

Promote creativity and creative learning in young children essay sample

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1. 1 Creative activities are fun for children, they are suggested to help children have positive experiences and develop important characteristics and abilities which lead to a sense of purpose and achievement. Creativity helps children find ways of expressing themselves through the arts, giving them opportunities to explore different medias. It involves being imaginative and original. Creativity involves activities such as: Drawing/painting

Design

Modelling and sculpting

Craft

Creative movement

Music

Role play/small world

Creativity is often more about the process rather than the end project, it is useful for many reasons: Developing confidence

Developing good relationships

Finding our strengths and weaknesses

Developing communication

Team work

Concentration

Developing imagination

Learning to problem solve

Creative learning is about how children are actively involved in their own learning and their ability to problem solve and use their imagination.

Creative learning activities may have goals sometimes which will help

children to practice using their skills of problem solving and imagination. To reach their goal children will use and explore a range of different materials, depending on the creative activity, be it a sculpture, den or expressive dance. They can use their creative learning to overcome a problem in creativity. This can be achieved through providing a creative environment allowing exploration through play and praising creative efforts. Creativity is about risk taking and making connections, allowing children to explore and express themselves through a variety of media or materials including, dance, music, making things, drawing, painting and make believe and to make new things emerge as a result. Being creative is strongly linked to play and can emerge through a child being absorbed in their own actions and ideas.

1. 2 Most theorists of child development view young children as highly creative with a natural tendency to imagine, experiment and explore their physical environment. Several different theoretical approaches that aim to explain creativity and creative learning. This area is complex as creativity involves so many processes. Creativity as a process

Focussed on by some theories, these models look at how new ideas emerge. One of the earliest theories was suggested by Graham Wallas, he proposed a 5-stage model. A focus on the importance of the unconscious mind:

Preparation (initial thoughts about a problem)

Incubation (time spent thinking unconsciously)

Intimation (awareness of an answer)

Insight (conscious awareness of answer)

Verification (solution worked upon)

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In support of Wallas's model, there is some research by psychologists with adults showing that sleep is an important component in problem solving.

Lateral thinking Edward de Bono proposes that creative thinking needs to be organised he treats creativity as the behaviour of information in a self organising information system and he has been the author of several books about this. Quote

“ Creative thinking - in terms of idea creativity - is not a mystical talent. It is a skill that can be practised and nurtured.” “ Creativity involves breaking out of established patterns in order to look at things in a different way.” Edward de Bono

Including books for children which aids them in problem solving using a process model. This style has been criticised as being too ' pragmatic' by people such as Robert Sternberg.

Nature vs. Nurture

Are some children naturally creative?

Or nurtured?

Cognitive theories

The way in which children make associations and connections by focusing on the way the brain processes information. A child can look at creative object, piece of material and while concentrating on the shape can make a connection to a similar object (Box - House). Theorists such as Robert Sternberg and Howard Gardner argue that making these new connections is a type of intelligence. In practice these theories suggest that we provide a

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range of first-hand experiences so children can develop their knowledge and draw on their own experience.

Social Models

Focus on the environment children are in and the role of the adults within it, implying it is the environment and experiences children are given which allow them to be creative.

Cultural approaches

All children can be creative, but it can be suppressed or enhanced depending on the support of the environment. Therefore there is the idea that society must be ready for new ideas and innovations. In practice this approach would ensure that we provide an environment that can be explored and inhabit creativity.

Role modelling

Children learn from watching and being with adults who are being creative. In practice this suggests we show in the way we work and think that we are creative - flexibility, problem-solving and openly drawing/painting.

1. 3 Creativity can support young children's development in a number of ways. They learn how to manage and express their feelings through problem solving and a sense of achievement with the end project. Children can build up self-confidence by listening to other ideas and working in a team, especially when using music as they can learn to communicate and with singing it can also help children's speech. They will learn about numeracy and developing their reading and writing skills and communicate in a team

through creative play which will develop their overall speech and listening skills. Creativity can help develop fine motor skills by using tools and cutting and materials such as crayons, paints and sticking etc. Which is important for later handwriting development. Participating in movement activities such as dance or role play develops their gross motor skills, balance and co-ordination.

