Research in developmental psychology indicates children are learning to regulate emotions and actions well before school. These studies also link early effective self-regulation to positive outcomes, such as prosocial behavior and adjustment in school. What does self-regulation look like in kindergarten? And what can teachers say and do to promote it early in children’s school careers? We address these questions in our session.
What is Self-Regulated Learning?

Self-regulated learners are …

(a) Metacognitive
- Aware of their strengths and weaknesses as learners
- Aware of the demands that tasks make on them
- Aware of strategies they can use to solve problems and cope with tasks that are hard for them

(b) Motivated for learning
- Engage in learning for the satisfaction it brings them
- Focused on deep understanding and personal progress, not besting their peers or impressing the teacher
- Willing to try challenging tasks
- Persist when faced with difficult problems
- View errors as opportunities to learn

(c) Strategic
- Have a repertoire of strategies
- Recognize when and where to apply particular strategies

Self-regulated learning occurs in classrooms where …

(a) Students have lots of autonomy
- Choices
- Control over challenge
- Opportunities to collaborate with peers
- Responsibility for evaluating their work

(b) Teachers provide instrumental support
- Establish routines and consistent participation structures
- Model and teach learning and problem solving strategies
- Guide students' thinking and performing
- Guide students' choices
- Guide their use of learning and problem solving strategies
- Provide informative and corrective feedback
- Offer encouragement
- Engage students in discussions about learning and self-regulated learning

(c) Teachers engage in non-threatening evaluation practices
- Embedded in on-going activities
- Emphasize processes as well as products
- Focus on personal progress
- Encourage students to view errors as opportunities to learn
- Involve students in setting criteria for evaluation and self-evaluation

Complex tasks give students lots of opportunities to develop self-regulated learning....

(a) Have **multiple goals**
(b) Focus on **large chunks of meaning**
(c) Often **integrate content** across curricular areas
(d) Extend over **long periods of time**
(e) Allow for a wide range of **processes and products**

Teaching Toward SRL

1. Give students **opportunities** to …

   (a) Make **choices** about:
   - What topics they will study
   - How they will demonstrate their learning
   - Where they will work
   - Who will help them or collaborate with them
   - How they will manage time

   (b) **Control challenge** by:
   - Choosing a topic that is familiar (they know something about), is new and challenging but interesting, worthwhile, important
   - Drawing on an area of relative strength to create products (e.g., balance writing requirements with opportunities to draw or build or speak or act
   - Choosing a place to work that is quiet, free of distractions, close to a helper, wide open (when they need to spread out)
   - Choosing a partner who can be a helper, is working on a similar topic, has good ideas, is encouraging
   - Developing a set of strategies that support learning (e.g., what to do when you can’t read a word, can’t think of anything to write, feel like giving up)

   (c) **Evaluate learning** by:
   - Keeping a learning log or reflections journal
   - Choosing work samples for portfolios
   - Preparing for student-led conferences
   - Asking, “What have I learned today? What have I learned that I will use again? What can I do to solve this problem? Who will be a good partner for me? What will be a good topic for me? Where is a good place for me to work? Do I like/value this … or think it’s important?”
   - Rating reading, writing, attending, working, helping … on a scale of …
   - Generating criteria for evaluating learning
2. **Support students** development of SRL by ...
   
   (a) **Talking** about learning, making thinking public
   
   (b) **Modeling** strategies for SRL
   
   (c) **Building** conditional knowledge about strategies (when, where, why knowledge)
   
   (d) Using more **coaching** than telling (e.g., What could you do to solve that problem? What will you do when you finish? How will you know ...?)
   
   (e) **Helping** students to make wise choices and to evaluate their learning

3. Allow students to support one another by ...
   
   (a) **Sharing** ideas (e.g., encourage them to browse, borrow, build)
   
   (b) **Sharing** resources
   
   (c) **Collaborating** on projects
   
   (d) Offering **feedback** (in the form of suggestions)
**Task Analysis—The Three Little Pigs**  
*(Kindergarten/Grade 1)*

**Goals/Objectives:**
- to practice decoding and comprehension strategies while reading The Three Little Pigs
- to sequence story events and write an alternative ending to The Three Little Pigs
- to evaluate the pigs’ response to the wolf’s actions

**Task/Activity Description:**
- students read The Three Little Pigs (twice)  
  practice tracking, context clues, sounding out, making connections and predicting
- students discuss the story’s ending  
  When someone is mean to us, should we be mean right back?
- students sequence pictures from story, write a sentence for each, and a new ending

