



*NYSED~ Office of Early Learning  
Video Training Series Presents  
Shannon Riley-Ayers, Ph.D.*

Co-hosted by WMHT & CUNY

**Intended Audience:** Administrators, Coaches and Teachers Prekindergarten to 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade **Length:** 43 Minutes

### **Training Overview: High-Quality Teaching in the Primary Grades**

Primary teachers are well-positioned to provide engaging and playful experiences, child-directed learning, and opportunities for children to collaborate that are critical for student growth in all domains. This video session will use data to paint the picture of the current state of instruction in kindergarten through third grade and identify opportunities for shifts in teaching to more effectively meet the needs of young learners. The practices shared will demonstrate academic rigor using developmentally appropriate practices.

**Shannon Riley-Ayers, Ph.D.**, Senior Program Officer at The Nicholson Foundation, has been working in early childhood education for her entire career of more than 20 years. She has extensive and varied experience in the early childhood field, spanning from the classroom, to the New Jersey State Department of Education, to national systems improvement. She holds an M.Ed. in Language and Literacy and a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the Pennsylvania State University.

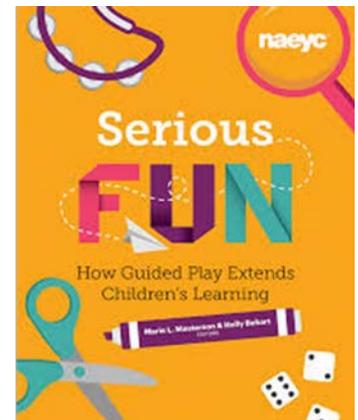
#### **Reflection Questions**

How does my work with children reflect my understanding of how children develop in all five domains?

How does my planning for students reflect developmentally appropriate practice?

What is my role as the teacher in child-directed learning?

**Chapter eight, “Engaging and Enriching Play is Rigorous Learning”**  
by Shannon Riley-Ayers and Alexandra Figueras-Daniel



### **A Note from the Presenter...**

The primary years in school are a critical period of development when children are especially sensitive to their environment and experiences. This means it is an opportune time to lay the foundation for later learning and ensure that each child is on the path to fulfill their potential. To do this, educators have a responsibility to meet the rigorous standards put in place for our youngest learners in a way that addresses their developmental needs as unique individuals. Early childhood educators have long understood the importance of teaching children in a playful manner that capitalizes on children’s interests and curiosity. Teaching practices that are child-centered and standards-focused provide the critical balance between rigor and developmentally appropriate practice. This breaks down the false dichotomy between play and learning. -Shannon Riley-Ayers