



**CHCECE043**

**Nurture creativity in children**



**Learner Guide**



**Updated to include  
National Quality  
Framework changes**

**Aspire**  
Learning Resources

CHCECE043

# Nurture creativity in children

Release 1

Learner Guide

Aspire Version 2.1



## CHCECE043 Nurture creativity in children, Release 1

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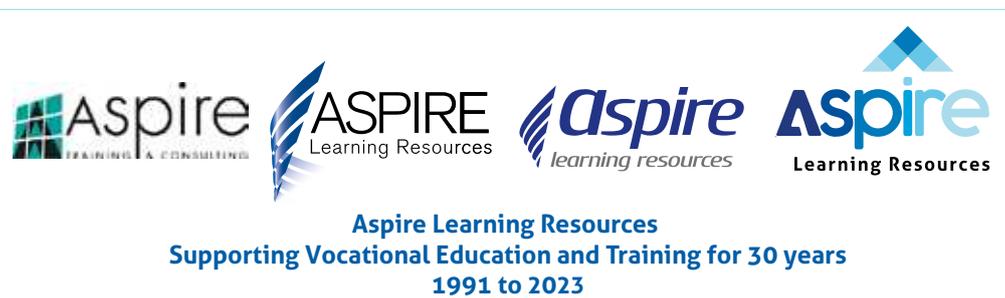
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# Before you begin

This Learner Guide is based on the unit of competency *CHCECE043 Nurture creativity in children*, Release 1.

Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. Information regarding how this Learner Guide relates to this unit of competency is detailed in our mapping guide.

## How to work through this Learner Guide

This Learner Guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the Learner Guide you need to read, and which Practice Tasks and Learning Checkpoints you need to complete.

Feature of the Learner Guide	How you can use each feature
Learning content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Read each topic in this Learner Guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.</li> </ul>
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ These highlight learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.</li> </ul>
Practice Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Practice Tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which Practice Tasks to complete.</li> </ul>
Summaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.</li> </ul>
Learning Checkpoints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ There are Learning Checkpoints at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which activities to complete. These activities give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.</li> </ul>

This table maps each topic in this Learner Guide to the National Quality Standard and national learning framework: Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

T = Topic

Topics	National Quality Standard (NQS)
T1-T3	Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice
T1-T3	Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety
T1-T3	Quality Area 3: Physical environment
	Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements
T1-T3	Quality Area 5: Relationships with children
T1-T3	Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
	Quality Area 7: Governance and leadership
	<b>Early Years Learning Framework</b>
	<b>Principles</b>
T2, T3	Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships
T3	Partnerships
T2, T3	Respect for diversity
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
T1-T3	Equity, inclusion and high expectations
	Sustainability
T3	Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning
	Collaborative leadership and teamwork
	<b>Practice</b>
T1-T3	Holistic, integrated and interconnected approaches
T2, T3	Responsiveness to children
T1-T3	Play-based learning and intentionality
T2, T3	Learning environments
	Cultural responsiveness
	Continuity of learning and transitions
T3	Assessment and evaluation for learning, development and wellbeing
	<b>Learning Outcomes</b>
T2	1. Children have a strong sense of identity
T2	2. Children are connected to and contribute to their world
T2	3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
T1-T3	4. Children are confident and involved learners
T2, T3	5. Children are effective communicators





## Topic 1

In this topic you will learn about:

- 1A** Role of the arts
- 1B** Development and creativity

# Understanding art and creativity

*Creative expression helps us to share our culture. It gives us an outlet or an opportunity to represent our feelings and thoughts.*

Creative expression helps us to share our culture. It gives us an outlet or an opportunity to represent our feelings and thoughts.

By developing an awareness of the arts and the creative development of children, you can plan and provide age-appropriate experiences to support their individual creative development.

# 1A Role of the arts

*The arts includes aspects such as drama, dance, media, music and visual art.*

In current practice, the arts are used every day as part of a play-based curriculum.

