



MarcoPolo Learning Alignment with Texas Rising Star



Texas 
Rising Star

Texas Star Category

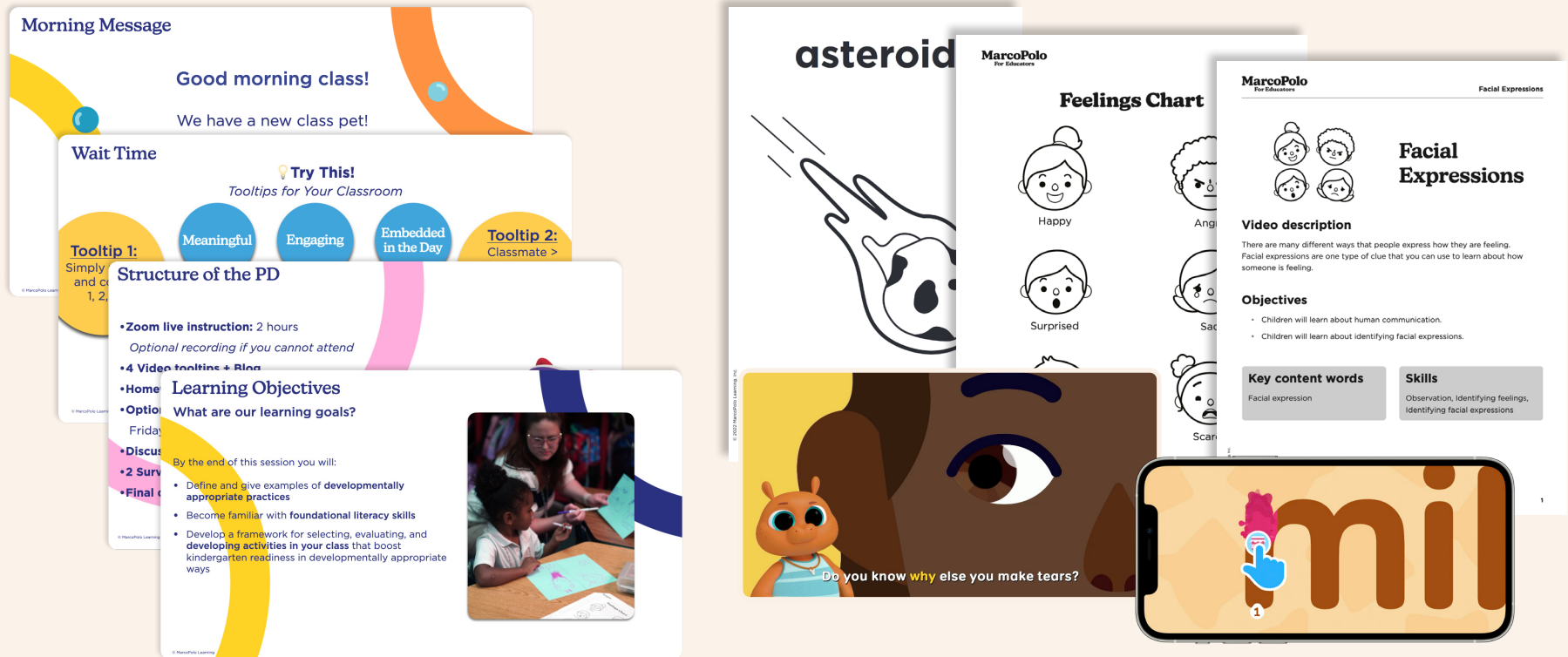
1. Director and Staff Qualifications

Subcategories

- Director qualifications and training
- Staff qualifications, orientation, and training

MarcoPolo Learning Alignment

MarcoPolo Learning offers a **comprehensive training and professional development approach** that fosters continuous quality improvement. Our embedded professional development model is based on research showing that regularly used resources can reinforce best practices by integrating them into the learning process. These resources are designed to model professional practices in context, helping educators continuously improve their teaching strategies and sustain them over time. In addition, educators are offered opportunities for self-reflection and feedback on how to strengthen their classroom practices with touchpoints from our team of education experts.



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2. Teacher-Child Interactions

Subcategories

- Group size/staff ratios
- Warm and responsive style
- Language facilitation and support
- Play-based interactions and guidance
- Support for children's regulation
- Instructional formats and approaches to learning

MarcoPolo Learning Alignment

MarcoPolo Learning supports effective teacher-child interactions by fostering warm, responsive caregiving through interactive videos and activities that encourage children to **identify emotions and manage their feelings**. We help teachers nurture these interactions by providing children with tools for self-regulation, building independence, and allowing teachers to act as guides.

Additionally, our engaging STEAM and literacy content enhances **language development** by promoting vocabulary growth and critical thinking around topics that children are excited about. MarcoPolo engages children in concept development through scaffolded learning, offering opportunities to make meaningful connections and explore through inquiry-based, playful activities.

