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# Play

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## Overview

Play is an essential medium for learning and developing. Physical skills, cognitive learning, and social-emotional development are seen as key areas that are enhanced through play. Through play, children work out difficulties encountered in the real world. Play with objects leads children to think in new ways and to create novel solutions to real problems.

Play has been studied according to its social categories and content. children's play, as distinguished from other activities, is involving, child directed and process oriented. Adults, however, do have a role in facilitating children's play by providing an environment conducive to play and assistance when needed.

## Questions To Consider

1. What are children learning as they play?
2. Which areas of development are enhanced through play?
3. What is the importance of play?
4. What is dramatic, functional, and constructive play?
5. What is the progression of the social content of play?
6. How is play different from other types of activities?
7. What do adults do to enhance children's play?

## Vocabulary

Read these terms with their definitions before viewing the program.

**Associative play** Takes place in a group with conversation and sharing materials, but each is doing his/her own thing.

**Constructive play** The activity of building and constructing objects with whatever materials are at hand.

**Cooperative play** Play in groups, where there is collaboration in the form of play, assignment of specific roles, and following of specific rules, as in a game.

**Dramatic play** The familiar "let's pretend" aspect of play.

**Functional play** Sensory exploration to find out what materials will do and what happens when you do something to them.

**Parallel play** Play occurs nearby another child, but there is no interaction.

**Sociodramatic play** Play with a partner which takes into account the imagination of the partner.

**Solitary play** Infants and all children play alone.

**Symbolic play** Play in which an object stands for something else and provides the basis for imagination (doll for baby, block for bed).

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### **Instructional Objectives**

When you have successfully completed this module, you will be able to:

1. Describe the ways play influences physical, cognitive, language, creativity, social, and emotional development.
2. Describe the significance of play.
3. Identify four types of play according to content.
4. Identify four social categories of play.
5. Describe three aspects of play.
6. Discuss the adult role in enhancing play.

### **Self-Test**

After studying the objectives and watching the video, take the self-test to check your progress.

1. Stringing beads contributes to a child's
  - a. physical development
  - b. social development
  - c. emotional development
  - d. creativity
2. While playing on the slide, the child is gaining concepts of "up and down"/ This is part of
  - a. physical development
  - b. social development
  - c. cognitive development
  - d. creativity
3. Social skills are enhanced when children play
  - a. alone
  - b. together
  - c. with toys
  - d. without toys
4. Play offers children the opportunity to express
  - a. only positive emotions
  - b. only negative feelings
  - c. both positive and negative feelings
  - d. no feelings at all
5. In play, children have
  - a. the freedom to try things out
  - b. the opportunity to express themselves
  - c. natural self-healing process
  - d. all of the above
6. An example of symbolic play is
  - a. using dough to represent a camera
  - b. climbing on a slide
  - c. placing a round block in a round hole
  - d. all of the above

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7. Match each type of play in column I with its description in column II.

- | I.                    | II.                             |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| _____ a. Functional   | 1. Sean talks on pretend phone  |
| _____ b. Games        | 2. Children create a sculpture  |
| _____ c. Dramatic     | 3. Children play soccer         |
| _____ d. Constructive | 4. The child explores playdough |

8. Match the social category of play in column I with its description in column II.

- | I.                   | II.  |
|----------------------|--|
| _____ a. Solitary    | 1. Play in groups, where there is collaboration and rules are followed.                              |
| _____ b. Parallel    | 2. Playing by oneself.   |
| _____ c. Associative | 3. Play in a group with conversation, sharing of materials, with each child doing his/her own thing. |
| _____ d. Cooperative | 4. Play occurs nearby another child but there is no interaction.                                     |

9. Complete the following statements about aspects of play.

- The child is completely \_\_\_\_\_ in the activity.
- The child is most interested in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the activity.
- The most meaningful play is \_\_\_\_\_.

10. The adult role is to:

- be a resource
- provide assistance when needed
- direct children's play
- set up an environment conducive to play
- never get involved in children's play
- become completely involved in children's play
- extend children's play then step back

### Observation

After completing the tape, review the sequence in which toddler Jamie is seen

- playing with wooden trains
- riding on a real train
- preschooler Jamie playing with the electric trains

Observe the sequence several times and answer the following questions:

- In what ways does Jamie's play with trains change over time? Describe the changes in physical skills, language ability, and thinking.
- How do real experiences with trains influence Jamie's pretend play with trains. Describe the level of control Jamie has in the real and pretend situations.
- Identify the types of play according to the content seen in each play episode.

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## Answers to Self-Test

1. a      2. c      3. b      4. c      5. d      6. a
7. a. 4      c. 1  
    b. 3      d. 2
8. a. 2      c. 3  
    b. 4      d. 1
9. a. involved  
    b. process  
    c. child directed
10. a    b    d    g