

# PLAY BASED LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM

Amit Kumar Das

State Aided College Teacher of Pritilata Waddeder Mahavidyalaya, Ranaghat, India

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**Abstract:** Play is a powerful and important activity. It has a natural and positive influence on children's social, physical, emotional and cognitive development. The best learning happens when children play in the classroom. Public schools are fantastic places for children to learn through play. A play based learning environment encourages talking, reading, thinking and writing. Play needs to be brought back into the early childhood classrooms in some way. Play is vital to the academic growth of your young students. Your children learn through play, as your students interact with one another and various instruments. For your students overall developing the skills various ways has to incorporate more play in the classroom. The author give out through this paper concept of play based learning, some importance of play based learning and discuss six unique ways to incorporate more play in the classroom.

**Keywords:** Play, learning, classroom, children.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Play can be broadly defined as an enjoyable activity that is pursued for pleasure or its own sake. It can be contrasted with activities that have explicitly defined learning outcomes or games which are likely to have clearer rules or a competitive element. Play based activities might be adult-guided, for example through the suggestion of a scenario for pretend play. In other cases, activities will be largely child-initiated with adult involvement focused on the props or the design and management of the learning environment.

In play based learning, children choose their own activities for the day. Play based program are also sometimes called 'child centered' because the children guide their own learning with their curiosity and interests. Meanwhile, academic programs are teacher-led and meant to prepare children for Kindergarten. The teacher comes up with activities or games to help children learn letters and distinguish shapes, sounds and colours, children may spend time practicing handwriting or filling in worksheets. These programs are typically very structured with a daily routine and lots of activity props from the teacher, you may encounter a program that incorporates a little bit of both. Different parts of the day may be reserved for different types of learning, you may also see a program that combines play based learning with other learning philosophies like Montessori, Waldorf or Reggio Emilia.

Public schools are fantastic places for children to learn through play. Dedicated play spaces assist children to learn how to solve problems, persevere, compromise and cooperate with others. Through play they practise and apply the skills they are taught in the classroom. Schools understand that play based learning is an important part of a balanced approach and that alongside more explicit teaching and instruction, it helps to keep every child productive and engaged.

Play based learning helps to promote happy and engaged children who can learn and succeed at school. Play is important to healthy childhood development. Many life skills are learnt during play. By playing, children develop their oral language, social, physical, cognitive, creative skills and get many opportunities to take turns and share things in the classroom. Children also become curious and want to know more about something if they see that their classroom buddies are working on something.

Children love to play and play often mirrors what is important in their lives. When asked about play children talk about having fun, being friends, choosing activities themselves. Play can be quiet or noisy, messy orderly, funny or serious, strenuous or effortless in the classroom. Children play for different reasons in the classroom. Sometimes they are exploring or learning new things. At other times they are consolidating existing learning or practising a skill. Play can also be a way of building or strengthening a relationship.

## II. OBJECTIVES

To know the about play based learning.

To know importances of play based learning.

To understand 6 unique ways to incorporate more play in the classroom.

### WHAT IS PLAY BASED LEARNING

Children are naturally motivated to play. A play based program builds on this motivation, using play as a context for learning. In this context, children can explore, experiment, discover and solve problems in imaginative and playful ways. A play based approach involves both child-initiated and teacher-supported learning. The teacher encourages children's learning and inquiry through interactions that aim to stretch their thinking to higher levels.

For example, while children are playing with blocks, a teacher can pose questions that encourage problem solving, prediction and hypothesising. The teacher can also bring the child's awareness towards mathematics, science and literacy concepts, allowing them to engage with such concepts through hands-on learning.

Play based learning was recommended by Caldwell Cook in the late nineteenth century. This method has been successfully employed in Kindergarten and Montessori schools.

### 6 UNIQUE WAYS TO INCORPORATE MORE PLAY IN THE CLASSROOM

Young children learn through play, as your students interact with one another, they are learning to solve problems while developing the skills they will need to grow and learn. Here are six unique ways to incorporate more play into the classroom—

Play games— use games to practice and review concepts. They don't have to be complicated or even competitive. Young students love-guessing games, eye spy, hide-and-seek type games, solving puzzles together.

Take play breaks— we know our students need breaks and recess is often too short. After a bit of hard learning, reward your students with a play break. Pull out your learning centers and let them have a few minutes to relax and re-energize for your next lesson.

