



# Getting a Head Start on the Oregon Trail

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**“Our mission is to provide early childhood development services that prepare children for lifelong success”**

**Every Year:**

- 600+ children are served by Head Start programs.
- 1,000 licensed child care facilities are offered resources and support.
- 3,000 caregivers receive training to help provide high-quality early child care.

# Andrew Hodgson, Nutrition Manager

“Subtle, significant improvements before innovative, original ideas.”

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- B.S. Nutrition, Arizona State University
- ACE Certified Youth Fitness Specialist
- Currently studying MBA courses
- Lived in IL, AZ, UT, and KS
- Active outdoors adventurer

The preschool industry is 98.5% female, and the Nutrition Industry is 90% female, so how did I become a Head Start Nutrition Manager?

- Some chance goes into that, but it means I came in with new and different perspectives, which adds value to a group.



# Inspirations:

## IMIL and Let's Move Outside! Conferences

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### CHALLENGES

No Rocky Mountains, not many lakes.

Ranked 96<sup>th</sup> worst major city in America for being outside by one article.

Families say “nothing to do outside” or “my kids get bored so fast”. Parents say “I know I should take my kids to the park, but...”

Kids are not as interested in outdoors? Can't get kids off screens?

### OPPORTUNITIES

150 city parks!

50+ miles bike trails

Splashpads, pools, waterparks, zoo and wildlife park.

A resource would be welcome and do more good than in other places!

Kids have imagination. They don't need the best setting; they can make-believe!

