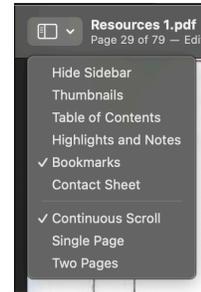


INDEX FOR RESOURCES 2

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Are you out on the playground? Learning Seeds is excited to share one of our strategies for working on peer interactions between children during outdoor play!

One-Minute Solution: Peer Supply Chain

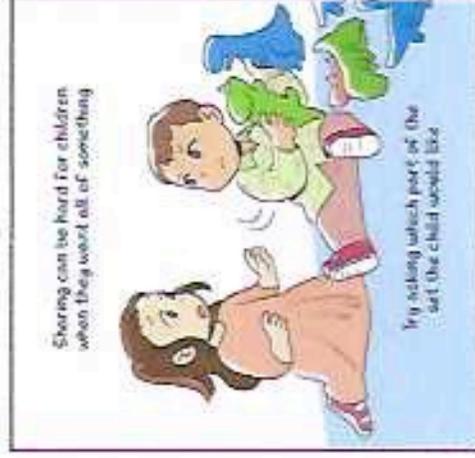
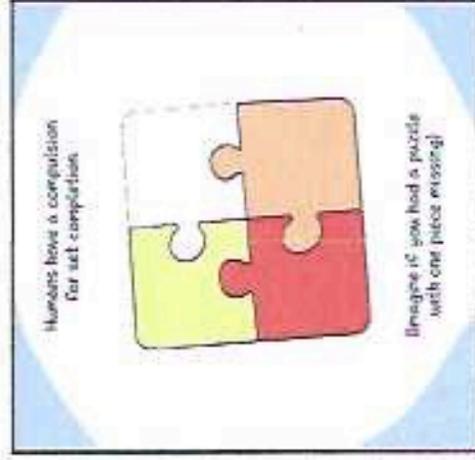
A child can enter play as a contributor.



Did you like this comic? Find more One-Minute Solutions at [Learning Seeds!](#)

Parts of a Set

A child's desire for set completion can be a sharing arrangement instead of a sharing obstacle.



Welcome to Collaborative Coaching and Modeling with Learning Seeds
Helping you help children achieve the Milestones of Engagement



When we model practical solutions to common issues in inclusive early learning environments, we look for teachable moments to help every child deepen their engagement.

THE PRACTITIONER'S COMPASS

- Prioritizing Engagement over mere compliance
- Defining Engagement: "learning to learn" skills in a group setting
- Creating structures to spark exploration, interaction and sharing of ideas.
- Setting your compass so engagement goals inform your teaching
- Picking your compass markers: defining goals that help you aim your responsive instruction while maintaining flexibility to respond to what arises during child-led play

EXPLORATION

- Helping little hands engage: environments and materials
- Structured and natural environments
 - Creating small spaces and flow
 - How classroom layout can help children settle or move
 - How objects help children explore and conceptualize
 - How environments support interacting
 - Visual information and a print rich environment

- **Activities and Materials**
 - Support progression of materials and objects from sensory exploration through physical exploration, mental manipulation and abstraction
 - Build flexibility and novelty with new materials
 - Support joining of activities with peers
 - Mimicking use of objects and tools

INTERACTION

- Discovering the explicit and hidden rules of being with the group
- Conversation Milestones
 - Key words from peers
 - Key words from the classroom: discovering shared vocabulary
 - Negotiating, persuading and solving problems with peers

SHARING IDEAS

- Pretend play skills as the most important skill PreK children are building
 - The basics of supporting pretend play: settings, characters, roles, actions and change over time (i.e. children do not yet have gestalt imagery skills and need supports to be able to 'picture' other people's ideas in sharing and in play)
 - Pretending challenges: the role of visuals for young learners and how you can create them organically
- Abstraction: Conceptualizing: Helping children explore ideas without memorizing inaccurate information

(Back of the Page)

Frequently Asked Questions about having Learning Seeds in your classroom environment:

What parts of the school day does Learning Seeds Professional Development support?

Learning Seeds helps support teachers and children to more fully engage in exploration, interaction and sharing ideas during open ended play such as center time, playground times, or exploration and investigation activities. When children can engage during open ended inclusive play they build the skills for learning how to learn that support their learning in all areas!

The children weren't arguing and there were no problems. Why did the Learning Seeds Shadow jump into the play?

It's great when children are playing without big upsets. Our goals for children include goals for them to overcome any habits of disruption that can derail a child's chance at experience group learning. But we know compliance isn't the ultimate goal of learning. We want to support children in developing the collaborative pretend play skills that lead to shared thinking and

learning as part of the group. Sometimes when children are playing without upsets, they are on a roll. Sometimes, playing quietly means some children are playing alone in order to avoid problem solving, or one child is dominating the decision making and planning. Because we don't take over and "run" the play, we frequently jump in as another player to help everyone in the group fully participate. We watch for opportunities to extend, expand or deepen the play and we are also watching for early signs of disengagement and trying to address them before they become larger problems. We know adults can scaffold children's play without taking it over. In this way, we can lend our presence to play without diminishing children's agency.

What about the times when the children are arguing it get quiet loud and Learning Seeds doesn't repeat the classroom expectations such as "no yelling" ?

We recognize that supporting teachers and children during open ended free play puts us all into many gray areas. We are all literally "in the mud" with children. When we are in this space and supporting children to more fully engage there are times when the authoritative teacher voice is needed and necessary. Learning Seeds will defer to you at those times to set the norms for the classroom. We will use our collaboration prep and debrief time with your teaching team to identify tips and strategies that teachers can use with children to help the children develop the skills to solve the arguing together rather than the teacher needing to jump in with authority everytime.

What if the child is being apprehensive/shy or needing to adjust to the new setting/school/schedule etc?

We agree that children often appear shy/apprehensive when entering a new setting/school/schedule etc. We want to support children during these times while also establishing a pattern of responding. Children with social and communication goals often appear to be shy or adjusting but are also not engaged and they can often set a pattern of nonresponding. We will offer strategies for how teachers can balance the child's need for support in a new setting while also scaffolding the child's engagement. Our goal is to both respect the child's autonomy and also teach a child strategies that increase comfort, joy, and understanding for what the group is doing together.

Why did the Shadowing attempt to have a child join peers in a play theme? This child prefers to play on the edge of the group with a preferred object. Does this value a child's autonomy?

We value both a child's autonomy and the importance of giving children the time and opportunities to grow and develop the skills of engagement. Sometimes children are on the edge of the group because they do not have the skills to join the interaction. Also, sometimes children are on the edge of the group playing with a preferred object because they do not yet have the skills to engage with that object beyond rote, repetitive play. We want to help the child build the skills to expand their engagement to be able to use mental abstraction with objects and expand their interactions with peers and their shared thinking as part of the group. Most children need lots of practice with social engagement. Your inclusive classroom is designed to provide each child with as many opportunities for neutral and positive social connections. Every child needs these many opportunities for social connection as well as times where they play

alone, take a break and make choices away from the group. We want to intentionally watch for children who have a pattern of not joining in and not getting practice in neutral or positive social engagements. Together, we will use tips and strategies in our teaching to help support as many moments of engagement as needed for all children to develop the skills of engagement.

What if the child is playing alone or engaged with just the shadow should teachers engage with the child and attempt to connect the child to the teacher, peers and/or the larger group?

In short YES! We can rarely think of a time when Shadows wouldn't want a teacher or child to join the child or to have the child invited to join something else along with teachers and/or peers. Often the students we work with choose a quieter activity because of the decreased social and language demands. When you see us supporting a child during a solitary activity we are often trying to wrap up the activity to help the child join another activity with peers or trying to get peers to join the child. If neither of those options are successful and the child is engaged in the activity we will try to deepen the activity through layering in language goals such as intro to new vocabulary, part to whole language or making comments. But Yes! Interrupt us and connect with the child or help the child connect with peers!

What happens if a teacher sets up an activity intended for inquiry such as scientific inquiry and it turns into pretend play?

At Learning Seeds we follow the lead of the children and children often expand an activity beyond the original goals/ benchmarks and expectations designed by the teacher. Learning Seeds will not block pretend play as it unfolds. Learning Seeds believes that this helps children to develop their exploration, interaction and shared thinking skills. Together we can problem solve how to meet the goals/benchmarks of the activity while also allowing for the following of the children's lead.

This document is a template.