Create parent Buy-In—parents love their children and want them to learn and so do you. If parents or administrations are giving you a hard time about play in the classroom, try to show them all the learning that is happening. Through your classroom blog you will often include a photograph of playful learning in action. You can explain exactly what the students are learning and how you are assessing their learning through play.

Make learning an adventure—instead of describing a new topic, have students use their imagination to visualize that they are right in the middle of what you are teaching. For example, when teaching children about ocean life, turn your classroom into an ocean. Display photos of animals and plants around the classroom and have your students pretend they are scuba diving and exploring these new things.

Use manipulatives while teaching—manipulatives don't just have to be used when you are teaching your students math concepts. Try using toy cars to practice blending sounds or letter tiles to teach children about new words.

Act it out—whether your students are telling you a story or you are teaching them a new concept, encourage them to act it out and move as they do so. Students love to be chosen to be actors and they will be fully engaged in learning.

### IMPORTANCES OF PLAY BASED LEARNING

There are many benefits of play based learning in the early years, including the development of intellectual skills, thinking and motivation. Play based learning is a concept that many early years educators adopt as part of their pedagogy

and practice. Research has explored the importance of play for a child's overall development and we know that play is closely associated with the development of intellectual skill, thinking and motivation.

Children may engage in play on their own and explore different materials. They may also play with each other and use materials to represent other objects. This type of play, known as symbolic play, holds great value in developing cognitive skills, imagination and social competence.

Here are six ways play based learning importance---

Encourages language skill--- engaging in active play from an early age encourages the development of language skills. During pre-school years, a child's vocabulary grows and develops as they play together with peers and interact with adults. Adults have the opportunity to support language development through play, they can do this by asking questions, encouraging conversation and introducing unfamiliar words. The context of play allows for this to happen in a natural way and learning is amplified as it is enjoyable and relevant to the child's interests.

Develops social skills--- during play time, children learn to work with others toward a shared goal. One child may lead play, children learn to be assertive, negotiate, cooperate and share in the classroom by the teacher. This collaborative skill is important in developing social skills and building friendship. Playing cooperative games and circle games brings joy as children share these social experiences with friends. It also plays an important pedagogical role of developing a sense of belonging to a community.

Purposeful play--- play is not an obstruction to academic learning, nor is it lazy teaching. Purposeful play experiences can be constructed to create deeper learning experiences that a child will remember and internalize. It is really purposeful play should be in classrooms, especially in a Kindergarten classroom. In children's brains, when they are playing, they are doing the deepest learning. We know that through Piaget, Vygotsky and all those good theorists who talk about the importance of play with young children.

Develops Cognitive, Critical Thinking & Motor skills--- critical thinking is the ability to analyse and sift through information in order to make sense of it and apply it in the context of the environment. This skill involves the part of the front part of the brain that manages attention, memory, control and flexibility. Playing with shapes, counting naptime mats out for each child or pages in a book, using illustrations in books to support comprehension-all are examples of the important learning this is happening during both free and guided play time. Physical play also helps develop important motor skills as well as helps your child student work through stress and crankiness. First, children develop large motor skills like running, throwing and pedaling. Then, fine motor skills are developed such as writing, colouring and buttoning.

Fosters Creativity and Imagination--- research has linked play to fostering creativity and imagination, valued traits that are vital in the modern world. Using imagination, children are able to find solutions to a variety of problems they encounter. Fostering imagination in its 'natural habitat' of play at an early age is fundamental to developing curiosity and raising a generation of creative problem-solvers. Play-based learning is widely seen as an essential tool for early years teaching and learning as it greatly benefits children in developing essential life skills.

Creates Confidence in Children--- one of the most important outcomes of play is the development of confidence in even the youngest child student in the classroom. Without confidence the ability to take risks and try new things is compromised. Using play to the every student grow active in the classroom. By the time children reach preschool age, they know they can still trust the adults in their lives, but they also have the confidence they need to take charge.

### III. CONCLUSION

Play needs to be brought back into the early childhood classrooms in some way. Play is vital to the academic growth of our young students. Play based learning capitalises on children's natural sense of inquiry and discovery through hand-on exploration of the world around them. Educators embed elements of teaching and learning within the play experiences that children are interested in and naturally drawn to and therefore more likely to say engaged with. Children need to develop a variety of skill sets to optimize their development. Play based learning also called 'child-centered learning' because the children guide their own learning with their curiosity and interests. Schools understand that play-based learning is an important part of balanced approach and that alongside more explicit teaching and instruction, it helps to keep every child productive and engaged.

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