# This project was a team effort.

## Child Start Wellness Committee(s) included:

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Nutrition Coordinator

Health Services Senior Manager and Assistant Director of Health and ERSEA

Health Managers/Nurses

Early Childhood Specialists and FaCES

Center Managers and Assistant Managers

Readiness Coaches

Research Analyst and Training Specialist

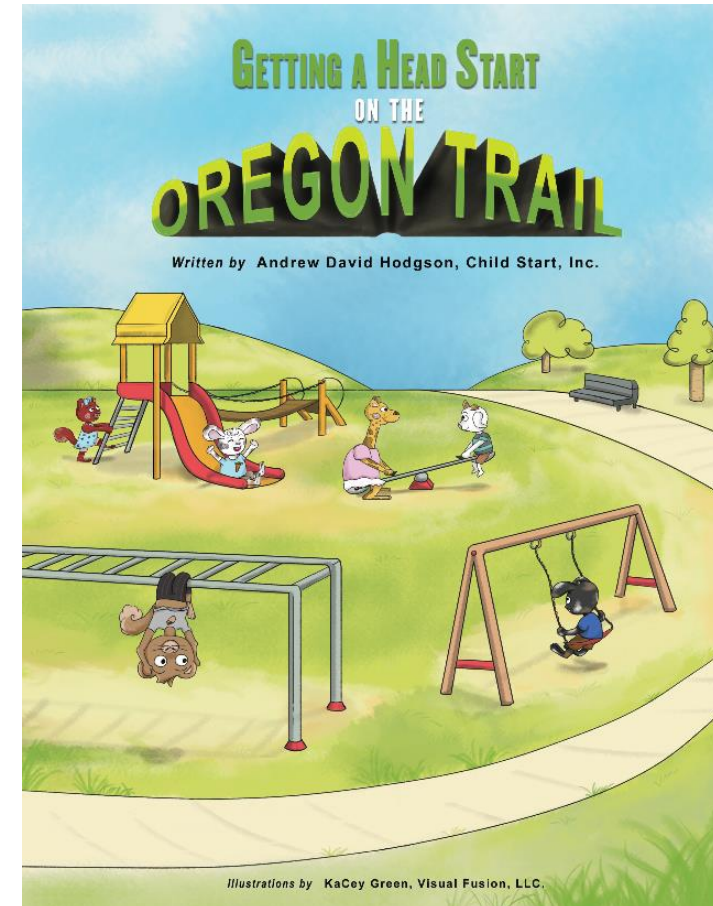
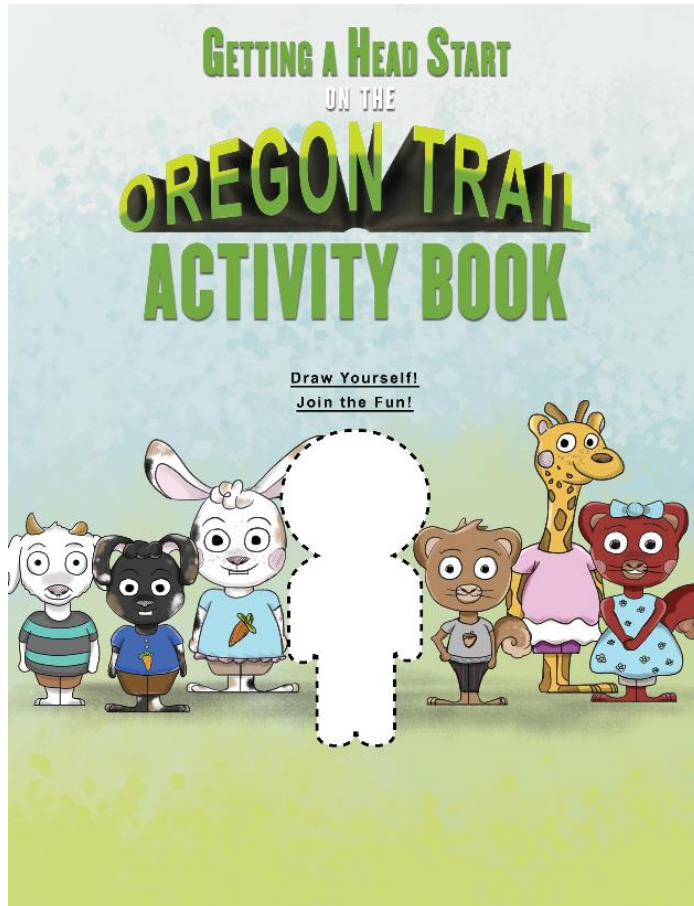
Monitoring/Quality Assurance Team

**Turnover is a challenge! Less than half the original contributors were on the final team. Keep recruiting!**  
**On the bright side, work teams are often strengthened by regularly introducing new members.**



# Paired Activity Book and Story Book

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# Original Characters

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ADHD  
Anxiety  
Sensory Sensitivity  
Bored? Bratty?



Three families who  
represent **Head Start** kids  
and families.

Or...  
Creative  
Resourceful  
Loving  
Friendly  
Ready to Learn  
Do their best





# 8 Theme challenges

## SAFARI ADVENTURER



To be a Safari Adventurer, observe wild animals from a safe distance, without scaring or approaching them. Visit a zoo, wildlife refuge, local park, or local hiking trail as a family to watch for animals. Mornings and evenings are the best times to observe wild animals because many are most active at these times. When do you feel the most energy during the day?

### Physical Activity

Can you move like different wild animals? Use your imagination and try to move like the animals below. Tip: Consider using your hands and arms as a tail or a trunk, and think about how fast or slow you are moving.

- ☐ Elephant ☐ Dog ☐ Squirrel ☐ Bunny ☐ Bird ☐ Crab ☐ Monkey

### Creative Task

Start by listing 3 different animals you observed below. A wildlife expert knows how to classify wild animals. Write one adjective. This is a word that describes each animal?

Animal	Adjective
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____

### Mindful Moment

Quietly observe an animal for a few moments. What is it doing? Do you think animals have different moods and feelings? What might your animal be thinking right now? What would you do if you were this type of animal?

## HEALTHY SNACKER



Do you know how to eat healthy? Fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods give us the energy to play and feel our best. Some foods like soda, cookies, and candy taste good but are "sometimes foods" that can be bad if we eat too many of them. Become a healthy snacker with the challenges below.

