

Literacy and Numeracy through Block Play



Leaders of Early Learning

Wellbeing and Learning

Achievement and Progress

Networked Learning Organisation

Connected Learning

Engagement, Participation and Inclusion



House Keeping

- Restrooms



- Fire Safety



- Tea/Coffee



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Aims

- Explore the far reaching impact of block play on a child's development
- Dip into the history of block play
- Familiarise ourselves with the role of the adult in block play
- Explore the opportunities to promote **literacy** and **numeracy** through block play
- Explore the holistic opportunities within block play to develop the 4 Capacities, Meta Skills and life long learning.

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Stages of Block Play



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Learning Across the Curriculum



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Introduction to Block Play



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‘Rich block play does not just occur. It develops when the adult acts as a powerful catalyst working hard to enable it.’

(Bruce in Gura 1992:26)



Friedrich Fröbel



- Friedrich Froebel was the founder of Kindergarten Education.
- He believed in the value of play to shape behaviour and aid in children's intellectual and emotional growth.
- Froebel believed that even very young children could learn scientific, artistic and natural principles by playing with various physical objects, which he called “gifts”.

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Froebel's Gifts

The kindergarten was sourced with specially devised materials for children's play and learning which Froebel called '*gifts and occupations*'.

- *Soft crocheted balls on string*
- *Weaving materials sewing*
- *Drawing and painting*
- *Wooden pattern boards and sticks for construction*
- *Clay*
- *Sand*
- *Water*
- *Wooden blocks*



Froebelian principles





Froebelian principles

Unity and connectedness

Everything in the universe is connected. The more one's desire of truthfully, the deeper the understanding of oneself, others, nature and the wider world. Children are whole beings whose thoughts, feelings and actions are interconnected. Young children learn in a holistic way and learning should never be compartmentalised for everything links.

Creativity and the power of symbols

Creativity is about children representing their own ideas in their own way, supported by a nurturing environment and people. As children begin to use and make symbols they express their inner thoughts and ideas and make meaning. Over time, these reflections of everyday life, community and culture become more abstract and nuanced.



The central importance of play

Play is part of being human and helps children to realise their inner worlds of feelings, ideas and lived experiences taking them to new levels of thinking, feeling, imagining and creating and a resource for the future. Children have ownership of their play. Froebelian education values the contribution of adults offering freedom with guidance to enrich play as a learning context.

Engaging with nature

Experience and understanding of nature and our place in it, is an essential aspect of Froebelian practice. Through real life experiences children learn about the interrelationships of all living things. This helps them to think about the bigger questions of the environment, sustainability and climate change.

Autonomous learners

Each child is unique and what children can do rather than what they cannot, is the starting point for a child's learning. Children learn best by doing things for themselves and from becoming more owners of their own learning. Froebelian educators respect children for who they are and value them for their efforts. Helping children to reflect is a key feature of a Froebelian education.

Knowledgeable, nurturing educators

Early childhood educators who engage in their own learning and believe in principled and reflective practice are a key aspect of a Froebelian approach. Froebelian educators facilitate and guide rather than instruct. They provide rich real life experiences and observe children carefully, supporting and extending their interests through freedom with guidance.



The value of childhood in its own right

Childhood is not merely a preparation for the next stage in learning. Learning begins at birth and continues throughout life.

Relationships matter

The relationships of every child with themselves, their parents, carers, family and wider community are valued. Relationships are of central importance in a child's life.

froebel.org.uk

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Froebelian principles

Froebel's key principles



Freedom with guidance

Unity, connectedness and community

Engaging with nature

Learning through self-activity and
reflection

The central importance of play

Creativity and the power of symbols

Knowledgeable and nurturing
educators

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Glasgow
CITY COUNCIL

Caroline Pratt



- Developed teaching methods that focused on play, influenced by Froebel's kindergarten philosophy that suggested that children's play and activity were central to their individual growth and development.
- Her philosophy of teaching was based on the children's interests, and through play she allowed them to learn experimentally through their experiences in their immediate environments.
- Advocate of free play vs 'taught' curriculum
- Developed wooden unit blocks, based on the blocks used by Froebel.

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Caroline Pratt



Froebel (1782-1852) and Pratt (1867-1954) each therefore developed a theory which supported the importance of children learning through **active** engagement in **meaningful play**.

Bruce, T. (Eds) (2012)

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Realising the Ambition: Being Me

Section 9.2 p.102-103



Realising the Ambition: Being Me

9.2 Friedrich Froebel and Froebelian practice today

... a good framework transforms itself and is as relevant today as it was when it was first formed.

(Bruce, 2012: 6)

Friedrich Froebel was born in 1782 in the German village of Oberwiesbach in the Thuringian Forest. In 1840 he established the first kindergarten (garden for children) in Blankenburg. Through his work and writing, Froebel succeeded in changing the way we think about childhood and the education of young children. His ideas about learning through nature and the importance of play spread throughout the world and continue to have relevance today.

Much of what we now take for granted in early learning and childcare has its origins in Froebel's ideas. Outdoor play is an obvious example. Other examples include play with blocks, sand, water, clay, finger rhymes, painting, and drawing. Familiar practices, such as observation-led planning, and partnerships with parents and the wider community, can be traced back to Froebel's pioneering work.

Challenge questions

Reflect on your observations of children and what you do with the information you gather to plan future provocations/activities.

Think about how you record those 'aha moments'. Do you write down what you observe or what you will do as a result of what you observe?



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Modern Froebelians

Many practitioners today identify themselves as Froebelians, meaning that their practice is informed by values and principles first established by Froebel almost 200 hundred years ago. Modern Froebellians sometimes refer to their approach as 'principled practice' to indicate their strong belief that effective practice is grounded in values, and on a sound understanding of how young children learn.

Helen Tovey expresses this clearly when she writes:

- “A Froebelian approach is not a method. There is no formula or recipe to follow or set of equipment to purchase or prescribed curriculum to adhere to. Nor is it a series of ideas and activities which practitioners can dip into and out of. Rather it is a whole way of thinking about children and childhood, based on a set of values and principles.”

(Tovey, 2013)

Drawing on the approach Froebel himself used to develop his innovative theories and practice, modern Froebellians stress the importance of careful observation of children. This, together with reflective practice and strong professional learning, is how they are able to translate Froebel's original ideas into practice relevant to children and families today, and into the future.

