

Planning for PLAY

Hi PLAYmates, it is lovely to see you here taking the next step forward in your PLAY journey. I would love to hear how you are going...you can send me an email or message in the Project PLAY membership group to share your journey.

At this point you will have seen the glossary of terms we use, discovered realistic pockets of time for play, read our schedule blocking tips, created a plan for play in your play space and developed a bank of PLAY Ideas – go to set ups which has led you to here.

In this series of mini lessons (3 lessons) you will:

- Learn about PLAY Theory – the different types of PLAY
 - Read about schemas
- Discover where your learners maybe in their development and
- Ways to create developmentally appropriate play-based learning experiences.

Let's get into it!

what is play?

“Engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose”.

The beauty of this definition is there is no right or wrong...play is what one wants it to be.

When studying Early Childhood many years ago, I learnt of 6 different types of play. However, when researching PLAY in more recent times, I learnt that there are more.

Bob Hughes explains 16 different types of play in his book titled *A Playworkers Taxonomy of Play Types (1996)*.

COMMUNICATION PLAY - play that uses words, gestures eg. Charades

CREATIVE PLAY - play that allows children to think creatively and use their imagination.

DEEP PLAY - play that includes safe risk taking and challenges

DRAMATIC PLAY - play where learners take on roles with responsibility in a play setting

EXPLORATORY PLAY - play where learners use their five senses to deepen their understanding eg. Feeling textured books

FANTASY PLAY - learners use their imagination and act out things that are unlikely to occur, eg. Driving a car

IMAGINATIVE PLAY - play where the conventional rules in the physical world do not apply eg. Pretending to be a bee and flying with pretend wings

LOCOMOTOR PLAY - movement in play when it is just for fun.

MASTERY PLAY - control of the physical and affective ingredients of the environments eg. Digging or making shelters

OBJECT PLAY - play that uses sequences hand eye co-ordination such as painting with a paintbrush

RECAPITULATIVE PLAY - play that explores ancestry, rituals, stories and rhymes.

ROLE PLAY - exploring ways of being by taking on roles and responsibilities such as dialing on a phone, sweeping the floor with a broom

ROUGH AND TUMBLE PLAY - discovering physical flexibility in a friendly and energetic way

SOCIAL PLAY - playing games bound by set rules with expectation that all players will follow

SOCIO-DRAMATIC PLAY - play when learners act out familiar situations with familiar people to imitate a situation or event.

SYMBOLIC PLAY - using objects, actions and/or items to represent other objects, actions and/or items.

What an incredible way to view *play*!! Did you know there were so many styles? Can you see which ones your learners are engaging in?

...let's chat about how you can use this information to plan play experiences in your *playspace*.

One **PLAY** session can encompass a few different styles of PLAY...eg. y'all often see and read about our dramatic PLAY set ups...these set ups not just include dramatic play, but also, role play and symbolic play. And can extend into locomotor play, object play and imaginative play.

Let's get *observing*!!

Step 1. Observe your learners in PLAY over a few days and determine which type/s of play they engage in.

The theory behind PLAY is an incredible one and has been studied and researched by many such as, Piaget (1952), Bartlett (1932) and with information shared by Atherton and Nutbrown, *Understanding Schemas and Young Children* (2013). It is one that inspires and provokes thoughts and encourages reflection.

Last lesson, my friends, we learnt about 16 different types of play and created activities that engaged the interests of our learners.

This lesson, we are going to chat about *schema/schemata* (plural form).

- TRAJECTORY
- ENCLOSING
- ENVELOPING
- CONNECTING
- ROTATION
- POSITIONING
- ORIENTATION
- TRANSPORTING

The **TRAJECTORY** schema involves learners pushing, kicking, dropping, and pulling things out of objects, reaching out for objects, opening, and closing their hands and kicking their legs.

Sound familiar, Mummas? Hands up if you are a Mumma of a little one that loves watching you pick up what they have knocked down? If this sounds familiar, they may be exploring the Trajectory schema.