### Physical Activity

A healthy snack can help us to play longer and have more fun. Make up your own healthy "Oregon Trail Mix". Try to include each food type below (look for whole grain and low sugar options). Give your new snack a fun name. Then head to a local park and get some great playtime in.

☐ Cereal Pieces

☐ Crackers

☐ Dried Fruits

☐ Nuts or Seeds

### Creative Task

Smoothies are a healthy and fun way to try new fruits and veggies! What is your favorite color? Can you help to make a smoothie that color? Try to use only fruits or vegetables to produce your favorite color. No blender? Visit a local shop that makes smoothies and let them know what your favorite color is, or try mashing some fruits together until soft at home.

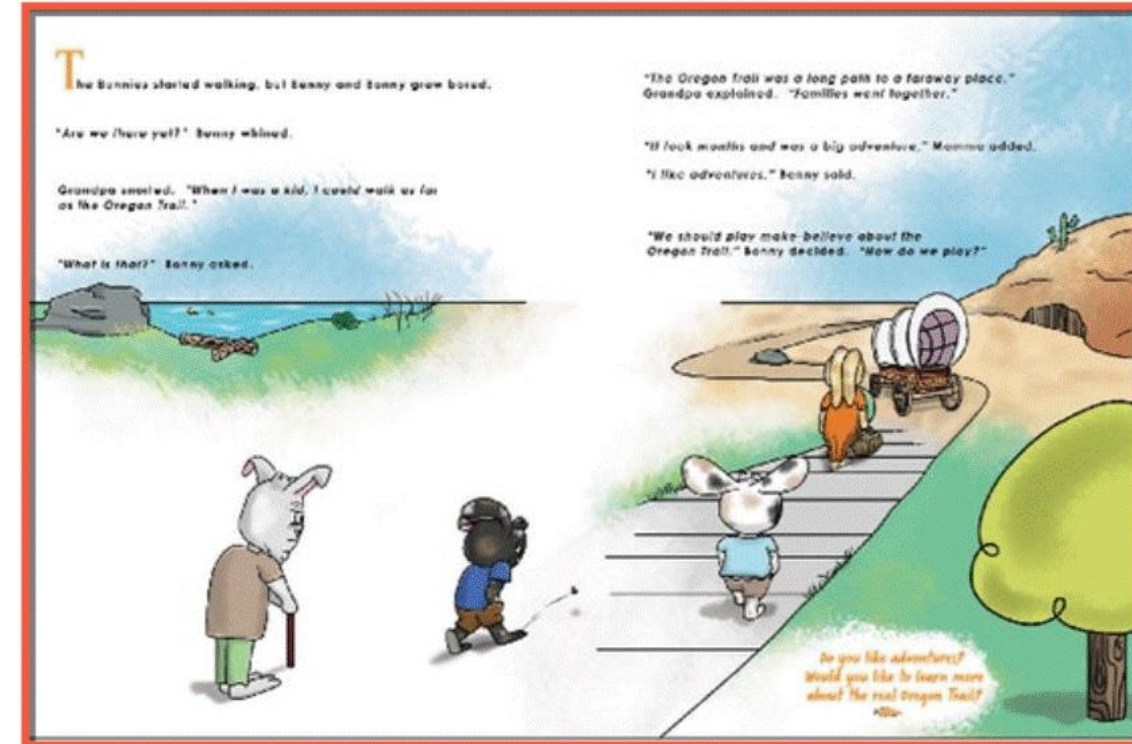
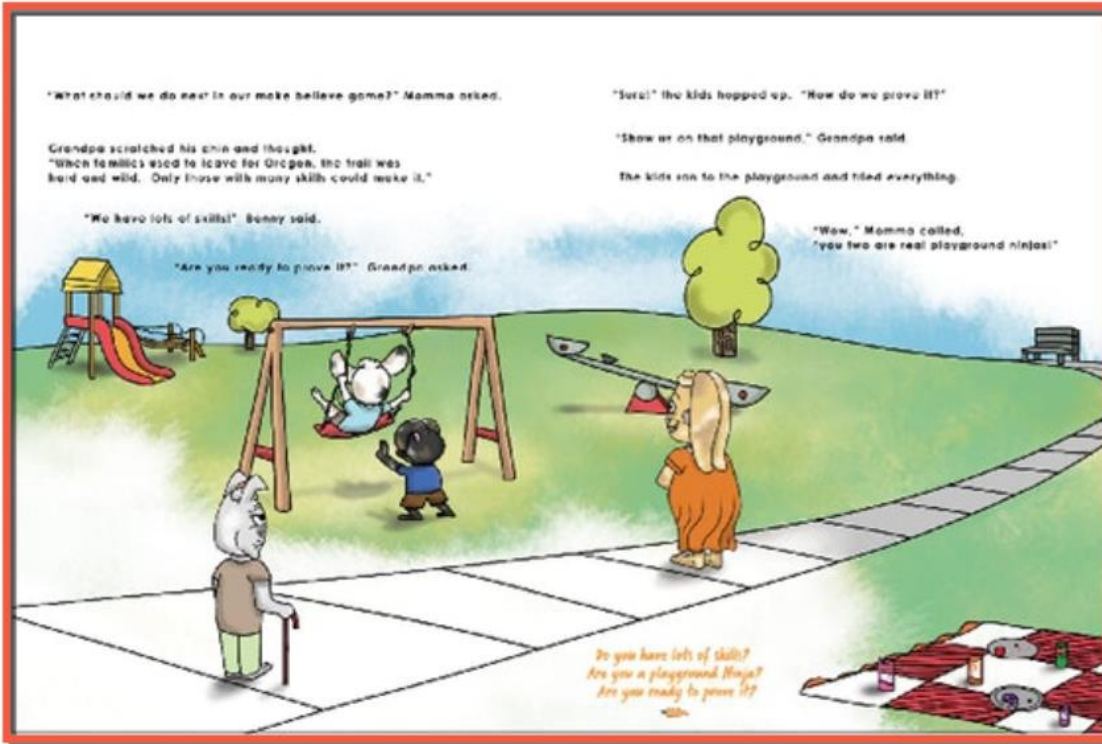
### Mindful Moment

