



The Importance of Early Experiences: How playing IS school readiness.

Shared with you by Lisa Murphy, M.Ed.

Environments that encourage **play** are environments that are **preparing children** for kindergarten, future elementary school **academics** and a love of life long learning. This foundation then supports the house of higher learning. What happens when you build with no foundation? What happens if an area or two (or all) is weak or missing? What happens when there is no room for PLAY in our programs?

SEVEN THINGS WE MUST DO WITH CHILDREN EACH DAY:



CREATE



MOVE



SING



DISCUSS



OBSERVE

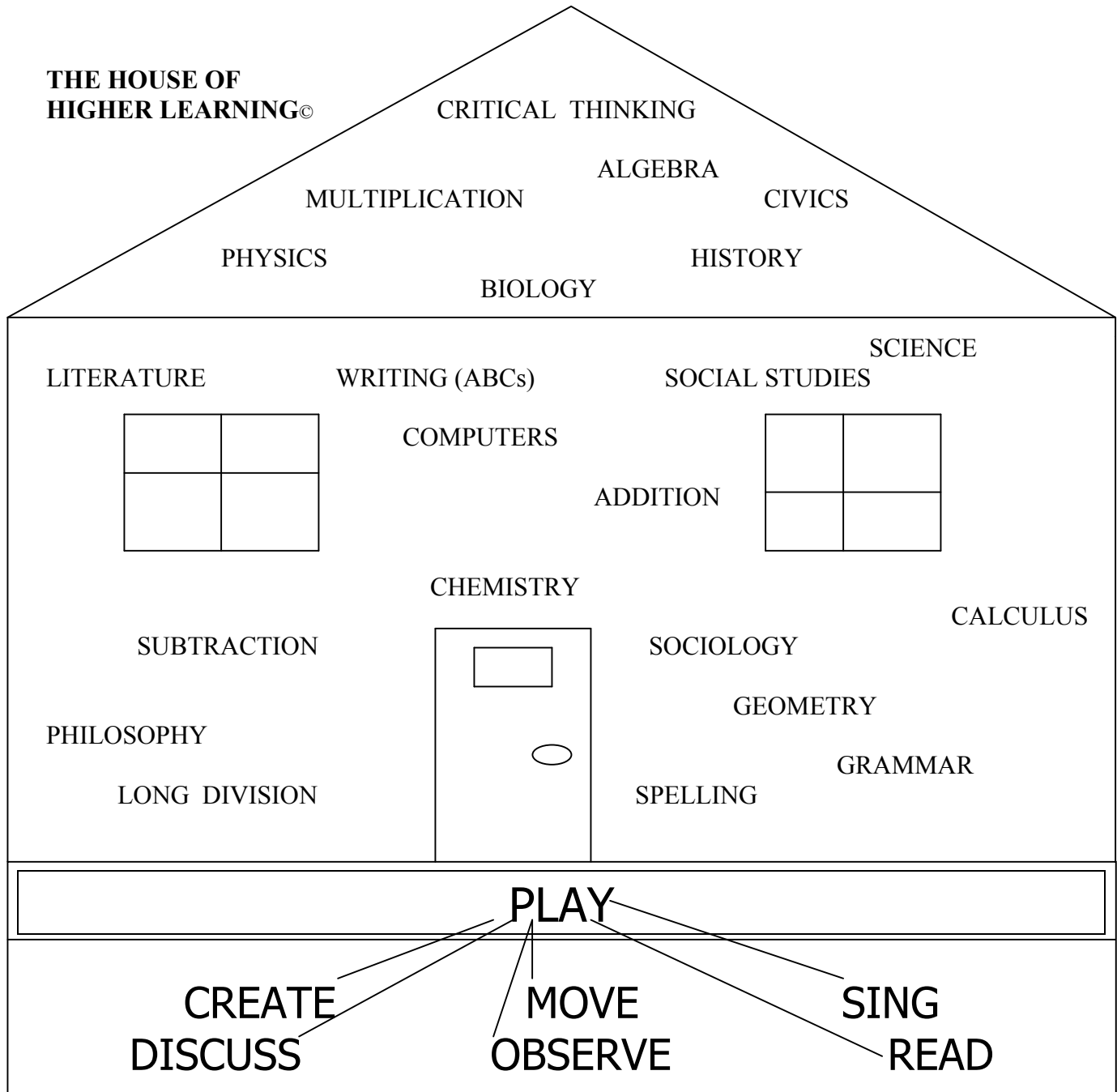


READ



PLAY

**THE HOUSE OF
HIGHER LEARNING®**

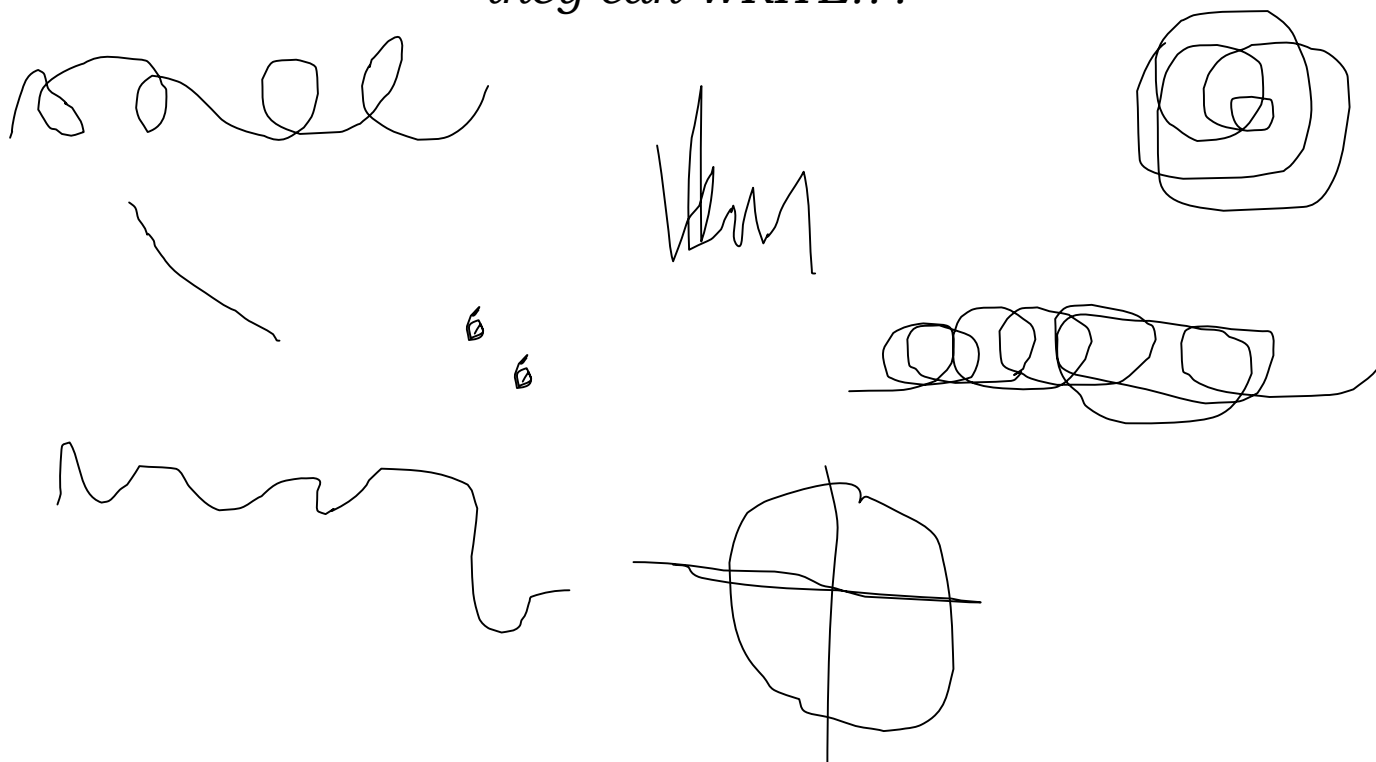


The house of higher learning is supported by a foundation of PLAY!

CREATE

Creating does NOT always = ART! Some children do not like to “do” art – their creativity comes out in many different ways... the dress up area, blocks, woodworking... are you making time for all these things?

Did you know there are 80 Stages of Scribbling before they can WRITE!??



Linking CREATE to Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP):

Physical Development: Letter reversal is because they have not yet learned that print is not flexible. Writing, drawing, cutting = creative expression that is not fine-tuned yet. Clay, playdough, puzzles, collage & legos all contribute to fine motor development

Cognitive Development: Make believe pretend play leads to self-regulation skills

Language/Literacy: Self expression, communication with others, oral language (dress up), and early writing = scribbles

Resources

You can “google” Rhoda Kellogg to get more information about her.

The Colors of Learning by Rosemary Althouse, Margaret Johnson & Sharon Mitchell

Also, any art activity/idea book by MaryAnn Kohl are excellent resources: *Scribble Cookies*, *Mudworks* and *Big Messy Art* are three of my favorites.



How to get free paper!

Call a local architect and ask for a donation of recycled **blueprints**.

Call your local newspaper or community paper and ask, “When is **end-roll** pick up day?” The end roll of newspaper paper is too small for the large machines but is still a lot of paper for your class!