A Froebelian approach is applicable wherever adults work with children and families. This means that it can be used by practitioners working in rural and urban settings, in outdoor settings, and by child-minders looking after children at home and even in the early stages of our primary schools.

Further reading <https://www.froebel.org.uk>



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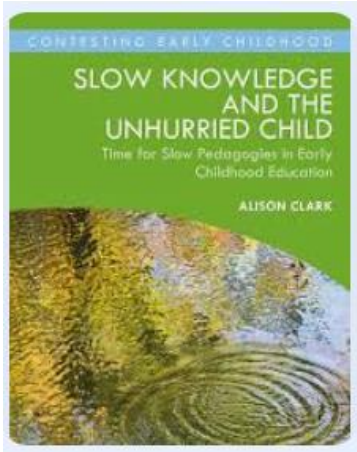
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Slow pedagogy...



<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1350293X.2025.2452547?mi=5t0s03>

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Play Time

Select as many blocks/resources as you wish from all of the resources available. You are only allowed one trip to collect resources.

Find a comfortable space and quietly explore your chosen items.

- Create what you like
- Be imaginative
- Don't be concerned with what others are doing

How did you feel...

- At the start;
- Whilst building;
- When you finished?

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The Blocks

- **Unit blocks**
 - solid hardwood
 - sustainable
 - built on the same basic standard of measurement. – ratio 1:2:4
- **Large hollow blocks:**
 - carry with two hands
 - can be stood on
 - can build life-sized structures
 - hollow in order to reduce their weight

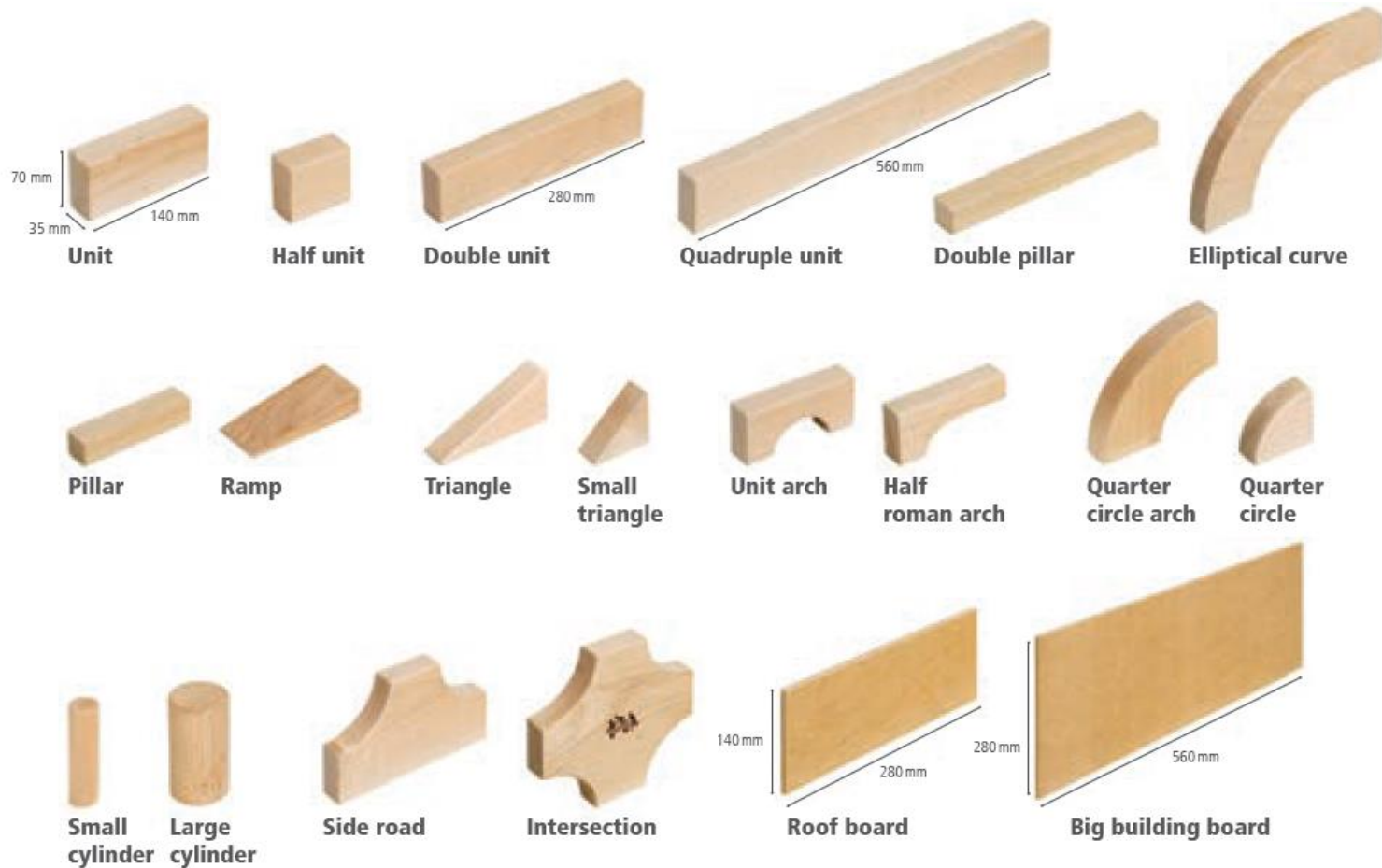


Environment, Space and Storage

- Organised
- Easily accessible, open access storage
- Adequate space
- Sufficient number and variety of blocks
- Different shapes can be seen
- Flooring



Block Names





Unit



Half unit



Double unit



Quadruple unit



Double pillar



Elliptical curve



Pillar



Ramp



Triangle



Small triangle



Unit arch



Half roman arch



Quarter circle arch



Quarter circle



Small cylinder



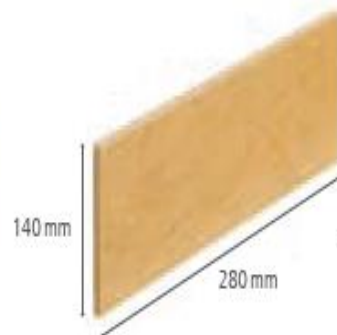
Large cylinder



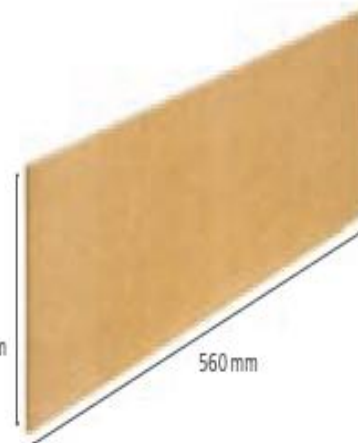
Side road



Intersection



Roof board



Big building board

Schematic Play



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Schematic Play

- Schemas are patterns of repetitive play.
- Schemas are often seen in block play.
- Observing schemas can help practitioners to support children and provide opportunities to extend and develop their play and learning.