## STEAM and learning dispositions

Active involvement in learning builds children's understanding of concepts as well as the creative thinking and inquiry processes that are necessary for lifelong learning.

Learning dispositions are represented in the approved learning framework *Belonging, being and becoming: The early years learning framework for Australia* (EYLF). Particularly relevant are Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners and its sub-outcomes:

- Children develop a growth mindset and learning dispositions, such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity
- Children develop a range of learning and thinking skills and processes, such as problem-solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
- Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another
- Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies, and natural and processed materials.

Children use their creative skills to play and explore naturally in the learning space. Educators with a STEAM philosophy, recognise that when they incorporate science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM or STEM) in children's daily learning and development, they will be placing a high priority on planning for Outcome 4 of the approved learning framework. This is not necessarily being provided in structured or intentional teaching experiences, but more as a recognition of a process of learning.

In a service that values creativity, STEAM may be identified as the way children learn within their play and projects and this forms a large part of their philosophy.

Following are some ways STEAM are linked to learning during creative processes.



Music, media, dance and drama are all part of the arts.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Science</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Observing</li> <li>➤ Hypothesising</li> <li>➤ Experimenting</li> <li>➤ Investigating</li> <li>➤ Connecting ideas</li> <li>➤ Concluding</li> <li>➤ Discovering</li> <li>➤ Asking</li> <li>➤ Wondering</li> <li>➤ Being curious</li> <li>➤ Inquiry</li> <li>➤ Researching</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Using tools</li> <li>➤ Identifying and solving problems</li> <li>➤ Inventing</li> <li>➤ Adapting</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Engineering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Solving problems</li> <li>➤ Designing</li> <li>➤ Creating</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Arts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Imagining</li> <li>➤ Moving in creative ways</li> <li>➤ Making music</li> <li>➤ Exploring visual arts</li> <li>➤ Telling stories</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Maths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sequencing</li> <li>➤ Counting</li> <li>➤ Patterning</li> <li>➤ Exploring and using shape, volume and size</li> </ul>

Some ways that learning dispositions are linked with artistic expression include the following:

- Curiosity: Children learn and want to find out how things work and how they might express their ideas.
- Cooperation: Children work together with each other and with educators to create and express themselves. Imaginative and dramatic play often includes more than one child.
- Confidence: When children feel they have achieved their goals or ideas, they feel good about themselves.
- Creativity: Children use their imaginations, learned skills and experimentation to express themselves.
- Commitment: Children decide to achieve their goals and ideas and dedicate themselves to working out how to do this.
- Enthusiasm: Children feel excited and eager to explore their ideas and goals, to learn new ways of doing things and new ways of using materials.
- Persistence: Children work at achieving their goals and ideas and continue to explore and experiment when they face frustration or challenge.

- Imagination: Children use their ideas and discover how they can express these. They use many different ways to explore and represent their ideas.
- Reflexivity: Children review their own work; they think about what it means to them and how it makes them feel.

By linking learning dispositions with STEAM philosophy, you can see how creativity, linked with other developmental aspects, extends a child's abilities and allows them to participate fully in play and leisure. You will notice learning dispositions and the concept of STEAM throughout this resource.

### Example

#### Using STEAM actions

Hayley is completing a collage. She experiments with the items provided on the table and explores their shapes, sizes and textures. Hayley places the items on her paper using a thick glue brush. She notices that the glue has squished from under the pieces making ridges of glue stick out. She picks up a cardboard square and starts to scrape the glue away from the pieces, scooping it and placing it in a pile away from her work. Hayley looks at her art and says, 'What else does it need? One more piece there, just a small triangle.'

In this scenario, Hayley used all STEAM actions. She:

- experiments with shape, size, texture and number (science, maths)
- uses a thick glue brush (technology)
- problem solves and invents a method for removing excess glue (science, technology, engineering)
- expresses herself using collage (arts)
- identifies what is needed to finish her idea (engineering).

