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**University College Birmingham –
School of Education, Health & Community.**

Taster Session – Childcare & Education.

Information Booklet.

Taster Session 1 –

Wednesday 15th June 2020 - 1pm to 2pm.

Thank you for agreeing to attend our first of three taster sessions. In the first session we are going to begin looking at the five types of play which nursery settings provide for children.

Begin to think about everyday objects you have at your house that might support each type of play, these **do not** have to be toys or specialist resources.

- Physical Play
- Creative Play
- Imaginative Play
- Sensory Play
- Heuristic Play

Session One:

1 to 1.15 pm – Meet the Early Years Team – Most of the early years' lecturers will be in the session to introduce themselves and tell you a little bit about their backgrounds.

1.15 to 1.50pm – An introduction to the five types of play. This will be an interactive session where you will need to find everyday objects from around the house which might be able to support children's play.

1.50 to 2 pm – Time for questions you may have – Ask the lecturers any questions you might have about the course you have applied for, placement or anything else that may be a concern to you.

Meet the Team –

Debbie Hocknull – Assistant Dean - Early years and Supporting Teaching & Learning

Chris Hughes – Senior Curriculum Lead – Lecturer Level 2 and 3 Childcare. Personal Tutor for Level 3 T level Childcare and Education.

Jo Matthews – Programme Manager Level 3 Childcare Programme's – Lecturer & Personal Tutor Level 2 & 3 Childcare.

Su Collins – Programme Manager Level 2 Childcare – Lecturer & Personal Tutor level 2 & 3 Childcare.

Stephanie Moriarty – Lecturer and Personal Tutor Level 2 & 3 Childcare.

Sonia Griffith - Lecturer and Personal Tutor Level 2 & 3 Childcare.



Play.



Make notes if you want to.

Play is the way that children develop and learn. It is the way that they learn about the world in which they live. Play is the way children learn skills they will use in their adult life.

The five types of play are:

Physical Play –



Two minutes to find an everyday object that you might be able to use with children to support physical play. It must be safe.

Creative Play –



Two minutes to find an everyday object that you might be able to use with children to support creative play. It must be safe.

Imaginative Play –



Two minutes to find an everyday object that you might be able to use with children to support imaginative play. It must be safe.

Sensory Play –



Two minutes to find an everyday object that you might be able to use with children to support sensory play. It must be safe.

Heuristic Play –



Two minutes to find an everyday object that you might be able to use with children to support heuristic play. It must be safe.

Summary –

All settings which care for and educate children under five years should provide for these five types of play each day.

This should be indoors and outdoors with some of these experience's child initiated and some adult led.



Think of a question you might like answering.



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Thanks for joining us – hope you enjoyed the session. Hope to see you again soon.

If this session has interested you then here is some further reading to do.

Reading Material to Support the Taster Session.

Characteristics and benefits of different types of play

Physical play

Physical play promotes a child's health. It links with all other areas of a child's development. The brain works better if children have plenty of fresh air and exercise. It also benefits the general health and well-being of children, aids rest/sleep and even helps digestion. That is why both indoor and outdoor play are very important.

Manipulative play Manipulative play is an important aspect of physical play. Children need plenty of opportunities to play using manipulative skills. This particularly encourages children to use their hands, which are very important in human development.

Through physical play children learn to challenge gender stereotypes. Boys and girls can enjoy playing ball games (e.g. football play scenarios, running and climbing). Children need to be encouraged in these activities. It helps if they wear clothes and shoes that allow freedom of movement. The benefits of physical play Physical play helps children to: Express ideas and feelings. Children become aware that they can use their bodies to express themselves by moving in different ways as they respond to their moods and feelings, to music or to imaginative ideas. Explore what their bodies can do and become aware of their increasing abilities, agility and skill. Children's awareness of the space around them and what their bodies are capable of can be extended by climbing and balancing on large-scale apparatus, such as a climbing frame, wooden logs and a balancing bar, and by using small tricycles, bicycles and carts. Cooperate with others in physical play and games. Children become aware of physical play both as an individual and a social activity: in playing alone or alongside others, in playing throwing and catching with a partner, in using a seesaw or push cart, or in joining a game with a larger group. Develop increasing control of fine movements of their fingers and hands (fine motor skills). For example, playing musical instruments and making sounds with the body, such as clapping or tapping, helps develop fine motor skills in the hands and fingers, while also reinforcing the link between sound and physical movement. Helping with household tasks – washing up, pouring drinks, carrying bags – also develops fine motor skills. Develop balance and coordination, as well as an appreciation of distance and speed; energetic play which involves running, jumping and skipping helps children to develop these skills. Develop spatial awareness. For example, dancing and moving around to music helps to develop a spatial awareness while also practicing coordination and muscle control.