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Stages of Block Play



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Stages of Block Play

Children's play with blocks will change over time as their understanding and experience deepens. Knowledge of these stages allows practitioners to support children's learning and provide what they need in order to take the next step.

Stages of block play include:

1. Carrying
2. Stacking
3. Bridging
4. Enclosures
5. Patterning
6. Building complex structures
7. Dramatic Play with complex structures



Stage 1 - Carrying

Children will:

- explore the blocks using their senses – they examine them closely, touch and taste them.
- hold one block in each hand and hit them together, exploring sound.
- carry the blocks from place to place.
- knock down structures built by others.

No actual building takes place within the carrying stage.



Stage 2 - Stacking

Children:

- Have an intrinsic need to build rows and towers repeatedly – they do this before moving on to build other structures.
- May haphazardly stack blocks until they fall.
- May line blocks up, pushing them into an even line.

When children have mastered building rows and towers they build them in multiples – this can resemble floors and walls.



Stage 3 - Bridging

Children:

- Begin bridging or roofing the space between two upright blocks
- Repeat bridging over and over again.
- Use this skill to build bridges on top of bridges.



Stage 4 - Enclosures

Children:

- Use blocks to enclose space.
- Need to practice using four block to create an enclosure in the shape of a square.
- Repeat creating enclosures over and over
- Begin to experiment with the size and shape of enclosures and connect one to the other.



Stage 5 - Patterning

Children:

- Use blocks to create patterns and symmetry when building
- May incorporate some enhancements, such as small world and loose parts.
- Generally do not name their buildings



Stage 6 -Building Complex Structures

Children:

- Use a larger number of blocks incorporating towers, rows, bridges, enclosures and patterns in the same structure.
- Name their structures whilst they are building or after



Stage – 7 Dramatic Play with Complex Structures

Children:

- Tell you what they are going to build before they start, showing they have a plan for their play
- Build familiar structures. The design features of the building represent the actual structure, for example, windows or a drawbridge.
- Create and add their own enhancements to the structure, recycled materials (loose parts) supporting the dramatic play and their interpretation of how the world works.



Role of the Adult



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Role of the Adult

- Knowing about blocks
- Free choice
- Connections
- Space
- Storage which shows the whole and the parts
- Time
- Valuing block play



Role of the Adult

Sensitive Interaction

- Being an active observer
- Listening
- Protecting children's block play
- Being a play partner
- Putting actions into words
- Questioning
- Supporting and extending

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Literacy Learning through Block Play



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Literacy Development

Block play helps to develop:

- Creativity and imagination
- Language and communication – vocabulary
- Storytelling and role play (story acting)
- Mark making - representation of own ideas and symbols

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Curiosity

- Inquire
- Observe
- Research

Problem Solving

- Identify
- Respond
- Present solutions

Open-Mindedness

- Listen
- Think differently
- Explore

Imagination

- Have ideas
- Invent

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Communication and Language

Communication

- Being in control and engaged in interactions
- Using symbols and understanding symbolic relationships
- Using more advanced language
- Use of props
- Sustained Shared Thinking

Vocabulary

- Sparkle words linked to focus book
- Names of the blocks
- Specialised words vocabulary linked to specific themes or interests e.g. astronaut

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Developing Children's Language

Modelling

- Showing an example
- Using 'think alouds'

First, I will put two unit blocks on top of one another here and here, and then I will put a unit block across the top to make a bridge, and then I can drive the car through the tunnel, I wonder if it will fit.

Scaffolding

- Plan your strategy or approach
- Reviewing actions or steps
- Break ideas or tasks down
- provide cues and prompts

Extension

- Providing suggestions
- Prompting children to explain their thinking
- Helping children to think through alternatives

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Developing Children's Language

Modelling

- Showing an example
- Using 'think alouds'

What do you need to do?

What have you tried so far?

Has it worked?

You might need to ... to get it to work.", "Looks like you need to to ...

Scaffolding

- Plan your strategy or approach
- Reviewing actions or steps
- Break ideas or tasks down
- provide cues and prompts

Extension

- Providing suggestions
- Prompting children to explain their thinking
- Helping children to think through alternatives

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Developing Children's Language

Modelling

- Showing an example
- Using 'think alouds'

Scaffolding

- Plan your strategy or approach
- Reviewing actions or steps
- Break ideas or tasks down
- provide cues and prompts

That would be one way, what's another way we could try?

Extension

- Providing suggestions
- Prompting children to explain their thinking
- Helping children to think through alternatives

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Supporting Sustained Shared Thinking

Refrain from closed questions and statements:

- “Nice building.”
- “What are you building?”

Use open-ended questions and model thinking aloud:

- “What would happen if...?”
- “Tell me about...”
- “What else could you try?”
- “How did you...?”

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Story Telling and Role Play

Block play
can:

Develop children's abstract thinking and use of imagination

Enable children to represent their ideas symbolically through arranging and manipulating blocks

Develop oral language and literacy learning as children take on roles and develop their own story narratives

Foster social interaction between children as they plan, negotiate and create together.