Please go to **File->Make a Copy** to create a new document. Be sure to edit the location of where you would like the new document saved (EduTeam Shared Drive, Client File, etc.) If the file saves to the Letterhead Folder it cannot be moved to another drive.

For External clients and advertising for Learning Seeds Fonts, we use Helvetica Neue.
Internal documents can use this or Arial.

Nurture Professional Growth in Supporting Children during Open Ended Play

Preparing yourself for growth:

Planning and taking time for reflection and preparation: Change is hard! But research shows that all professionals are most successful when they reflect and set intentions for incorporating new ideas into daily work. As part of this collaborative model coaching semester we will work with you to set time for reflection to prepare and set intention for ideas you want to try out.

Thinking about specific questions for your observations of young children: Is there something to adjust in the environment or classroom set up to support all children to engage more deeply? What area of the milestones does a specific child need support to more deeply engage in exploration, interaction or shared thinking?

Setting Goals for growth in your teaching practice: What are your professional growth goals to be able to support children in exploration, interaction and shared thinking during open ended play?

Embrace Radical Candor: Assume good will and disagree with ideas not people. Share your wisdom and experiences. Learn from the modeling while also recognizing yourself as an expert with experience from being at the side of children and an expert at integrating various suggestions and recommendations.

To Begin:

Reflect on your experience with open ended play. At Learning Seeds open ended play means times when the children are actively making choices and free to explore, interact, and share ideas. Often this is center time, playground times, adventure outdoor play, and exploration and investigation activities. When is open ended play in your day? What engagement do you see already happening at these times, and what do you wonder about? What goals do you have for this child-directed time of the day?

To prepare for our goal setting zoom call please complete this reflection. Choose a struggle you have experienced with your students during open ended free play. What common advice have you been given about this struggle? Did you try it? What was the outcome? What might you try next time? Here is an example reflection below:

Struggle	Common advice given for this struggle	Did you try this advice and what was the outcome?	Something else you might try next time?
<u>A child is on the periphery of the play and doesn't choose to join the group</u>	leave the child to explore and learn on their own because it develops autonomy and independence.	Yes, I allowed the child to explore on their own and the child seemed content. After a while I began to notice the child wasn't deepening their play and seemed to be avoiding the group.	-Try an "I am noticing" by going over to the child and without insisting the child joins the group, talk about what you are noticing the group doing. Talk about what is happening. Have the child point out something the group is doing. -Avoid asking "do you want to" Use objects to build a familiar physical transition to something new.



Learning Seeds Policies and Procedures

Custody and Bathroom or Changing rooms

We do not take children into the bathrooms. We can help, but we don't take custody so we don't go with the child alone in a changing room or a bathroom. So we can bring them to that space and then bring them back out of that space but not alone.

Hospital Dangerous

We don't create rules or enforce rules unless something is hospital dangerous.

We look to you to say and set the same rules and expectations to your student you would say even if we were not there. Then we will work to help the children respond to you. We are like an Undercover Kid unless it is hospital dangerous. It is the teacher's judgment call since every environment has a different gauge of what rough and tumble play is allowed and not allowed. The teachers should carry on as if we were not there and feel free right in front of us to say "hey we don't run" or "no climbing on that". If something is hospital dangerous, we will stop it right away. If it is a judgment call we might come over and say "just a reminder if you think this is getting too rough and tumble let the kids know."

Extra Set of Hands for Open Ended Play Times not for Errands

We are an extra set of hands to support you and your students to more fully engage in exploration, interaction and shared thinking across the Learning Seeds Milestones of Engagement. There are times when our extra set of hands will also be useful for lost shoes, unzipped coats, a runny nose etc. We are happy to be that extra set of hand especially when it helps you to support children to more fully engage. We are not an extra set of hands for errands or to gather supplies at another location etc.

Beginning and Ending Circle

Our professional development model is focused on supporting engagement in exploration, interaction and shared thinking during open ended play times. In general we do not attend circle time. As part of our initial weeks of collaborative model coaching we will cover **How to set up your environment to nurture independence in your classroom** which can help with building independence during circle time.

Custody During Arrival and Departure

During arrival we stay back during custody handoff from family to teachers. The Shadow enters after. Prior to that, Shadow is either in the background or has not arrived so that there is no confusion for the children with too many adults during the handoff and so that the children don't think we are there to play until it is time for open ended play.

Dismissal

During dismissal the Shadow will fade away and teachers return custody of the children back to the families again to prevent any confusion for the children with too many adults at the dismissal handoff.

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Engagement Lens Applied

The Learning Seeds Milestones of Engagement in Practice

When [we model practical solutions](#) to common issues in inclusive early learning environments, the [Milestones](#) provide a framework for our approach.



THE PRACTITIONER'S COMPASS

- Set your compass so it leads you to the signs of engagement that will guide your teaching
- Create structures to spark exploration, interaction and sharing of ideas
- Pick your compass markers: defining play goals and responsive teaching goals that help you aim your instruction while maintaining flexibility to respond to what arises
- Define Engagement: "learning to learn" skills in a group setting
- Prioritize Engagement over mere compliance
- Identify opportunities for responsive teaching

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EXPLORATION

- Help little hands engage: environments and materials
- Forming structured and natural environments
 - Creating small spaces and flow
 - How classroom layout can help children settle or move
 - How objects help children explore and conceptualize
 - How environments support interacting
 - Visual information and a print-rich environment

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INTERACTION

- Guide discovery of the explicit and hidden rules of being with the group
- Conversation Milestones
 - Key words from peers
 - Key words from the classroom: discovering shared vocabulary
 - Negotiating, persuading and solving problems with peers

A child who interacts shares reactions and exchanges expressions with peers. They respond to bids for attention and have basic conversations. They correctly seek help, and say "no" verbally rather than physically.

SHARED THINKING

- Cultivate pretend play skills as the most important skill preK children are building

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A child who shares thinking can take the perspective of others. They tolerate and enjoy pretending with objects and roles. They can think about the past and present to plan for the future. They have a sense of self-identity, and can also identify with the group.

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PROBLEM FOCUSED

SOLUTION FOCUSED

bossy

natural leader, visionary

defiant

holds strong beliefs, bold, determined

demanding

knows what they want, outspoken

dramatic

expressive, passionate

fearful

cautious, careful

fussy

has strong preferences

hyperactive

energetic, enthusiastic, on the go

impulsive

spontaneous, instinctive

oppositional

advocates for a different perspective

rebellious

is finding their way

stubborn

persistent, determined, steadfast

talkative

enjoys communicating

tattletale

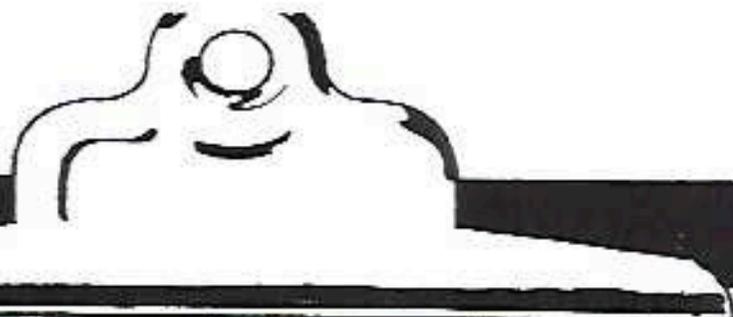
seeks justice, respects rules

unfocused

multitasks, pays attention to many things

wants attention

advocates for needs, seeks connection



Customer Service
If it's in your power...DO IT!!!

Pay attention to the details of the day, adhering to parents requests and center directives!!

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate!!!

Spelling Counts-remember that you are educating the children, lead by example!!

SMILE-greet parents and children each morning and at each pick-up time!!

Sandwich the not so good with positive(ie: Johnny made a really great picture today, he's very excited to show you. He did have a hard time at rest, but he was a great friend this afternoon!)

Be available!!

Cleanliness and organization mean a happy and fun classroom!!

Happy sounds, and fresh smells!! Look at the whole picture!!

Always be attentive to the children!! Especially on the playground!!! Interact with the children-NOT each other!!!

Appropriate, positive discipline!!!

Process-oriented vs: Product-oriented art activities:

[Link to NAEYC article](https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/feb2014/process-art-experiences?fbclid=IwAR2amjxP98O914tv5WQHvO14KIO8JcopBhloClAkeISvQMmMOGQWEaNRwpl&fs=e&s=d) : <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/feb2014/process-art-experiences?fbclid=IwAR2amjxP98O914tv5WQHvO14KIO8JcopBhloClAkeISvQMmMOGQWEaNRwpl&fs=e&s=d>

What is process art?

