop early on the idea that those symbols give us information.

Something simple: comfort children with language. Label feelings and help the children to identify their feelings and encourage them to communicate about their emotions.



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Take a step back: Know when to be silent so that the children can experiment with language and literacy independently. They can read for themselves, look for their own names and wonder about the meaning of the symbols that they are looking at.



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# Sharing my language and culture

I introduce myself to the children as more than an educator by including my language and cultural identity. This demonstrate to the children that they are welcomed in culturally safe spaces where they can share their own language and culture and their identity will be valued and respected.



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- I draw on similarities between languages and cultures.
- I share stories about myself, where I come from that the children can relate to and identify themselves with.
- I sing in my language familiar nursery rhymes and read books that they know.
- I make language fun and playful: make up songs and play with different sounds.



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I subscribed to a children's magazine in French. They are accessible to the children along with other French books.



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