



# Intelligent materials CPD making learning irresistible

EXPLORING OPEN- ENDED MATERIALS AND LOOSE PARTS TO ENCOURAGE IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY

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## Description:

This session looks at the value of using intelligent materials. These are materials and objects through which children can explore a plethora of possibilities to express their imagination. The CPD will focus on materials that are open-ended and often lead to high levels of sustained engagement, and that have significant opportunities for technique progression and ideas development. Examples will include clay, woodwork, paper and fabric. We will examine 'intra-action', how materials have 'agency', also having an impact on us.

We will explore the rich potential of loose parts, embracing natural, found or recycled materials. Loose-parts position the child 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 also with active practitioner involvement at the optimal moments - learning and extending thinking together. The exploration of materials encourages open-ended discovery and a focus on process. Creative & critical thinking 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 within curriculum. The CPD will look at ways in which intelligent materials can be incorporated and developed within early years settings. We will look at examples of how material exploration can be encouraged both indoors and in the outdoor environment.

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

- Provide appropriate materials and resources to encourage open ended exploration
- Facilitate the conditions to enable children taking the lead role in their learning
- Learn about various pedagogies that support investigation with intelligent materials
- Understand progression, how best to develop skills and techniques
- Suggestions for loose-part material both indoors and outdoors.
- Practical session for practitioners to explore a selection of materials, gain confidence and share the experience of getting creative with materials.

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

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