## Developing creativity

*Creativity is the skill used to create works of art.*

Art allows children to express their ideas. During the development of art, children become active participants and use their creativity to do the following things.

Children use their:	Children express:	Children explore:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ imagination</li> <li>➤ physical skills</li> <li>➤ intellectual abilities</li> <li>➤ problem-solving and decision-making skills</li> <li>➤ flexible thinking</li> <li>➤ senses</li> <li>➤ bodies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ what they know</li> <li>➤ their feelings</li> <li>➤ multiple perspectives, thoughts or visions</li> <li>➤ originality</li> <li>➤ their own interpretations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ their understanding of the world</li> <li>➤ their thoughts</li> <li>➤ aesthetic appreciation</li> <li>➤ materials through manipulation</li> <li>➤ their own ideas.</li> </ul>

Children are naturally creative, and the experiences they have during their first years of life significantly enhance the development of that type of creativity. This is a time when they are open to taking risks, both in trying new things and in expressing themselves in ways that may be different to others.

In our fast-paced world full of technology and ever-changing expectations, creative thought and expression is valued as a method for dealing with the never-ending quest for new ideas and concepts. Our society seeks people who are able to think creatively, to solve problems, use their imaginations and convert their ideas into reality or, in some cases, fantasy.

The children we educate in this era will be faced with even greater pressure to develop these skills. Art is a fantastic medium for expanding a child's thought and bringing them opportunities for exposure to these expectations. It is an enjoyable way for children to challenge themselves, explore and expand their knowledge and skills, gaining confidence in their abilities and enjoying further learning and development.

## Providing creative freedom

*By providing creative freedom educators enhance children's learning and development as they become confident in using their skills and extending their knowledge.*

Creative or artistic freedom is a term used to describe the feeling or ability a person has to use their ideas, their imagination or different ways of expressing themselves openly and without concern for judgment, interference or pressure. Creative freedom also supports the development of positive self-esteem due to its open nature, allowing the child's ideas and interpretations to be accepted and encouraged.

If children are to explore artistic expression and develop creativity, they must be given creative freedom. This does not mean that they should be unsafe, disregard cultural protocols or use materials or spaces in dangerous ways, but it does mean that their ideas and actions should be considered, investigated, encouraged and acted on where possible. To do this, children and educators may need to take risks. You may also need to think about how you can provide freedom within boundaries.

## Exposing children to art

*Being exposed to art and artists is exciting for children.*

People communicate their ideas, culture and thoughts through art. Current arts research determines that when art is viewed it is interpreted differently for each person, based on their own life experiences, culture and knowledge. Arts research also responds to the value of art in community as it influences society, health, wellbeing and education through:

- celebrating diversity and promoting pride in culture by using materials, resources and methods that are common to a culture or are recognised as important to a culture
- encouraging appreciation of cultures other than our own by providing examples that we may find interesting or intriguing and so leading to further exploration
- enriching our experience of emotions by using methods and materials that encourage us to reflect on feelings

- increasing health and happiness by participating in enjoyable or thought-provoking activity
- being accessible to all socioeconomic groups
- understanding that a creative process might use any variety of materials in many different ways
- exploring the value of the artistic process as part of an art product by watching others determine how they will express an idea, decide on how they will develop the idea and then to see their abilities being applied.

When children view the art of others, they are given inspiration and are introduced to the different ways that people view the world; some attractive and understandable, others unclear, confusing or distracting. They find out that the artform one person appreciates might not be valuable to another person. When viewed, the beauty of an artform is different than when it is experienced or when it is described by the artist. The process of creating art is also viewed differently; individually we appreciate the different processes used and materials applied.

Exposing children to the arts can occur in many ways; for example, within a service or through an excursion. It might occur using technology, human involvement, or by sharing or displaying methods. The following arts exposure ideas may be implemented within the service or be part of an excursion:

- puppet show
- theatre production
- art gallery
- local art show
- dance performance
- cultural exhibitions
- sharing sessions – learning to use a new material or view a different aspect of art
- sculpture walks
- dance recitals
- concerts
- Discussions after performances

Children may be involved in creating their own gallery, performance or display based on their work.

