

Creative Curriculum for 4-Year-Olds

This chart shows how Luminous teachers plan experiences thoughtfully and intentionally on the basis of your child’s current levels of development and learning in the following areas: social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and mathematics.

Area of Development & Learning	Objective	Beginning of the Year	Middle of the Year	End of the Year
Social–Emotional	Self-regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to be able to look at a situation differently or delay gratification • Begins to manage classroom rules, routines, and transitions with occasional reminders • Demonstrates confidence in meeting own needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks at a situation differently or delay gratification • Manages classroom rules, routines, and transitions with occasional reminders • Begins to take responsibility for own well-being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to control strong emotions in an appropriate manner most of the time • Begins to apply rules in new but similar situations • Takes responsibility for own well-being
	Positive relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to engage with trusted adults as resources and to share mutual interests • Begins to identify basic emotional reactions of others and their causes accurately • Uses successful strategies for entering groups • Begins to establish a special friendship with one other child, but the friendship might only last a short while 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to engage with trusted adults as resources and to share mutual interests • Begins to identify basic emotional reactions of others and their causes accurately • Begins to initiate, join in, and sustain positive interactions with a group of two to three children • Begins to establish a special friendship with one other child, but the friendship might only last a short while 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages with trusted adults as resources and to share mutual interests • Identifies basic emotional reactions of others and their causes accurately • Initiates, joins in, and sustains positive interactions with a group of two to three children • Establishes a special friendship with one other child, but the friendship might only last a short while

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Social-Emotional, continued	Group participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes turns • Begins to suggest solutions to social problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to initiate the sharing of materials in the classroom and outdoors • Suggests solutions to social problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiates the sharing of materials in the classroom and outdoors • Begins to resolve social problems through negotiation and compromise
Physical	Traveling skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moves purposefully from place to place with control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to coordinate complex movements in play and games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates complex movements in play and games
	Balancing skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustains balance during simple movement experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to sustain balance during complex movement experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustains balance during complex movement experiences
	Gross-motor manipulative skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manipulates balls or similar objects with flexible body movements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to manipulate balls or similar objects with a full range of motion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manipulates balls or similar objects with a full range of motion
	Fine-motor skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses refined wrist and finger movements • Begins to hold drawing and writing tools by using a three-point finger grip but may hold the instrument too close to one end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to use small, precise finger and hand movements • Holds drawing and writing tools by using a three-point finger grip but may hold the instrument too close to one end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses small, precise finger and hand movements • Begins to use three-point finger grip and efficient hand placement when writing and drawing
Language	Listening to and understanding language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds appropriately to specific vocabulary and simple statements, questions, and stories • Begins to follow directions of two or more steps that relate to familiar objects and experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds appropriately to specific vocabulary and simple statements, questions, and stories • Follows directions of two or more steps that relate to familiar objects and experiences • Begins to follow detailed, instructional, multistep directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to respond appropriately to complex statements, questions, vocabulary, and stories • Follows detailed, instructional, multistep directions

