

# Theory of play

[Literature](#), [Play](#)



THEORY OF PLAY Play is behaviour that humans and animals participate in to explore and learn in their environments. Humans are involved in play all their lives to learn and to have pleasure. Through play children, among other things, develop language that then is the basis for literacy skills that are taught at schools. Play develops a number of skills: Fine and gross motor skills Sensory knowledge (sight, hearing, taste, touch, exploration of space) Exploration of different roles Development of social skills — best indicator of success at school Development of cognitive skills Development of problem solving skills and thinking skills Development of language skills Play enables children to show their mental representations of the world and enables children to interpret their world. There is structured and unstructured play. Adults often direct structured play and there are rules etc. In unstructured play children choose the activity and make their own rules. Play provides a medium for learning. The learning needs met through play include the opportunity to: Practise, choose, imitate, imagine, gain confidence, persevere Acquire new knowledge, skills Create, observe, experiment, think To communicate, question, interact with others, social interaction To know and value one's own strengths and limitations All of this learning is done in a safe environment that encourages confidence and consolidates skills. There are many theories of play — most notable would be Piaget, Vygotsky and Bateson Through play language can be developed in the following areas: Language functions (directing others, requesting, choosing) Discourse skills - turn taking, staying on topic Listening and following instructions Understanding and asking questions Concept knowledge Vocabulary expansion Descriptive Story/narrative, sequencing and problem solving

Types of play Sensory play Construction/deconstruction play Dramatic play  
Exploratory play Manipulative play - hands, fingers Physically active play  
Creative play- painting, music, language These types of play are all inter  
related. They do not happen in isolation. Children with Complex needsNeeds  
can include: Sensory loss Language delay/disorder Motor problems Cognitive  
delay These needs will affect the development of play that in turn can affect  
other areas of development. Therefore some children need to be taught how  
to play.