They may also be introduced to artists and connections can be made to the art genre and visual art movement. Some examples are listed in this table.

Art Genre	visual art movement
➤ Portraiture	➤ Impressionism
➤ Religion or historical	➤ Symbolism
➤ Landscape	➤ Cubism
➤ Still life	➤ Art Nouveau
➤ Abstract	➤ Colour Field Painting

## Cultural expression

Art is used as a medium to share cultural heritage and is often combined with new ideas to expand views and build an additional picture of current life.

Cultures use art in a variety of ways that often tell stories of history, beliefs, values and achievements. Art can be part of celebrations, message sending or storytelling.

Some cultural representations you might notice are shown below.

	<p>➤ African music</p>
	<p>➤ Chinese dragon dancing</p>
	<p>Turkish pottery</p>
	<p>Indian sculpture – Diwali elephants</p>
	<p>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander painting</p>

The inclusion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples' art forms and artists extends children's interest in the history of Australia and of Country. Indigenous art is traditionally used as a cultural teaching tool and its symbols as a method for communicating stories.

You can find examples of Indigenous art forms at the Artlandish Aboriginal Art Gallery website: [aspirelr.link/artlandish](http://aspirelr.link/artlandish). Each art piece is accompanied by a bio of the artist and a description of the story behind the artwork. By looking through the descriptions you are able to gain a deeper understanding of how artists express themselves.

## Process and product

*Artforms are often experienced as a product, meaning the end result of a process.*

This occurs when we visit galleries or attend a dance performance; we see what happens after the process has been achieved. While children may enjoy and become enthusiastic about a product, it is the process, including how they develop their own art, where the most valuable learning takes place. Even if the product is not the result that was expected, desired or planned for, the process will have given them future ideas, knowledge and skills.

This theory flows through to how you respond to the artistic experiences of children. Maximum value will be gained if you focus on processes, such as discussing how things occurred and how they were applied, developed or adjusted. This encourages children to be creative, to enjoy the creative experience and to pursue creative activities for enjoyment, rather than for praise or for an end product that others reward them for.

## National Quality Standard (NQS)

*The NQS supports the inclusion of the arts and the development of children's creativity.*

The relevant elements of the NQS are explained in the following table.

Element	Descriptor
Element 1.1.1: Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators	Educators provide experiences for children that actively promote or initiate the investigation of ideas, complex concepts and thinking, reasoning and hypothesising by engaging children in exploration of creative arts, such as musical rhythms or beats, or lines or shapes in visual arts.
Element 1.1.2: Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program	Educators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ focus on what is meaningful to children now</li> <li>➤ provide open-ended creative activities that promote self-expression</li> <li>➤ are flexible enough to allow children to work at their own level and pace</li> <li>➤ encourage children to support each other to learn</li> <li>➤ allow children to explore ideas through play and use of imagination.</li> </ul>