Call a local printer and ask about **poster board or/and cardstock end-rolls**, again, like the newspaper rolls, it’s too small for the machines but lots of paper for you!

While on the phone with the printer, ask if they generate **scrap cardstock or poster board** from custom projects. If so, ask if you can haul that away too for them.

Every December we haunt the local office supply stores, stationery stores, Staples, Office Max and Office Depots for **desk calendars** that are about to expire.

Recycled newspaper is an excellent form of art paper! As grown ups we might want new clean crisp white paper but the children will paint and create on any surface... offer newspaper at the easels to vary the kind of paper used for art projects.

Know a photographer? They often use long sheets of bulletin board style **colored butcher paper** on photo shoots. The paper gets wrinkled and then they can’t use it again. But you can!

Brown **paper bags** from the grocery store.

MOVE

Children need to move in order to take in new information. The outside environment is more conducive to their active learning style. It is estimated that 40% of the elementary schools in the USA have eliminated recess. How do we make sure your school does not become one of them?

Remember the Learning Styles...

VISUAL (eyes)

AUDITORY (ears)

KINESTHETIC (body)

... and how preferences (including yours!) influence the environment!

Linking MOVE to DAP:

Physical Development is one of the domains within DAP. Children should spend at least a quarter of their day in motion! Learning is transmitted through the large muscles – from the hands to the head, not the other way around. The YARD is seen as an ideal environment to be developing large motor skills. The 3rd edition of NAEYC's DAP book specifically lists experiences that develop both FINE and LARGE motor muscles on pages 117-119.

A small list of resources:

Brain Gym by Paul and Gail Dennison www.braingym.org

Heather Gudmundson in Washington State offers an "Education in Motion" DVD (a great intro to Brain Gym movements) for only \$15. Order by emailing her at educate88@centurytel.net

Smart Moves: Why learning is not all in your head by Carla Hannaford

The Last Child in the Woods by Richard Louv

S'Cool Moves www.schoolmoves.com Debra Em Wilson

The Myth of the ADD Child by Thomas Armstrong

The Hand: How its use shapes the brain, language and human culture by Frank Wilson

Brain Rules by John Medina

SING

Bev Bos says songs are hooks to hang memories on...

Sing to the air! The only thing you will remember with word for word accuracy are the songs you learned when you were little... what songs are you teaching the children? What songs will they remember?

Linking SING to DAP:

Social & Emotional Development: Rituals, welcoming songs, routines, reflection of home culture

Cognitive Development: Memory and recall, patterns and sequence

Language/Literacy Development: Songs and chants, finger plays, clapping out names (syllables)

A short list of musical resources:

Vincent www.lighthouserecords.com

Ellen Allard www.ellenallard.com

Jim Gill www.jimgill.com

Bev Bos & Michael Leeman www.turnthepage.com

Hugh Hanley www.hughhanley.com

DISCUSS

*Communication skills are the KEY to school readiness!
Do the children know how to get their shovels back?
Social and emotional competence is more important than
ABCs and 123s! Many children can “do” lots of things –
but if they are lacking social skills it doesn’t matter a
hill o’beans if they can read, write, use a computer,
know their shapes and colors or whatever – they need
to be able to interact with others!*

Linking DISCUSS to DAP:

Social & Emotional Development: Positive social and emotional development provides an essential foundation for cognitive and academic competence. Social & Emotional Development must be seen as just as important as the other domains.

Social & Emotional Development: Friends/being with others and managing own emotions

Language/Literacy: Strengthening oral language and communication, offering new words

In 2000 a report was published entitled: *A Good Beginning: Sending America's Children to School With the Social and Emotional Competence They Need to Succeed*. On September 6, 2000 Ronald Kotulak, a writer for *The Chicago Tribune*, had this to say about it:

People Skills, not ABCs, Aid Kindergartners, Experts Say

For years, educators have been encouraging parents and child-care workers to teach children letters, numbers, and colors before sending them off to school.

But new research to be released this week suggests that being ready for school really means being friendly, attentive, and curious, and failing to instill these qualities sets up children for failure.

It sets out to establish new priorities for parents and to call for an overhaul of the federal programs designed to prepare children for school. Evidence continues to mount that despite these programs, children are increasingly showing up for the first day of kindergarten unprepared to learn.

The report finds that parents can improve a child's chances of success in kindergarten by fostering a strong relationship that enhances confidence, independence, curiosity, motivation, persistence, self-control, cooperation, empathy, and the ability to communicate.