Using and evaluating resources for physical play Some of the resources available for the development of fine and gross motor skills might be: climbing and riding apparatus, large and small balls, skipping ropes, large and small building blocks for the development of gross motor skills. scissors, playdough, threading activities, painting and drawing activities, using large tweezers, sewing, using construction toys, craft activities for the development of fine motor skills. When evaluating resources for physical play, ensure that they are the correct size for the age and stage of development of the child, particularly ride-on toys and climbing equipment. In all cases, always check that the children can use them safely. Bikes and climbing equipment may be too large, or scissors and sewing activities may not be appropriate for

children aged under three. You should also look at whether the children choose to use them independently and enjoy using them.

Creative play

Creative play allows children to explore and experiment using different media, such as materials or music. It is about the making and not about the end product; not necessarily producing things to go on display or to be taken home. For example, when children are involved with messy finger play with paint, nothing is left at the end of the session once it has been cleared away.

Adults can encourage creative play by offering children a range of materials and play opportunities in dance, music, drawing, collage, painting, model-making and woodwork, sand and water (small world scenarios), and miniature garden scenarios. The benefits of creative play Creative play helps children to express their feelings and ideas about people, objects and events. It helps children with their physical coordination, developing language, developing ideas (concepts), developing relationships with people, their confidence and self-esteem, positive thinking. Using and evaluating resources for creative play Resources for creative play can range from painting and drawing equipment to the use of, junk modelling, clay and creative resources such as tissue, beads, glue, sequins and so on. Children should also have access to a range of musical instruments so that they can explore how they work and how different sounds are made. Practitioners should vary the kinds of creative resources which are available so that children have opportunities to use their creative imagination in different ways.

Imaginative Play.

Imaginative play Sometimes called drama or pretend play, imaginative play is where children make play scenarios; for example, about a shop or a boat, a garage, an office or a swimming pool.

The important thing to remember about imaginative play is that there will be nothing left to show anyone when the play finishes. Pretend play scenarios do not last, and it can be difficult to explain to parents the importance of pretend play.

What to look out for in imaginative play: Children use play props: for example, they pretend a box is a fridge, a stick is a spoon, or a daisy is a fried egg. They role play and pretend that they are someone else (such as the shopkeeper). When they pretend-play together, cooperatively, this is called socio-dramatic play. Young children pretend-play everyday situations: getting up, going to sleep, eating (just as Peppa Pig and George Pig do on television and in books). Gradually children develop their pretend play scenarios to include situations that are not everyday events, and that they may only have heard about but not experienced. This is called fantasy play. They might pretend to go to the moon or go on an airplane. It is not impossible that these things will happen to them. Superhero play develops when they use unreal situations, like Superman, Power Rangers or cartoon characters. Children use imaginative play to act out situations that they have definitely experienced, like going to the supermarket. For example, a group of children made a swimming pool out of wooden blocks. One of them pretended to be the lifeguard and rescued someone drowning.

All the children had visited a swimming pool, so this pretend play was based on a real experience. The benefits of imaginative play Imaginative play is beneficial for children because it links to all areas of a child's development, and children can use the resources and equipment in any way they choose, as an open-ended activity. Imaginative play boosts: O emotional development – children are able to express a

range of different scenarios in a safe and secure environment

- social development – children can socialise with their peers in a variety of ways, language development – due to the different forms which imaginative play can take, language and vocabulary can be enriched and extended, cognitive (thinking) development – children can develop their own ideas and make their own rules, physical development – depending on the activity, different aspects of children's physical skills can be developed. Using and evaluating resources for imaginative play.

The resources which can be used for imaginative play are endless, from large empty cardboard boxes, sand and water to small world toys and play equipment. You should ensure that a range of resources is always on hand and that children have the opportunity to use them to their own choosing; adults are often surprised by the imaginative ways in which children can use seemingly uninteresting resources!

Sensory play

Sensory play includes any activity that stimulates a young child's senses. It is important to remember that children learn best when they can actually touch, see, smell, taste, hear and manipulate the materials in their world. Stimulating the senses sends signals to children's brains that help to strengthen neural pathways important for all types of learning. For example, as children explore sensory materials, they develop their sense of touch, which lays the foundation for learning other skills, such as identifying objects by touch and using fine motor skills.

