

# Facilitator's Guide

for

## Learning Module:

# Play-Based Learning in a Culture of Inquiry

# Play-based learning in a culture of inquiry

## Overview:

This learning module dispels misconceptions about play-based learning and stresses educators' critical role in children's play. The module offers suggestions on how to establish an inquiry-based kindergarten program to create learning opportunities that best extend learning and optimize student interest.

**Duration of the professional learning opportunity:** 60 minutes

**Audience:** Educators

## Materials:

- projector and computer with internet access and functioning speakers
- screen and extension cord
- appendixes A, B and C
- chart paper and markers

## Preparation:

- Before the professional learning opportunity, send a notice to all participants to either bring hard copies or a device to access online *The Kindergarten Program, 2016*.
- Request participants read pages 18-28 of *The Kindergarten Program, 2016* re Play-Based Learning in a Culture of Inquiry.
- Photocopy appendixes.
- On the day of the professional learning opportunity, arrange the venue so the participants are sitting in at least four groups.



## Purpose:

The goal of this professional learning opportunity is to deepen educators' understanding of play-based learning in a culture of inquiry as reflected in *The Kindergarten Program, 2016*.

## Objectives:

Educators will:

- Reflect on their role and the child's role when engaging in play-based learning in a culture of inquiry and
- Offer materials and learning opportunities that best extend learning while optimizing children's interests.

## Procedure:

### Welcome

The facilitator welcomes the group and gives an overview of the purpose and objectives of the professional learning opportunity explaining that the content involves a learning module; work with various documents; and individual, small group and large group activities.

### Introduction

The facilitator invites the group to view the photo of students engaged in play-based learning in slide 1.

Questions to engage the group:

What learning do you think is happening in the play shown in the slide?

In what ways is their play nourishing their development?

The facilitator brainstorms with the whole group to come up with a definition of play. The participants' responses can be written on chart paper and added to as the professional learning opportunity goes on.

## Part I – The partners involved in education

**Please Note: Part I has slides that are common to all seven learning modules. If your participants have already attended some of the learning module professional learning opportunities, this section can be used as a review only section.**

### *Pre-viewing activity (individual)*

To give context to this professional learning opportunity, the facilitator begins with the partners that are involved a child's learning.

Each participant is asked to complete appendix A as a warm-up activity. Before taking up the activity, begin the slide deck.

### **View**

Slides 3-5. The facilitator can elaborate on the slides' message using the slide notes included.

### **Post-viewing activity (whole group)**

Discuss characteristics of the partners in education: educators, parents and children.

Questions: Where do educators, parents and children intersect?

How is our view of assessment linked to our view of children?

Extension: View slide 6 that introduces “environment” as one of the partners. Discuss view of the importance of environment.

Discuss relationships between families, educators and environments (degree of importance, significance, positive and negative impacts).

Expand on relationships by viewing and discussing slide 7.



## **Part II – What’s new for educators**

### **Pre-viewing activity (individual or pair sharing)**

With the goal of assessing knowledge and queries of the participants, and to validate their concerns, the facilitator asks the participants to complete appendix B (K-W-L, slide 9).

### **View**

Slides 10-15: re principles of play-based learning and common misconceptions.

End with slide 16 and leave up for viewing for the post-viewing activity.

### **Post-viewing activity (small group)**

The facilitator invites the participants to share in their groups at least one learning opportunity they feel is happening in their context from each of the three sections mentioned in the slide – What Children Do, What Educators Do, What Children and Educators Do to Co-construct Learning. (Diagram is on page 25 of *The Kindergarten Program, 2016.*)

Ask the participants to help each other examine the learning opportunity examples to see whether they incorporate the principles of play-based learning. Could these learning opportunities be enacted more fully within a play-based context? How?

Questions: What uncertainties may parents have about play in the classroom?

### **Part III – Preparing for a play-based environment**

#### ***Pre-viewing activity (small group)***

The facilitator invites each table group to talk about how they have set up their particular classrooms. Participants can describe how different areas are divided up or pick one area and describe the materials of that area.

#### ***View***

Slides 17: a short video of “Co-constructing Learning.”

#### ***Post-viewing activity (small group)***

The facilitator asks the participants in the group to share their reflections about how the educator in the video co-constructed the learning.

Discuss how the:

- educator promoted deep thinking and honoured their students’ voices and
- children responded to materials and learning opportunities in their environment.

Questions: How can I create a play-based environment that honours my children’s curiosity?

How can we become co-constructors of this environment?

What role does knowledge of the curriculum play in the educator’s inquiry stance?

Extension: Ask yourself if anything needs to be removed or replaced to promote deep thinking and learning? Discuss with your group.

### **Part IV – How to create a play-based environment**

#### ***Pre-viewing activity (small group)***

With the goal of consolidating some of the learning about play-based learning so far in the professional learning opportunity, the facilitator gives participants time to reflect and complete appendix C (Reflection on the four Rs – repeating, re-thinking, removing, replacing).

## **View**

Slide 18: the marble run inquiry.

### **Post-viewing activity (small group presenting to whole group)**

The facilitator asks the participants to describe what they see in the slide.

Questions: What is the value of play?

How does inquiry play a role in learning?

What do you notice about the children's learning?

What thinking is evident?

How can pedagogical documentation inform our learning about learning?

Extension: View slide 19. How might you respond to some of the questions on the slide?

The facilitator gives the groups time to prepare a short role-play presentation. Participants role play a conversation between parent(s) and educators. The parents' wonderings from the slide can be used or the participants can write their own scripts. The role play will be presented to the whole group with the intention of recreating a scene where:

- parents have an opportunity to build understandings about current pedagogies,
- parent questions are leveraged to build relationships and
- parents are given opportunities to participate and engage in their child's learning.

## **Wrap-Up**

The facilitator presents slide 20 and encourages a group discussion about how participants' understanding of play-based learning in a culture of inquiry has deepened.

Time can be given for further reflection and discussion of the K-W-L appendix B and the four Rs appendix C on slide 21.

Opportunities for Further Learning slide 22.

Participants can consider how they could facilitate further conversation through Twitter, board chat room and Teach Ontario.

## List of resources

### Play-based learning in a culture of inquiry

[CMEC Statement on Play-Based Learning](#)

View: "[Play-Based Learning](#)"

Capacity Building Series: [Inquiry-Based Learning](#)

View: "[Kindergarten Matters: Intentional Play-Based Learning](#)"

# Appendix A

## Instructions:

Sort the characteristics below under the appropriate heading.

## Characteristics:

- competent
  - curious
  - caring
  - loving
  - reflective
  - influencers
  - fun-loving
  - rich in potential
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- experts
  - life-long learners
  - hardworking
  - knowledgeable
  - resourceful
  - creative
  - rich in experience
  - capable of complex thinking
  - (add your own)

Educators	Parents	Children
<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>



## Appendix B

### Instructions:

Take a moment to reflect and write brief answers to the questions below.

What do you Know	What do you Want to Know	What do you want to Learn
<i>About the theme in the learning module</i>	<i>About the theme in the learning module</i>	<i>About the theme in the learning module</i>

## Appendix C

### Instructions:

Reflect on what you are learning about *The Kindergarten Program, 2016*.

	What am/are I/we thinking or wondering about, as a result of this learning?	How might I/we act on my/our wonderings?
<b>Repeating</b>  These practices have proven successful and are supported by current research.		
<b>Re-thinking</b>  These practices have had some measure of success but may need some modifying to enhance their effectiveness.		
<b>Removing</b>  These practices have had little measure of success and are not supported by current research.		
<b>Replacing</b>  These practices are based on current research and have proven successful for others.		