First and foremost - how do you define process art? Simply put - it's focusing on the art process in which a child naturally goes through instead of the end result. You provide the tools for the child, sit back, and let them get lost in the experience.

Another way to put this, is it's an open-ended art experience where the child is in control of what is created instead of you giving them step by step directions and assistance.

Benefits of process art

<https://www.messylittlemonster.com/2020/11/process-art-for-kids.html>

Aside from how easy this is, what are the real benefits?

Independence: Process art naturally puts the child in control so instead of expecting direction from you, they get to go wild! As they grow older, they won't expect directions and can easily dive in all on their own. They will learn to trust themselves instead of seeking external help.

Self-regulation: Process art is incredibly soothing and a GREAT source of learning self-regulation. Some children even seek out process art for sensory needs because it helps so much!

Creative thinking: The nature of process art means THEY have to get creative and think of what to do next! This can mean using materials in a new way, seeking out new or favorite materials, and choosing what to create. Product based art can be creative too, but not nearly to the level of process art.

Learning: While this approach to the art process seems so simple, children are learning a lot! Everything from what materials are available, the limitations and use of those materials, as well as cause and effect... children's minds are at work during this time! Depending on the activity, they may also gain new science or math skills without even realizing it!

Experimentation: As previously mentioned, children get to learn all about the materials they use. But this also extends to experimenting. They learn about different possibilities, cause and

effect, ask questions, experiment, and so much more. *For example, if you give children a selection of paint and paper, they may experiment by mixing different colors to see what happens or ask you about how to make different colors.*

Confidence: Through engaging in process art, children will learn to trust themselves and their own ideas. Overtime you'll notice them becoming very proud of their work as they gain confidence in what they create.

Motor skills: Both gross and fine motor skills are being practiced at this time, too. As they learn to hold a paint brush or crayon, children are practicing fine motor skills. When they are working with a large space, such as an easel, they are also developing gross motor skills as they gain muscle control.

There are so many benefits to process art for preschoolers, toddlers, and older kids - I could not begin to list them all. Just watch and you'll naturally notice all kinds of benefits they are embodying!

Process art vs product art

Many of us are familiar with product art (*especially since it's all over pinterest!*), but it's important to point out the difference between product art, or a craft, and process art.

Additionally, understand that they can work together. They can easily coexist together, but what separates them is the intention and expectation surrounding the experience. If watching a child sway away from a project stresses you out and you jump in to try and "correct" them for example, that takes away from the process art components that may exist.

Product art usually includes the following:

- Driven by an adult giving direction
- Clear step-by-steps that are expected to be followed
- Has a clear vision in mind for the end result
- More work and preparation may be involved for the adult
- There is little to no room for creativity trying to copy the sample

Whereas process art usually means it's:

- Self-directed by the child with little to no direction
- Allows the freedom for self-discovery and creativity
- There is no expectation for the end result
- It is very relaxed free of expectation

1) Clothespin paintbrushes using:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>PomPoms</u> ** | Cupcake Liners |
| <u>Sponge</u> ** | Old Credit or Gift Cards |
| <u>Bubble Wrap</u> ** | Burlap |
| Leaves ** | Crepe Paper |
| Foam | Twine |
| Yarn ** | Cosmetic Wedge |
| Scouring Pad | Feathers |
| Loofah Sponge | Fruit Netting |
| Felt | Pipe Cleaner |
| Cotton Balls | |

2) Watercolor painting - taken from <https://www.projectswithkids.com>

- a) Wet on Wet – wet the paper and then paint on it. Start with two or three colors. As the paint dries, it mixes and gives a pleasing result.

First, Mix paint in a palette

Next, secure the paper with painter's tape on a piece of scrap wood. Then, use a flat brush to cover the paper with water. If it gets too wet, dab the really wet places with a paper towel.

Finally, start to paint using one color at a time. Try not to mix the colors because the point is to have the colors mix on their own as they dry.

3) Fork painting in the style of Vincent Van Gough

Supplies:

- scrapbook paper or white cardstock
- acrylic paint
- Paint trays or paint palette
- Paintbrushes
- Pencil and eraser
- Painter's tape and wooden board (optional)

Process

- 1) Tape the paper down to a wooden board or the table. This helps keep the paper from sliding around and also gives it a nice frame when it's finished. This is an optional step.
- 2) Draw out your painting in pencil. You want to keep it simple for the best results. (ex. a few circles or shapes)

- 3) Start painting using one color at a time. Have the children put the paint on fairly thick. This will help when it's time to use a fork.
- 4) Once you have painted part of your painting, you can start to use the forks. Drag a fork through the paint to create different lines.



- 5) Using Salt with Watercolors (Course salt works best)
 - a) First, wet the paper
 - b) Next, apply the paint
 - c) While it is still wet, sprinkle with salt
 - d) Let the picture dry completely and then take it outside to brush of the excess salt
- 6) Q-tip painting – this painting was done with a bundle of Q-tips of each color



- 7) Watercolor resist – Draw the picture with the oil pastel or crayon first. Remember to tell the children to press hard.
 - a) Watercolor paper
 - b) Watercolor paints
 - c) White oil pastel or crayons
- 8) Straw art – cut one end of a straw $\frac{3}{4}$ " several times to make a brush. Dip it in paint and use like a stamp on the paper.



- 9) Painting with water Balloons – Put out containers of paint and brushes. Let the children paint the balloons any way they want and then use them to stamp on paper.
- 10) Ice cube painting – Freeze tempera paint ice cubes
- 11) Cardboard tube shapes stampers
- 12) Sponge shapes painting
- 13) Puffy paint

To make homemade microwave puffy paints you will need:

Self-rising flour

Salt

Water

Food Coloring in your chosen colors

Microwave puffy paint recipe

- Mix together equal amounts of self-rising flour and salt. We used 1 spoonful of each.
 - Slowly add a small amount of water and mix together. You are aiming for the paint to be able to drip off your spoon. Keep adding water until you get a paint consistency you are happy with.
 - Mix in your chosen food coloring.
 - Paint patterns or simple pictures onto card (cut up cardboard boxes or paper plates work well). You could paint using brushes, spoons or fingers!
 - Put your artwork into a microwave for 20-30 seconds (timing will vary for different microwaves)
 - Watch the paint puff up! Magic!
- 14) Bubble wrap painting – paint directly on the bubble wrap (using rollers makes it easy and fun) and then make prints by pressing paper on it.
 - 15) Crumpled paper art – crumple a piece of paper (5X7) might work best. Paint all around the crumpled ball. Open it up to see the result. Crumple it again and repeat with another color. Try this with as many colors as you want.
 - 16) Fizzy watercolors
 - a) Liquid watercolors
 - b) Baking soda
 - c) Vinegar

d) Watercolor paper

- Paint your picture
- When complete, move to a tray or cookie sheet that has an edge
- Using a sprayer or pipettes, add vinegar (be careful not to add so much that it is floating)
- Let dry for 24 hours and see the results

17) Crystalizing watercolors

- Epsom salts
- Table salt
- Water
- Liquid watercolors
- Good quality watercolor paper

In a glass or some other container swirl/shake

1/2 Tablespoon of Epsom Salts,

1/2 Tablespoon of water,

A pinch (roughly 1/8th of a teaspoon) of table salt

liquid watercolors/food coloring to your desired shade.

Swirl the mixture gently for 2 minutes. Nearly all of the Epsom Salts should be dissolved (if a few grains are left, that's OK).

If you still see a ton of salt, swirl/swish for another 2 minutes.

Paint as usual. The thinner layers of paint will crystallize in around 2 hours. They make a shiny shimmery finish.

If you want to have some larger crystals, you need to add lots of paint (because they are watercolors, this means that your paper will be quite wet). The larger crystals take up to 24 hours to completely form.