Art helps children find ways to represent words or images to match their feelings using their marks, colours, size of shapes and lines. This can help their cognitive development as they are making representations. There seems to be a correlation between early musical experiences and mathematical ability, by using the ability to hear rhythms, beats and patterns in music. Children's concentration and perseverance skills will be developed when problem solving, which links to the later curriculum, science, design and maths. Through exploration there is a cognitive benefit for children as they will learn to categorise and sort as a result. Also through making decisions children develop their confidence and their cognitive skills because they begin to think about advantages/disadvantages of their choices. There is a key term that is used when children make connections and apply their knowledge - Metacognition skills Automatic awareness of their own knowledge and their ability to understand, control, and manipulate their own cognitive processes.

2. 2 Giving children the most available time they can explore and experiment with materials and use them in their own way. It also allows children to do their best work by moving from popular to more original ideas as it gives

them opportunity to think, explore and imagine and being able to come back to it at a later date to finish. Allowing children to take has its advantages:

Persevere

Work at a higher level

Prevents frustration

Prevents rushing

Being creative is valuable

Gain more skills and concepts

Feeling of pride in their achievements

End product feels worth while

Learn about processes

Links between being creative and sub-conscious

Theoretical approaches also suggest that time is required as our sub-conscious plays a big part in problem-solving and new ideas. Some children will take their time know what they want to achieve and others will know straight away. Giving them limited time can make them feel under pressure and can lead to a lack of confidence. 3. 1A creative environment needs to allow children easy access to a range of materials and be able to move them around with ease. Its not just about putting out the tools and encouraging artistic skills, but allowing the freedom to explore the space around them, they will start to make connections between things more easily. Children also need to feel they have the permission to explore and try new things and see good role models so they know we will join in and be creative, children will then develop positive attitudes towards creativity. There are ways you

can make simple activities broader for children's imagination to go free:

Collage - Choice of textures, colours and shapes.

Varied resources (lace, buttons, string feathers etc.) Children will enjoy choosing and exploring. Paint - Large areas and paper, Palettes (to mix paint as they wish) and a collection of different tools to create textures (sponges).

Mark-making - Large areas and paper and tools (pencils, markers, pastels etc), can also give children opportunities to combine activities such as collage and mark-making. Can even use sensory materials for mark-making (sand, water, cornflour etc). Role play - 'Real' objects and dressing up props and use neutral furniture for whatever their imagination desires. Small world play - play people, cars, dinosaurs, farm animals etc... These can be linked to sensory materials as well, so for example putting the farm animals in soil.

Music - Instruments (exploring all the different sounds), make own instruments (Plastic bottles and pasta, rice etc...) and recording devices.

Creative movement - Space and music, props (ribbons etc).

Modelling - Opportunities to create 3D objects (dough, clay and boxes etc).

3. 2 When evaluating an environment to assess its effectiveness in supporting creativity for the children you have to observe the children and ask yourself a few questions. These include: Is it welcoming?

Are there displays on the wall that are age appropriate, appealing and relevant to the children's work? Is the children's work displayed?

Is there a good variety of equipment and is it accessible to the children?

Levels of engagement and length?

Does the environment inspire you?

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4. My activity: Discovering sounds and music.

Age range: 10months - 16months

What I did: I placed different musical instruments in the space for the children to explore. These were bells, maracas, xylophone, drums as well as different things such as foil, bags filled with rice and other materials that rattle. In our messy tray I placed pasta for the babies to discover by making sounds when crunching, mixing, scooping and dropping it with their hands.

Reflect: I feel the babies really enjoyed exploring the different sounds. I really liked watching how they made accidental sounds with things they hadn't seen before and how their natural curiosity allowed them to work out how that sound was made and develop them into bigger, louder or longer noises. The pasta wasn't played with as much as the instruments, I think that the babies weren't engaged in it enough as once they had felt it and crunched it a bit there wasn't much else they did.

Next time: I would use more than just pasta, maybe rice or couscous as well. I could put these into shallow trays so the babies could make marks with their fingers as well as listening to the sounds it makes. I could also provide different containers and tools such as buckets, bottles, spoons and jugs so the babies fill and empty while hearing the sound it makes. Not only would this extend the sound making it would also encourage mark making and hand-eye co-ordination as they are dropping into containers developing their pincer grip. I learnt that no matter the age, children get a lot out of playing and exploring instruments. I also learnt that just putting out materials, isn't always enough to engage children and that you need to give children the

opportunity to connect tools and toys into their play, such as the buckets and spoons but also cars or animals etc.