Element	Descriptor
<p>Element 1.2.2: Educators respond to children’s ideas and play, and extend children’s learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback</p>	<p>Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ use language associated with the creative arts</li> <li>➤ use open-ended questions and interact frequently</li> <li>➤ allow children to problem-solve and to develop their own thoughts and ideas.</li> </ul>
<p>Element 1.2.3: Each child’s agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world</p>	<p>Educators provide open-ended resources and materials that allow children to express themselves (rather than using templates, stencils or resources that limit children’s capacity to create, interpret, experiment and explore).</p>
<p>Element 2.1.3: Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.</p>	<p>Educators plan and implement opportunities for children to engage in dance, creative movement and drama, and to respond to traditional and contemporary music and storytelling.</p>
<p>Element 2.2.1: At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.</p>	<p>By fostering children’s capacity to understand and respect the social and natural environment, educators create learning environments that encourage children to explore, problem-solve, and create and construct in challenging and safe ways.</p> <p>Educators supervise children closely when they are in a situation that presents a higher risk of injury; for example, during water play or woodwork experiences.</p> <p>Educators talk with children about safety issues and the correct use of equipment and the environment and, where appropriate, involve children in setting safety rules.</p>
<p>Element 3.1.1: Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.</p>	<p>Quality indoor spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ support the emerging interests of every child and enable them to demonstrate their innate creativity and curiosity</li> <li>➤ reflect the cultures, interests, abilities and learning styles of every child</li> <li>➤ recognise children as active learners and competent decision-makers.</li> </ul> <p>Quality outdoor spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ are dynamic and flexible</li> <li>➤ provide opportunities for unique play and learning</li> <li>➤ complement and extend the indoor learning experiences</li> <li>➤ offer children opportunities to be active, make mess and noise, and be wholly engaged in play.</li> </ul>

Element	Descriptor
<p>Element 3.2.1: Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.</p>	<p>Learning environments include a range of materials and equipment with appropriate levels of challenge, where children are encouraged to explore, experiment and take appropriate risks in their learning according to their current capacities, strengths and interests.</p> <p>Educators encourage the use of natural materials in all learning environments.</p> <p>Indoor and outdoor spaces are designed to invite spontaneity, risk-taking, exploration, discovery and connection to nature.</p> <p>The service implements strategies to support the development of children's creativity and engagement.</p> <p>Programs provide opportunities for children to engage in outdoor and indoor experiences, such as dramatic play, construction, music and exploration.</p>
<p>Element 5.1.1: Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships, which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.</p>	<p>Positive interactions between educators and children involve educators viewing each child as capable and competent, with a right to a voice and ability to contribute to decisions that affect them.</p> <p>Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ respond positively to the varying abilities, individual strengths and confidence of all children, and facilitate their involvement in the service</li> <li>➤ acknowledge children's efforts and achievements, and support children to experience success.</li> </ul>

For more information on the NQS, go to: [aspirelr.link/national-quality-standard](https://aspirelr.link/national-quality-standard).

## Practice Task 1

1. Draw a line to match each term about the role of the arts to its description.

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| * Artforms                     | * Allows children to express their ideas.  |
| * Art exposure                 | * The feeling or ability to use your ideas, imagination or expression openly and without concern for judgment, interference or pressure. |
| * Creative or artistic freedom | * Gives inspiration and introduces us to the different ways that people view the world.  |
| * Art process                  | * Often experienced as a product or end result.  |
| * Art                          | * Applies to the development of art, where the most valuable learning takes place.   |

2. Which of the following NQS elements support the inclusion of the arts and development of children’s creativity? Select all that apply.

- Element 1.2.2
- Element 5.1.1
- Element 4.2.2
- Element 3.3.1
- Element 2.1.3
- Element 2.2.2

3. Which of the following statements are correct about the role of arts? Select yes or no for each one.

- |   |       |      |
|---|-------|------|
| a. Learning dispositions outlined in Outcome 4 of the approved learning framework include curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity. | * Yes | * No |
| b. The most effective way to expose children to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander art forms and artists is to show them a dot painting and provide them with a stick and earth coloured paint.       | * Yes | * No |
| c. STEAM and learning dispositions are closely related and each reflect the approved learning framework.  | * Yes | * No |

# 1B Development and creativity

*The more a child explores and is involved in the arts, the more they are able to express themselves and have ideas for expression.*

The more a child explores and is involved in the arts, the more they are able to express themselves and have ideas for expression.

To successfully provide experiences that enhance and encourage imagination, creativity and self-expression, you need to identify children's interests and developmental levels. This means considering their gross motor skills, fine motor skills, social, emotional, cognitive and language development to offer age-appropriate experiences that build on their strengths and interests and extend their skills and knowledge.

