



Block Play

CPD

UNDERSTANDING THE POTENTIAL OF BLOCK PLAY TO
ENCOURAGE IMAGINATIVE PLAY AND DEVELOP CREATIVITY

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Description:

Block play is well established as a rich resource with which to develop children's imaginative play, self-expression and creativity. Block play is open-ended which allow children a multitude of different ways to express their imagination. Block play incorporates many EYFS areas of Learning and Development and incorporates the Characteristic of Effective Learning so it really can be seen to be a resource that is central to curriculum. Blocks are a really popular resource for young children and they typically show high levels of engagement for extended periods of time.

The hands on experience of block play develops children's mathematical and scientific thinking as they explore spatial relationships, balance and construction techniques. Large block play can encourage communication and collaborative work due to the scale of the work whereas smaller blocks can facilitate individual expression. Physical development is also developed, as children become more dexterous, exploring balance in various ways and using a range of movements. Blocks play can also provide opportunities to problem solve as children work out how to best use the block to express their ideas.

Blocks allow children to be independent and construct their own learning. Children become engineers as they construct bridges, architects as they design houses, artists and designers as they create sculptures and arrange patterns. Children create a vast range of constructions from making cars to boats and petrol stations.....the list is endless. Block play allows us amazing opportunities to observe children, giving us a real insight into their thinking processes. Working three dimensionally is another important aspect of play and an area which can unlock some children's learning as they create structures and construct narratives.

The workshop will explore the origins of block play, looking at Froebel's gifts and theory of "loose parts" (Nicholson). I will provide examples of blocks and refer to the wonderful contribution that Community Playthings have made to this important area of learning with their different series of blocks – unit blocks and hollow blocks and the new all-weather outlast blocks. The session will include a practical session.

Aims: From this course you will:

- Understand the theory and pedagogical influences
- Learn how block play can support open ended enquiry based learning
- Learn how block play can support creativity and imagination
- See how block play can support learning in relation to the EYFS curriculum
- See how block play can facilitate cooperation and encourage communication

Pete Moorhouse is an Artist Educator and Early Years Consultant. He is an associate trainer for Early Education and is an Honorary Research fellow at The Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol researching creative and critical thinking in early years. He is the author of several journal articles and books and a Member of ICENet – the International Creative Education Network.

AUDIENCE: EARLY YEARS LEADERS, MANAGERS, TEACHERS & PRACTITIONERS
SESSION: INSET HALF DAY – OR AS TWILIGHT/SAT AM

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