Each **Video Lesson** is accompanied by an **Educator Guide that focus on fostering teacher-child interactions**, through accessing prior knowledge, posing open-ended and higher-order thinking questions, and being responsive to children's interests through the video content and play-based activities. **Children are invited to share their thoughts** in small groups, with a partner, or in whole group. In addition, our professional development invites teachers to examine their teaching practices such as the use of wait time and self and parallel talk, with examples for weaving these discourse methods in naturally throughout the day.



Activity option 2

DRAMATIC PLAY: THE WEATHER STATION

In this activity, children will pretend to be meteorologists or 'weather people'.
Setup: Stock the pretend play/dramatic play area with raincoats, umbrellas, winter scarves, mittens, sunglasses, etc. Laminate a picture of a world map and attach a fastener to different parts of the map. Use felt to create different weather symbols (like those seen on weather reports).

Cut out clouds, rain, sunshine, and snow, and attach them to craft sticks so that children can use them to show where the weather will be on the map. Support children to take on the role of a meteorologist and act out sharing the weather report to their viewers.

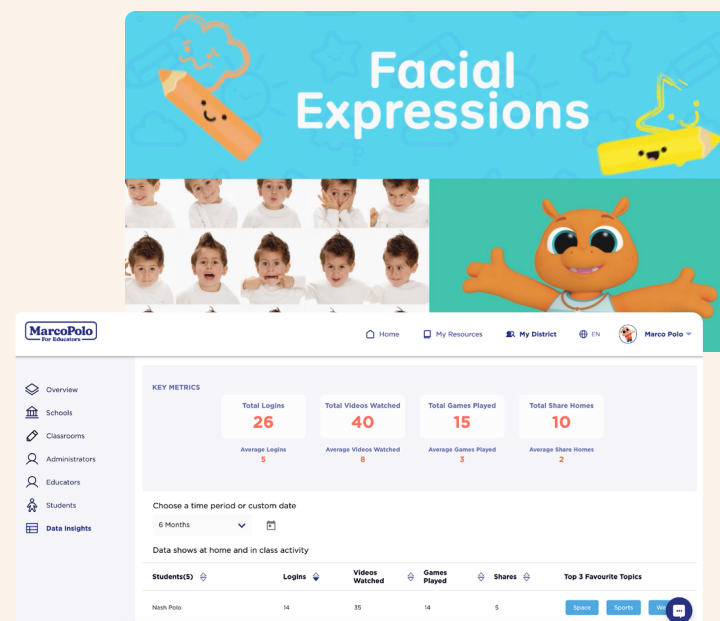
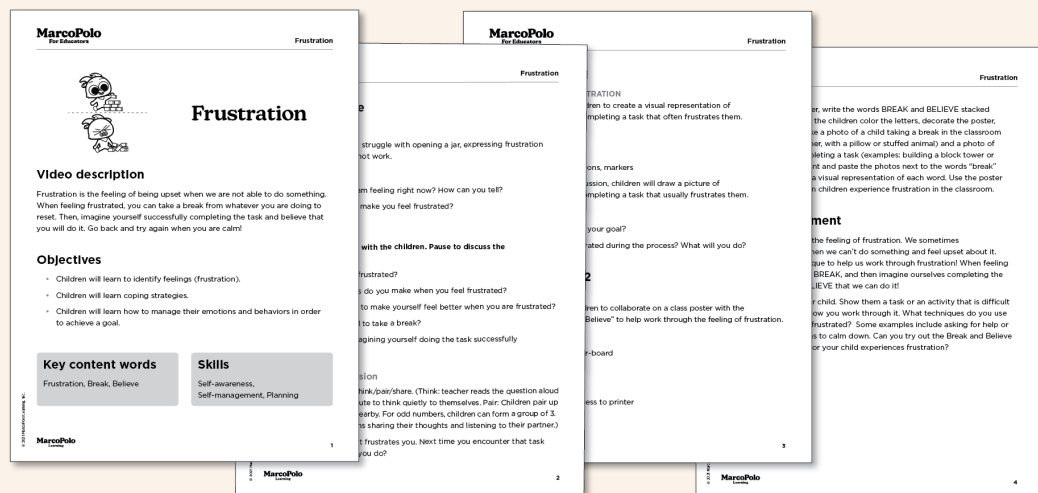
Furthermore, we offer **language facilitation** with versions in English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Mandarin Chinese, along with **Modified Video Lessons**, Educator Guides, and teaching resources in these languages. This enables teachers to differentiate for various learners in their classrooms.