Mindful eating means eating slowly, and using all the senses to enjoy our food. Pack a healthy picnic with all the food groups, focusing on lean proteins, and remembering plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. Try eating mindfully. Hold each food in your mouth and chew slowly. Think about the taste and texture of each food. What is your favorite new food of the day?



# 100 Active Outdoor Hour Challenge







# Inside the Story Book



# Spring 1

 Go for a hike Total Move Minutes ( )	Go for a nature walk and draw the flowers you see Total Move Minutes ( )	Climb a tree Total Move Minutes ( )	Go on a nature scavenger hunt Total Move Minutes ( )	Go puddle jumping Total Move Minutes ( )	Go for a walk Total Move Minutes ( )
Go play at the playground Total Move Minutes ( )	Go on a color hunt for spring colors Total Move Minutes ( )	Chase bubbles Total Move Minutes ( )	Toss around a beach ball/balloon in a blanket or sheet Total Move Minutes ( )	Create an obstacle course Total Move Minutes ( )	Play balloon volleyball Total Move Minutes ( )
Play catch Total Move Minutes ( )	Go for a walk or run Total Move Minutes ( )	Draw four colored squares and run to the color called Total Move Minutes ( )	Play hide and seek Total Move Minutes ( )	Play follow the leader and walk like animals Total Move Minutes ( )	Go fly a kite Total Move Minutes ( )
Go for a bike ride Total Move Minutes ( )	Set up activity stations and rotate through them Total Move Minutes ( )	Play tag Total Move Minutes ( )	Go on a "Bear" hunt Total Move Minutes ( )	Go on a walk to create a spring nature book Total Move Minutes ( )	Plant a garden Total Move Minutes ( )
					Play hopscotch Total Move Minutes ( )



Total Monthly Move Minutes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# How often do you do what you should?