18) Texture Painting

- Glue
- Paint
- Different textured items like cork, wood shavings, beads, sand, etc
 - Squirt glue and paint onto the paper
 - Use homemade cardboard spreaders to spread the glue/paint mixture
 - Sprinkle on the textured pieces
 - Spray with hairspray
 - Let dry

19) Paper printing

- Paper towel tubes
- Paper towels
- Cardboard box or try with sides
- Paint in squirt bottles
 - Cover the paper towel tube with a paper towel

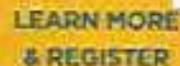
- Squirt paint on the inside of the box or tray (it would be fun to line the box or tray with paper so you would have a paper picture and the decorated tube)
- Roll the tube through the paint from one end to the other

20) Kool Aid Painting

- a) Watercolor paper
- b) Different flavors of Kool aid
- c) Sprayer
 - Spray the paper with water
 - Sprinkle different flavors of Kool aid over the paper and watch the colors explode

21) Bubble Wrap stomp painting



The logo for the NAEYC Annual Conference, featuring the text "naeyc" in white and "annual conference" in green on a blue background.A yellow button with the text "LEARN MORE & REGISTER" in black, located in the top right corner of the header.The NAEYC logo, consisting of the word "naeyc" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font.

How Process-Focused Art Experiences Support Preschoolers

[Resources](#) / [Publications](#) / [Teaching Young Children](#) / [February/March 2014](#) / [How Process-Focused Art Experiences Support Preschoolers](#)

LAUREL BONGIORNO

Is your goal to encourage children's creativity through developmentally appropriate art experiences? Review the differences between process- and product-focused art to help you get started.

Characteristics of process-focused art experiences

- There are no step-by-step instructions
- There is no sample for children to follow
- There is no right or wrong way to explore and create
- The art is focused on the experience and on exploration of techniques, tools, and materials
- The art is unique and original
- The experience is relaxing or calming
- The art is entirely the children's own
- The art experience is a child's choice
- Ideas are not readily available online

What children might say

"Look what I made!" "I'm going to do another!"

"Can I have more time?"

Characteristics of product-focused art experiences

- Children have instructions to follow
- The teacher created a sample for children to copy
- There's a right and a wrong way to proceed
- There's a finished product in mind
- The children's finished art all looks the same
- The children experience frustration
- The teacher might "fix mistakes"
- The whole class took part in an art project at the same time
- Patterns and examples are readily available online

What children might say

"Can I be done now?"

"Is this right?"

"I can't do it."

"Mine doesn't look like yours."

Provide open-ended, creative art experiences by offering activities such as

- Easel painting with a variety of paints and paintbrushes (with no directions)
- Watercolor painting
- Exploring and creating with clay
- Finger painting

- Painting with unusual tools like toothbrushes, paint rollers, potato mashers
- Printing and stamping (stamps purchased or made with sponges)
- Creating spin art using a record player and paint, squirt bottles, paintbrushes, or markers
- Stringing beads independently and creatively
- Weaving cloth, yarn, or paper
- Drawing with pencils, art pens, various sizes of markers, or crayons
- Using homemade doughs
- Making collages using tissue paper, various sizes of paper, glue, paste, glue sticks, scissors, and recycled materials

Tips for leading process-focused art

1. Approach art like open-ended play—for example, provide a variety of materials and see what happens as the child leads the art experience
2. Make art a joyful experience. Let children use more paint, more colors, and make more and more artwork
3. Provide plenty of time for children to carry out their plans and explorations
4. Let children come and go from their art at will
5. Notice and comment on what you see: Look at all the yellow dots you painted
6. Say YES to children's ideas
7. Offer new and interesting materials
8. Play music in the background
9. Take art materials outside in the natural light
10. Display children's books with artful illustrations, such as those by Eric Carle, Lois Ehlert, and Javaka Steptoe
11. Let the children choose whether their art goes home or stays in the classroom
12. Remember that it's the children's art, not yours

What children do and learn through process-focused art

Social and emotional

Children relax, focus, feel successful, and can express their feelings

Language and literacy

Children may choose to discuss their art and add print to it (on their own or by dictating to a teacher)

Cognitive

Children compare, predict, plan, and problem solve.

Physical

Children use small motor skills to paint, write, glue, use clay, and make collages

Resources

Spotlight on Young Children and the Creative Arts, edited by Derry Koralek. This NAEYC publication focuses on both understanding and doing creative arts with young children.

More Than Painting, Preschool and Kindergarten: Exploring the Wonders of Art, by Sally Moomaw and Brenda Hieronymus. This book provides many process art activity ideas.

The Creative Arts: A Process Approach for Teachers and Children, by Linda Carol Edwards. A textbook format that provides a foundation for understanding process in art, music, and drama activities with young children.

<http://prekandksharing.blogspot.com/2012/02/making-transition-from-produ...>

www.ooeygoeey.com/handouts/art.pdf

www.pinterest.com/cricketteacher/process-art-activities

Audience: *Teacher*

Age: *Preschool*

Topics: *Subject Areas, Creative Arts, Art, TYC*

LAUREL BONGIORNO

Laurel Bongiorno, PhD, dean of the Division of Education and Human Studies at Champlain College, writes and presents on a variety of early care and education topics—play as learning, parents' and teachers' understanding of play, process art, and early childhood leadership. She is a past president of the Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children.

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How Process-Focused Art Experiences Support Preschoolers



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Laurel Bongiorno

Is your goal to encourage children's creativity through developmentally appropriate art experiences? Review the differences between process- and product-focused art to help you get started.

Characteristics of process-focused art experiences

- There are no step-by-step instructions
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Process art will...

- Have few or no step-by-step instructions.
- Have no sample to follow.
- Have no right or wrong way to create.
- Produce a final product that is unique.
- Be child-directed.

- **THE BENEFITS OF PROCESS ART**

- Children are naturally curious. They observe, explore, and imitate, trying to figure out how things work and how to control themselves and their environments. This freedom of exploration helps children form connections in their brain, it helps them learn—and it's also fun.

Process art is a natural activity to support this essential interaction with the world. Children need the freedom to explore and experiment. Process art allows them to practice a wide range of skills that are useful not only for life but also for learning.

Specific skills include:

- Fine motor skills. Grasping pencils, crayons, chalk, and paintbrushes.
- Cognitive development. Cause and effect, problem-solving.
- Mathematical skills. Understanding concepts like shape, size, counting, and spatial reasoning.
- Language skills. As children share their artwork and process, they develop language skills.
- **Provide a diverse range of supplies.** Gather a wide range of materials for your child to use like paint, colored pencils, chalk, play dough, markers, crayons, oil pastels, scissors, and stamps.
- **Encourage, but don't lead.** let them decide what materials they want to use and how and when to use them. Let them take the lead.
- **Be flexible.** Instead of sitting down with a plan or expected outcome in mind, let your child explore, experiment, and use their imaginations. They might make a huge mess or change their direction several times—this is all part of the creative process.
- **Let it go.** Let them explore. They may only want to run their hands through the shaving cream instead of painting with it. Children learn through playing,

From Little Bins for Little Hands

exploring, and trial and error. If you give them the freedom to discover, they will learn to create and experiment in new and innovative ways.

FLY SWATTER PAINTING



SPLATTER PAINTING

SPLATTER PAINTING

Splatter painting is messy and fun! It is a process art activity. Process Art is art that is child-directed, choice-driven, and celebrates the experience of discovery.

STEP 1: Gather materials: paper or canvas, paints, and brushes.

STEP 2: Place paper on a drop cloth or on some newspaper to contain the 'mess'

STEP 3: Have fun making a mess! Splash, splatter, flick, and any other way you can think of to get paint onto the canvas!

SUPPLIES

Art paper or canvas
Acrylic or tempera paint
Paint brushes

PAINT LIKE JACKSON POLLOCK

Jackson Pollock was born in 1912 in Wyoming. He became famous for painting in the abstract expressionist style. Pollock's most famous paintings were made by dripping and splashing paint on a large canvas. Pollock's paintings are alive with motion, energy, and spontaneous fluidity, fueled by the use of unconventional materials.

SENSORY FUN

Using your fingers to flick and sling paint onto canvas is a great way get kids' hands dirty! It is an excellent tactile experience and it also stimulates your child's senses. (Touch/feel, sight, smell)

www.littlebinsforlittlehands.com

PUFFY SIDEWALK PAINT RECIPE

YOU WILL NEED:

- 3 cups flour
- 3 cups water
- 6 to 8 cups shaving cream (like Barbasol)

From Little Bins for Little Hands

- Food coloring: red, yellow, blue
- 6 squirt bottles (one for each color)

STEP 1. Stir together 1 cup of flour and 1 cup of water until smooth.

STEP 2. Add 10 or more drops of food coloring, remembering that the colors will be fainter once the paint is mixed completely. Stir to combine.

STEP 3. Fold in 2 cups of shaving cream until the color is even. Mix gently to keep your paint nice and fluffy.