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Language, continued	Expressive language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to describe and tell the use of many familiar items • Is understood by most people; may mispronounce new, long, or unusual words • Begins to use complete, four- to six-word sentences • Begins to tell stories about other times and places that have a logical order and that include major details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes and tells the use of many familiar items • Is understood by most people; may mispronounce new, long, or unusual words • Uses complete, four- to six-word sentences • Tells stories about other times and places that have a logical order and that include major details • Begins to tell elaborate stories that refer to other times and places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to incorporate new, less-familiar, or technical words in everyday conversations • Begins to pronounce multisyllabic or unusual words correctly • Begins to use long, complex sentences and follow most grammatical rules • Tells elaborate stories that refer to other times and places
	Conversational and other communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages in conversations of at least three exchanges • Begins to use acceptable language and social rules while communicating with others; may need reminders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages in conversations of at least three exchanges • Uses acceptable language and social rules while communicating with others; may need reminders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to engage in complex, lengthy conversations (five or more exchanges) • Begins to use acceptable language and social rules during communication with others
Cognitive	Approaches to learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to sustain work on age-appropriate, interesting tasks; can ignore most distractions and interruptions • Begins to plan and pursue a variety of appropriately challenging tasks • Begins to solve problems without having to try every possibility • Begins to show eagerness to learn about a variety of topics and ideas • Uses creativity and imagination during play and routine tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustains work on age-appropriate, interesting tasks; can ignore most distractions and interruptions • Begins to plan and pursue a variety of appropriately challenging tasks • Solves problems without having to try every possibility • Shows eagerness to learn about a variety of topics and ideas • Changes plans if a better idea is thought of or proposed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to sustain attention to tasks or projects over time (days to weeks); can return to activities after interruptions • Plans and pursues a variety of appropriately challenging tasks • Begins to think problems through, considering several possibilities and analyzing results • Begins to use a variety of resources to find answers to questions • Begins to think through possible long-term solutions and take on more abstract challenges

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Cognitive, continued	Remembering and connecting experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to tell about experiences in order, provide details, and evaluate the experience • Begins to recall 3–4 items removed from view • Begins to draw on everyday experiences and apply this knowledge to a similar situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tells about experiences in order, provides details, and evaluates the experience • Recalls 3–4 items removed from view • Draws on everyday experiences and applies this knowledge to a similar situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to use a few deliberate strategies to remember information • Begins to generate a rule, strategy, or idea from one learning experience and apply it in a new context
	Classification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places objects in two or more groups based on differences in a single characteristic, e.g., color, size, or shape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to group objects by more than one characteristic, then regroup them using a different characteristic and indicate the reason 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups objects by more than one characteristic, then regroups them using a different characteristic and indicates the reason
	Symbolic thinking and representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draws or constructs, and then identifies what it is • Acts out familiar or imaginary scenarios; may use props to stand for something else 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to plan and then use drawings, constructions, movements, and dramatizations to represent ideas • Begins to interact with two or more children during pretend play, assigning and/or assuming roles and discussing actions • Begins to sustain play scenario for up to 10 minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans and then uses drawings constructions, movements, and dramatizations to represent ideas • Interacts with two or more children during pretend play, assigning roles and discussing actions • Sustains play scenario for up to 10 minutes
Literacy	Phonological awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fills in the missing rhyming word • Generates rhyming words spontaneously • Begins to show awareness that words begin the same way • Notices and shows awareness of separate words in sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to decide whether two words rhyme • Shows awareness that words begin the same way • Begins to match beginning sounds of some words • Begins to notice and show awareness of separate syllables in words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decides whether two words rhyme • Matches beginning sounds of some words • Notices and shows awareness of separate words in syllables • Notices and shows awareness of separate syllables in words • Begins to verbally separate and blend onset and rime

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Literacy, continued	Alphabet knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes and names a few letters in own name Identifies the sounds of a few letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes as many as 10 letters, especially those in own name Produces the correct sounds for 10–20 letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to identify and name 11–20 upper- and 11–20 lowercase letters when presented in random order Shows understanding that a sequence of letters represents a sequence of spoken sounds
	Print Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orients book correctly Turns pages from the front of the book to the back Recognizes familiar books by their covers Begins to indicate where to start reading and the direction to follow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knows some features of a book (title, author, illustrator) Connects specific books to authors Indicates where to start reading and the direction to follow Begins to show awareness of various features of print: letters, words, spaces, upper- and lowercase letters, some punctuation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to use various types of books for their intended purposes Shows awareness of various features of print: letters, words, spaces, upper- and lowercase letters, some punctuation
	Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to ask and answer questions about the text Begins to refer to pictures Begins to pretend to read, using some of the language from the text Begins to describe the action across pages, using pictures to order the events; may need prompts from adult Retells some events from a familiar story with close adult prompting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asks and answers questions about the text Refers to pictures Begins to identify story-related problems, events, and resolutions during conversations with an adult Pretends to read, using some of the language from the text Describes the action across pages, using pictures to order the events; may need prompts from adult Begins to pretend to read, reciting language that closely matches the text on the page using reading-like intonation Retells familiar stories, using pictures or props as prompts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies story-related problems, events, and resolutions during conversations with an adult Pretends to read, reciting language that closely matches the text on each page using reading-like intonation Retells the plot in sequence without prompting Retells a familiar story in proper sequence, including major events and characters

