



ECE Training Dynamics, LLC
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"Play: the Springboard to Learning"

Handout

What is Play?

1. "Play is the fundamental means by which children gather and process _____, learn new _____, and practice _____. (Spodek, 1986)
2. "Through play, children learn about cultural norms and _____, discover the workings of the _____, and negotiate their way through their _____." (Klein, Wirth, & Linas, 2003)
3. "Play helps children deal with disturbing eventsIt also allows them greater _____ over their environment and activities as they leave _____ to engage in higher order thought processes." (Thompson, 2005)
4. "Play is important for brain, cognitive linguistic physical, psychological, and social-emotional _____ and well-being." (Brown & Vaughan, 2009)
5. "Early childhood researchers and educators agree that play is key to early childhood development. Through play, young children learn _____ skills across all domains (language, cognitive, physical, and socioemotional)." (Van Hoorn, et al. 2015)
6. "As children explore their physical and social worlds during self-active play ----- hands on, open-ended play ---- they naturally and effectively gather _____, discover _____, and become immersed in creative processes. This fosters their intellectual, physical, and emotional development." (Nell, et al. 2015)
7. "Play is essential to development because it contributes to the cognitive, physical, social and _____ well-being of children and youth. (The American Academy of Pediatrics)

Characteristics of Play:

1. Intrinsic -----
2. Free Choice -----
3. Pleasurable -----
4. Pretend -----
5. Active -----
6. Process Oriented -----
7. Self-directed -----

Reasons for Using Open-Ended Manipulatives:

Just Playing

When I'm building in the block room, please don't say I'm "just playing"; for you see, I'm learning as I play --- about balance and shapes. When I'm getting all dressed up, setting the table, caring for the babies, don't get the idea I'm "just playing"; for you see, I'm learning as I play --- I may be a mother or father someday. When you see me up to my elbows in paint, or standing at an easel, or molding and shaping clay, please don't let me hear "He is just playing"; for you see, I'm learning as I play. I'm expressing myself and being creative --- I may be an artist or an inventor someday. When you see me sitting in a chair "reading" to an imaginary audience, please don't laugh and think I'm "just playing"; for you see, I'm learning as I play --- I may be a teacher someday. When you see me combing the bushes for bugs, or packing my pockets with choice things I find, don't pass it off as "just play"; for you see, I'm learning as I play --- I may be a scientist one day. When you see me engrossed in a puzzle or some "play thing" at my school, please don't feel the time is wasted in "play"; for you see, I'm learning as I play -- - I'm learning to solve problems and concentrate --- I may be in business someday. When you see me cooking or tasting foods, please don't think that because I enjoy it, it is "just play". I'm learning to follow directions and see differences. I may be a chef someday. When you see me learning to skip, hop, run and move my body, please don't say I'm "just playing"; for you see, I'm learning as I play --- I may be a doctor, nurse or athlete someday. When you ask me what I've done at school today, and I say "I just played", please don't misunderstand me. For you see, I'm learning as I play. I'm learning to enjoy and be successful in my work. I'm preparing for tomorrow. Today, I'm a child and my work is my play.