



Messing About and Loose Parts

Messing About

Messing About is a process in which educators have an opportunity to explore, try out and experience materials before they offer them to children. It is important for educators to *mess about* as this gives them an opportunity to explore materials so they are prepared for what is likely to happen. This will support educators in scaffolding children's learning.

Benefits of educators

Messing About

- Recognize and respect desire for children and adults to co-construct knowledge
- Materials, time and space to engage in sharing ideas with other educators
- Connect investigations that are observed, documented and analyzed
- Utilize resources
- Forum through which educators gain competency and feeling of authentic inquiry

Adapted from Hawkins Centers for learning

Loose Parts

Loose parts are objects that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, taken apart and put back together.

They are rich, open-ended real materials that evoke experimentation and engage children to construct and investigate and enable them to tinker and manipulate whilst playing.

Loose Parts promote a high level of creativity and choice, and develop children's imaginations.

In any environment, both the degree of inventiveness and creativity and the possibility of discovery are directly proportional to the number and kind of variables in it.

Benefits of Loose Parts

- Develops a high level of creativity and affords choice, thus developing children's imaginations
- Encourages open-ended play
- A more flexible environment encourages curiosity and inventiveness
- Promotes social, dramatic, constructive and symbolic play
- Promotes skills in problem solving, making choices, math and physical science
- Invokes experimentation and engagement
- Promotes self-discovery
- And much more

Sources - aneverydaystory.com, oxonplay.org, www.letthechildrenplay.net/, playgroupprofessionals.com, playbynature.org, Simon Nicholson (1971) 'How not to cheat children: The theory of Loose Parts'.