Enhancing the learning process through the use of play

Alison Tonkin

http://theawkwardstore.com/products/the-fork-poster
Aim of the session

• To promote the value of play based strategies for enhancing ‘effective learning’ for our students and staff

An overview of what we’re going to cover

• Defining play (if that is possible)
• Exploring why play is such an important part of the learning journey - throughout the lifespan
• What are we already doing?
• What could we do in the future?
Your starter for 10…

You have 3 minutes to complete the following activity – remember Mr Chips… ‘Say (or in this instance – write) what you see’
It’s all about relationships

Let’s play for five minutes
This is me
So what is ‘play’

‘An important problem associated with trying to provide evidence for the development of play is that it is a difficult concept to define… without a definition, we have been unable to isolate play as a causal factor and it has been argued that previous studies have failed to show that it is specifically play (rather than any other experience) that is influencing children’s development’ (Howard and King 2015)
Using something we already do

We all play – when we dream, imagine, create, experiment, take risks, try something new. Every time we have to step outside the box – try something different – to reach a student, to solve a problem, to come-up with a new policy, we are playing with ideas. We cannot predict what will happen but we are open and accepting of how things might unfold.
Some examples of what we already do

• Sophie – Business L2
  Kahoot, Snakes and Ladders (revision game)
  Word tennis and Naked Teaching Day (TES)

• Jenny – Business L1 and 2
  Blockbusters on the SmartBoard

• Louise – English
  Jigsaw activities, Matching games, role play
  Throw the gonk (one who catches it has to speak)

• Sally – Art and Media (creative processes)
  2nd year art and design students are currently using
  pre-existing objects (junk modelling) - one student is
  weaving with her shopping receipts
The Teddy Murder Mystery

Who done it?

Mint Sauce         Big Ted          Furby             Nicholas
Honey Bear      Monkey           Floppy           Mr Dog
Wol            Geoffrey

Using all the clues, can you identify your murderer from the suspects on this page
• Stephen – Science (last year in A level course)
Electro-magnetic induction – give magnets, coils and voltmeters and let students ‘play’ to explore ‘cause and effect’
Magnets, compasses and iron filings – ‘play’ with the magnets to explore magnetic fields
*Nuffield Approach* – ‘Here’s the equipment, you fiddle [play] with it and tell us what you find out then we’ll tell you the theory’
Difficulties include it is time consuming and can lack focus – may not met the objectives
‘Vocational programmes are now too prescriptive and do not give enough time to enable exploration and curiosity’
Making the abstract concrete (play as theatre)

Good for embedding maths and English
Exploring tricky concepts

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**Bikini Bottom Genes**

Name ____________________________

Scientists at Bikini Bottoms have been investigating the genetic makeup of the organisms in this community. Use the information provided and your knowledge of genetics to answer each question.

1. For each genotype below, indicate whether it is a heterozygous (Hh) OR homozygous (Hh).

   TT ___________ bb ___________ DD ___________ hh ___________ dd ___________

   Dd ___________ FF ___________ Tt ___________ bb ___________ BB ___________ FF ___________

   Which of the genotypes in #1 would be considered purebred?

   Which of the genotypes in #1 would be hybrids?

2. Determine the phenotype for each genotype using the information provided about SpongeBob.

   - Yellow body color is dominant to blue.
   - YY ___________ Yy ___________ yy ___________

   Square shape is dominant to round.

   Ss ___________ ss ___________

3. For each phenotype, give the genotypes that are possible for Patrick.

   - A tall head (T) is dominant to short (t).
   - Tall = ___________ short = ___________

   - Pink body color (P) is dominant to yellow (p).
   - Pink body color = ___________ Yellow body color = ___________

4. SpongeBob SquarePants recently met SpongeSquid Roundpants at a dance. SpongeBob is heterozygous for his square shape, but SpongeSquid is round. Create a Punnett square to show the possibilities that would result if SpongeBob and SpongeSquid had children. HINT: Read question #2!

   - List the possible genotypes and phenotypes for their children.

   - A. List the possible genotypes and phenotypes for their children.