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Story Telling and Role Play

- Literacy enhancements
- Incorporating blocks into interactive shared story sessions
- Block provocations
- Adult role – active observer, prompting, guiding



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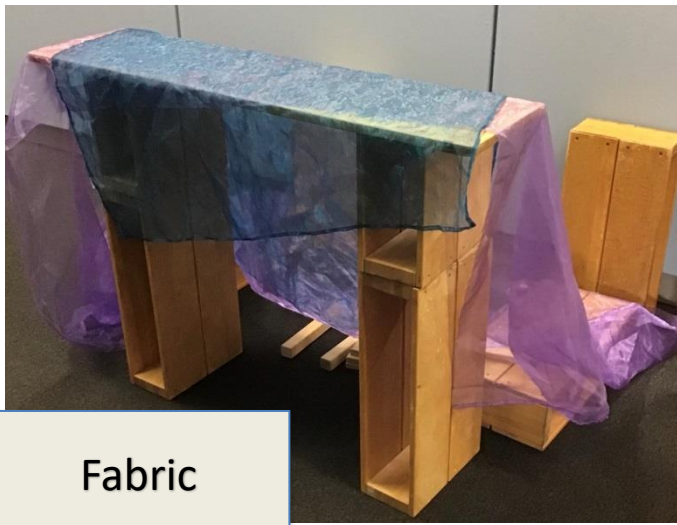
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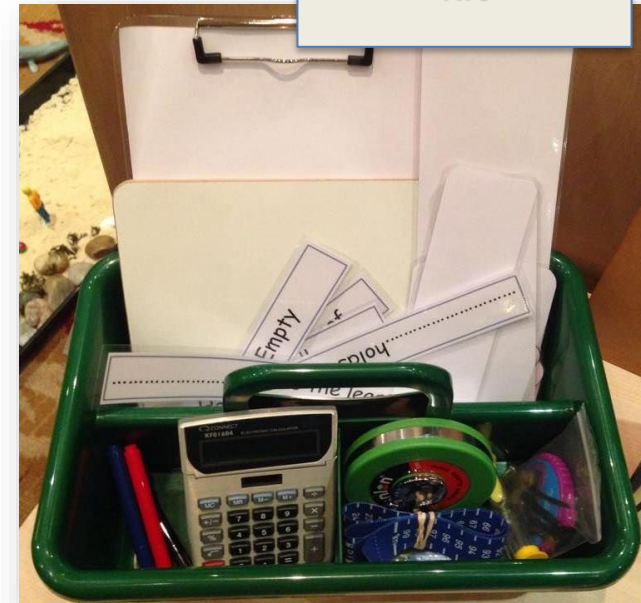
Fabric



Loose parts

Mark making kit

Small word/
story props



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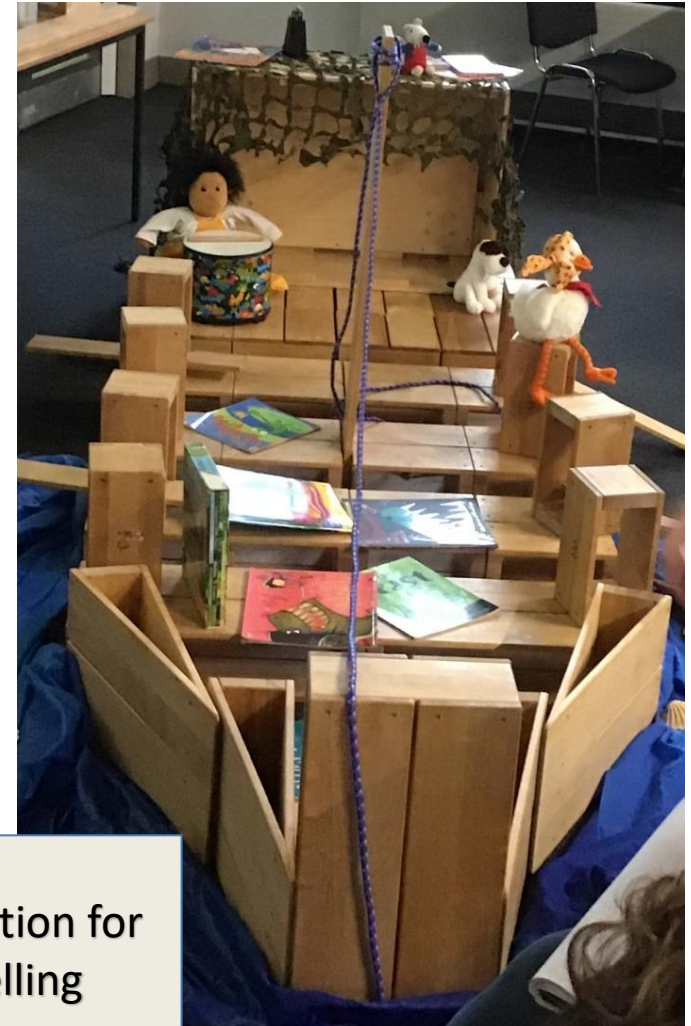




