



Ideas for playing at home

<p><u>Sensory play</u> Some children love to experiment with different textures. Sensory play helps develop and strengthen finger muscles and fine motor control which supports children with their writing skills. Experimenting with sensory play also supports children to investigate, ask questions and make connections. Some sensory play can be a little messy but you can plan it in a basin, on a tray or even in the bath!</p>	<p><u>Playing with rules</u> Learning how to play games with rules will support children to learn about fairness and why we need rules in the world. Young (and older!) children can find this tricky but learning how to lose graciously is a skill which can needs lots of practise and support.</p>	<p><u>Role-play</u> Children love to pretend and have amazing imaginations. When your child is pretending in their play they are actually learning to make sense of the world around them. They will act out scenarios, problem solve, experiment with ideas and think about linking ideas - even big kids like to pretend play.</p>
<p><u>Ideas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice - you can freeze a range of interesting object in a tub of water, add some food colouring if you have it. • Bubbles - a little water, a bit of washing up liquid and few straws - remind your child they must blow and not suck! • Cornflour/flour - either with a little water or dry, this is great for drawing and making patterns. Cornflour and water creates a texture which is both hard when squeezed together and runny when let go! • Salt dough - see link below for recipe. • Make a potion - use little bits of what you have e.g. vinegar, washing up liquid, water. Put them in separate bowls and let your child make their own magic potion! Perhaps you could make up a spell for the 	<p><u>Ideas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memory games - You could you use a pack of cards or make your own, place the cards face down and take turns choosing 2 to see if you can find a matching pair. • Turn taking games - e.g. throwing roll-up socks into a basin or a traditional board game you have at home, • I spy with my little eye - variations can be something that is 'name a colour', something that is 'name an adjective' e.g. humungous, tiny. You could add rules like you must guess it within 3 turns or you can only guess when the person is not looking at you. • Play a simple game like throw and catch but make up silly rules e.g. if you drop the ball you need to spin around then touch your nose or say 5 things that are yellow. 	<p><u>Ideas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give your child some props to play with e.g. an old disused mobile, a hat, some sheets/towels to use for dress-up. • Help your child act out their favourite story, see if you have any props they can use, remember children don't need the exact thing they use their imaginations so a wooden spoon may very well become a magic wand! • Older children might want to put on a show or a play, they can plan, rehearse and take pride in performing for you. • If you have room make a fort under a table or behind the sofa. • Use socks as puppets. • Make a treasure map to follow on some pirate adventures.

<p>potion or a story about what happens when the potion works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other sensory items you may have at home include cotton wool, rice, spaghetti, buttons, shaving foam, talcum powder, jelly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hide and seek - this can be tricky in the house so rules would need to be negotiated. Devise a clapping game that follows rules, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Christmas elf idea but have a different monster/fairy/giant come visit which leaves footprints, a note or a treasure map to start them off on a role-playing adventure.
<p><u>How to support your child's learning</u> Talk about how the textures feel, smell and look, have fun with words like squelchy, oozy etc. Encourage your child to come up with their own silly describing words. Encourage your child to ask questions eg. What will happen if...? How will we make it more gloopy? (Make sure younger children are supervised at all times if substances are not to be eaten)</p>	<p><u>How to support your child's learning</u> Negotiate all the rules before the start of the game. Make sure everyone has their say in making up the rules. Talk about whether the rules are fair or not. Experiment with what happens when you change the rules. Offer lots of support and encouragement - it much easier to lose if you are having lots of fun!</p>	<p><u>How to support your child's learning</u> Teach them the vocabulary they need as they play e.g. if you are going on a pirate adventure they might need to learn which way is left and which is right, if you are making a fort they might hear 'draw bridge' or 'turret'.</p>
<p><u>Useful websites</u> https://www.learning4kids.net/list-of-sensory-play-ideas/ https://www.playscotland.org/parents-families/messy-play/ https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/support-for-parents/things-to-do-with-your-child/messy-play Salt dough https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/how-make-salt-dough-recipe</p>	<p><u>Useful websites</u> For loads of great clapping games https://www.todayparent.com/family/10-classic-hand-clapping-games-to-teach-your-kid/</p>	<p>For more information about learning through play you can visit https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-at-home/learning-through-play/</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Lesley Wallace</p>