

Responses to Questionnaire, Parent 4 – Parents and Teachers Understanding and Practices of Play and Learning

Questionnaire: Parents and teacher's understanding and practices of play and learning

1. What you understand by term the play for 3-4-year-old children?

For my 3-year-old, play means being extremely busy and having a distinct need to be occupied most of the time. It involves the developmental aspect of expressing his feelings –like when he needs to express frustration, or needs to share with me that he loves messy' play. Although he has moved from being dependent on me for play, to being much more independent, I find that he often pretend plays with an imaginary 'other' He loves his toys and can occupy himself with one thing for hours, but there also times he need various activities to satisfy him. He's engaging more in throwing, catching and kicking a ball, running, climbing, jumping, hopping and balancing on one foot.

2. How do you engage your child in play and learning ?

We learn through everyday activities like him helping me bake, or helping me hang up washing (where he does the pegging on a piece of cardboard to ready it for me). We set aside time for building with his wooden/Lego blocks, threading and even for gardening. Reading happens twice a day, once when it is his nap time in the afternoon, and the other time at bedtime. Some learning happens through HOMER, an app on his iPad – 15 min twice a week.

3. Do you consider play as learning ? Explain

Absolutely! While play has to be fun for the pre-schooler, I prefer it to be meaningful. Learning (playing) alongside me, or other members of our family, I find that my 3-year-old develops an understanding for how things work, the 'rules' of engagement. I see the cognitive and creative come together when he asks questions and begins to problem solve.

4. Do you think play is more important than learning ? Why ?

I think they work hand in glove. Especially if it is meaningful. It helps develop curiosity with confidence, knowledge with understanding.

5. Do you think learning is more important than play ? Why ?

Age appropriate learning through play can happen organically, thus making both aspects dependent on each other.

6. Do you prefer that your child plays and learns? Why?

I certainly see the benefits at his age. There are certain anatomical developments that need to happen in the play (like finger strengthening with play dough) to facilitate the learning (writing). Role playing helps teach order, understanding and consequence. I don't think 1 should replace the other, but I do feel that at this age, play needs to precede the isolated concept of learning.

7. Does your child like to play ? Why ?

He loves it!!! It helps him burn his energy, it he loves discovering new things and understanding how things work, but most of all I think he loves getting dirty☺

8. When you go shopping with your child , do you allow your child to choose his/her own toy? Why?

I believe strongly in having a choice in life. At his age though, he does need guidance, so I would often select 2 options, of which he can choose 1 from

9. How do you ensure that your child is happy/delighted with the learning activities ?

I try to make it interesting and include toys he loves most. Like cars to count out numbers, or recognise colours. This keeps him engaged.

10. Does learning take place inside or outside the house ?

Depending on the weather, activity type, it can happen either inside or outside

11. Describe how you set up the play learning environment for the child?

We have a dedicated space for outdoor play and depending on the activity, we set up for paint or for gardening.

More organic learning/play in the house usually just follows the order of the day – like the baking, etc where he will have a small section of the island to roll his scone dough. He also has a table indoors that he uses for play dough, or kinetic sand. The challenge isn't usually the setting up to play- it's the cleaning up afterwards 😊

12. From the pictures explain which picture best depicts learning ? Explain

If I had to choose just one (that's tough- because I feel most have a role to play) But it would have to be picture 4. There are other children to learn from in a guided environment, as well as skills development. At the same time, there is social interaction, the setting to understand how things work, and also teamwork

13. Do you consider certain play activities to be risky activities? Explain

Some can be – such as unsupervised playground activity. Children can be reckless, or over enthusiastic , sometimes overestimating their capacities, which can result in severe injuries.