The report recommends that child-care centers and government policies on early childhood development **refocus to promote emotional and social development.**

New brain research shows that how children learn to get along with others and control their feelings is greatly influenced by their earliest experiences, and that **social and emotional competence are more important for school success than learning the ABCs and 1-2-3s.**

“What the basic science is telling us is that simple counting, colors, and the alphabet are really not how kids get ready for school,” said Dr. Peter Jensen, and expert consultant for the report and director of Columbia University's Center for the Advancement of Children's Mental Health.

The report points out that children who do not begin kindergarten socially and emotionally competent are often not successful in the early years of school and **can be plagued by behavioral, emotional, academic, and social development problem that follow them into adulthood.**

SOME NOTES FROM LISA: NOTE 1) Copies of the full report used to be available from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), Bethesda, MD, give a call to see if they'll still send you one! Phone: (301) 443-4513. NOTE 2) NAEYC made a comment on it here > <http://www.naeyc.org/resources/research/aGoodBeginning> NOTE 3) ERIC has the whole document here > <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED445810.pdf> and, NOTE 4) I am a scientist and researcher at heart, therefore must admit that I am well aware of the “dated-ness” of this article. And while I realize I could provide more recent articles that make the same point, I appreciate the directness of Mr. Kotulak, and that is why I continue to use this particular resource.

OBSERVE

Use your senses: touch, taste, smell, see & hear.

Seriously, let's make our appreciation of the senses go beyond MY FIVE SENSES WEEK!

I challenge you to go back to your space and do an audit of how often the senses are organically incorporated into your daily routine.... What is overused? What is under represented? What's your preference?

Linking OBSERVE to DAP:

Sensation and perceptions are under the Physical Development domain of DAP

TOUCH: All the sensory activities (ooblick, playdough, flubber, etc.)

TASTE: Children have more taste buds than adults! She might not necessarily be a "picky" eater, but rather super aware!

SEE: Children often have trouble switching between close and distant, still developing binocular vision (eyes working together)

HEAR: Hear patterns, rhyming, letter sounds, conversations, etc.

Resource:

A Natural History of the Senses by Diane Ackerman

READ

Watch how easy this is: Read read read until you think your lips are going to fall off, and then, read one more.

Linking READ to DAP:

Language/Literacy: Kind of a no brainer! It has an entire domain dedicated to it!

A small list of resources:

Children's Play – the roots of reading Eds: Edward Zigler, Dorothy Singer & Sandra Bishop-Josef

Heavy Words Lightly Thrown – the reason behind the rhyme by Chris Roberts

Reading Magic by Mem Fox

A is for Ox by Barry Sanders

Misreading Masculinity – boys, literacy and popular culture by Thomas Newkirk

PLAY

Playing is not a separate seventh thing – but rather, the cement that is holding our foundation together.

When was the last time you played?

It's been said that we do not stop playing when we get old, but we get old because we stop playing.

Go Play!

A small list of resources:

Hothouse Kids by Alissa Quart

The Genius of Play by Sally Jenkinson

Play = Learning Eds: Dorothy Singer, Roberta Golinkoff, Kathy Hirsh-Pasek

Einstein Never Used Flashcards by Roberta Golinkoff, Kathy Hirsh-Pasek

The Power of Play by David Elkind

Perfect Madness by Judith Warner

All work and no play.... How educational reforms are harming our preschoolers Sharna Olfman, Ed.

Children at Play: An American History by Howard Chudacoff

Childhood Lost Edited by Sharna Olfman

To Play or Not to Play, is it really a question? Eds: Christine Ferguson & Ernest Dettore

Playing to Get Smart by Elizabeth Jones and Renatta Cooper



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Ms Ooey’s Musings and Mayhems Blog: <http://msooey.tumblr.com/>
This is the best way for you to get the articles I have shared with you FOR YOUR #BINDER

Carpet Blog: <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/thecarpetblog>
I take pics of all the crazy carpets I see in hotels! It’s a total brainless way for me to decompress.

Spicy Slides Blog: <http://www.tumblr.com/blog/spicyslides>
I take pics of spicy slides and other old metal playground equipment I come across while travelling.

YouTube Channel: OoeyGooleyLady
Video clips, soundbites, favorite stories: great for when you need a BOOSTER shot of inspiration!

eBooks: All of Lisa’s books are now available on your favorite eBook platforms. Questions? Call REDLEAF PRESS (800) 423-8309

Collaborations with Jeff Johnson/Explorations Early Learning

We do a (free!) PODCAST (child care bar and grill), we do WEBINARS, we sponsor an UNCon Conference, we share a collaborative website
<http://www.myplayvolution.com/>

AND SO MUCH MORE! The best way to stay UP TO DATE with all of our shared projects is to download the APP!

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