STEP 4. Transfer half of the paint to a plastic bag with the corner clipped. Squeeze the bag into a squirt bottle.

You can make TWO colors from each batch as follows:

Red and purple – Make the red first. Transfer half of the paint to a squirt bottle. With the remaining paint, add blue food coloring until you reach the desired shade of purple. If the paint has gotten flat, add an additional cup of shaving cream before transferring to the squirt bottle.

Yellow and orange – Make the yellow first. Transfer half of the paint to a squirt bottle. With the remaining paint, add red food coloring until you reach the desired shade of orange. If the paint has gotten flat, add an additional cup of shaving cream before transferring to the squirt bottle.

Blue and green – Make the blue first. Transfer half of the paint to a squirt bottle. With the remaining paint, add yellow food coloring until you reach the desired shade of green. If the paint has gotten flat, add an additional cup of shaving cream before transferring to the squirt bottle.

KINETIC SAND RECIPE

YOU WILL NEED:

- 1 cup of play sand or craft sand (used colored craft sand to create [colorful kinetic sand!](#))
- 1/2 cup of school glue
- 2 teaspoons of dish soap

From Little Bins for Little Hands

- 2 tablespoons of cornstarch

STEP 1: Combine play sand, dish soap, and cornstarch, stirring until all the ingredients are mixed together very well.

STEP 2: Add the glue a little at a time and stir thoroughly with each time you add a bit more.

STEP 3: Once the ingredients are mixed with the spoon, knead the mixture with your hands for a few moments to finish the mixing process!

Keep your kinetic sand covered and it should last for several weeks. If you do store it away for a while, do check for freshness when you pull it out.

CHICKEN POX



Exclude for 5 days after the onset of the rash OR until all lesions have dried and crusted-whichever is later.



COVID

If negative with a test on day 5, child can return on day 6. If still positive, wait for a negative test or until day 10.

COXSACKIE



Exclude for 4 days after rash disappears, or sores are scabbed over.

DIARRHEA



Exclude when the stool is watery or decreased in form AND cannot be controlled by toilet use, or if stool contains blood or mucus, or if accompanied by a fever.



EAR INFECTION

Child should be fever free and not experiencing any ear pain.



FEVER

24 hour fever-free without the use of medication (Tylenol, Motrin).



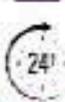
FLU

Exclude until after treatment begins and symptoms resolve.



HEAD LICE

Exclude for 24 hours after treatment begins and, upon return to school, be checked to ensure the absence of nits.



IMPETIGO

Exclude for 24 hours after treatment begins.



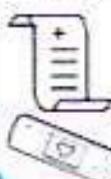
MEASLES

Exclude for 4 days after rash disappears.



MOUTH SORES

Exclude only in children who cannot control their saliva, unless the child's physician or local health department states the child is not infectious.



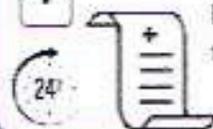
MUMPS

Exclude for 9 days after the onset of gland swelling.



PINK EYE

Exclude until 24 hours after treatment begins.



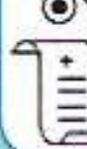
PINWORM

Exclude for 24 hours after treatment begins.



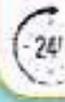
RASH

Exclude if accompanied by a fever or behavior change until a physician determines that the illness is not a communicable disease.



RINGWORM

Exclude for 24 hours after treatment begins.



RSV

Exclude until fever-free and wheezing and coughing have subsided.



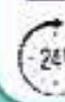
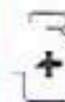
RUBELLA

Exclude for 7 days after rash onset.



STREP

Exclude for 24 hours after treatments begin AND the child has had a normal temperature for 24 hours.



VOMITING

Exclude if child has vomited 2 or more times in previous 24 hours, unless vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and is not in danger of dehydration.



WHOOPIING COUGH

If on antibiotics: Stay out through the fifth day of appropriate antibiotic treatment.

If not on antibiotics: Out for three weeks after the cough started.



Mathematics

Questions to Promote Children's Thinking

- Can you see if you can find another way to make those blocks stand up?
- What other block shape might work there?
- How will the firefighters get into your building?
- It looks like you are all out of the long blocks. What else could you use to fill up the same space?
- Can you find two blocks that you could put together to be the same size as this one block?
- How will people know what building this is?
- How will people know which way to drive their cars on the road?
- Which animals will live in each part of your zoo?
- Tell me about your building.
- How did you decide to put all those blocks together?

classroom. They serve as reminders not just to me, but to my teacher assistant, interns, and volunteers as well. For example, questions to promote children's thinking in the math center include "What other ways can we show that?," "How can we do this differently?," "Tell me how you did that," "Why do you think that?," and "Tell me how you figured that out." Over the years, this shift in thinking has allowed both my teacher assistant and myself to focus on the process of learning—not just on our students' finished products. In the art center, for example, the teacher assistant and I both make comments like, "You worked really hard on that. How did you come up with that idea?," instead of something more general, like, "That's a beautiful painting."

Science

Questions to Promote Children's Thinking

- What do you suppose would happen if . . . ?
- What will you do next?
- I wonder . . . ?
- Why do you think that?
- How did you figure that out?
- Do you have any ideas about how we might begin?
- How does it move?
- What changes do you see?
- Which have changed the most?
- How do you know?
- Which one is . . . (e.g., heavier, taller)? How could you find out? Why do you think so?
- What can you add to the class definition of . . . (e.g., animals, weather)?
- What characteristics do the . . . (e.g., flower, caterpillar) have that make it a . . . (e.g., plant, insect)?
- What do you think will happen?
- Why do you think the . . . (e.g., ice melted, clouds disappeared)?
- Can you draw a picture of your findings? Can you add some words?
- Which holds more: the tall, thin jar or the short, fat one?

The North Carolina Kindergarten Center Posters and Planning Guides (<https://bit.ly/2DfitYz>) is a collection of resources for planning center-based classrooms, including information on art, block, books and listening, dramatic play, math, science, and writing centers. The planning guides explicitly describe how children may engage in each center and how intentional teachers can support their learning. They serve as a starting

Questions to Promote Children's Thinking

Creative Arts:

- How are these alike or different?
- Is there a pattern in this?
- What do you think should happen next?
- What would happen if . . . ?
- Which is . . . (e.g., larger or smaller, louder or softer, brighter or darker)?
- How would you move if you were this animal?
- What can you tell me about your work?
- How did you feel when you heard/saw that?
- How is this . . . (e.g., shape, sound, movement, phrase) different from the other one?

Mathematics:

- Can you see if you can find another way to make those blocks stand up?
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The Four Intentions

Compelling Materials



Design materials that evoke interest and sustain attention, inspire curiosity, experimentation, invite children into increasingly more complex interactions with materials and each other.

1. Try collecting trays, baskets, and small dishes for "tray work."
2. Try offering children smaller amounts of materials.
3. Try setting up materials on child-accessible shelves.
4. Try adding dice, tongs, gems, etc. to make play more complex.
5. Try designing an activity for 1-2 children.

Explicit Presentation



Model use of classroom materials and daily routines through descriptive language and non-verbal cues, demonstrate usage and steps that support future learning and discoveries.

1. Try practicing an activity before showing it to children.
2. Try using slow movements when presenting.
3. Try using non-verbals and a soft voice when speaking.
4. Try presenting to 1-2 children instead of a whole group.
5. Try presenting step by step from start to clean up.

Responsive Scaffolding



Scaffold children's experiences to support new learning, observe and listen, step in close and then step back, build and extend activity, strengthen trusting relationships with children.

1. Try observing children daily to find out what interests them.
2. Try not to jump in to "help" right away
3. Try helping a child start an activity and then step back.
4. Try engaging in activities yourself to model the material.
5. Try inviting children to help each other and be experts.

Following Children's Interests



Find out what children know and want to know, support meaningful, joyful communal and individual learning experiences rooted in Big Ideas, provide a prepared environment that supports choice.

1. Try engaging in close listening and planning with children.
2. Try brainstorming to find out what children know and want to know.
3. Try extending learning into longer investigations.
4. Try making connections across curriculum areas.
5. Try helping children to choose activities that interest them.

When You Want to Say "BE CAREFUL"

Play with Great Heights

- Stay focused on what you're doing.
- What's your next move?
- Do you feel safe there?
- Take your time.
- Does that branch feel strong and stable?
- I'm here if you need me.