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choices</th>
<th>Control Over Challenge</th>
<th>Self-Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shared reading or ...</td>
<td>help from peers and the teacher</td>
<td>do you need to ...?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tracking</td>
<td>one idea or ..., drawing as writing</td>
<td>evaluating feelings, explain why ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>problem solving strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>voted on the actions of the pigs</td>
<td></td>
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<td>alternative ending</td>
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<td>where to work</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Support:

a) from peers

- helping with decoding difficult words (generating and evaluating strategies)
- sharing opinions about the pigs’ actions
- sharing ideas for writing

b) from teacher

- guiding students’ reading
- facilitating discussion
- facilitating writing

Teacher Evaluation:

- monitoring students’ shared reading
- checking students’ ideas for story endings before they began writing to make sure everyone has at least one original idea
- checking students’ final story for pictures were sequenced correctly, original story ending, writing development

Materials:

The Three Little Pigs storybook, pictures to sequence, paper for sequencing and writing, chart paper to record students’ ideas during discussion, students’ glue, pencils, crayons, scissors
What is Socially Responsible Self-Regulation?

Children’s abilities to give and receive instrumental support in order to engage in academic learning.

Students who engage in socially responsible self-regulation (SRSR) are believed to be:

**Metacognitive in the ways they think about other children’s learning:**
- **Aware** of other children’s strengths and weaknesses as learners.
- **Understand** how to tailor constructive feedback to suit their peers’ individual strengths and weaknesses as learners.
- **Aware** of strategies they can use to instrumentally support other children’s learning.
- **Recognize** how much support a peer needs for learning.
- **Recognize** when a peer is struggling.

**Motivated for supporting other children’s learning:**
- **Enjoy** providing expertise/knowledge to assist peers with learning.
- **Interested** in other children’s projects/tasks.
- **Committed** to and interested in including others in learning activities.
- **Motivated** by the help/support they receive from other children (e.g., “Other peoples ideas can help make me a better learner.”).

**Strategic in their learning with others:**
- **Contribute** ideas to the classroom learning community (e.g., sharing ideas for tasks, topics for writing/research).
- **Show** children resources that may help them with their tasks.
- **Offer** instrumental help to other children when they are struggling with academic tasks.
Task Analysis: Play Based Learning - Volcanoes (50 min.)

(Kindergarten)

Goals/Objectives:

• to practice working independently or collaboratively on tasks
• to support children to effectively manage learning interactions with others
• to simulate the eruption of a real volcano using baking soda, vinegar, red food coloring and observing how the ‘lava’ flowed down the volcano
• to practice decoding words by reading the recipe for building a volcano
• to practice math (fractions) by measuring out the ingredients for the volcano
• to build a sand volcano (with details) and explain the reaction of the ingredients

Task/Activity Description:

• This activity took place in a kindergarten classroom where children were in an “outside classroom” for the month of May.
• Children had a variety of tasks they could engage in (drawing, building, digging/unearting, volcanoes).
• The volcanoes task took place after recess and became a joint task among children in the classroom – some children worked in pairs, groups of 3, and groups of 6. Children shared the recipe for reading, the ingredients (there was a limited amount of supplies), they helped each other build up and shape the volcanoes before adding the ingredients.
• The teacher helped students make connections between their learning using prior knowledge, and by providing them with opportunities to record and reflect on learning.
• She modeled metacognitively thinking about other children’s learning and what they require for it.
• Children construct the volcanoes and they also complete their learning journals to write and/OR draw what they learned
### Choices
- What to do/work on
- Who to work with
- How many people to work with
- What to write about
- How long to spend at an activity

### Control Over Challenge
- Working independently or collaboratively
- Build, draw, write to represent your learning
- What to do

### Self-Evaluation
- Learning journals
- “What do you think will happen when we pour the vinegar? Where will it go?”
- “Do you remember when we were reading the beaver book on Friday…we could use sticks to make the hole in the volcano”

### Support:

#### a) from peers
- Helping with decoding words from the volcano directions
- Helping build volcanoes (digging and shoveling sand)
- Helping get/measure the ingredients
- Helping pour the ingredients, sharing the ingredients so that everyone had a turn

#### b) from teacher
- Modeling how to think about other children’s learning “we’re almost out of baking soda, so we should leave some for people who haven’t had a chance to build their volcano”
- Encouraging children to borrow ideas “did you notice some people were making channels down the side of the volcanoes? You can do that too if you want”
- Supports children to try and do more in their learning (e.g., add details in a picture) and notes improvements she sees in their drawings.
- Models how children can think of helping others effectively “you can help, but part of the fun of [the volcano] is pouring the soda – we don’t want to take that away from the other kids – your strength is that you’re very good at [inaudible] but we have to let others get a try”
Teacher Evaluation:

- Monitored students’ engagement in all of the tasks, including volcanoes.
- All students had the opportunity to build a volcano, write in their learning journals
  - Checking over students’ learning journals - their pictures and writing, children showing the teacher the volcano s/he built

Materials:

Baking soda, vinegar, red food coloring, learning journals [paper for writing, pencil crayons and markers for coloring], sandbox, volcano instructions.