

Develop Literacy and Numeracy Through Play

Why Play?

“Play is a vehicle for learning and lies at the core of innovation and creativity. It provides opportunities for learning in a context in which children are at their most receptive. Play and academic work are not distinct categories for young children, and learning and doing are also inextricably linked for them.” (FDELK Program)

From play comes the SPARK for inquiry...

Inquiry/Play-Based Learning

- Builds on children’s natural curiosity about the world
- Natural learning
- Honouring children’s voices, questions, and ideas
- Extending learning

Child as a Learner

- Curious and knowledgeable
- Creative
- Capable of much more than you think!
- Strong and resilient
- Teachers too!

Child’s First Teacher

- You!
- The environment
- Provide experiences
- Guide and extend thinking

Natural Curiosity

- Your child has many interests and questions about what they observe in their world. Answer these questions by allowing them to experience it themselves.

Talk

- At all ages, talk to your children while you play with them. This is when they listen to how you say things and build their vocabulary.
- Ask questions that help your child think critically and listen to their questions too!
- Take turns talking and listening to each other. This develops a sense of respect for ideas and opinions.
- Give lots of time to think about what to say and encourage your child to be confident in sharing ideas no matter what they might be.
- Talk to other children, adults, and experts. Look for ways to better answer questions by asking for help through social media, researching via the internet, writing letters, or even visiting an expert!

Do

- Play WITH your child.
- One of the most important things about learning through play is your involvement. Pretend, make, discover, research, and learn with your child.
- Get dirty!

Literacy and Numeracy

- Literacy and numeracy are imbedded in all aspects of the inquiry and play-based learning.
- Investigate a child's interest/question by doing, researching, recording, experimenting, talking, sharing, representing, and questioning.

Inquiry

- Investigate with your child
- Model the different ways you could find out answers to questions
- Draw and label diagrams
- Ask experts
- Look at environmental print
- Take a trip somewhere!
- Investigate the environment
- Go online and use appropriate websites...READ BOOKS
- Find statistics
- Record measurements
- Estimate and hypothesis answers to questions
- Use the five senses (what do you see, hear, feel, taste, smell)
- Ask more questions
- Go off topic and ask even more questions!

Art

- Design and creating also involves experimenting with different materials
- Representing findings
- Expressing opinions about what they think, feel, see, touch, hear, and wonder.
- Opportunities to use a variety of paints, markers, crayons, tools, paper – everything – and allow children to create and manipulate things to fit their ideas
- It's ok to make mistakes and use creativity to fix them.

Cooking and Dining

- Cook books and recipes
- Designing menus
- Measuring tools (measuring spoons, cups, rulers, etc.)
- Pretend play (tea party, restaurant, etc.)
- Organizing an event
- Calculating costs
- ...this usually inspires more questions about things like ingredients, how food science works, people's jobs, and so much more that you would not expect! This means more inquiry!

Music, Dance, Phys-Ed, and Drama

- Sing songs about what is being investigated to learn more or remember what has been learned.
- Create songs and dances to represent learning (and just to have fun)
- Dramatic play and pretend to show what has been learned.
- Play games

Playdough

- Develop fine motor skills
- Incorporate talk to model thinking and build vocabulary
- Design and create

Blocks

- Problem solve, design, build, reflect, and re-design for a purpose
- Investigate details, strategies, failures, alternative ways of building
- Use a variety of materials both toys and things just around the house and environment
- Draw and label (we do this all the time)
- Talk about creations!

*Presented by Elizabeth Maitland
and Heather Burgess*

