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Play-Based Treatment: Basic Strategies for Exceptional Instruction

Presenter: Meredith P. Harold, PhD, CCC-SLP

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Part 1: How Play Impacts Learning

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# Play-Based Treatment: Basic Strategies for Exceptional Instruction

Meredith P. Harold, PhD, CCC-SLP

SpeechPathology.com
Summer 2015

Learning Objectives

After this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify the types and benefits of play.
- Describe the difference between play and playful learning.
- Provide examples of how playful learning can be used in speech-language treatment for preschool through elementary-aged children.

Part 1: How Play Impacts Learning
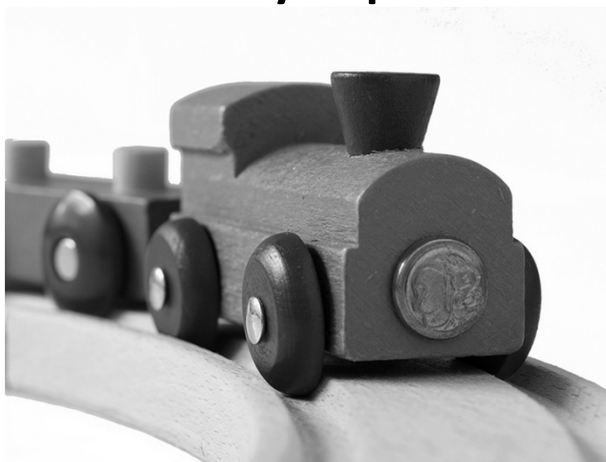
Do you use play
during your therapy sessions?

Play-Based Tx:
Young Children/Low Language

- programs from The Hanen Centre [1]

- Responsivity Education, Prelinguistic Milieu Teaching, Milieu Communication Teaching [2, 3, 4]

1. http://www.hanen.org
2. Fey et al. (2006)
3. Fey et al. (2013)

Outline

- Cross-Disciplinary Research
- Intervention & Professionals' Roles
- How To Use Play in Speech–Language Tx
  - Articulation
  - Language
  - Literacy
  - Pragmatics

- Special Populations
  - Autism
  - Developmental Disabilities
- Barriers
- Cultural Differences
- Collaborating with Other Professionals

What is "play"?

Broad definition
- flexibility and nonliterality
- positive affect and intrinsic motivation
- active (rather than passive) engagement
- no extrinsic goals or learning that must occur

Narrower definitions *additionally* include
- episodic
- rule-governed
- process-oriented
- artifacts
- other people

Image from www.growingtreetoys.com

Krasnor and Pepler (1980)
Hirsh-Pasek and Golinkoff (2003)
Dietze and Kashin (2012)
Isenberg & Jalongo (2003)

Types of play

❑ **functional play**
exploration or functional use of objects
begins before age 2

❑ **construction play**
blocks, legos, race track

❑ **games with rules**
Candy Land, Don't Break the Ice
begins around school age

❑ **outdoor and movement play**
kick all, hopscotch

❑ **symbolic, dramatic, and pretend play ("as-if"[3])**
kitchen, zoo, camping
begins around age 2

Kostelnik et al. (2011)
Dietze and Kashin (2012)
Garvey (1990)

Play & Language Development

• Westby (1980), **Symbolic Play Scale**

- Stage I = 9–12 months
- Stage II = 13–17 months
- Stage III = 17–19 months
- Stage IV = 19–22 months
- Stage V = 2 yrs old
- Stage VI. = 2 ½ yrs old
- Stage VII = 3 yrs old
- Stage VIII = 3 ½ yrs old
- Stage IX = 4 yrs old
- Stage X = 5 yrs old

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• language skills predict symbolic play skills in children aged 2–6 [1, 2]
  - • early differences sometimes absent; severity of play impairments increase with age [1, 3]

• why? [1, 4]

1. Casby (1997)
2. Lewis et al. (2000)
3. Rescorla & Goosens (2002)
4. Short et al. (2011)

Social stages of play

❑ **onlooker play**
watching

❑ **solitary play**
playing alone

❑ **parallel play**
playing next to, but not with others

❑ **associative play**
playing with others (occasional cooperation)

❑ **cooperative play**
playing with others (full cooperation; *emerges age 4*)

Kostelnik et al. (2011)

Benefits of play

- restores attention
- improves cognitive function when it involves exercise
- fun (improves mood)
- relaxing (improves mood and heart rate variability)
- when it involves adults, facilitates positive adult–child interaction
- allows opportunities for socialization with peers

