

Dynamic Learning Circle

The Dynamic Learning Circle was described by Dr. Lili Nielsen. The following is a summary of the stages. Observe the student and determine what stage they are in when playing and interacting with their environment to determine the level of engagement and interaction and readiness for new items to be added. For more in depth description of the Dynamic Learning Circle, visit [Active Learning Space](#).

Stage 1 Aware and Interested

During this stage, an individual becomes aware of and interested in his or her own motor and sensory activity, the objects or activities in the environment, and people in the environment including social and communication activities. To help someone become aware of an object, move it so it lightly touches their body. DO NOT perform hand-over-hand to bring the person's hand to the object as that results in passive participation. It may take a long time for the person to understand that his or her movement is causing something to happen. Provide wait time and opportunity for sensory and movement experiences.

Stage 2 Curious and Active

During this stage, the individual becomes curious and active. This leads to repetition of an action, experimenting, exploring, comparison of objects, imitation of actions of others, responding to verbal and non-verbal communication of others, initiating an activity and sharing experiences with others. Actions may include pushing, banging, grasping, throwing, or mouthing. Encourage active learning in all positions including prone (on the stomach), supine (on the back), side lying, sitting, and upright in standing. Provide opportunities for exploration and interaction with a variety of materials in the environment.

Stage 3 Learning Completed or Habituation

During this stage, the activity is repeated to the point that it has become part of the individual's everyday actions and patterns. It is familiar enough that it doesn't challenge the individual anymore. Allow time for practice and repetition of skills, and observe to see when learning is complete.

Stage 4 Ready for New Challenges

During this stage, the individual is ready for new challenges. This will lead to new awareness and interest if the individual is given new opportunities in their developmental level that include sensory, motor, and social. Model behaviors and communication while providing opportunities for new activities, materials, and experiences.