Play Near Dangerous Elements

- Please move slowly and carefully near the...
- Please give each other lots of space so that no one feels like they need to push, and no one gets knocked over by accident.
- Do you feel stable/balanced?
- Do you need more space?

Rough and Tumble Play

- Make eye contact before you tackle someone. Make sure they know you are coming so that they can get their body ready.
- Check in with each other. Make sure everyone is still having a good time.
- Ask them if they're ok.
- Ask them if they're still having fun.
- Did you like that? Make sure you tell them if you didn't like that.

Play Where Children can Get Lost

- If you need to run, meet me at the next trail marker!
- Let's check this cave/fort to make sure it's safe to hide in.

Play with Great Speeds

- Please find a safe spot for your stick while you're running.
- I've noticed that this is a really busy area and I'm worried that someone not playing this game might get knocked over. Watch out for other people and give them lots of space.
- Should we move this game to a more open area?

Play with Harmful Tools

- Sticks need space. Look around you - do you have enough space to swing that big stick?
- Please keep one end of your stick on the ground!
- What's your plan with that big stick?
- Rocks need space!
- Before you throw that rock, what do you need to look far?
- That rock looks really heavy! Can you manage it?





YOUR WORDS
Instead of...

MATTER
Try...

Be quiet.	Can you use a softer voice?
What a mess!	It looks like you had fun! How can we clean up?
Do you need help?	I'm here to help if you need me.
I explained how to do this yesterday.	Maybe I can show you another way.
Do I need to separate you?	Could you use a break?
Stop crying.	It's okay to cry.
Do you have any questions?	What questions do you have?
You're okay.	How are you feeling?
It's not that hard.	You can do hard things.
We don't talk like that.	Please use kind words.
Don't touch _____.	_____ isn't for touching. You can have _____ or _____.
That's wrong.	Try this way.
Hurry up.	Run like a cheetah!
Stop running.	Walking inside.
Don't tear the book.	Books are for reading, not tearing.
Don't drop it.	Two hands.
No!	_____ (object) is not for _____ (verb). Then, describe what they can do.
Don't bite	Biting hurts! We can bite food but not _____.
Don't throw your food on the floor.	Food stays on the plate, not on the floor.
Don't hit or scratch.	Hands on your own body
Repetitively saying – Good boy / girl	You did it! Or Thanks for _____.
Stop Shouting	Inside voice (In a low voice)
Please share / Play nice	Turn taking is kind, can _____ have a turn?
Don't slam the door	Doors are closed gently
Stop being so rough	Be gentle with _____.

Recommendations / Resources

Books

Balanced and Barefoot	Angela Hanscom
Last Child in the Woods	Richard Loud
Blessings of a Skinned Knee	Wendy Model
The Other Wes Moore	Wes Moore
Dirt is Good	Jack Gilbert, Ph.D & Rob Knight, Ph.D
Bringing Up BeBe	Pamela Druckerman
The Gift Of Failure	Jessica Lahey
Raising Antiracist Children	Britt Hawthorne
Thinking Critically About Environments for Young Children	Lisa Kuh
There's No such Thing as Bad Weather	Linda Akeson McGurk

Professional Development

NAEYC / BAEYC	Early Childhood Investigations
Boulder Journey	Britt Hawthorne
TED-Ed	MindShift
AISNE	Embrace Race
EdWeb	Steve Spangler
Erickson Institute	Handwriting Without Tears
https://earlymath.erikson.edu/	
Natural Start Alliance	
<u>BARIN - Boston Area Reggio Inspired Network</u>	
<u>https://inspiredmindsecc.ca/workshop-events/</u>	
Antioch University - Outdoor Education - David Sobel	
www.eecprofessionalpathways.com	
VINS- animal habitat curriculum with Laurie Goldsmith / VT Institute	
ERAFANS -Eastern Regional Association Forestation Nature Schools	
Early Childhood Investigations	
<u>edtopia.org</u>	

Whole Body Movement is important for learning the alphabet:

Link to short video <https://www.edutopia.org/video/better-way-learn-your-abc>

September 14, 2022

Narrator: One of the foundational skills early readers learn is matching a letter to its corresponding sound. To get a kid to understand that a plosive *C* makes the sound as in *car*, teachers often use pictures as scaffolds or have children write the letter repeatedly while making the matching sound.

But a new study suggests that this crucial skill—which sets the stage for decoding, blending, and eventually word recognition—is much more effectively learned when whole-body movements are integrated into lessons.

In the study, 5- and 6-year-olds spent 90 minutes over the course of eight weeks practicing movements corresponding to each letter of the alphabet.

Kids moved like a snake as they hissed the sibilant *sss* sound or quickly snapped their body into the shape of a *Y* and paired the movement with the *yuh* sound.

Other groups of students in the study made hand gestures while sounding out words—or sounded out letters without any movement while reading along at their desks.

The researchers found that whole-body movement improved students' ability to recall letter-sound pairings and doubled their ability to recognize hard-to-learn sounds—like the difference between the *C* in *cat* and *sauce*—compared with students who read from their desks. Whole-body movement also outperformed hand gestures by 30 percent.

So if you're working on letter-sound pairings this year, it might be a good idea to get kids up and out of their chairs. The silliness that ensues can have a profound effect on the future readers your students become.

Making connections between letters and sounds is a crucial skill that sets the stage for reading—and so much more. To dig deeper into the findings cited in the video, read [Linn Damsgaard et al.'s 2022 study](#) on the effects of embodied learning on children's precoding and word-reading skills.

WHY DO KIDS CHEW?

Chewed-up shirts and gnawed-up pencils, yuck! Why do some kids bite and chew? The mouth is our first sensory seeking organ from gestation. Babies use their mouths to suck and eventually to blow, lick, eat, kiss and talk. Let's break down some common reasons your child might bite or chew and how you can help them cope instead.

Stress. With its ability to bite down, exerting hundreds of pounds of pressure, the mouth is a phenomenal stress reducer. Chewing crunchy foods or a chewy can provide an outlet for stress. You can also try stress reduction strategies such as brushing, touch, deep pressure, movement or heavy work and weight.

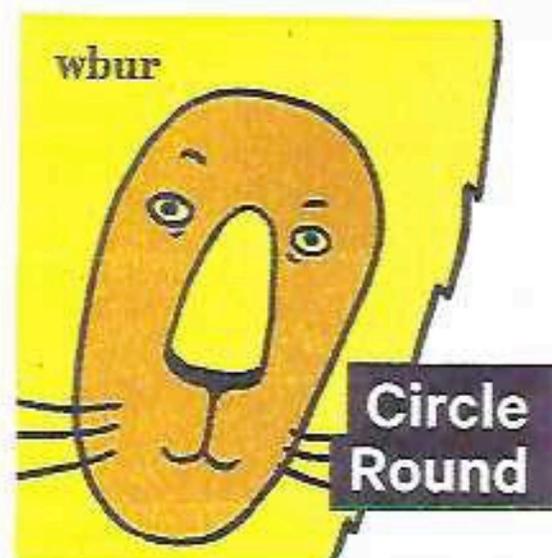
Concentration. Chewing gum and crunchy foods or even using a whistle toy can help a distracted student focus and be more alert. Consider packing carrot sticks or celery as snacks or using a chewy when doing homework.

Self-Regulation. Chewing is one of the most effective ways to self-regulate. It provides proprioceptive input to the jaw, which is calming, soothing, organizing and regulating for the brain. Consider using straws, vibration, crunchy snacks and whistles.

Pleasure. The truth is we chew, blow, suck, sing and whistle for pleasure. And who doesn't love a happy smile? Chewing can strengthen the muscles around the mouth, allowing for a more pleasurable experience.



All chewies are designed without BPA, phthalates, lead or latex using only food grade materials. Choose an appropriate durability to match the user's biting or chewing habits. Inspect frequently. Use with adult supervision.



Circle Round

Created and produced by parents of young children, WBUR's Circle Round adapts carefully-selected folktales from around the world into sound- and music-rich radio plays for kids ages 3-103. Each 15 to 25-minute episode explores important issues like kindness, persistence and generosity. And each episode ends with an activity that inspires a deeper conversation between children and grown-ups.

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Schemas in Children's Play

8/8/2012

Written by Clare Caro

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Schemas in Children's Play are such an important concept when it comes to the development of our children that it's worth taking the time to understand them so you can facilitate them when you see them.

What are these schemas?

Well it's really a fancy word for the *urges* that children have to do things like *climb*, *throw* things and *hide* in small places.