Lilliard et al. (2012), Pinkham et al. (2012)

Lilliard et al. (2013)

One of several possible routes to development

No contribution; masked by attached factor

Domain or subdomain	Causal	Equifinal	Epiphenomenal
Creativity	No: Inconsistent correlations.	No: When experimenters are masked or filmed or have other hypotheses, null results.	Best supported, but not clear what of. Adult interaction, materials, social mix?
Intelligence	No: Although correlations, direction of effects is uncertain; skills training suggests adult interaction could be underlying third variable.	No: Music training is more effective.	Best supported: Adult interaction or other features of intervention.
Problem solving	No: Construction but not pretend play.	No: Construction but not pretend play.	No: Construction but not pretend play. Associations might result from propensity to construct.
Reasoning	No: Getting children to focus on premises is as effective.	Yes.	Possible: If pretend as operationalized is also a cue to pay attention to premises, and this is true reason for results.
Conservation	No: Correlational studies find no relationship; training results ride on adult questioning.	No: When experimenters are masked and other aspects of intervention equalized, null results.	Best supported: Adult interaction (structured questioning).
Theory of mind	No: Inconsistent. Some correlations to social pretend play with more recent tasks, but direction of effects is unclear.	Possible, yet sounder methods fail to show.	Best supported, considering inconsistent findings and hints of reverse direction of effects. Adult interaction.
Social skills	No: Correlations inconsistent with both solitary and social pretend play. Direction of effects is an issue.	Possible: Other routes unexamined.	Possible: Crucial variable could be practice.
Language	Possible: Consistent relationships to different aspects of language. Effects could be bidirectional.	Possible: Other routes unexamined.	Possible: Adult interaction could explain training study results.
Narrative	Possible: Correlations inconsistent and to different aspects of narrative development but one solid but small training study needs replication.	Possible.	Less likely but one solid but small training study needs replication.
Executive function	Not likely: If so, limited to subsets of children and tests.	Not clear that pretend play leads to.	Not clear that pretend play is reliably associated.
Emotion regulation	Possible: Parent rating consistent in single study; other results have other interpretations.	Not clear that pretend play leads to.	Too few studies.

See also: Weisburg et al. (2013)

Play in school

• 30% of kindergarten teachers report "no time for student-chosen activities or play; others < 30 minutes for play [1]

• teachers feel forced to choose between either academics or play… [2, 3]

• … though literature suggests that guided play can be used to teach the curriculum [4, 5]

1. Miller & Almon (2009)
2. Kochuk & Ratnaya (2007)
3. Viadero (2007)
4. Bodrova & Leong (2001)
5. Golinkoff et al. (2006)

What should we be doing in the classroom and therapy room?
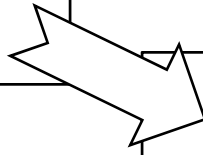
work → | playful learning | → play

> "Young children quickly differentiate between pure play and work being disguised as play." [1]

1. Hirsh-Pasek and Golinkoff (2004)

Why use playful learning?

- Playful learning involves a couple/several aspects of play:
  - flexibility, nonliterality, positive affect, intrinsic motivation, active engagement
  - *… and any/all of these may contribute to the benefit of playful learning*

Capturing attention

Forming memories

Ebbeck et al., 2013; Hirsch-Pasek et al., 2008; Resnick, 2004

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work ⟵ **play** ⟶

target density   generalization
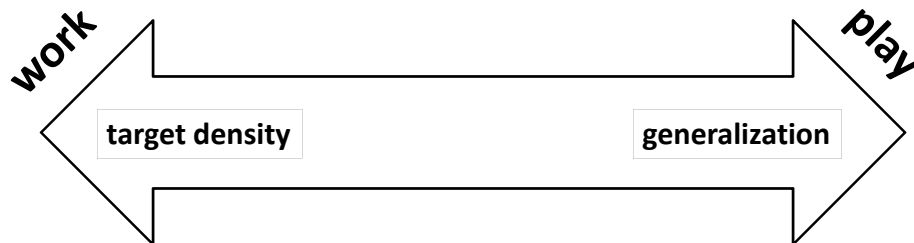
Eisenburg (2004); Shriberg & Kwiatkowski (1982)

Required targets in playful learning

What makes playful learning different than play?
  required targets

You will plan both required targets and suggested targets.

"Require" by considering *how to obtain access to a result*:
  Toys
  Food
  Parts of a whole
  Social Interaction
  Funny/amusing consequence