Sensory activities and tables promote exploration and encourage children to use scientific processes while they play, create, investigate and explore. Examples of sensory play, Sand and water play: provide interesting objects – pipes, funnels, ladles, scoops, sieves, etc. Play dough: provide rolling pins, cutters. Play with a variety of malleable materials: shaving cream, cornflour, dried or cooked pasta, dried beans or lentils. Natural objects: collect sticks, feathers, fir cones, etc. during a walk in the park or garden. Fruits and vegetables: encourage children to touch, smell, taste and play with all the different produce. Music activities: singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, etc. The benefits of sensory play

Spending time stimulating their senses helps children to develop cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally, physically and creatively:

- Cognitive development: sensory play promotes spatial awareness, mathematical thinking, and scientific exploration and discovery. It provides opportunities for learning colours, counting, sequencing, sorting and constructing.
- Language development: it encourages children to use descriptive and expressive language, and to find meaning behind essentially meaningless words (such as 'slimy' or 'lumpy') when taken out of context. Children also develop pre-writing skills as they focus on hand-eye coordination tasks while using various materials.
- Emotional development: sensory play provides an opportunity way for children to relieve their stress and to express their feelings. Pummelling clay or playing with water, for example, can be very soothing and relaxing to a young child. The open-ended nature of sensory play gives children the opportunity to create or recreate pictures, shapes and designs as many times as they like. Sensory play also eliminates the fear and experience of failure, which can negatively impact a child's self-esteem.
- Social skills: when engaged in group sensory play, children often form emotional bonds with other children as they share a common experience. Working closely together at a sand and water table, for example, provides young children with opportunities to observe how their peers handle materials, to share their own ideas and discoveries, and to build relationships. Because playing with play dough or sand does not require the use of language, even very young children can build early social ability through sensory play.
- The development of fine motor skills: in the process of rolling and cutting up play dough or scooping and pouring water

and beans, children will develop hand–eye coordination and fine motor control. Children are also developing the skills and muscles they will need for handwriting and other fine manipulative skills. Creative development: sensory play allows children to experiment with a large variety of materials in new and creative ways. Play that is open-ended and uninterrupted by adults allows creativity to flourish. The children are able to use the materials in any way they like and are able to enjoy the process without a concern for the end product. Using and evaluating resources for sensory play Ensure that children have access to a range of different messy activities as well as sand and water and play dough. You should have a store of ingredients for these so that they can be made up when needed and coloured with food colouring. Wherever possible, allow children to mix up their own sensory materials; for example, explore what will happen if they add water to dry sand. You should also allow children to explore using their imaginations: if they want to use different toys in the water and sand to see what happens or decide to put penguins in the shaving foam.

Heuristic Play

The principles of heuristic play Heuristic play is the term used to describe children playing and exploring natural materials using all of their senses. The word ‘heuristic’ means ‘helping to find out or discover’, and this open-ended form of play is normally used when working with very young children up to three years. The concept was developed by Elinor Goldshmiel, a child psychologist, from her work watching children and the way they gained knowledge of the world around them.

Heuristic play is rooted in young children’s natural curiosity. As babies grow, they move beyond being content to simply feel and ponder objects, to wanting to find out what can be done with them. Toddlers have an urge to handle things: to gather, fill, dump, stack, knock down, select and manipulate in other ways. Kitchen utensils offer this kind of activity and can occupy a child for surprising stretches of time. When toddlers make an enjoyable discovery (for instance when one item fits into another, or an interesting sound is produced), they often repeat the action several times to test the result. This strengthens cognitive development as well as fine muscle control and hand–eye coordination. Treasure basket play was also developed by Elinor Goldshmiel to promote heuristic play. The benefits of heuristic play Heuristic play: supports inclusion and is often considered to be therapeutic. It supports children’s cognitive development, as they learn through discovery and exploration. It offers children the opportunity to test out their own theories and solve problems.

Heuristic play is effective as it is an open-ended activity: it does not have a set outcome. When choosing items for heuristic play, always ensure that they are clean and safe. You should not include anything with sharp edges, or which could cause harm to the child as they use their mouth and hands to discover and explore. Make sure items are not small enough to be swallowed. The kinds of equipment which are suitable might be: corks, tins, saucepans and kitchen utensils, chains, sponges, large pebbles and shells, fir cones, dried gourds, big feathers, a lemon or orange, coloured beads on a string, brushes of different sizes, keys. Natural materials which can be explored safely will all be suitable. As is the case with other resources, watch the child to see the kinds of activities and resources which they enjoy.

Taken from: Meggit. C, Bruce. T, (2015) CACHE Level 3 Childcare & Education (EYE), Hodder Education. London.