They appear through play; perhaps it is the way they choose to do things, or what they desperately need to do out of the blue!

Here are ten of these natural play-urges mapped out in a list, they can come one at a time, in bunches, some are super strong and last for ages... each child is different.

They are the building blocks for the brain, repeated behaviour that in turn forge connections in the brain, patterns of unfolding, learning and growth.

Schemas are such an important part in every child's development that they are covered in training for anyone in the business of care and education of young children - yet not too many parents seem to know about these *natural*, *uncontrollable* and totally *necessary* play-urges that **all** children have.

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Knowing about these play-urges can help us to understand why our children are so determined to do certain things that we might not understand. If we have no idea about the way in which a child exhibits signs of brain development, then we might actually think that the child is being 'difficult' or even try to stop the developmental urges themselves.

By knowing about these schemas we can recognise and support their urges and development.

Orientation

The urge to hang upside down, get the view from under the table or on top of the dresser and other actions that are part of the **Orientation** schema.

In order to 'know' what it is like to hang upside down or see things from a different point of view you must take yourself into those positions. Although you and I might not hang upside down very often these days, we still 'know' what it feels like to hang upside down - because we have the experience - we learned what it was to hang upside down when we too had



our **Orientation** urge kick in.

Positioning

Do you find yourself **Positioning** things neatly into alignment on your desk, ordering the books on the shelf, getting creative when you plate the dinner or even just tidying-up. Perhaps you see your child lining up their cars, making sure the whale is next to the cow, or turning all the cups upside down?

The **Positioning** is a schema that is kept alive in us all.



Connection

Joining train tracks, clicking together pieces of lego, running a string from one thing to another... the urge of **Connection**.

This can mean connecting *and* disconnecting too, building followed by destruction, and that can mean other peoples buildings and sandcastles get destructed



when the urge gets hold.

Trajectory

The urge to throw, drop and other actions that are all part of the **Trajectory** schema. Some other **Trajectory** actions are things like climbing up and jumping off (**Trajectory** of ones own body), putting your hand under running water (interacting with things that are already moving) and the classic, throwing and dropping (making it happen). It can be diagonal, vertical or horizontal... this is a multi-dimensional urge, after *all learning is based on movement* in the first years of life.



Enclosure/Container

The urge to fill up cups with water, climb into cardboard boxes or kitchen draws, build fences for the animals or to put all the animals inside the circular train track, it is



the **Enclosure/Container** schema.

Transporting

Transporting can be the urge to carry many things on your hands at one time, in jars, in buckets and baskets, or even better containers with wheels.



Enveloping

To have a sheet over your head, wrapping things in fabrics or with tape and paper - all actions seen in the **Enveloping** schema. An extension of this is peek-a-boo, now you see it now you don't, a concept that just keeps on amusing.



Rotation

Anything that goes around anything that is circular - wheels, turning lids, watching the washing machine on spin cycle, drawing circles, spinning



around on the spot, being swung around. These are all experiences of the **Rotation** schema.

Transformation

The urge to **Transform** can come in many forms; holding all your food in your mouth for a long time to see what it turns into, mixing your juice with your fish pie, water with dirt, or helping Granny with mixing the bread dough.

Its only natural that once you have explored and learnt about a raw material you should want to do further testing... there is a scientist and a chef in everyone.



Bringing It All Together

After looking at each schema individually to get to grips with what each 'urge' is all about we may already be able to recognise some of the different ways they can appear in your child.

Rotation, Trajectory, Enveloping, Orientation, Positioning, Connection, Enclosure/Container,

Transporting and **Transformation** are urges that show in all children starting as early as their first birthday, some times before.

How Can Knowing About These Urges Help Us?

As a parent, one of the best things about having an understanding of these urges is that we are able to recognise and support them in our children as soon as we see them.

Sometimes they will come through as what we might once have seen as 'inappropriate behaviour' such as throwing objects in enclosed spaces or climbing on the table.

When we observe the behaviour and recognise the play-urge we are able to redirect it, your child will be happy to throw something outside where it is okay, or climb a tree instead! *Its not about the action, its about the urge.*

If the action is dangerous, harmful or inappropriate then find a more suitable outlet for the urge. That way the energy seeking expression (the urge) can fulfill its role in your child's development, and in an acceptable way.

if you found this useful, you might like these... [Five Easy Steps for the Observer and The Adult Role in Child-led Play.](#)

Here's how the GPS Play Scale and GPS Observation Checklist guiding questions tie together.

CORE SUMMARY OF THE GPS PLAY SCALE

ME	ME + YOU	ME to WE	WE	SCIP
GPS Play Level 1	GPS Play Level 2	GPS Play Level 3	GPS Play Level 4	GPS Play Level 5
Play is very singular and is object or action focused. Children at this level tend to play alone. They will attend to an adult if the adult is actively seeking their attention.	Play is still quite singular but children will attempt to engage the adult to play their way. With a lot of work on the part of the adult, the child will briefly attend to a peer during play.	Adult directs the play, providing the structure, ideas and context. Peers take a role and enact the play within that structure.	With minimal adult facilitation (providing props, materials and initial ideas), peers can begin to create structured play together. Adults may step in to resolve conflicts and keep play moving along.	Shared Collaborative Imaginative Play (SCIP). Peers provide ideas, decide on a theme and choose roles, negotiate, and problem solve on their own. Low adult facilitation, if any.

Note: This is a criterion-referenced instrument designed to direct your observations of children at play and help lead to a direction for intervening with each child. It has not yet been standardized and is not meant as diagnostic information. Please use it as a guide to begin work and monitor progress with each child.

Six Core Guiding Questions

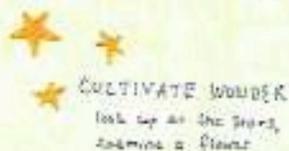
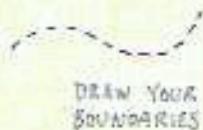
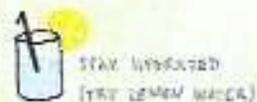
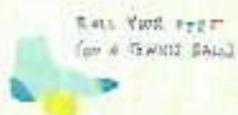
(Use to observe a child's interactive play abilities)

1. Does the child seek peers or adults as a play partner in interactive play?
2. How does the child use language during interactive play?
3. How does the child engage with objects or play materials during interactive play?
4. What type of pretend play is the child using when interacting with peers?
5. How flexibly does the child shift his or her play based on others' ideas during interactive play?
6. How well does the child problem solve during interactive play?

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Wild Peace

A Montessori Approach to "Clean-up Time"

November 2, 2020

"How do you get your kids to clean up after themselves??" This is one of my most frequently asked questions. And one of the most frequent comments parents have when observing a Montessori classroom or home is how tidy it is. There are a few reasons for this.

1. Maria Montessori believed in providing a beautiful and orderly environment for children. Young children are able to focus better and feel more at peace when their spaces are clean.
2. Less clutter allows for more movement in the shared space.
3. Children are a part of the community, and that means we all help each other keep our shared space clean and safe. This includes cleaning up after ourselves.

Children are more willing to help clean up after themselves in a classroom vs. a home because rules and expectations are often more clear at school, and home is where they know they are safest and comfortable. That being said, there are many ways we can help our children, even toddlers, consistently clean up after themselves when playing at home too. Most children are capable of cleaning up after themselves by 18 months, but children can be increasingly independent with age and practice.

Have a place for everything - It is very important to have a specific spot for everything. Our children can only put toys and materials away if they know exactly where it goes. It is especially helpful for children if they can see what's available just by looking at the shelf, e.g. books facing outward, materials on trays, and toys in clear bins or wire baskets ([see Polished Playhouse post!](#))

Only put out what they can put away - This often means minimizing what is out at a time. The amount that is displayed depends on the child - their age and their current interest in dumping vs. cleaning up after themselves. In general, less is more. A toddler can put away 8 blocks, but not 48. I always encourage rotating materials more often and having less out at one time to prevent toy and mess overload.

Model it - We are our children's best role models and they are ALWAYS watching. If we slowly model putting a material back on the shelf before we choose a new one, they are far more likely to do so too. It is also helpful to think about how we model tidying up after ourselves throughout the day. If we leave our own spaces cluttered, they are more likely to do so as well.

Make it part of the routine - The more we incorporate it into our day, the less of an issue it becomes. Most days, clean up happens naturally as we play. The children know that we put one work away before choosing the next. When they are busy playing independently with open-ended toys, they know that we clean up before rest time, or at least before bedtime.