Build elements of setting
from the book



Setup provocation for
oral storytelling



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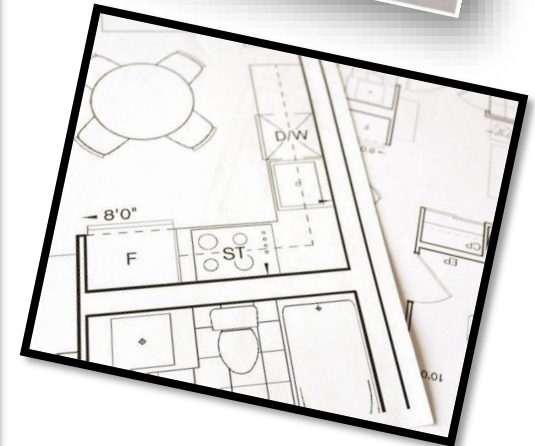
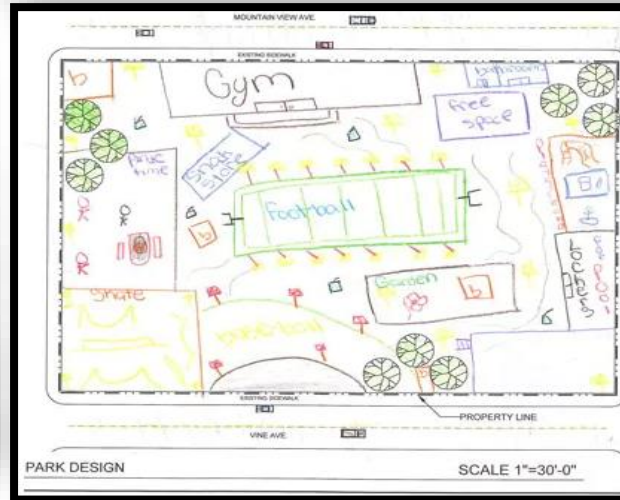
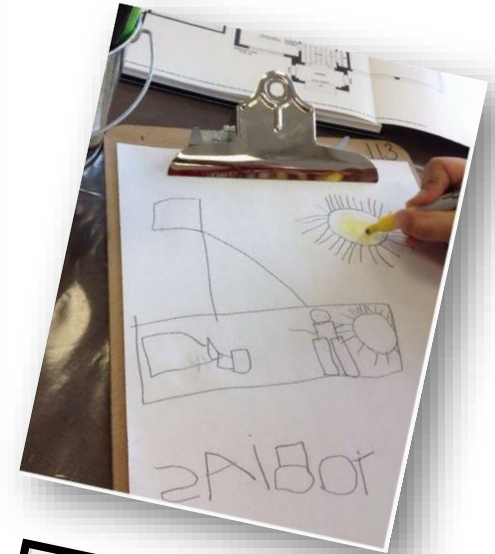
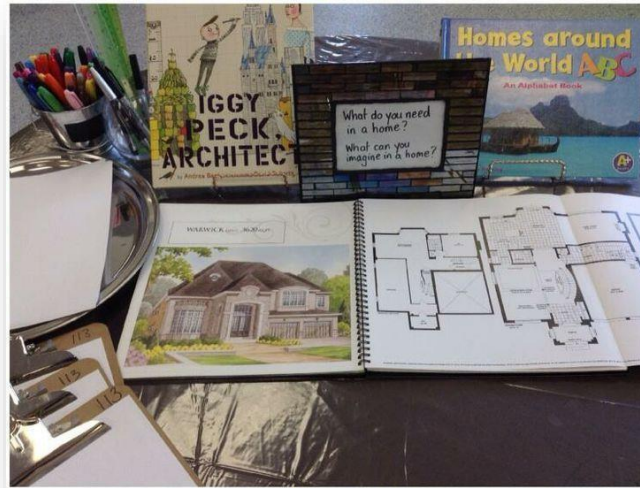
Mark making

Opportunities for mark making

- Planning building/construction
- Record constructions
- Making signs/labels/characters/features
- Making a story about their construction



Enhancements



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● was in the block play area. A friend said they wanted to make a fire engine. ● then looked through two of the books on display and said “it tells you how to do a fire engine.” He kept looking through the books until he found this picture. He then counted the circles and picked out the corresponding blocks to create his fire engine.

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Writing Stories



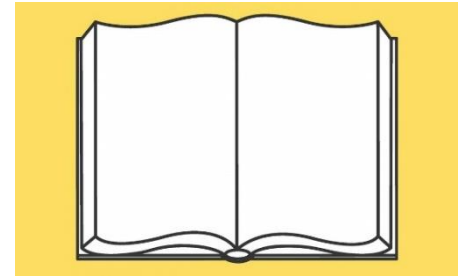
The Princess

*Once upon a time there
was a princess who
wanted a new castle, we
designed one with tall
towers and a look out at
the top.*

The End

Task

Telling Tales



- Select a traditional/familiar story or rhyme.
- Build a setting as a provocation.
- Use enhancements to retell and recreate the story or rhyme.
- Feedback to the group and show case your story.



Numeracy Learning through Block Play



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What the research says....

"A study that evaluated the block constructions of 4 year olds (in 1982) and compared them with their test scores in high school (in 1998) supported the hypothesis that a child's ability to create complex block constructions can predict mathematical ability."

Cited in Pamela C. Phelps, Ph.D., Laura L. Stannard, Ph.D. June 2012

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Why Unit Blocks?

Unit blocks are special because they:

- have a precise mathematical relationship to each other
- are open ended and offer infinite creative possibilities
- have a neutral, natural texture and colour which supports symbolic play
- have weight, which gives structures strength and stability
- do not require a system of joining therefore structures are only limited by the natural laws of gravity and other forces.



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Numeracy through the Stages Of Block Play.

- Weighing when **carrying**.
- Comparing and counting blocks when **stacking**.
- Measuring distance when **bridging**.
- Making judgements on shape and space when **enclosing**.
- Applying symmetry when **patterning** and building **complex structures**.
- Classifying and sorting when tidying up!

Remember:

- ❖ Problem Solving is happening throughout all block play.

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Mathematics



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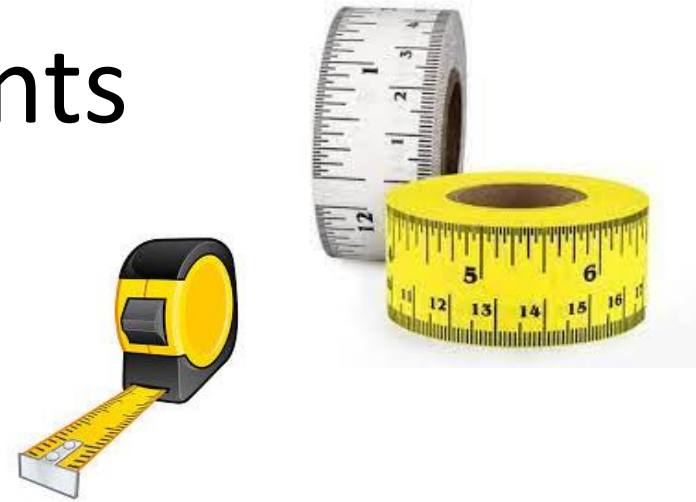
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Well done.

That's a nice
model.

Great building.



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Think Aloud Suggestions

Measure



I wonder
whose building has
the most blocks...

This tower has more
blocks. I wonder why
it's shorter...

How could we make
sure these towers
are the same
height?

I see that my block is
half the size of
yours...

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Think Aloud Suggestions

Shape and Pattern



I think I need a
block with a curved
edge...

I wonder how we can
continue this
pattern?

How would you
describe this shape?
Is it the same when
it's upside down?

I think this building is
the same on both
sides...

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Think Aloud Suggestions

Problem Solving



I wonder how we can stop the rain from getting in?

How will we make sure the dinosaurs don't escape?

Could we make a bridge to join the buildings

What could we change about the ramp to speed up / slow down the cars?

