

# INVITATIONS FOR LEARNING

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## Learning goes from

- Simple to complex
- Concrete to abstract
- Inside to Outside
- Me to Others

Learning does not go from theme to theme...

## *Brains Do Not Think in Themes*

How many of you think about 'Apples' for one whole week and the following week you think about 'Bears'?

Children's brains are not set up to think in Themes either.

The brain is set up to integrate ideas and thoughts without isolating topics. This wiring provides for enriched learning opportunities.

### Why are Themes NOT appropriate for children

- Not all children are interested in the subject selected for the theme
- Adults spend too much time on making sure all the experiences provided for children are related to the theme( for example, cutting paper for the easel in the shape of the subject, or

collecting books that relate to the theme)

- Many of the themes selected are not developmentally appropriate
- Children do not have a choice on what themes are to be used
- Adults are so involved in implementing the theme they miss really good observations of what children are doing
- Most of the themes are not relevant to children, therefore the brain prunes them (for example, a 'snow' theme in an area of the country that never has snow)
- Themes frequently focus on the product not the process

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## ***Instead of themes:***

- **Observe children to find out what is relevant to them**
- **Plan experiences that are relevant**
- **Offer information in small amounts**
- **Provide lots of repetition with experiences that children have selected**
- **Include children in the planning of the curriculum**
- **Expect children will make changes**
- **Provide props/activities that will extend children's interests**
- **Include experiences that support family rituals**
- **Listen to what interest children and make sure your environment supports it immediately**