Wait for a Natural Pause - It's important not to interrupt a child who is concentrating with something to remind them to put a work away. If my child hasn't put a work away and has already moved on, I wait until they are done with the new work before pointing out the one that need to be put away. This lets them know we respect their work and their concentration while still following through on clean-up.

Especially in a home versus a classroom, there are times when the children are playing independently, particularly with open-ended toys, when toys aren't put away one at a time. This isn't a bad thing, but it can lead to a bigger mess, and one that is harder for young children to initiate clean-up with. For S (17 mos), I simply continue to model. With D (3), here are some strategies I use:

Frame in the positive - When simple reminders are needed, I try to phrase in the positive instead of the negative. Instead of saying "You can't ___ until you clean up!" I'd frame it in a positive light, e.g. "After you put these toys away we can make snack together!" That subtle difference makes a big difference.

Play a bell or Sing a song - Something about music makes everything feel easier and lighter. One tip is to ring a bell when it's clean up time. Another is to sing a simple song together. These little tricks can make a big difference.

At the end of the day, we pick up toys, pick up toys, pick up toys

At the end of the day, we pick up toys, and put them all away.

Tomorrow we'll take some out again, out again, out again

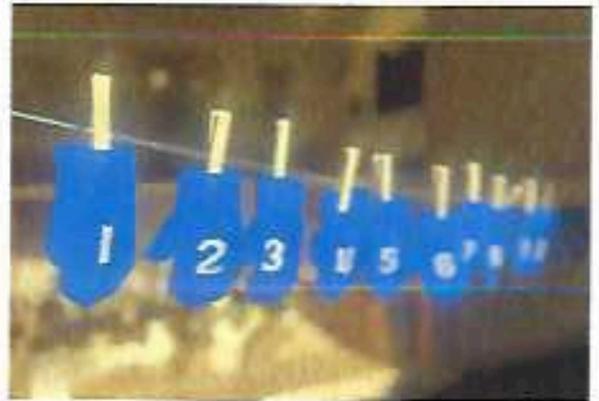
Tomorrow we'll take some out again, and have fun when we play!

Offer choices - When there are toys all over, and it's feeling overwhelming, it's helpful to break it down and offer choices. For example, "Would you like to put away the blocks or trains? You choose." I typically help by cleaning up the one she doesn't choose first.

Empathize - On that note, it's important to show compassion. If our child is tired or hungry or just having a hard day, it's okay to let the clean-up expectations go. In these instances I'll say "It's been a long day. You can help or stay close to me while I tidy this up." That way, D is still involved in the process, seeing empathy modeled, but not forced into cleaning.

Keep in mind that all of this is a gradual process. I always recommend starting small, and giving them a little more responsibility as they get used to being an active participant in the clean-up process. Our patience is key to clean-up being a positive and natural follow-up to play, rather than a battle of wills!

MITTEN MATH



Sequence of Learning

- Number sequence to count, remember and identify 1-5, 1-10, 1-15, 1-21
- What number is hiding? These can be mittens that are flipped over or simply missing and a space with no mitten is there
- Number more than (see direction above)
 - A given number
- Number less than
 - A given number
- Mixed up sequence: take a few mittens and mix them up and spread them out as below.
 - 4,6,2,1,3,5
 - Child rearranges to put them in order
- Mixed up mid number line sequence (see directions above)
 - 5, 6, 4, 7
- What are the Buddy Numbers?



- The numbers just before and just after a given number
- The buddies of "5" are 4 and 6
- Children should be able to reference the line of mittens or a number line to tell what the buddy numbers are. Once children are confident at that level, try flipping the buddies over.
- Number line with some number flipped over
 - Which numbers are they? Do this with ever growing line of numbers: 1-10, 1-15, 1-20
- Number 2 more than a given number
 - Ask the question first with children able to reference the mitten number line. They can "find" the answer in the line.
 - Flip the mitten that is 2 more over
- Number two less (see direction above)

Game

Where is the Magic Coin?

Children cover their eyes or turn around or BOTH! Put the coin in one of the mittens. One child can guess where it is. If it is LESS than the number offered, all of the higher numbers can be removed. If it is MORE than the number offered, take down all of the numbers that are less. Keep going until the only number left is the one with the Magic Coin! Naturally if a child guesses correctly the game is finished as well!

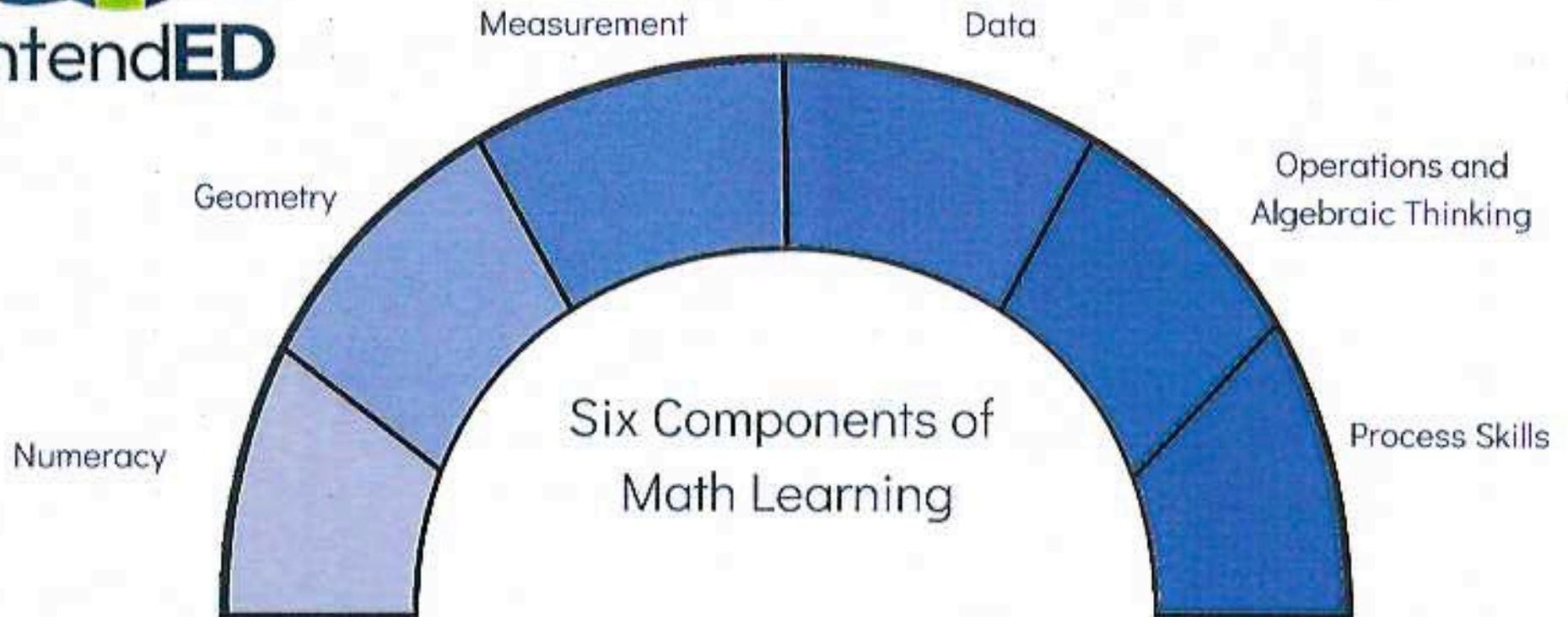


Apple Orchard Math Fun for Everyone

- How many steps to.....
- How many trees have lost their leaves?
- How many trees have pine cones?
- Which tree has the biggest trunk around? Circumference- compare with several.
- How many snowballs can we make in 3 minutes?
- How big a snowball can we roll? (Circumference)
- Countdown chain until we see the first flower pop?
- How many yellow flowers ? How many red?
- Treasure hunt for letters? Numbers?
- Count fence posts



IntendedED



Numeracy (Number Sense): Counting, cardinality, recognizing numerals, comparing quantities, ordinal numbers

Geometry: Recognizing and naming basic shapes, introduction to 3-D shapes, understand and use positional language, symmetry

Measurements
Comparing objects, using non-standard measurement, time concepts

Data:
Basic graphing, data collection through counting and categorizing

Operations and Algebraic Thinking:
Recognizing patterns, creating and extending patterns, and operations

Process Skills:
Problem solving, reasoning, communication, connections, and representation