Here are some PLAY ideas to try that support learners in the **TRAJECTORY** schema:

- * Paper plane making and throwing
- * Marble painting
- * Clear easel painting
- * DIY posting boxes
- * Bubble blowing

- * Ribbon twirling
- * Water wheels
- * Pulley systems
- * Pipettes used in art/science

Some common words used this schema: spin, twist, turn, bend, drip, drop, in, out, fast, slow, up and down.

ENCLOSING - learners begin to join lines, create a barrier or build structures that form an enclosure. These types of enclosures can come in all sorts of shapes and sizes, with a variety of materials and can also appear in drawings or on a plate of food.

Do your learners create enclosures for their toys, or make farm fences around the farm animals or bundle up their babies in blankets? If this sounds familiar, they may be exploring the Enclosing schema.

Here are some PLAY ideas to try that support learners in the **ENCLOSING** schema:

- cardboard boxes to climb in and out of
- fences for animal figurines
- tunnels
- tents/cubby houses
- craft supplies that lend themselves to construction
- discovery tubs with bracelets, bangles
- dramatic play [vet clinic or doctor's office](#) with bandages
- natural loose parts to make craft borders
- shoe boxes for small world creations
- dolls in cots, prams, and blankets
- opening and closing books

Some common words used in this schema: enclose, wrap, close, open, inside, outside, corner, side, edge, top, bottom, next to, beneath

In the **ENVELOPING** schema learners cover themselves or dolls/toys with a blanket/s. They conceal and reveal objects, fill up bags or boxes and close, climb into boxes, paint their hands with paint or glue (then peel it off), and paint over pictures with the one colour.

Do your little ones climb into empty boxes, work out what happens if they wrap or hide an object, dress up in layers of clothes? If this sounds familiar, they may be exploring the Enveloping schema.

Here are some PLAY ideas to try that support learners in the **ENVELOPING** schema:

- pass the parcel
- dolls in cots, prams, and blankets
- sensory play with bowls, containers, and scoops
- posting boxes
- [post office dramatic play](#)
- cooking - pasta, pasties, samosas, curry puffs, pies etc
- Paper Mache
- sock puppets
- opening and closing books
- sensory boxes

Some common words used in this schema: visible, invisible, over, under, in, out, wrap, unwrap, fill/full, empty, cover, hidden, see

CONNECTING - learners begin to join things together and disconnect things that have been put together. You may also see learners tying two or more objects together using ribbon, rope, tape, strings, fastening items together or suspending them from larger objects.

Do your little ones join train tracks, build a tower of blocks only to knock it down afterwards or knock down someone else's or stick things together with tape? If this sounds familiar, they may be exploring the Connecting schema.

Here are some PLAY ideas to try that support learners in the **CONNECTING** schema:

- paper chains
- threading
- laundry basket weaving
- building train tracks
- building hammocks for toys
- Oobleck
- recycled object sculptures

- dress ups with different fasteners eg. Zip, buttons, ties
- sewing
- knitting
- painting patterns and symmetry
- making books
- making musical instruments
- dominoes
- magnetic fishing games
- jigsaws
- recipes
- marble runs

Some common words used in this schema: construct, build, join, separate, fragile, delicate, strong, weight bearing, apart, rigid, flexible, stretch, bend, knot and thread

ROTATION – involves children rotating, spinning, and turning objects and/or themselves. They tend to be full of energy as they explore this new world.

Do your little ones twirl around, roll down hills or drop balls and watch them roll away? If this sounds familiar, they may be exploring the Rotation schema.

Here are some PLAY ideas to try that support learners in the **ROTATION** schema:

- busy boards (the sort with locks, keys, dials and buttons)
- windmills
- paper planes
- playdough
- messy spaghetti
- mixing paints
- Cogs (construction style of toy)
- Pasta Sensory bins
- Tools
- Salad Spinner Art
- Whisking
- Cooking
- Water Play
- Wheels

Some common words used in this schema: spin, turn, rotate, mix, around, round, circles, dizzy, twist, spiral, cascade, left, right, up, down, side.