Each Educator Guide offers hands-on **Activity** suggestions that incorporate various domains such art, physical activity, experimentation, engineering and design, dramatic play, as well as early literacy and math skills. The Activities provide opportunities for collaboration with peers while enhancing children's understanding of the content introduced in the Video Lesson, such as a game of pillbug tag or making a class recipe for hummus. These intentionally-designed Activities provide children with opportunities to have repeated exposure of new concepts within different learning contexts throughout the day.

Our **social and emotional development Video Lessons** teach and model adult responsiveness in videos such as: *Bullying, Using Your Words, Breathing, Frustration, and Scared*. Each video shows real-world situations that children may encounter as well as **language and tools for identifying feelings and working to manage them**. Educators are provided with content-related questions designed to access children's thinking and respond accordingly.

Our **Kindergarten Readiness** professional development focuses on supporting teachers to help children build independence and self-help skills, and this is reinforced in our Video Lessons such as *Choices* and *On My Own* to enrich the child's learning experience.

To help guide **instructional planning**, teachers can access our **data dashboard**, which provides insight into content and games that the child has engaged with. In addition, they can see vocabulary words that the child has been exposed to in various Video Lessons. Our filter features offers video alignments to various curriculum used in early childhood classrooms to allow teachers to plan integration and enrichment of MarcoPolo content.



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3. Program Administration

Subcategories

- Family education
- Family involvement
- Program management

MarcoPolo Learning Alignment

MarcoPolo Learning enhances family involvement by offering families **access to educational content at home**, promoting continuity of learning and meaningful engagement between the home and the classroom environment. This is done through open-ended family engagement prompts, weekly newsletters, and activity packs with simple tips for caregivers.

Family engagement

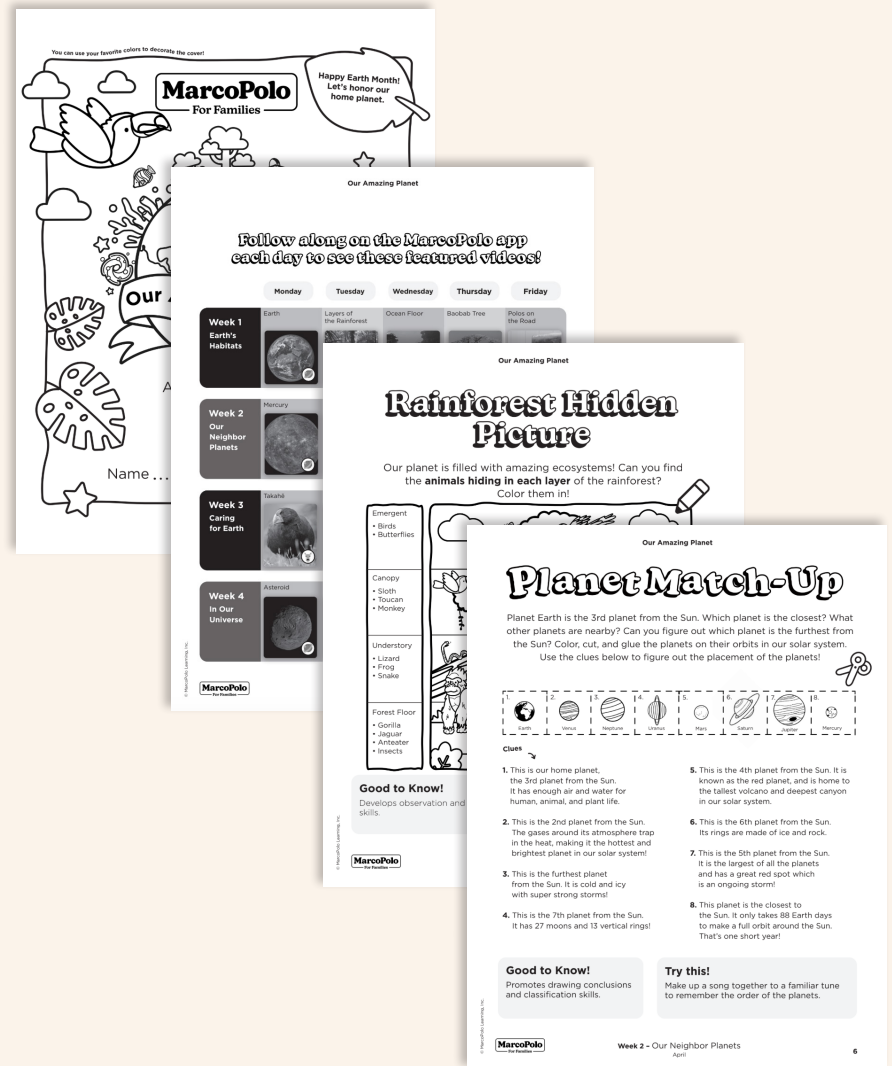
Today we learned about different types of food. Fruits, vegetables, dairy, protein, and grains give our bodies the vitamins and nutrients that we need to be healthy and grow strong. What's the difference between a fruit and a vegetable? All fruits have seeds! Ask your child which fruit has seeds that grow on the outside.

