



Designing a Play-Based Learning Environment, Grade K-3

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| Facilitator(s): | Jill Melnyk |
| Date: | August 22, 2018 |
| Time: | 9:00 am – 3:30 pm |
| Cost: | \$50.00 (includes lunch, which is not prepared in a nut/gluten-free environment) |
| Location: | Edmonton (ERLC Office at Elmwood School) Room 17/18, 16325 - 83 Avenue |
| Session Code: | 18-EL-311 |



Target Audience

Grades K-3 Teachers

Also Recommended For

Instructional/Learning Coaches, Administrators

About this Learning Opportunity

"Do not...keep children to their studies by compulsion but by play." Plato, Greek philosopher 427-347 BCE

Play in its essence is the work of children. It supports the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of children. Learning in play-based environments is student-driven where they can explore ideas, materials and make choices in their learning. This creates opportunities that are less stressful and reduce anxiety, which allows for more risk-taking, critical thinking and problem solving. Students construct knowledge through inquiry and problem-based approaches to learning. According to Vygotsky, Dewey and Piaget, interaction is key to learning as it allows for a deeper understanding of the concept of study. Students as active explorers and researchers, are constantly interacting with their environments. They have opportunities to make choices about their learning which builds their self-efficacy and resilience. Through play, children also develop executive functioning skills, which is one of the highest predictors of school success. As student interact with peers through their play, they develop better self-regulation, learn social skills and internalize these social behaviors by being given the time needed to practice these skills.

In this session, you will learn the following:

- What is play? What are the different types/forms of play? How does play support the learning and

About the Facilitator(s)

Jill Melnyk has 18 years of classroom teaching experience primarily in the early years. For the last 8 years, she has worked inside and along classroom staff and school teams as a Collaborative Teaching Partner and Learning Services Facilitator with *Parkland School Division #70*. Throughout her entire teaching career, Jill has been a strong advocate for supporting learning through play and inquiry-based approaches.

In 2015, Jill completed her master's degree in Special Education. This experience led her to become a knowledgeable and critical consumer of research and evidence to support the implementation of quality educational practices. Jill has learned that if we increased the quality and quantity of "play" in our communities, homes and schools our concerns for children and youth would be noticeably reduced. Jill continues to play as an adult and encourages other to continue to do so, as it has multiple benefits for our health and well-being.



development of children ages 0-12?

- What are some pedagogical and play-based approaches that support deeper levels of learning and active involvement of the students?
- What are some ways to design (set up) play-based learning environment for classroom K-3 to support all areas of the curriculum?
- How to plan and assess for learning in play-based learning environments?

This learning opportunity is being provided through funding from Alberta Education.