

Let Students Learn Through Play - Promoting Active and Pleasurable English Learning Through Play in Key Stage 1 (Learning Through Play)

“You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation.” - Plato

In 2019/20, the “Seed” project *Learning Through Play* was launched. In play, children develop exploratory as well as explanatory drives: they actively look for patterns, test hypotheses and seek explanations, leading to increased complexity in thinking, learning and understanding (Gopnik et al, 1999). These cognitive processes are socially and culturally situated and, through the subject disciplines, can become increasingly refined (Wood, E. & Attfield, J., 2005).

Learning Through Play is not about children doing what they want in the classroom. In the “Seed” project, it is conducted in a carefully planned environment with four specific stations to allow students space and opportunity for learning to take place.

The stations provide appropriate materials for students to make choices, interact with each other and solve problems collaboratively as illustrated in the picture on the right.

Below is a brief explanation of the four stations in *Learning Through Play*.

References

Gopnik, A., Meltzoff, A. N., & Kuhl, P. K. (1999). *The Scientist in the Crib: Minds, Brains, and How Children Learn*. New York, NY: William Morrow & Company.
 Wood, E. & Attfield, J. (2005). *Play, Learning and the Early Childhood Curriculum (2nd Ed)*. London: Paul Chapman.



At the station **‘Small World Play’**, students exercise their imagination. Small World Play allows students the opportunity to:



- play together, self-regulate, exchange ideas and communicate feelings;
- create stories around things they are familiar with;
- acquire new experiences and practise speaking and listening; and
- improvise and use language in a meaningful way.

At the station **‘Atelier’**, students create, design and investigate a variety of materials, tools and techniques. Atelier allows students the opportunity to:

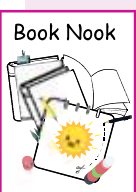


- develop visual, spatial and tactile awareness;
- experience sensory learning;
- practise gross motor and fine motor control;
- understand conceptually how the world works; and
- invent and share new ideas.

“Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood, for it alone is the free expression of what is in a child’s soul.” - Friedrich Fröbel

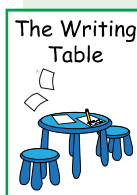


At the station **'Book Nook'**, students read for enjoyment in a relaxing and comfortable environment. Book Nook allows students the opportunity to:



- generate new ideas;
- research more on a particular topic;
- make their own choices and decisions;
- develop independence; and
- present ideas in different ways to show their learning.

At the station **'The Writing Table'**, students publish their work. It provides a good balance of activities that develop fundamental writing skills. The Writing Table allows students the opportunity to:



- organise their ideas;
- practise fine motor skills;
- extend their vocabulary; and
- be exposed to creative use of the language.

**Winnie So, Curriculum Development Officer,
Jojo Chan, Advisory Teacher, and
Jonathan Lee, Advisory Teacher, NET Section**