During your next family meal, look at the type of food you have from each food group. Which foods are your family favorites? Look at your grocery list with your child, and work together to organize it into food types.



Teachers can record **personalized video messages paired with video playlists** to provide instructions, summarize information, or reinforce a topic or concept. Families are provided interactive video content in English and Spanish to support multilingual learners and promote co-watching.

Additionally, the “**Let’s Talk**” feature provides caregivers with specific talk prompts designed by educators to promote higher-order thinking. These activities, available in multiple languages, give parents tips on how to reinforce their child’s learning in natural ways, highlighting the developmental benefits.



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4. Indoor/Outdoor Environments

Subcategories

- Indoor learning environments
- Outdoor learning environments

MarcoPolo Learning Alignment

MarcoPolo Learning's curriculum encourages exploration of both indoor and outdoor environments through **interactive science**, **nature**, and **adventure-based content** that promotes a connection with the natural world. Our lessons help children form real, lasting connections to the world around them while also honoring culturally responsive and sustainable practices.

MarcoPolo
For Educators

Beaver

Activity

DESIGN CHALLENGE: BEAVER DAM

The teacher prepares the following materials for this activity:

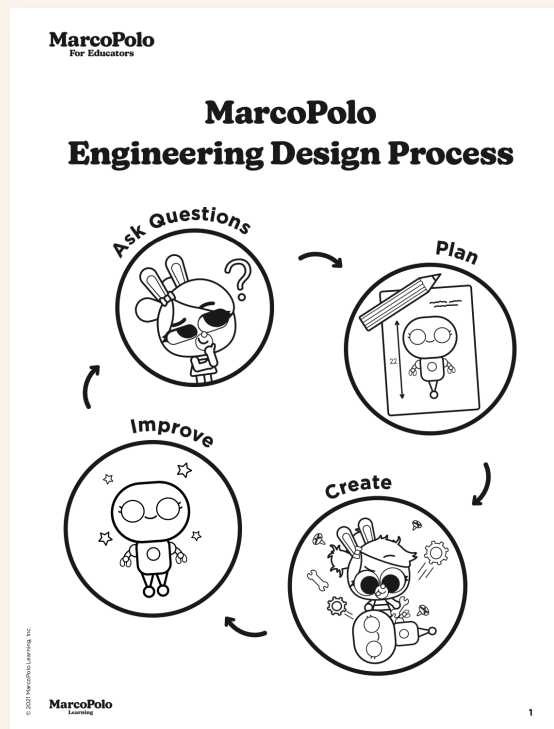
- Lots of sticks and small branches
- Clay
- Large, wide container
- Bucket of water (If outside, use a garden hose)

Beavers live in water; what do you think they use to build their homes? In this activity, children will use sticks and clay to create a beaver dam. This dam should obstruct the movement of water, similarly to the way a beaver's dam does.

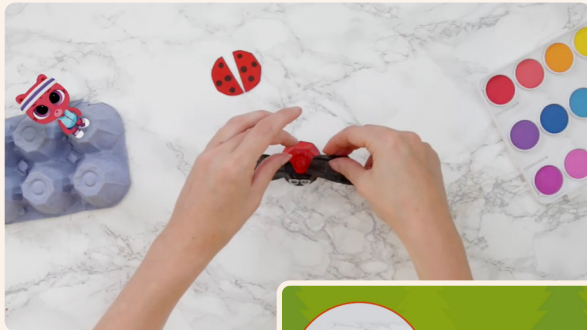
Support children to engage in the Engineering and Design Process (chart provided).

Process:

- **Ask:** Children ask questions about how beavers make dams, and how they might make a beaver dam themselves.
- **Plan:** Children draw pictures to show their ideas.
- **Create:** Children create a model of the beaver dam inside the container. Then, the teacher helps them to put water into the container to see if the beaver dam obstructs the flow of water.
- **Improve:** Children revisit their plans and make improvements to their design.



Our extensive collection of Video Lessons showcases **animals and plants from diverse environments around the world**. Children are invited to explore a variety of habitats and ecosystems, discovering how living organisms depend on their surroundings to meet their basic needs for survival. Through a blend of real-world footage and engaging CG animation, children can journey through different habitats, life cycles, and discover the unique adaptations that help organisms survive and thrive in their environments. From the life cycle of a tiny insect to the journey of a baby sea turtle, children learn how animals resemble their parents and develop specialized structures and behaviors that allow them to interact with and survive in their surroundings. **Many of our discussion guides and activities include bringing natural objects into the classroom for exploration and conversation.** In addition, many of our activities take the children outdoors to extend the learning experience --such as a tree walk after learning about leaf lobes on the maple tree.





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