



# Block Play CPD

## Building foundations

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

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### Description

Blocks are a fundamental resource with which to develop children's imaginative play, self-expression and creativity. Block play is open-ended allowing children a multitude of different ways to express their imagination. Block play is truly holistic incorporating all areas of learning and development and the characteristics of effective learning so can be seen to be a powerful resource that can be central to curriculum. Blocks play is a popular resource for young children and they typically show significant levels of engagement for sustained periods of time as they represent their thinking with blocks.

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 particularly encourage communication and collaborative work due to the scale of the work whereas smaller blocks often can facilitate individual expression. Physical development is also developed, as children become more agile and dexterous, exploring balance in various ways and incorporating a range of movements. Blocks play can also provide opportunities to problem solve as children as children construct and 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 provides us with wonderful opportunities to observe children, giving us a real insight into their thinking processes, informing us as to how we can best further support their learning. Working three dimensionally is another important aspect of block play which some children particularly respond to that can unlock some children's learning as they create their structures and construct narratives.

The training will explore the origins of block play, looking at Froebel's gifts, Pratt's Unit blocks and theory of "loose parts" (Nicholson). I will provide examples of blocks and highlight the block play resources that are available from various suppliers. The CPD includes a hands-on practical session. A comprehensive handout and supporting online resources and links are provided.

### Aims and objectives From this course you will:

- Understand the theory and pedagogical contexts
- Learn how block play can support open ended enquiry based learning
- Learn how block play can support creativity and imagination and how to create enriched block play areas
- Explore the stages we can observe in children's work and learn to observe and scaffold
- See how block play can support learning in relation to all areas of curriculum inc. STEM
- See how block play can facilitate cooperation and encourage communication
- View examples of children's explorations both indoors and outdoors
- Experience a hands-on, experiential session with opportunities explore block play.

Pete Moorhouse is an Early Years Creative Consultant. He is an associate trainer for Early Education and a Froebel tutor and has delivered training in many countries. He is the author of several journal articles and books and was awarded an honorary research fellowship at Bristol University, currently researching creative and critical thinking in early years. Pete won the national award from the Creative Learning Guild for his work promoting creativity in education and is Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a Churchill Fellow.

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

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