   - B. What are the chances of a child with a square shape? __________ out of __________ or __________%

   - C. What are the chances of a child with a round shape? __________ out of __________ or __________%

5. Patrick met Patti at the dance. Both of them are heterozygous for their pink body color, which is dominant over a yellow body color. Create a Punnett square to show the possibilities that would result if Patrick and Patti had children. HINT: Read question #5!

   - List the possible genotypes and phenotypes for their children.

   - A. List the possible genotypes and phenotypes for their children.

   - B. What are the chances of a child with a pink body? __________ out of __________ or __________%

   - C. What are the chances of a child with a yellow body? __________ out of __________ or __________%

T. Trimpe 2003  http://thebiologynerd.com/
Playful artefacts

Don't worry; I'm not actually saying anything important. Up here. In the front of the room. Talking out loud. About your lesson.

someecards user card
Always up for a bit of theory

- Remember
  - Recognizing and recalling facts
- Understand
  - Understanding what the facts mean
- Apply
  - Applying the facts, rules, concepts, and ideas
- Analyze
  - Breaking down information into component parts
- Evaluate
  - Judging the value of information or ideas
- Create
  - Combining parts to make a new whole

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https://tips.uark.edu/using-blooms-taxonomy/
From the Early Years Foundation Stage

‘Practitioners teach children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development. They foster the characteristics of effective early learning’ (Early Education 2012)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Effective Learning</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, and Creating and Thinking</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>A Unique Child:</strong> observing how a child is learning</th>
<th><strong>Positive Relationships:</strong> what adults could do</th>
<th><strong>Enabling Environments:</strong> what adults could provide</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Playing and Exploring engagement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Finding out and exploring</td>
<td>Play with children. Encourage them to explore, and show your own interest in discovering new things.</td>
<td>Provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways.</td>
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<td>• Showing curiosity about objects, events and people</td>
<td>• Help children as needed to do what they are trying to do, without taking over or directing.</td>
<td>• Make sure resources are relevant to children's interests.</td>
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<td>• Using senses to explore the world around them</td>
<td>• Join in play sensitively, fitting in with children’s ideas.</td>
<td>• Arrange flexible indoor and outdoor space and resources where children can explore, build, move and role play.</td>
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<td>• Engaging in open-ended activity</td>
<td>• Model pretending an object is something else, and help develop roles and stories.</td>
<td>• Help children concentrate by limiting noise, and making spaces visually calm and orderly.</td>
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<td>• Showing particular interests</td>
<td>• Encourage children to try new activities and to judge risks for themselves. Be sure to support children's confidence with words and body language.</td>
<td>Plan first-hand experiences and challenges appropriate to the development of the children.</td>
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<td><strong>Being willing to ‘have a go’</strong></td>
<td>• Pay attention to how children engage in activities -- the challenges faced, the effort, thought, learning and enjoyment. Talk more about the process than products.</td>
<td>Ensure children have uninterrupted time to play and explore.</td>
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<td>• Initiating activities</td>
<td>• Talk about how you and the children get better at things through effort and practice, and what we all can learn when things go wrong.</td>
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<td>• Seeking challenge</td>
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<td>• Showing a ‘can do’ attitude</td>
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<td>• Taking a risk, engaging in new experiences, and learning by trial and error</td>
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Stanmore College
Play gives us permission to make mistakes

‘Play isn’t a waste of time. It delivers the same benefits for adults in higher education as it does for children… Risk is removed, so learners can practise the skills they need to develop, without worrying about failure’. (Walsh 2016)
Play for communication

Play is not an added extra but an integral tool in our communication toolkit. We sometimes call it creativity or lateral thinking or inventiveness.