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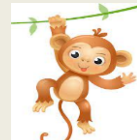
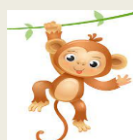
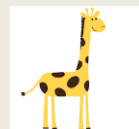
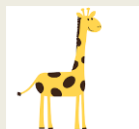
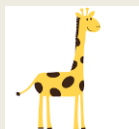
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Challenge

Let's build a home for:



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Task

Bridge the Gap



Create the longest self supporting single bridge span, you must be able to drive a car from ground level from one side to another.

Points System:

10 points for every metre spanned.

10 points for every 50cm from the ground at the highest point.

20 points if the car reaches the other side.

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“Much research has shown that young children’s spatial rather than numerical abilities predict their overall mathematical achievement”

(Young et al 2018)

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Learning Across the Curriculum: Meta-skills & 4 Capacities



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Learning in all areas

- Communication and Language Development
- Physical Development
- Personal, social and emotional development
- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design.

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Learning across the curriculum..

As an open-ended resource, block play lends itself to any curriculum based on holistic child development. Block play supports all areas of children's development. (Cuffaro 1995)

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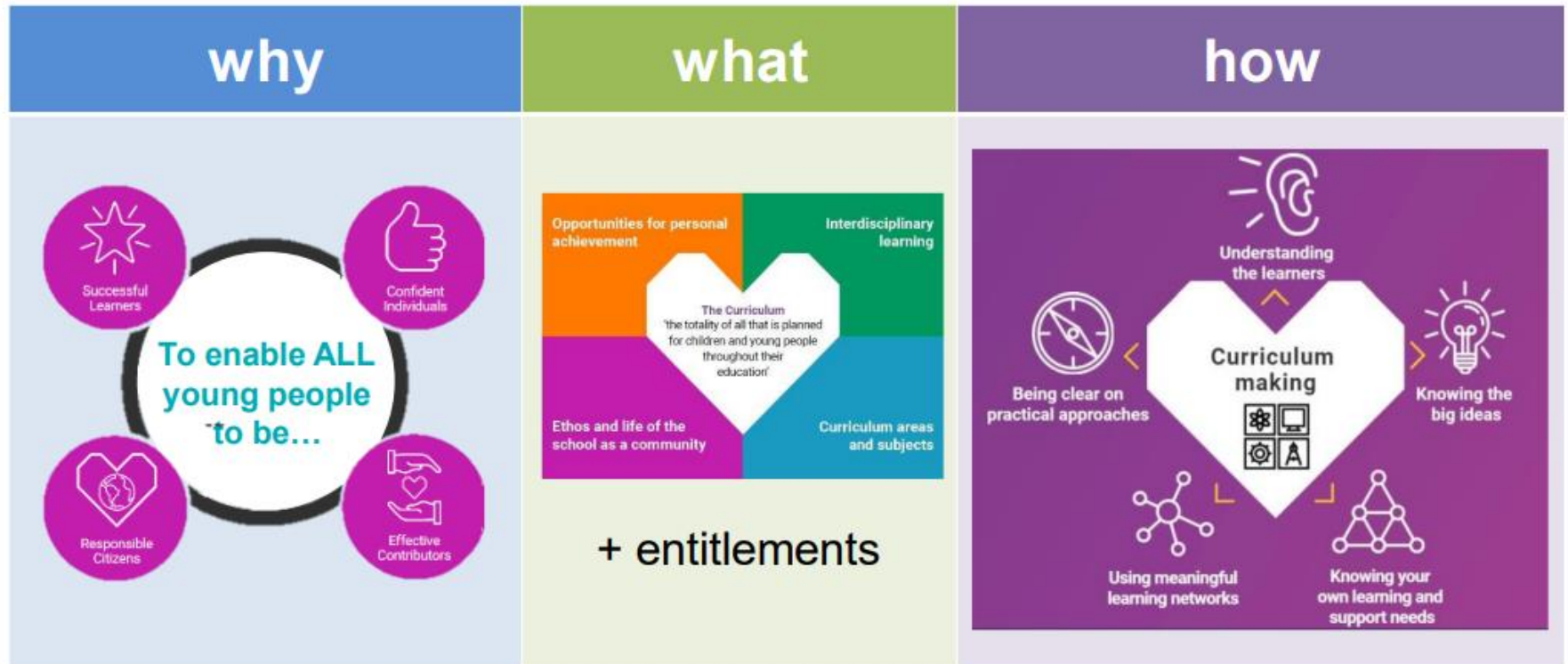
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Scotland's Curriculum Framework



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Meta-skills Progression Framework

Meta-skills are transferable, timeless, higher-order skills that create adaptive learners and promote success in whatever context the future brings. From birth, children use their meta-skills as they test and explore the world around them, and it is these meta-skills that act as a key to unlock the development of other transferable and technical skills. Therefore, it is important that as children and young people progress through their education, practitioners make meta-skills explicitly visible and create opportunities for learners to recognise, understand and explore their meta-skills development.

The Skills Development Scotland meta-skills progression framework has been developed in collaboration with partners and practitioners from across Scotland and aims to help with identifying and understanding what meta-skills look like in the classroom. The framework builds on the 'Skills 4.0 - A Skills Model to Drive Scotland's Future' paper and facilitates examples of meta-skills across Curriculum for Excellence levels, from early years through to senior phase.



Points to consider when using the meta-skills progression framework:

- the framework is not mandatory and is provided to support practitioners to reflect and develop their teaching practice in developing meta-skills in the classroom;

