

The types of play.

Section 1.

Play Scotland (no.date) discusses how play gives all children free choice with no determined outcome. Play Scotland (no.date) also states that holistic development is supported through play such as physical and social development. Play Scotland (no.date) also states that play can be done with and without equipment and there is no right or wrong way of playing play.

Key Worker.

According to Sunflowerclub (no.date) a key workers duty for play is to give the child an opportunity to play with what they feel like, to build a bond therefore giving the child reassurance during their play. Sunflowerclub (no date) continues to suggest that the role of the key worker is to be aware of the child's interests and needs and to communicate about their day and what they are playing with.

Symbolic Play.

According to Play and Playground encyclopaedia (2020) symbolic play is children using their imagination with different types of objects for play; they may use a box as a sailing boat, or they may use a building block as a phone. This helps the child to understand the world around them. BabySparks (2017) also follows on that symbolic play is using different objects as their own imaginative play, for example a block used to be a car.

Sprouts (2018) states Piaget Pre-objectional stage is where children are learning and understanding objects through symbolic play. The child will be learning about different objects through exploration with adult support. This will support their understanding about the world around them.

Empoweredparents (2019) states during symbolic play, children are developing their holistic learning, as children will be using fine and gross motor skills by using their own bodies and moving around during play. The child will be using language and communication with other children and objects in play, it acts on emotional needs from acting out experiences. Children learn first by the support of a practitioner, this

supports Vygotsky (Jenna Vande Zandschulp, 2016) he believed children learn first through communication with a practitioner. Opportunities for children to problem solve together through play will also be provided, this supports Piaget (Kandola, 2019) stance as he suggests children need hands on practical experiences.

Orr and Geva (2020) state symbolic play is self-directed by the child as they will be going through stages of objects. The child will be using objects they can find, either single or multiply and using the objects for their own pretend play, for example using a bowl as a dolls hat.

Fantasy Play.

SpringerLink (2019) speaks about fantasy play as a non-fiction roleplay. Children can use their own imagination to create their own roleplay or repeat an experience they have witnessed from exploring the world. Jenna Vande Zandschulp (2016) as Vygotsky theory states children will take on their own imagination of the world through imaginary play.

According to Little Darlings Childcare Harrow (2016) the experience of fantasy role play lets children direct their own play, as the child's own imagination is utilised. They can use whatever they want in the room for their own fantasy play and any object in the room can be turned into something else during this play.

Scholastic (2020) states fantasy play also benefits their holistic development, as the child will develop their social skills through interaction with other children while supporting emotional development through problem solving, taking turns and developing an awareness of empathy towards other children. This type of play will also help support a child's self-esteem while providing them with experiences to learn more about the world and people around them during play. According to (Bronfrenbrenner, 1979 cited Rose and Rogers, 2012) he believed experiences affect a child's development, he states children's experiences builds on their human development (Rose and Rogers, 2012).

According to Hostettler (2020) Vygotsky considers play an important tool for children as it builds on their intellectual, social and emotional development. Hostettler (2020)

continues to say that fantasy play is set out in roles and rules of the play; roles are what the child is going to play, and rules are what will be followed within the game.

Scholastic (2020) discusses how fantasy play supports holistic learning, as the child will be developing language skills as they communicate with each other during reacting a story or an event the child witnessed. This provides opportunity for new words, social and emotional development with learning, as the child will be learning about taking turns resulting in the child showing more understanding of empathy towards other children which building self-esteem. Thinking skills help with the child's learning, enabling the child to solve problems in creative ways, share responsibilities of setting rules and roles and thinking on which objects and materials to use during play. Imagination skills are helpful during play as children can use any object or material to create something new during play. Homan (2020) backs this statement by explaining, fantasy play develops thinking and problem-solving skills, as children can take on roles and use objects and materials they may need for their play.

Section 2 – Why risks benefits the child's learning.

According to Moyles (2010) taking risk in play is important for a child's learning as they show more interest in doing activities, understand that it is okay to make mistakes and they will feel safe during play. Moyles (2010) continues to state risk benefits their development by building on their emotional bond of trust between child and adult, developing social cognition in the child.

Role of the adult – key worker on risk.