The difference between play and other tools in our toolkit is that it is not just about what we think about something but encompasses what we do, and what we feel.
The importance of humour

‘Humour … has considerable merit in providing a means of access to otherwise inaccessible territory. As well, its power to transform the moment is too vital to be ignored’ (Dean 2003).
British humour

Playfulness in the form of banter between colleagues and between staff and patients is seen as a cultural necessity within the context of healthcare provision in the NHS (Payne 2002). Exemplified by an innovative scheme run by the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust, new nurses from overseas were offered ‘courses in colloquial English and lessons in what makes Britons laugh’ as part of their induction programme as many nurses failed to understand their patients ‘quaint and curious colloquialisms’ and did not understand their humor (Payne 2002).
Humour as a means of control

“One of the most popular stories on TES at the moment relates to how to manage low-level disruption. I believe that one of the least talked about aspects of classroom management is the use of humour. It's hugely underrated… [There is]…plenty of research that suggests humour is the most effective mode of social control. So, what’s to stop it being one of the most effective forms of classroom control?” (Rogers 2016)
However…

‘The criteria for recognising playfulness excludes behaviour in which the player is stressed or hurt by another. The unpleasant aspects of human ‘play’ can include teasing, bullying, shunning, as well as hurting and being hurt. Such behaviour lacks the positive, relaxed mood associated with play’ (Bateson 2014)
Promoting the use of personal hobbies

“I’ve always tried to bring my other hobbies and outside interests into the lecture theatre and research lab. For instance, I’m a huge fan of rock music, including – whisper it – heavy metal. There are deep and fundamental links between heavy metal and quantum physics” (Moriarty 2016)
The BIG UWL quiz
4 taxing rounds
1 minute for each round

Choose your team… 4 players per team
Choose your team name
Enjoy
Name the London landmarks

A
B
C
D
E
F
General knowledge

1. How much does a first class stamp cost for a standard letter posted inland in England?
2. When was the Battle of Hastings fought?
3. What does this chemical symbol Fe stand for?
4. Who’s theory includes ‘positive reinforcement’?
5. Who is the next Heir to the Throne in the UK?
6. Who won the FIFA World Cup in 2014?
Science (hurrah)

1. What crisps would you be eating if they were sodium chloride and acetic acid flavour?

2. What are the nerve cells that carry electrical messages called?

3. Where would you find cardiac muscle?

4. What do these figures relate to when linked to human bodily function – 120/80Hb

5. Roughly how long does it take for the Moon to complete one orbit around the Earth?

6. How much would you weight on the Moon?
Commercial airliners
1 point for naming the type of aeroplane

A

B

C
Schema formation

Please look very carefully at the pictures of the aeroplanes below – in each box, describe what you see in relation to the aeroplane. Literally, “say what you see” in each box.

Airbus A380

Boeing 747

Airbus A340

Great for embedding maths
Pokémon Go

Descriptive and inferential statistics

SHINY HUNT PART I: WILD ENCOUNTERS

Today we are releasing the resulting shiny rate for standard Wild Pokémon Encounters. Our researchers have engaged in nearly 600,000 potentially shiny encounters over the last 7 months and discovered 1,325 shiny Pokémon. Overall, this points to a shiny rate of roughly

1 in 450

for all species and special events. Importantly, within the 95% confidence interval the rate falls between 1 in 425 and 1 in 475 for Wild Encounters for all data collected. (Unfamiliar with confidence intervals? Give this a read!) This range leads us to deduce that roughly 1 in 450 may be a valuable approximation of the general shiny rate – though some uncertainty of the exact value remains.
## Social Learning Theory – Albert Bandura

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<th>Self-efficacy</th>
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<td>Our thinking, behaviour and the environment are constantly interacting and changing the way we think and feel. What, how and where we do things are linked together and each will affect the other.</td>
<td>How an individual personally perceives and responds to differing situations. It links observational learning, social experience and reciprocal determination to define the individual’s own beliefs as to how well they can manage and succeed on any given task.</td>
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(Allen and Gordon 2011)
The role of the environment

Don't you get it? If I make my classroom super cute and organized, then the rest of my year will go so smoothly!
The ultimate college play den
Acknowledgements

• Stanmore College (for letting me do loads of lovely play based ‘stuff’)
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• Nicola Conibear
• Claire Weldon
• Julia Whitaker
Thank you for ‘choosing’ to engage in this workshop

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(also happy to share my Po Go Trainer Code)
References


