



# Intelligent materials - making learning irresistible CPD

EXPLORING OPEN- ENDED MATERIALS ALSO KNOWN AS "LOOSE PARTS" TO ENCOURAGE IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY

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## Description:

This workshop looks at the value of using intelligent materials – objects that children can use in a multitude of different ways, exploring different possibilities, to express their imagination. Combining natural or recycled materials, the child is at the center of their learning as they use their imagination to create various arrangements/constructions/narratives as they combine the objects. Materials are explored in many ways, following the child's line of enquiry but with the practitioner sharing their journey of discovery – researching and learning together.

The exploration of materials encourages open-ended discovery and a focus on process. Natural and recycled materials can be seen as intelligent materials offering many possibilities for exploration and associated learning. Creativity and curiosity underline children's emergent thinking and development.

We will look at examples from Reggio Emilia which has had a long tradition of working with natural and recycled materials and gain insights from Froebel (gifts), Nicholson (loose parts) and Goldschmeid (Heuristic play). We will look at how placing and arranging meets many learning and development aspects of the EYFS. The workshop will look at ways in which intelligent materials can be incorporated and developed in early years settings. We will look at example of loose parts indoors and in the outdoor environment.

**Aims:** From this course you will learn to:

- Provide appropriate resources to encourage open ended exploration
- Prioritise children taking the lead role in their learning
- Learn about various pedagogies that support investigation with intelligent materials
- Gain ideas for where to resource materials
- Suggestions for open ended explorations and longer term projects
- Practical session for practitioners to explore a selection of materials, gain confidence and share the experience of making creations.

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 & PRACHTIONES  
SESSION: INSET HALF DAY – OR AS TWILIGHT/SAT AM

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