

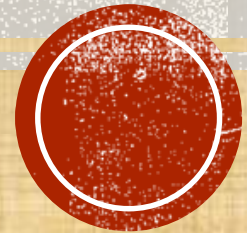
# **CHILDREN AS ACTIVE THINKERS: INTEGRATING LEARNING THROUGH PROJECTS AND PLAY**

## **PURPOSEFUL PLAY AGES BIRTH -5**

Presented by: **Dr. Debora B. Wisneski**, John T. Langan Professor of  
Early Childhood Education, University of Nebraska- Omaha

For: PD for All- Buffett Early Childhood Institute

March 2 and 4, 2017



- [This is ME: Article 31 and the Child's Right to Play](#)



# GOALS FOR TODAY

- To learn about the variety ways to play
- To learn how teachers can support learning through children's play
- To provide resources to support your professional inquiry into play



# What do we mean by “play”?



- Attunement play
- Object play
- Body Play and Movement
- Social Play
- Imaginative and Pretend Play
- Story-telling or Narrative Play
- Transformative- Integrative and Creative Play
- Games with Rules
- Constructive Play
- Outdoor/Nature Play
- Cultural Play



# ROLE OF TEACHERS IN PLAY

- Trust-in-Play (spontaneous play, free play)
- Facilitate Play (guided play)
- Learn & Teach through Play (teacher directed play)



Trust

Facilitate

Teach

Trawick-Smith, J. (2012). Teacher-child play interactions to achieve learning outcomes: Risks and opportunities. In T.C. Pianta's (ed.) *Handbook of early childhood education*. p. 259-277 NY: The Guilford Press.



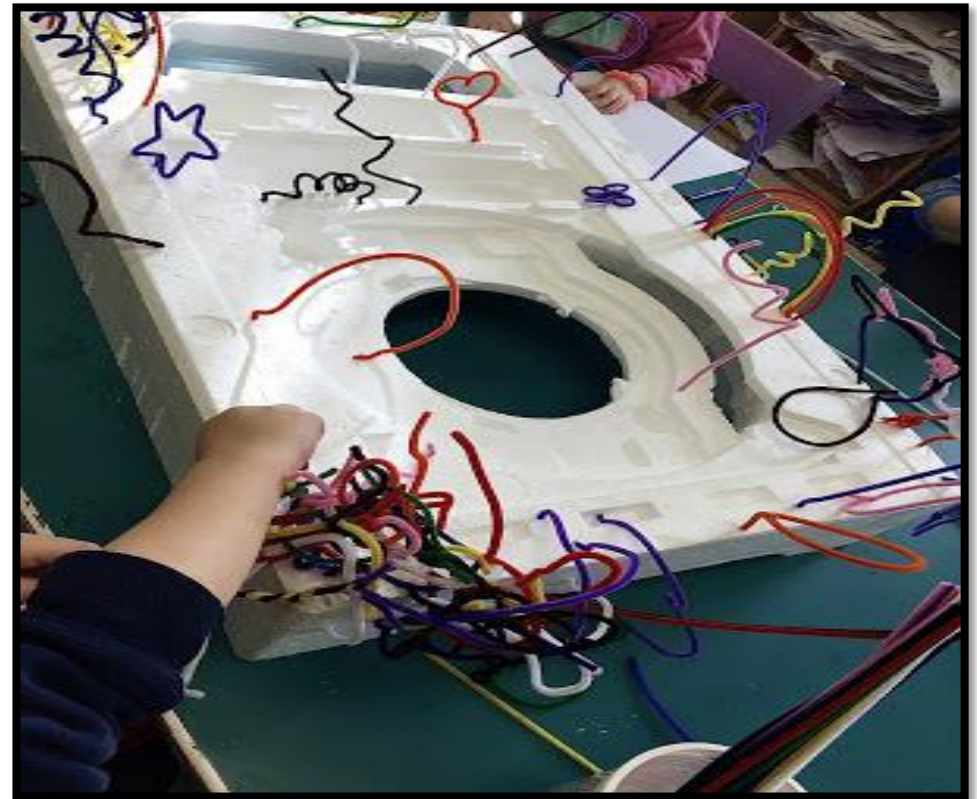
# OTHER ROLES FOR TEACHERS IN PLAY

- Co-player
- Planner/Stage Manager
- Director/Mediator
- Observer/Scribe
- Assessor
- Communicator
- Reflector & Co-Meaning maker (Wisneski)

Jones, E., & Reynolds, G. (1992). *The play's the thing: Teachers' roles in children's play*. Teachers College Press.



# TRUST IN PLAY: FREE PLAY



Functional or discovery play  
(exploring and using the senses)

# FACILITATE PLAY: CICADA INQUIRY



Is it alive or  
dead?



Symbolic play (using objects and  
language to represent ideas)



Games with rules (organizing  
games with rules and roles)  
“Cicada Patrol”

Hamlin, M., & Wisneski, D. B. (2012). Supporting the scientific thinking and inquiry of toddlers and preschoolers through play. *YC Young Children*, 67(3), 82.





# FACILITATING AND TEACHING: VIVIAN PALEY'S STORYTELLING AND STORYACTING

- 1) Write down children's stories as they tell them.
- 2) Set up a stage and audience area.
- 3) Choose the actors.
- 4) Read the story slowly as the actors act out the words.
- 5) Applause & discussion may follow.

Google: bostonpublicschools  
earlychildhood storytelling



# FATMA'S STORIES

## Fall

- A monkey.
- A doggie.
- A bunny.
- A kitty.
- A cow.
- That's all.

## Spring

### ▪ A Princess

- One time a boy is a prince. And he's walking in a park. Our princess was getting some food and the guys who is the prince saw the girl. And they had a pumpkin pie. Her Poppa got a pumpkin pie and a cake. One upon a time her Grandma and Grandpa got a milk and an egg and a peanut butter and cakes (because they are hungry.) And the prince was hungry, too. The princess loves to kiss on the cheek.  
That's it.



# THE “BEAUTY AND THE BEAST” OF PLAY



# REMEMBER:

- 1) Play = Learning
- 2) We have an important role in play.
- 3) We must be reflective and intentional.

## UNO & PLAY

<https://usplaycoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/PRTM-Play-Coalition-White-Paper.pdf>

Contact: [dwisneski@unomaha.edu](mailto:dwisneski@unomaha.edu)