A key workers duty for risk is to see what potential risk the child may encounter during play and they manage that risk by either reducing the risk, or removing the risk so the child is not harmed during indoor or outdoor play (Tilmouth and Quallington, 2016). However, the Health and Safety Executive (no.date) states that practitioners should not prevent risk but should enable it to occur in a safe manner. The Foundation phase (2015) states taking risk is part of the curriculum framework of children's learning. Foundation phase (2015) continues, in that the personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity developments, mention taking risks supports the child's confidence in exploring the world around them. For children to achieve this, practitioners need to offer the right amount of support, this agrees with both Bruner and Vygotsky's work as according to Teachthought (2019) Bruner's suggests that

practitioners will Scaffold a child when they start to learn a new skill. After the child understands what they are doing, they will become more independent and will no longer need support. Likewise Let's LEARN (2019) states Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal development explain the learning stages of what a child goes through. At first, children need support from practitioners to have a better understanding of skills and things around them; once the child understands, the child should be independent enough and no longer need support.

SearchCompliance (2020) continues that risk management is important as it gives the setting a safe and secure environment. Staff and children are all protected from potential harm, to prevent potential threats and gain a better understanding of risks.

Risk assessments can be carried out by practitioners. Risk assessments are there to protect children, employees and the childcare setting. It is also the law that childcare settings should have risk assessments for activities and health and safety policies and procedures in place. If these were not implemented in the childcare setting, they would, as stated by Tilmouth and Quallington, (2016) be breaking the law.

Estyn, inspects early years settings, and give recent inspection reports where they discuss how some settings provide risk within play. According to Estyn (2017), the report shows how all children have risk in their own led play, learn to take risks and problem solve skills during play.

Estyn (2017) states in the report that Estyn reported, they were very pleased with the nursery taking risks in outdoor play, however, the report only stated about risk being taking in outdoor play not indoor play.

Do risk benefit children and can they learn from risk?

Playswales (2020) states giving children the opportunities to experiences risks during play is important for young children as it helps them develop skills. Through risk children will develop physical and emotional resilience as supported by Playswales (2020), they are more likely to challenge themselves in taking new risks and have a better resilience to conquer fears (Playswales 2020).

Other curriculums, such as the forest schools in Denmark take a very different approach to risk. They believe that to deny children opportunity for risk in their play is detrimental to their development. They give the child an opportunity to challenge

themselves and to experience risk out in the forests, thus supporting the development of their holistic learning (Denmark's Forest Kindergarten, 2016).

Section 3 – observation.

An observation is a method that all childcare practitioners use in early years settings to witness children during play, what they are developing through learning and to see where the child is at within their development stage (SafetyCulture, 2019). Nursery World (2006) also states an observation is a method used in early years settings to better understand young children during their learning and to reflect on their observations.

The Classroom (2018) says a narrative observation or running record method is carried out by practitioners where they record down what they witness during the observation. The Classroom (2018) continues, that the narrative observation includes interacting with other children and the environment, how the child behaves and how the child communicates with other children. Teach (2020) agrees with this statement, as narrative observation mostly involves free description to write down all about the whole child and the holistic learning of the child. Teach (2020) continues that narrative observation usually lasts from twenty minutes to an hour depending on the child and the duration of their own play.

Montessori (1979, cited in Burdenelle, 2004) believes in her method of teacher training, that practitioners should have good observation skills in order to have a better idea on what to plan in the early years setting. Observing Children (2014) agrees with the statement, as observations during teacher training are important for early year practice, as it gives practitioners ideas about the child and their needs, as observations should be based on the child's interests and developments.

According to Cherry (2019) Piaget used observations to see the academic learning of a child. Cherry (2019) continues to say Piaget found that children learn differently, and children learn and develop through support. Piaget, through his observations, was able to create his theory cognitive development stages (Cherry, 2019).

Gray and Macblain, (2012) also agree with this statement as Piaget used the method of interviews with children of different age groups to do a problem-solving task. While he observed them he discovered older children and younger children think in very

different ways when solving a problem. Gray and Macblain, (2012) continue to discuss how Piaget believed children are curious of the world around them when involved in active play, and this supports their development and understanding. He believed in the importance of child-initiated learning to support children to acquire new skills for a child's learning development.

According to Learningladder (no.date) the set goals for observation on each child in early years settings are, to learn more about the child, see how the child likes the play areas and are there any changes needed, record any issues with any areas of development and see if there are any possible behavioural problems. This information would be shared with parents. Connectability (no date) also agrees, as the goals of an observation is to learn about the whole child, therefore supporting practitioner knowledge of the child in their setting. Information can be shared of the child's progress with the child's parents. Connectability (no date) goes on to say observations can pick up on a child's triggers, on triggering their behaviour problems and the observation records can be used to get the child extra support if needed.