Characteristics of Effective Learning



LEARNING OUTCOMES	SKILLS
Shows curiosity, wondering and questioning - around objects, phenomena, events and people	
Shows an eagerness to explore and investigate - intrinsic motivation	
Remains engaged for sustained periods, maintaining focus, not easily distracted	
Shows a willingness to try new things, new experiences, new challenges, take risks, open to new ideas	
Shows a willingness to initiate - plan, explore, question etc.	
Shows resilience - copes with mistakes or when things go wrong/ tolerate ambiguity	
Shows perseverance - sticking with difficulty or challenge/ persistence	
Shows a belief that more effort/different approach will pay off, that skills can grow (growth mindset)	
Creative thinking skills - using their imagination	
Thinking of ideas that are new and meaningful to the child (original for the child)	
Ability to generate multiple ideas around same topic, playing with possibilities - what if? what else?	
Finding new ways to solve a problem, or do things	
Perceiving objects are things from their experience	
Taking on a role in their play, alone or in a group	
Ability to resolve and manage options - sets in the mind's eye	
Critical thinking skills - analysing and synthesising	
Can think clearly based on observational experience - gathering information - pays attention to detail	
Making links - use previous experience/ knowledge to inform their new learning/ transfer learning	
Developing ideas of grouping, patterns, comparison, sequencing and anomalies	
Able to identify problems	
Developing understanding of cause and effect	
Thinking about what is new and meaningful to the child (original for the child)	
Planning how to approach a task, solve a problem or reach a goal	
Testing ideas - choosing ways to do things/ trying things out - putting ideas into action	
Checking and reflecting how activity is going - improving by trial and error/ flexibility - adapting	
Showing flexibility - adapting, changing strategy	
Thinking back, reviewing, evaluating how well an approach worked/ thinking about next steps	
Communication and collaboration - Communicating their ideas to others/ confidence in own ideas	
Dialogue of ideas, listening to others, exchange of ideas, giving and receiving feedback	
Communicating a willingness to work collaboratively with others	

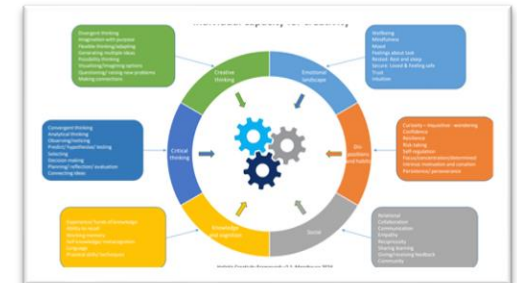
Learning Resource 8: Personal Learning and Achievement

curriculum for excellence



Realising the ambition: Being Me

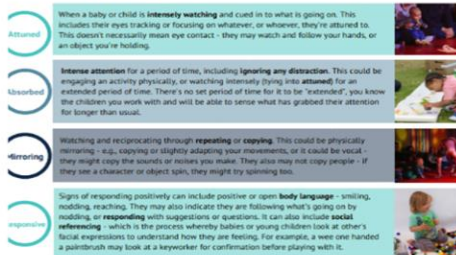
National practice guidance for early years in Scotland



James McTaggart-Ready-for-the-Next-Play-Step-keynote

STARCATCHERS ENGAGEMENT SIGNALS

These engagement signals were developed across with researchers from the University of Edinburgh, University of Exeter and the University of Strathclyde across our pilot and second phase of work with children aged 0-5. They were used to inform the different ways babies and young children engage in explorative play experiences in both our productions and workshop settings. We're sharing them here because we think they can be useful for your early years practice.



Supporting Creativity and Imagination in the Early Years

Second Edition

Bernadette Duffy



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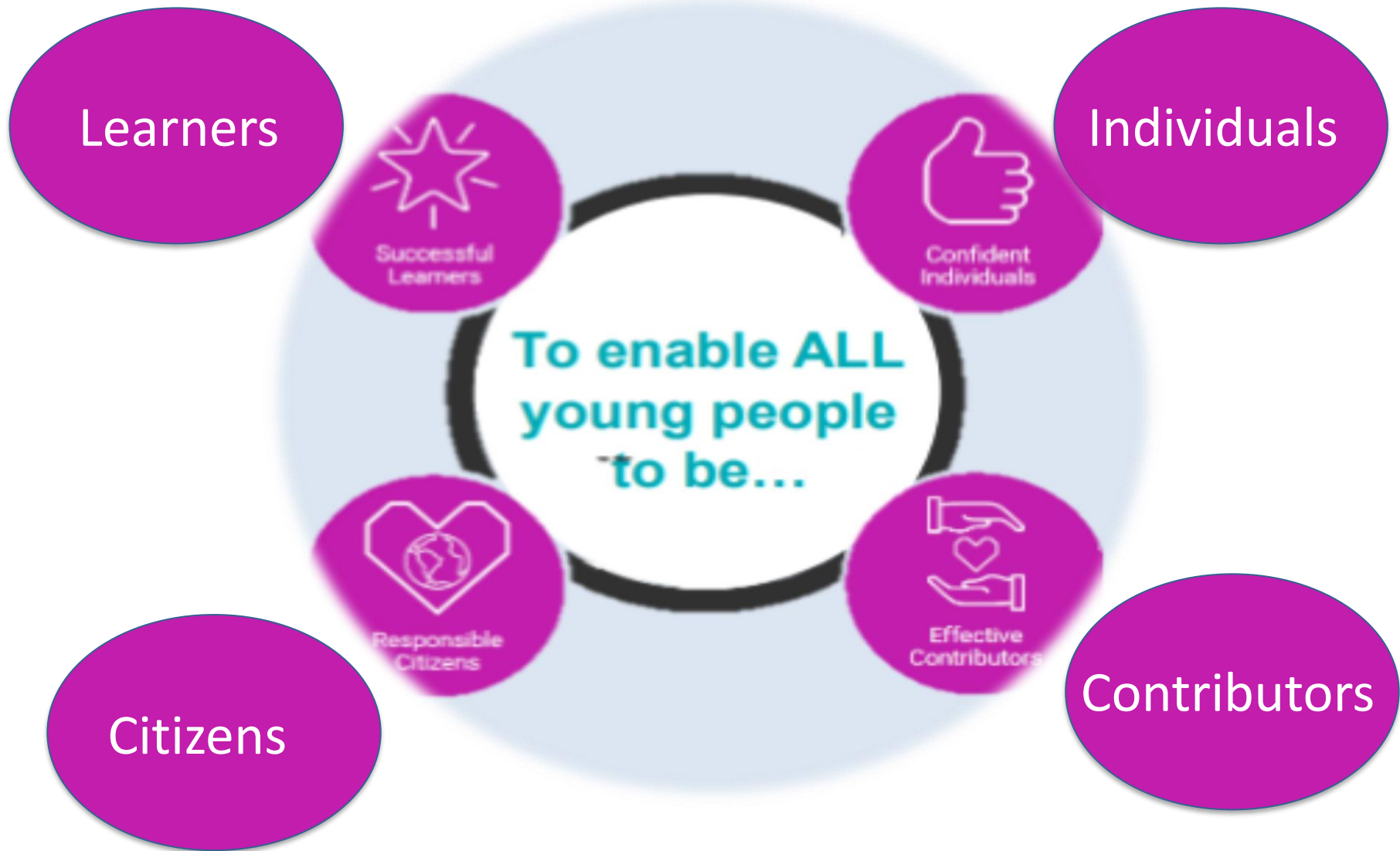
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Four Capacities Tracker