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Literacy, continued	Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts to write name; may use mock letters, letter-like forms, or letter strings Begins to write to convey meaning; may use mock letters or letter-like forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writes name (partially accurate) Writes to convey meaning, using letter strings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writes name accurately (may use a combination of upper- and lowercase letters) Writes to convey meaning using early invented spelling
Mathematics	Number concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to count verbally to 20 Begins to count 10–20 objects accurately Begins to know the last number states how many in all Begins to tell what number (1–10) comes next in order by counting Recognizes and names the number of items in a small set (up to five) instantly Combines and separates up to five objects and describes the parts Identifies numerals to 5 by name and connects each to counted objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to verbally count to 20 Begins to count 10–20 objects accurately Begins to know the last number states how many in all Begins to tell what number (1–10) comes next in order by counting Begins to make sets of 6–10 objects and then describe the parts Begins to identify which part has more, less (fewer), or the same (equal) Begins to count all or count on to find out how many Begins to identify numerals to 10 by name and connect each to counted objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbally counts to 20 Counts 10–20 objects accurately Knows that the last number states how many in all Tells what number (1–10) comes next in order by counting Makes sets of 6–10 objects and then describes the parts Identifies which part has more, less, or the same (equal) Counts all or counts on to find out how many Identifies numerals to 10 by name and connects each to counted objects Begins to solve addition and subtraction problems within 10
	Spatial relationships and shapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to use and respond appropriately to positional words indicating location, direction, and distance Begins to describe basic two- and three-dimensional shapes by using own words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses and responds appropriately to positional words indicating location, directions, and distance Begins to describe basic two- and three-dimensional shapes by using own words Begins to recognize basic shapes when they are presented in a new orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to use and make simple sketches, models, or pictorial maps to locate objects Describes basic two- and three-dimensional shapes by using own words Recognizes basic shapes when they are presented in a new orientation

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Mathematics, continued	Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compares and orders a small set of objects as appropriate according to size, length, weight, area, or volume Knows usual sequence of basic daily events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses multiples of the same unit to measure Uses numbers to compare Knows the purpose of standard measuring tools Begins to relate time to daily routines and schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to use measurement words and some standard measuring tools accurately Begins to use simple ordinal terms Relates time to daily routines and schedule Begins to create and read simple graphs
	Patterning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies simple repeating patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extends and creates simple repeating patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to recognize, create, and explain more complex repeating and simple growing patterns

Science and Technology, Social Studies, and the Arts

The following is the scope of knowledge, skills, concepts, and behaviors in science and technology, social studies, and the arts. These are presented in an integrated way that reflects how content in these areas is introduced in early childhood classrooms.

Area of Development & Learning	Learning Objective	Throughout the Year
Science & Technology	Scientific inquiry skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observes and explores things in the environment Reacts to changes Manipulates objects to understand their properties Connects new observations to what he or she already knows Identifies problems, makes predictions, thinks of ways to solve problems, and tries possible solutions Organizes information Makes comparisons and classifies Communicates with others about discoveries Represents his or her thinking through drawing, dramatizing, graphing, or making models