According to Ehow (2017), there are advantages to narrative observation. Ehow (2017) states practitioners are able to see where the child is at in their development stage, learning styles, strengths and weakness and group learning. Following on, Ehow (2017) explains it can help identify any weakness in the child's development and if the child needs support in their learning. The practitioner can spot any behaviour or learning difficulties and can have a meeting with the parents to discuss which steps to take for getting support for their child.

However, according to GradesFixer (2019), there are disadvantages to narrative observations. GradesFixer (2019), state practitioners may find it difficult to record every piece of information that they see, the practitioner may have to stop at some point due to interruptions from another child. It can be hard to be accurate within the observation as Neaum (no.date) suggests that practitioners need to be aware of any assumptions that they might have and how these may influence who, what and where they observe.

Spreeuwenberg, (no.date) state how an observation supports a practitioner to understand individual children's developmental stages. It gives practitioners an idea where the child is at with their development stage and discover any areas where the

child may struggle. It also helps the practitioner to reflect back on old observations to see if the child has improved or if they still need support. Neaum (no.date) also explains that practitioners carry out observations on a child to understand the child better, to see the child's likes and dislikes therefore supporting a better idea of planning.

Section 4 – Role of play Observation.

Kelly, (2020) discusses how play supports a practitioner while observing children during their free child led play, enabling the practitioner to gather more information on the child. Kelly (2020) continues to say the data we gather on observing children is important as we are learning more about the child. Practitioners get to see if the child works well in groups, how the child reacts to different activities, what development skills the child is at, building a bond between the child and practitioner, how the child copes with routine and any changes to behaviour and triggers to behaviours.

Howard and McInnes, (2012) speak about the importance of the location of an observation of both the child's led play and the practitioner as this will have an impact on the child's own play activity. Howard and McInnes, (2012) continue to say that interfering or getting the child to do an activity will impact on their emotional well-being, as the child will consider the activity as not their own play. It is only when the child is leading in their own led play that emotional well-being is realised, and children are therefore fully engaged. Forest (no date) agrees with the statement as by letting the child lead on their own play, the child will be more engrossed in the play and the practitioner will be able to have more observation information on the child if they wait and see what unfolds in the child's own led play.

Howard and McInnes, (2012) states children would rather see play as just as their own play and not something that is planned out by the practitioner, this will have an impact on their emotional well-being. Howard and McInnes (2012) explains children feel, when given their own choice of play, that it is then perceived as play to them. However, when doing an activity with certain rules by the practitioner this is not play to children and this is what impacts a child's emotional well-being, the child would rather their own free choice of play than an activity play (Howard and McInnes, 2012).

Howard and McInnes (2012) go on to discuss the importance of play for a child's learning and development. This is because a child who does not have access to play

or has no play, will have a delay in their development. Howard and McInnes (2012) further discuss that if a child is not given any play or experiences this will affect their communication skills with others and their physical needs.

UkEssays (2020) discuss how practitioners can observe children's play, and by having this recording data of the child's play, practitioners can scaffold and identify the child's Zone of Proximal development, therefore supporting extension or consolidation of learning for the future. According to Alberta Education (2015) both Bruner and Vygotsky support this stance, as scaffolding is about supporting children to develop new skills while seeing the child develop at each stage during play. The Open University (no date) discusses how through observations of children at play practitioners can witness Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, therefore identifying where the child still needs guidance and support, but also when to progress and withdraw as the child can then do it independently.

Moyles (2010) states practitioners reflect on children's play to see if there are improvements needed, they do this by observing children during child led play and see if they can make any changes to play for the child. This is good practice for the practitioner as it gives them an idea on what the child's likes and dislikes are and finds out the benefits of the role of play provided to support the child's learning.

Donaldson (2015) expresses how hands on play benefits children's learning as it gives children the independence, development, confidence and self-esteem to be ready at any age where they can transition to leaving school or employment. Donaldson (2015) continues to say children need access to play and other creative activities, as hands on play gives a child a wide range of support on their learning and it helps with the child's mental health.

Child Psychology (no date) states Piaget's theory helps practitioners to understand children's different learning abilities and to give support to children struggling in the early years setting. Child Psychology (no date) goes on to say Piaget states, observing children within early years learning will support the practitioner to have a better understanding of child development learning and if the child needs any support in their learning.

Early-education (no date) states Froebel suggests in practice, practitioners must provide a spacious environment for children to play, for them to build, bond and learn

in the environment. Early-education (no date) continues to say practitioners who observe children when they are more engrossed in their own play need to be observing in the background and not interfering in the child's play.

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