**MAKE BEING HEALTHY FUN!  
A GAME, NOT A CHORE!  
WANT > SHOULD**

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WHEN DO YOU GO TO BED EVERY NIGHT?  
DO YOU DRINK SODA? EAT FAST FOOD?  
DRIVE FASTER THAN THE SPEED LIMIT?  
SHOULD YOU BE DOING THESE THINGS?



# Performance Standard 1302.50(a)

## Family Engagement

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### Purpose.

A program **must** integrate parent and family engagement strategies into all systems and program services to support family well-being and promote children's learning and development.

Programs are encouraged to develop innovative two-generation approaches that address prevalent needs of families across the program that may leverage community partnerships or other funding sources.

# 1302.46(a) Family support services for health, nutrition, and mental health

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## Parent collaboration.

Programs **must** collaborate with parents to promote children's health and well-being by providing medical, oral, nutrition and mental health education support services that are understandable to individuals, including individuals with low health literacy.



# 1302.31(4) Teaching and the learning environment.

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**Park Ranger**

A program **must** recognize physical activity as important to learning and integrate intentional movement and physical activity into curricular activities and daily routines in ways that support health and learning...



# What are Performance Standards?

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How does your program view and approach them?

Requirements or opportunities? Chores or challenges?

Seeds to grow from or hurdles to get past?

Make them come to life! Use them for inspiration.

Don't serve them like drab vegetables with a grimace!

In a world with so many entertainment options and distractions,  
programs cannot thrive being boring and uncreative.

# Community Partners and Outside Funding Sources

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Health and Wellness Coalition

Health ICT

Wichita Parks and Recreation

Child Care Aware of KS

Visual Fusion (Graphic Design)

Valley Offset Printing

Office of Mayor Jeff Longwell

- Walk-a-Longwell Grants

+Kansas Nutrition Council

+Sunflower Health Foundation

\$15,500

Applied to 7 foundations/grants

Received 1 of 3 large, 2 of 4 smaller

Received 62% of original \$ pursued.

Waiting out COVID...

Tablet/phone version?

Parks and Recreation Summer Camps?

Community kickoff?

Head Start Park Day?

Feature story book in libraries?

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## WHAT COMES NEXT?



# Don't be sad like Mr. Squirrel!

## This is a free resource!

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<https://ChildStart.org>

PDF files: pro versions for schools,  
Easy print home edition for families  
English and Spanish versions  
Non-commercial use only

[ahodgson@childstart.org](mailto:ahodgson@childstart.org)

316-682-1853





# Prefer to create your own?

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YOU HAVE THE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

YOU HAVE TALENTED, MOTIVATED PEOPLE

IT IS FASTER TO IMPROVE SOMETHING THAN INVENT IT!

FUNDING IS EASIER ONCE A MODEL IS PROVEN!



“Genius is 1% inspiration  
and 99% perspiration.”

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-THOMAS EDISON



# Cautions and Tips

## Build a diverse team, but assign a Project Manager.

- “If you have two quarterbacks, you have no quarterback.”
- More projects die by committee than thrive in them.

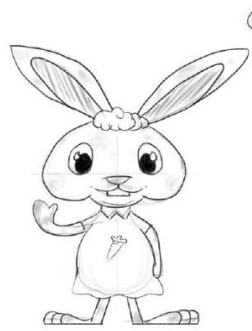
## Quality takes time. Expect the unexpected.

- Plan on multiple iterations. Creativity should not be easy.
- It took 2 years to go from concept to handing books out to parents!

## Truly new, original ideas are harder to fund.

- Even when a big, original idea is asked for!
- Is your project or agency “awardable?”
  - (Pursue small “wins” first to establish support and momentum.)





