

Section 1: TYPES OF PLAY: Fantasy play

According to Laevers (2005;9) they believe that it is the explanatory attitude and alertness to surroundings and the adaption to these surroundings that will ultimately bring a child to develop the skills for concentration and involvement. He further suggests that trying to keep this motivation intact and successful would be a big challenge for education and would have a lot of implications and also trying to keep up the organization and managing the classroom or location, the pedagogy and most importantly the role of the child adults, practitioners or caregivers and also the assessment. Davies & Howe (2009:247) propose that within the role play session or activity whether playing, imagination make-believe, pretending or using just their imagination can all be features of Ludic play, therefore play that's based on past experiences will include symbolic and fantasy play. These types of play generally a low-key risk way of them using rehearsals to adapt to real world settings and experiences. Moyles (2009:28) states that “play is powerful” and deepens learning and understanding by enabling the child to begin learning from first hand experiences, based on their knowledge and what they can do. Bodrova & Leong (2005) go on to explain that Vygotsky saw play as the leading behaviour in a child's development. In this theory he believed that a child would play above and beyond their years if the play at hand had several different elements to it. First, the play should include an imaginary element and secondary it has said that all children involved must have assigned roles and relevant rules to understand and the last element is that language and understanding of this is crucial. Research shows that Bruner (2004) suggests that the least effective and engaging play was the “real world kind”. As an early year's pioneer Dewey (1902) advocated that a child's freedom would be nurtured with adult guidance while developing trust and building relationships negotiating to the environment. Daley (2004) along with Bruner (1972) who supported the idea of “children need books” argues that it is story play, fantasy play, role play and dialogue that promote intellectual growth and importantly emotional intelligence. There are lots of benefits of fantasy play which will often include, cognitive development which promotes creative thinking, problem solving and the chance to be able to think solely and enhance memory, attention span and cognitive skills. It will allow children to act out and deal with emotions in a safe environment, while using empathy, co-operation skills and physical development.

Messy Play:

According to Duffy (2007:1) messy play is made up of and involves children using several senses in the process of exploration, especially the sense of touch while offering plenty of opportunity to mould and manipulate materials and not having a particular focus on making or producing something. It's more than just making a mess with materials, its purpose and value as a thinking skill or tool are equally important and

the stimulation of senses plays a very big part on how children learn about themselves while learning about the world around them. Messy play is the need for contact with different types of materials to build on and create experiments which will involve life learning through chaos (Szekely,2015:42) and it is the sense of chaos that give children opportunities to explore containment, control and transformation as well as testing adults . Framework for messy play known as the ARC which consists of

Autonomy; this is associated with a child making their own decisions and choices where the learning structure and consistent boundaries which are the provided by the caregiver or practitioner.

Relatedness : where the child will develop secure relationships and attachments in early years through positive well-being and behaviour, they discover themselves and the world and the connectivity through these through objects and environments and using critical thinking skills.

Competence; is when they feel that they must make an impact on a situation or task (Morris,2015:88) it can also consist of control. Predictability and boundaries and a sense of belonging. Messy play is good for child development and practice where the child learns about the world through demonstration of touch and senses, whether it be indoors or outdoors which give the child to be themselves while being confident and being involved while participating while having fun and together learning about the surroundings, life skills, what is in the world and how it all works

SECTION 3: BENEFITS OF THE OBSERVATION METHOD AND SCHEDULE OF GROWING SKILLS

- Observing children's play provides, real-time observations into their development, allowing practitioners to track progress of cognitive, social, and physical domains. It notices individual learning styles, interests, and needs, enabling the right support and activity planning. While observing It can identify a child's overall development can obtain and document information that can help with language and literacy skills, and cognitive capabilities and helps to identify potential support needs, fosters secure relationships, and ensures a safe, stimulating environment for the child. It helps practitioners spot areas where a child may need extra support, or if they are anxious, ensuring early intervention. It will also identify whether the right resources and materials are appropriate of age and the right equipment used. It can help discover the child's likes and dislikes to create the right learning capabilities or experiences and how to interact with other children or adults through various situations as play is the best way to express a child's feelings and thoughts. The ideas are stemmed from this as play tends to reveal. Using constant observation can provide an accurate

record of surficial development milestones and struggles and can notice certain behaviour patterns over time as observations are critical to create an inclusive environment or experience for the child to thrive. The schedule of growing skills (SOGS) is a very important tool for child development as it can be used from birth all the way up to 5 years, this tool enables adults or practitioners to assess key development areas of the child as it is a test for a variety of skills such as hearing, speech and language, along with social and self-care skills and this is important as they need to identify if the child is meeting their development age to see if there are any additional support needed.

The Hawthorne effect is another important tool as it can help you identify if an individual or child increases, modifies or you see an improvement in their behaviour as they are very aware they are being observed and their behaviours might change. When this occurs, the child will act accordingly or naturally if you like so it would be harder to notice if any improvement is needed and

SECTION 4 : AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF PLAY

An understanding of observing children's play is crucial as it will outline their development while noticing they're likes and dislikes and an observation of needs as it is a version of play that is spontaneous and an expression of a child's world. You will understand that a clear observation will reveal how a child works and plays with objects, build things, sort out different apparatus and will problem solve while doing this. While administering imaginative play children will have so many different emotions and fears as they are demonstrating different experiences in a safe environment while using empathy and negotiation. Play will show a child using concentration along with resilience and the urge to take risks while also revealing they're fine motor skills whether this be learning to grasp objects or playing in the playground along with relationship building and knowing boundaries. The UNCRC highlights play as being a fundamental right and states that "reinforcing the value of play not only for entertainment but as a foundation for discovering, being creative and solving problems" (Play Wales 2018). We as adults need to recognize play as it has the understanding of different types of play that can help practitioners and caregivers as it provides the right support for the child's holistic development. Recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

The right to play is accepted universally and is set out in the United

Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The convention

lists the 42 rights that children and teenagers (under the age of 18) have.

Article 31 of the convention states: 'Every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts

Thomas-Walters, J. (2023) *Exploring opportunities for children's creativity and imagination in 'real world' and 'fantasy' play in the Reception setting*. University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

The Reflective Practitioner

A Schön, D.A.

D 1992

7 1

B How Professionals Think in Action

Routledge

@ 9781315237473

G English

U <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315237473>

Vygotsky, L. S. (2004). Imagination and creativity in childhood. *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology*, 42(1), 7–97

Gascoyne, S. (2019) *Messy play in the early years : supporting learning through material engagements*. First edition. Boca Raton, FL: Routledge.

Brock, A. (2010) "The nature of practitioners' reflections on their reflections about play." In Moyles, J. (ed) *Thinking about play: Developing a Reflective Approach*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

<https://share.google/D546w7lkzF6eRVvNu>

<https://youtu.be/5tjRPWPhIfA?si=9Ve4nDpzSn3uetfN>

