

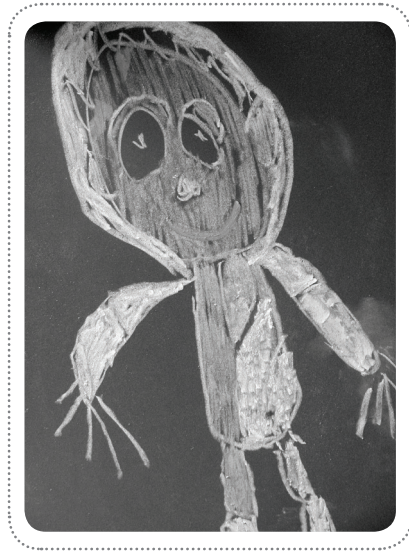
The importance of play and how to use games in the classroom

CREATIVE PLAY

In this type of play, children work with any media available – often mixing them to create a desired effect or object.

Why creative play is important:

This type of play allows children to express their feeling and ideas in a safe, non-threatening way.



What you can do:

Provide opportunities for creative expression. In the creative learning area, place paint, crayons, pencils, pastels, foil, cellophane (from sweet wrappers) and different sized and textured papers. Modelling clay can also be put out. Make sure to alternate the materials – if too many are put out at once, this could be overwhelming for some children and lead to boredom in others. Place puppets in the reading corner.

Musical instruments and taped music can also be placed in the creative learning area, but this can be quite noisy so make sure it fits in with the other activities you have planned and is not too disruptive. (It is probably best to keep your musical activities for the music-and-movement slot provided for in your daily planner. Set aside five minutes during these sessions for unguided experimentation.)

CONCLUSION

While the daily planner sets aside specific time for outdoor play and music-and-movement activities, the other activities mentioned here can all be incorporated into learners' work time. While you are working with a small group, the other learners will be moving about freely between the different learning areas you have set up. The activities you prepare and the materials you place in these areas should encourage all sorts of different play. In other words, 'play' should not just be a series of unstructured, random activities – nor should the activities you set up for work time be overly structured so that the element of play is lost.