Area of Development & Learning	Learning Objective	Throughout the Year
Science & Technology , continued	Living things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a growing ability to classify living and nonliving things • Communicates about the characteristics of living things • Demonstrates understanding that living things grow, change, and reproduce • Shows awareness of life in different environments or habitats • Groups or categorizes living things, e.g., appearance, behavior, plant, or animal • Demonstrates awareness that living things go through a growth cycle
	Physical properties of objects and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examines, describes, and measures the observable features of objects • Demonstrates understanding that objects are made from one or more materials, e.g., metal, wood, plastic, or paper • Communicates that the physical properties of objects and materials can change, e.g., when solid ice becomes a liquid • Displays awareness of natural forces that affect objects and materials, e.g., wind and gravity • Explores and describes ways that objects can be moved in space, e.g., pushing, pulling, rising, or sinking
	Earth's environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding that there are different kinds of weather and that weather changes • Describes and measures weather • Communicates awareness that the environment changes, e.g., season to season, sometimes slowly and sometimes suddenly • Communicates that Earth's surface is made of different materials e.g., rocks, sand, dirt, and water, and each material has properties that can be described • Shows awareness that different objects can be seen in the sky • Demonstrates understanding that people can affect the environment in positive and negative ways
	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows understanding that different tools and technology are used in different places for different purposes, e.g., finding information, communicating, and designing • Demonstrates the appropriate use of various tools and other technology
Social Studies	Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding that each person has unique characteristics ways of communicating, and ways of solving problems • Communicates that each person is part of a family that has unique characteristics • Shows awareness that each person has basic needs that must be met to stay healthy, e.g., food, clothing, shelter

Area of Development & Learning	Learning Objective	Throughout the Year
Social Studies, continued	People and how they live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows awareness that there are similarities and differences among people and families • Demonstrates understanding of the various jobs of people in the community • Shows understanding that people buy, sell, and trade to get goods and services that they do not raise, make, or find themselves • Communicates about the various means of transportation that people use to move goods and go from place to place • Shows increasing awareness that respect for others, cooperation, and fairness help us get along in communities • Demonstrates increasing understanding that there are rules in our homes, schools, and community and that each rule has a purpose • Communicates understanding that people have various rights and responsibilities
	Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding that people and things change over time • Shows that time can be measured • Communicates about time, e.g., uses words such as yesterday, today, tomorrow, day, week, month, minute, hour
	Geographic knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding that we are surrounded by geographical features (e.g., mountain, hill, desert, lake, river, creek, bayou) and that specific information identifies a location (e.g., address) • Communicates that we depend on people who live far away for many necessities and information • Shows increasing understanding that maps are tools with symbols that help us locate objects, find where we are, and where we are going
The Arts	Visual arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows appreciation for various forms of visual art • Shows appreciation for the artwork of peers • Communicates what he or she sees and how it makes him or her feel • Uses and cares for art materials • Explores different materials, tools, and processes • Shows increasing awareness of color, line, form, texture, space, and design in his or her artwork or the work of others • Communicates about his or her artwork, e.g., what it is made of, what he or she was thinking, and from where the idea comes
	Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows awareness and appreciation of different kinds of music • Expresses thoughts, feelings, and energy through music • Shows increasing awareness of various components of music: melody (tune), pitch (high and low sounds), rhythm (the beat), tempo (speed), dynamics (changes in volume), and timbre (sound quality distinguishing one instrument or voice from another)

Area of Development & Learning	Learning Objective	Throughout the Year
The Arts, continued	Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates feelings and ideas through dance and movement • Demonstrates spatial awareness (where the body moves); location (separate or shared space); directions (up or down, forward or backward); levels (low, middle, high); and pathways (straight, curved, zigzag) • Demonstrates effort awareness (how the body moves); speed (fast or slow); force (strong or light); and control (bound or free) • Demonstrates relational awareness (relationships the body creates); with the physical self (body parts); with body shapes and size (big, small, straight); roles with other people (leading or following, mirroring, alternating); and in space (near or far, over/ or under, around or through)
	Drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows that real-life roles can be enacted • Communicates a message or story through action and dialogue • Represents ideas through drama, e.g., pretends to be the big bad wolf • Shows appreciation of the dramatizations of others