

Provincial Outreach
Program for the Early Years

Play Today!

February 24, 2025

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Land Acknowledgement

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Play & Early Learning Workshop Series Outline

- Early Learning Framework – February 3, 2025
 - *The Early Learning Framework (ELF) offers practical guidance and pedagogical clarity for educators working with young children aged birth to eight in our province. This session will provide an overview of the ELF and offer guiding principles that can inform our literacy instruction with young children.*
- Play Today- February 24, 2025
 - *Play Today is a handbook that serves as a supporting document to the Early Learning Framework(ELF). This session will review the importance of play in all aspects of child development, with practical exemplars of how literacy can be supported in early learning environments.*
- Learning in the Primary Years- March 3, 2025
 - *Learning in the Primary Years is a companion document specifically for K-3 teachers offering pedagogical foundations for learning alongside relational teaching practices. This session will highlight the importance of pedagogical choices and how these dynamic decisions influence the ways in which children experience curricular learning along a continuum of play, with a focus on literacy instruction.*

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The Early Learning Framework principles are:

- Children are strong, capable in their uniqueness, and full of potential.
- Educators are researchers and collaborators.
- Early years spaces are inclusive.
- People build connection and reconnection to land, culture, community and place.
- Environments are integral to well-being and learning.
- Play is integral to well-being and learning.
- Relationships are the context for well-being and learning.
- Learning is holistic.


(Ministry of Education, 2019)



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Section One: Core Competencies



- Core competencies are a set of intellectual, personal, social, and emotional proficiencies required to engage with deep and lifelong learning
- Core competencies are the 'doing' part of our KNOW DO UNDERSTAND curriculum framework
- Students self-assess their own growth in the core competencies

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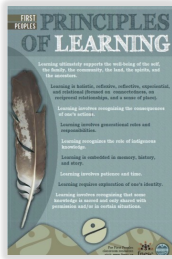
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Section One: The First Peoples' Principles of Learning (FPPOL)

The principles are:

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflective, reflexive, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.
- Learning recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge.
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.
- Learning involves patience and time.
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.
- Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission in certain situations.


(First Nations Education Steering Committee, 2012)



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Section One: Inclusion



1. Access
2. Participation
3. Support

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Section Two: The Play-Learn Connection



- Our own memories of childhood play influence the decisions we make for children in our care
- Early relationships and experiences shape how the brain develops
- Early relationships influence emerging social competence, emotional well-being, cognitive skills, language and physical development

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Section Two: Calm, Alert & Focused



- SEL competence is associated with emotional competence, academic success, health and well-being
- SEL *is not about* compliance or social behavior expectations
- SEL *is about* developing an internal motivation for adapting to demands and challenges

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Section Two: The Importance of Play



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Section Two: Functional Play



Functional play
Functional play is an exploratory type of play that begins when children are infants. Children experiment with materials and learn how things go together. They are learning about the physical characteristics of objects. Children explore and examine the functions and properties of objects.

By exploring objects and materials, children are discovering how they work. Functional play emerges in infancy and continues throughout childhood when there are new objects to explore. When the environment offers materials and objects that are interesting and challenging, children's curiosity increases, and they are motivated to explore.


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Section Two: Constructive Play

Constructive Play
Constructive play involves building structures or other creations with various materials such as blocks, recycled large or small cardboard boxes, or tubes. The complexity of constructive play is related to the availability of materials that stimulate creativity and access to the tools with which to execute ideas. In constructive play, children can transform open-ended materials such as planks, pipes, water, sand, netting, tarpaulins, barrels, large plastic water containers, and plastic milk crates.



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Section Two: Pretend Play

Pretend or Dramatic Play

Socio-dramatic play contributes to children's literacy and numeracy acquisition, problem-solving, and social skills. Children set tasks and goals through a narrative structure and increasingly complex language. The use of narrative and oral language are linked to later reading comprehension. Socio-dramatic play deeply involves children as they try out a variety of roles and scenarios that require joint planning, perspective-taking, and mental representation. It helps expand children's understanding that others have their own beliefs, desires, and intentions. Dramatic play is often influenced by popular culture as children incorporate cultural practices and ideas into their play.



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Section Two: Games with Rules

Games with Rules

In play that involves a game with specified rules, children must understand and agree to the rules for the play to be successful. Younger children require simpler rules. Older children often enjoy the challenge of more complex rules. Games with rules help children concentrate, understand limits, and manage their behavior to conform to the rules. Two major types of games with rules are table games and physical or movement games.




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Section Two: Physically Active Play

- Benefits all measures of wellness across childhood development
- Children who require support shifting attention, impulse control, and planning ahead benefit greatly from active play
- Essential for developing fundamental movement skills, fine motor, and gross motor skills
- Declining in childhood across Canada, important to protect time and space for physical activity everyday in our learning environments



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 Section Two: Outdoor Play




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 Section Two: Risky Play

- Heights
- Speed
- Tools
- Dangerous elements
- Rough & tumble
- Play out of sight
- Impact
- Vicarious
- Construction
- Breaking rules



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 Section Two: Risky Play




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Section Three: Pedagogical Strategies for Play-based Learning

Pedagogical Strategies for Play-Based Learning

Child-Directed		Educator-Guided		Educator-Directed
Free Play Observe & reflect Facilitate time, space & things	Inquiry Play Extend child-initiated ideas & explorations through questions, provocations, investigations	Collaborative Play Use opportunities to enter children's play & incorporate targeted skills into their play	Playful Learning Focus on targeted skills in learning experiences that can incorporate children's play narrative	Learning Games Prescribed activities—focused skills—usually literacy & numeracy skills

Adapted from Pyle and Daniels, 2017

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Section Three: Free Play



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Section Three: Inquiry Play



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 Section Three: Collaborative Play



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 Section Three: Playful Learning



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 Section Three: Games with Rules



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 Review

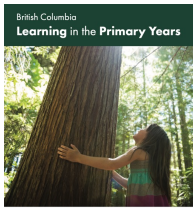


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 Next Session March 3, 2025




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Thank you from the POPEY team!

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