Responsible CITIZENS To be caring and respectful towards myself and others, be able to follow rules and work in groups I will...	Show kindness towards friends, adults and living things.		Look after resources.	Recognize that my actions can hurt others.	Accept responsibility for my actions when I make mistakes.		Talk about my ideas and listen to others.		Initiate play with others	Listen to others and swap ideas.	Join in with group discussions	Recognize that we have similarities and differences, but we are all unique.	
Successful LEARNERS To have enthusiasm and motivation to learn and help me reach my full potential I will	Use my senses to explore.	Choose where I play and learn.	Play on my own.	Play with others	Find new ways to do things through trial and error.	Plan a task to reach a goal	Adapt my strategies to reach a goal.	Think of new ideas in a range of contexts.	Use resources in original ways.	Use my Communication skills when playing.	Use my Literacy skills when playing.	Use my Numeracy skills when playing.	Use my Technology skills when playing.
Effective CONTRIBUTORS To be resilient, self-reliant and motivated I will...	Be willing to have a go at something new.		Persist with activity when challenges occur.		Focus on a chosen task/activity for a period of time.		Start conversations with adults.	Start conversations with peers	Show excitement and joy in the unexpected.	Take on a role in play- individually or in groups		Initiate my own tasks.	Show pride in my achievements
Confident INDIVIDUALS To be physically and emotionally secure with my own values and beliefs I will ...	Describe myself in positive terms.	Engage in open ended play.	Show curiosity in the world around me.	Bounce back after difficulties.	Seek challenges and be willing to take risks.		Show pride in my accomplishments.	Make choices and express my preferences	Express a range of emotions	Regulate a range of emotions	Expresses myself through actions such as mark making, role play, singing or dancing.		Reflect on my experiences

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Meta skills and Block Play

Self-management

Focusing



Integrity



Adapting



Initiative



Social intelligence

Communicating



Feeling



Collaborating



Leading



Innovation

Curiosity



Creativity



Sense-making



Critical thinking



"Whilst we cannot predict the future, we can prepare for a future that is increasingly unpredictable."



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Meta-skills

Self-management

Focusing

You can maintain interest and concentrate on a task for a period of time, and not be distracted.



Integrity

You are guided by your own principles and Values and are considered trustworthy, open and honest by others.



Adapting

You can respond confidently and constructively To new ideas and experiences and unexpected challenges.



Initiative

You are confident in your own abilities and judgement. You can take decisions and have responsibility for your own actions.



Social intelligence

Communicating

You have the ability to openly share information in the best way that helps everyone understand your thoughts and ideas.



Feeling

You can see things from other people's point of view and this helps you understand their feelings and motivations.



Collaborating

You are good at building and maintaining relationships with other people so everyone can work together to achieve shared goals.



Leading

By having a sense of direction and purpose, You can encourage and motivate others to work towards agreed tasks and goals.



Innovation

Curiosity

Being curious is the desire to learn or know something in order to increase your Understanding of an opportunity or problem.



Sense-making

You can determine the deeper meaning of what is being expressed and organise information into an understandable form which is easier to use.



Creativity

Using your imagination, you are able to think of new ways of addressing problems and this enables you to visualise solutions.



Critical thinking

You are able to process, analyse and evaluate information to solve complex problems and form an opinion after careful thought.



"As children and young people progress through their education, it is essential that practitioners nurture and develop their meta-skills so they can navigate a world which is increasingly complex and unpredictable."

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Meta-skills progression framework



Adapting

Adapting is the ability and interest to continue to enlarge knowledge, understanding and skills in order to remain adaptive and resilient as circumstances change.

Adapting can include the following:

- **Openness:** Being open to new ideas and approaches – having a growth mindset
- **Critical reflection:** The ability to critically reflect on new knowledge and experiences in order to gain a deeper understanding, embed and extend learning
- **Adaptability:** Flexibility when handling the unexpected, adapting to circumstances as they arise
- **Self-learning:** The ability to self educate without the guidance of others
- **Resilience:** The ability to respond positively and constructively to constantly evolving challenges and complexity



Learners show adapting at Early Level by:	Learners show adapting at First Level by:	Learners show adapting at Second Level by:	Learners show adapting at Third/Fourth Level by:	Learners show adapting in Senior Phase by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking lots of questions and being curious about the world around them • recognising simple problems and talking about solutions with others • being flexible and resilient when faced with novel or unexpected situations • learning to work and play with others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking and answering questions to deepen understanding and adapting how to play and learn • identifying and reflecting on problems and enjoying finding solutions • creatively thinking of solutions to a task and developing this through use of trial and error • adapting their behaviour and language to suit different situations and activities • willingly taking turns and sharing co-operatively with others when working on a group task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • posing interesting questions and constructively challenging ideas to adapt thinking and behaviour • identifying problems and researching different ways to understand and find solutions, including using online tools • understanding and responding to feedback when working with their peers • changing their way of working to fit with different activities and different groups • reaching agreements and beginning to manage disagreements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking questions, thinking laterally and adapting behaviour to suit a range of contexts • enjoying selecting texts or other relevant information regularly to inform thinking • navigating a range of challenges in order to develop a deeper understanding of how to apply skills • giving and responding to feedback from their peers, and being willing and able to reach agreement through compromise • critically evaluating and changing their approach when working in a group, taking increasing responsibility if necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thinking laterally, applying their understanding in a wide range of contexts, demonstrating initiative and discipline • evaluating their own progress and being able to adapt their approach to overcome unexpected challenges • treating others with respect and seeking effective ways to develop co-operation, including resolving conflict • working with peers to devise ways to evaluate and improve their performance • responding positively and influencing others when faced with unexpected change.

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Final thought...

‘Play is the highest level of child development. It is the spontaneous expression of thought and feeling – an expression which [their] inner life requires’.

(Froebel in Lilley 1967: 83)

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- **Blog:** Google Leaders of Early Learning
<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/gc/gccleadersofearlylearning/>

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Literacy and Numeracy through Block Play



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