POSITIONING – involves learners ordering and arranging items and/or themselves. Children may line objects up by size, shape or colour.

Do you see your learners arranging their toys, collecting items for a collection or make patterns with their collected items? If this sounds familiar, they may be exploring the Positioning schema.

Here are some PLAY ideas to try that support learners in the **POSITIONING** schema:

- stacking items
- hide and seek
- balancing objects
- peg boards

Some common words used in this schema: on top, beneath, next to, under, in front, over, between, line up, colour, sort, order

ORIENTATION - shows when learners can be seen looking at things from a different viewpoint eg. Hanging upside down, looking at things between their legs. Children can be seen playing with ramps and watching objects roll down it or peering over the edge to see something more clearly.

Do your little learners hang upside down from the monkey bars, stand up on the lounge and look down at their world, climb stairs to look down? If this sounds familiar, they may be exploring the Orientation schema.

Here are some PLAY ideas to try support learners in the **ORIENTATION** schema:

- pendulums
- car ramps
- kaleidoscopes
- telescopes
- periscopes
- mirrors
- posting boxes

- binoculars
- magnifying glasses

Some common words used in this schema: twist, turn, spin, spiral, roll, forwards, backwards, upside down, birds eye view, fast, slow.

TRANSPORTING - involves moving and carrying items from one spot to another eg. Using hands, pockets, buckets, containers, and wheelbarrows to transport items. They can also create piles of their collected items.

Do your little ones like carrying items from place to place? If this sounds familiar, they may be exploring the Transporting schema.

Here are some PLAY ideas to try that support learners in the **TRANSPORTING** schema:

- Using diggers, wheelbarrows, vehicles to transport blocks and nature
- sand and water play
- treasure hunts to collect items/objects
- stacking toys
- ice cube tray play eg. Pom poms in water
- posting boxes
- pan balances and pulley systems
- deliveries to family and friends
- sending and receiving mail
- whisper games
- cars in paint - track prints
- shopping for ingredients and unpacking

Some common words used in this schema: in, out, under, over, overflowing, all gone, open, closed

plan of action

Which schema had you nodding your head at?

Which one had you with an **'aha' moment**?

What activity ideas instantly came to mind?

Let's break it down even further PLAYmates, by accepting our invitation to joining us a mini challenge.

Challenge - Create an activity from your mind list whilst reading this lesson and set it up. Snap a pic and come back to share it within the group with the tag #schemachallenge

I look forward to seeing your creations!

As always with any PLAY Idea suggested – **ADULT SUPERVISION** is always required. **Please only engage in learning experiences that YOU deem safe for your child/ren.**

PLAY is essential for children. It serves to practise skills that are needed in the future.

Mildred Parten, an educational theorist, outlines 6 social stages of PLAY starting from birth (1932).

UNOCCUPIED PLAY - infants engage in movement with no purpose - this is the early signs of play.

SOLITARY PLAY - this is when infants and toddlers play on their own. When engaged in this type of play, they are heavily immersed in what they are playing with, they do not notice other children playing nearby.

ONLOOKER PLAY - this stage of PLAY is when children watch other children play. The onlooker may sometimes ask questions of the child playing but they do not join in their play.

PARALLEL PLAY - children engage in this PLAY side by side by sharing the same set of materials/resources but without any interaction. However, children are interested in what the others are doing around them. This stage marks the groundwork for the later stages of PLAY.

ASSOCIATIVE PLAY - this stage of PLAY sees children begin to interact with one another more so than the toys. They talk about the toys and begin to ask each other questions. It is the beginning of understanding how to work with others. This type of PLAY tends not to be governed with rules or formal organisation.

SOCIAL PLAY - children share their thoughts and ideas. They create games that involve rules and organisation. Children also work together towards achieving a common goal and assign roles & responsibilities. Children practise the skills of turn taking, sharing, making decisions, and solving problems.

Incredible right? Did you know there was so much theory about PLAY? And this is just the tip of it!!

