

## Your Improved Learning Space

Once you have read chapter 7, drawn your current learning space, and defined its critical components, use this handout and your new knowledge to go back to the drawing board and create a blueprint to improve your learning space. Write your responses here and label or indicate your answers on your drawing as well.

### Section I. The Physical Setting and Use of Space

1. Since you most likely cannot actually rebuild your space, redraw your learning space on a blank piece of paper.
2. What color will you make the walls, if you can change them?  
If not, what can you do to change or add to the colors in your classroom?  
What colors will help students concentrate?
3. How can you improve the lighting in your space?  
Will you use lamps?  
Do you need to improve the current overhead lighting? How?  
How can you increase and/or control any natural lighting?
4. Can you augment the flooring in your space? How?  
Do some areas need activity-appropriate flooring?  
Do some areas need less conditional flooring (where spills are okay, for example)?
5. Where will the closets and cabinets be?  
Do you need more storage space?  
How will you obtain it?
6. What are the larger objects and furniture in your improved learning space? List them, then locate them on your drawing.
7. How will you change your entryway?  
What will you do to make it more welcoming?
8. Will you have defined work areas or specific topic areas in your improved learning space?  
How many?  
How will you create them?  
How will you make their use clear to the children?

9. How will you change your overall layout?

What will it look like? Create the layout on your drawing, and remember to consider the specified learning centers or topic areas.

10. How will you create clear pathways?

Indicate the pathways on your drawing.

11. How will you ensure there is spatial variety?

Indicate the large- and small-group areas on your drawing.

12. What is the appropriate social density for each area?

### **Section II. Material Type, Selection, and Storage**

1. What materials will you have in your improved learning space? List them.

How will you ensure that the materials reflect the developmental levels of the children?

How will you ensure that the materials reflect the interests of the children?

How will you ensure that the materials entice children to work together?

Will you have activities children can do alone? What will they be?

How will you be sure you have adequate quantity and variety of materials?

2. How will you store the materials in your improved learning space?

Will you need additional storage?

What kind? How will you obtain it?

Where will it be located?

How will you ensure the materials are stored in a convenient location?

### **Section III. Sensory and Natural Elements**

1. What temperature will you maintain in your improved learning space?

Can the temperature be regulated?

If not, what can you do to help maintain an optimal temperature for learning?

What is the optimal temperature?

How will you know when it is optimal?

2. What will the noise level be in your space?  
Are there interfering noises within the space?  
How will you control those noises?  
Will you use music? What type? When?  
Will you allow a certain amount of child chatter in your space?  
How will you let the children know when it is too loud?
3. How will you control the various scents in your improved learning space?  
Do you want to use candles, scented tissues, cleaners, and so on?  
What other scents will you need to be aware of? List them.  
What will you do to improve the odors in your improved learning space?
4. How will you create new or different visual displays?  
Whose art will you display, and how?  
How much will you put up in your improved learning space?  
Will the art be seasonal?
5. How will you bring nature into your improved learning space?  
What will be safe for your children?  
Will the natural objects be used as a learning tool?  
Will they take up valuable space?

#### **Section IV. The Social Environment**

1. How will you promote positive interactions?  
What types of phrases will you use when you interact with your children?  
How will you create your space to encourage children to interact with each other?
2. How can you manage the number of children so there is enough space and time for positive engagement?  
Will you limit how many can occupy centers or topic areas at a given time?
3. How will you ensure that your improved learning space feels like a safe space for the children?
4. How will you change your interaction style?  
How will you monitor your own behaviors, body language, and interactions to be a good role model?