Bonny Sketch vz 1



Bonny Sketch vz 2



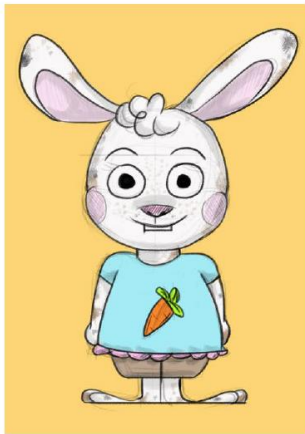
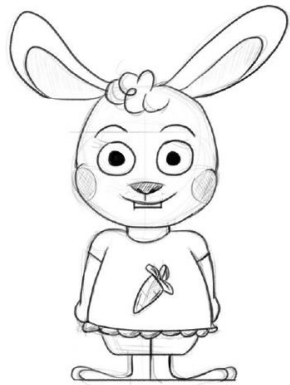
Bonny Sketch vz 3



Bonny Sketch vz 4



Bonny Sketch vz 5



**Playground Ninja**





# Bird and Bug Buddy

Do you know that birds and insects, or bugs, do many important jobs in nature? A **Bird and Bug Buddy** observes without doing harm. There are many different types of birds and bugs. They come in many sizes, shapes, and colors. Winter may not be the best season for this challenge.

## Physical Activity

Go on a nature scavenger hunt on a trail through woods or prairie or a park. Check off ones you spot below. Tip: before you go, look up pictures of different bugs and birds in a book or website so you will know what to look for.

- A colorful bird
- A bird in flight
- A spider or spiderweb
- A colorful insect
- Ants or other insects on the ground
- Bees or other insects at work

## Creative

On the next page, draw, color, or paint your own new bird or bug. Is your creation big or small? How does your bird or bug live?

Many birds and bugs are attracted by colorful flowers. Do you have a favorite color? Do you ever feel like a color? Colors can affect our mood. Try looking at different colors while focusing on how you feel.

# BIRD AND BUG BUDDY

Do you know that birds and insects, or bugs, do many important jobs in nature? A **Bird and Bug Buddy** observes without doing harm. There are many different types of birds and bugs. They come in many sizes, shapes, and colors. Winter may not be the best season for this challenge.

## Physical Activity

Go on a nature scavenger hunt on a trail through woods or prairie or a local botanic garden. Keep your eyes out for birds and bugs. Check off ones you spot below. Tip: before you go, look up pictures of different bugs and birds in a book or website so you will know some to look for.

- ☐ A colorful bird
- ☐ A spider or spiderweb
- ☐ Ants or other insects on the ground
- ☐ A bird in flight
- ☐ A colorful insect
- ☐ Bees or other insects at work

## Creative Task

On the next page, draw, color, or paint your own new bird or bug using any colors, or patterns you like. Is your creation big or small? How does your bird or bug live? Be sure to give your bird or bug a name.



## Mindful Moment

Many birds and bugs are drawn to colorful flowers. Do you have a favorite color? Do you ever feel like a color? Colors can affect our mood. Try looking at different colors while focusing on how you feel.



# BUG BUDDYQUEST!



Are you interested in all the different types of bugs there are because insects do so many different tasks in plants and parks. Can you help Felix learn more about bugs?

Find bugs under rocks, on plants, or even flying in the air.

Record what bugs you've seen today. Don't worry about them being perfect. Just record what you see.



Record what bugs you've seen today. Record it below!

Record what bugs you've seen today. Record it below!



“Perfection is the enemy of progress.”

“The best is the enemy of the good.”

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-WINSTON CHURCHILL

-VOLTAIRE



# Final Take-Aways

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## You can do fun and inspiring things at your Head Start or Non Profit!

- Try something ambitious and creative.
- Break up the monotony and monitoring!
- You don't need perfect hires, but consider non-conventional ones.



Marvin, the “clumsy” kid goat was inspired by a real kid goat I met on a mountain hike.

## Know your staff and parents!

- What do they want? What excites them?
- Skills and duties vs. passions and interests.
- What could be done in a new and better way?
- Use what you have and what you know.