## Infant development

*In infancy, children begin to grasp objects, sit, crawl and walk.*

Infants use physical forms of communication and express their feelings by using sounds and cries. They put toys and objects into their mouths and learn through sensory experiences, such as feeling, tasting, watching and manipulating.

Stimulating play for infants encourages learning. Infants react to adult facial expressions and begin to learn about their feelings. They enjoy brightly coloured objects, mobiles and musical tunes, which stimulate their creative development.

You can use a range of toys and experiences to encourage infants to become familiar with repetitive actions and words as outlined in the following table.

Creative development milestones	How to encourage creativity in infants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Explore and use their senses to learn about the world and express themselves</li> <li>➤ Absorb information through sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch</li> <li>➤ Explore objects in a variety of ways, including shaking, banging and dropping them</li> <li>➤ Attracted to colour and movement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Create interesting spaces with materials that are safe and open-ended.</li> <li>➤ Acknowledge that creativity at this age is about the process of exploring how to do and how to use things.</li> <li>➤ Talk about what can be seen or heard.</li> <li>➤ Provide additional supervision for some activities to maintain safety; for example, infants like to put objects in their mouths or use materials in a way different to their purpose.</li> </ul>

## Toddler development

*The focus for toddlers is on using muscles and discovering how things feel*

Toddlers enjoy sensory and messy play experiences, such as play dough, clay, slime and finger painting. They may need guidance during art activities, as they will often experiment on walls, doors and other surfaces. This generally occurs because they are unaware of the limits of art and wish to explore the medium.

Toddlers enjoy music and movement and begin to construct and build in more planned ways. They may express their creativity in a physical way by trying new ideas and attempting more challenging feats. Toddlers are excellent risk takers.

Toddlers demonstrate understanding and enjoyment in being imaginative, and begin to explore emotional expression in dramatic ways, such as pretending to be sad, happy or angry.



Toddlers begin to construct using imagination.

Creative development milestones	How to encourage creativity in toddlers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Are at an experimental, expressive and inquisitive stage</li> <li>➤ Love to explore and take risks</li> <li>➤ Like to attempt things in their own way; for example, seeing how many items they can carry, adding dolls to water play or trying to go up the slide instead of down</li> <li>➤ Are gaining greater control over materials, but need to use items that are easy to hold and pick up</li> <li>➤ Practise, scribble and experiment with different art materials</li> <li>➤ Hold pencils in a whole-hand grasp (palmar grasp)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Recognise that some of the actions toddlers exhibit are showing creativity rather than poor behaviour.</li> <li>➤ Encourage children to think about what they are doing and how they can do it safely; for example, if they want to try going up the slide, how can they do it safely and when should they move out of the way?</li> <li>➤ Provide additional supervision for higher-risk activities as toddlers may take unconsidered risks.</li> <li>➤ Provide opportunities for practice.</li> </ul>

## Preschooler development

*Preschoolers have greater muscle control and are able to use complex materials and tools.*

They can plan, design and implement ideas using a range of creative materials. By four or five years of age, some children are able to draw recognisable objects, although many details may be missing. By six years old, most children are interested in discussing their pictures.

While younger age groups may be interested in drama, art, music, movement and exhibitions, preschoolers can be intensely motivated and excited when introduced to or involved in these arts. They have greater concentration spans and can spend more time listening and watching. They also have the ability to recognise the actions and events that might need to take place to develop or present art forms; for example, a script might need to be written, or choreography invented. They have a greater understanding of the meaning and purpose of a wider range of artforms.



Provide a range of creative materials for preschoolers.

Creative development milestones	How to encourage creativity in preschoolers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Have great imaginations and are able to see ideas in their heads</li> <li>➤ Use a variety of methods to express themselves</li> <li>➤ Learn different techniques and explore how materials and equipment can be used</li> <li>➤ Learn to draw circles first, then other shapes</li> <li>➤ Begin to name parts of their drawings</li> <li>➤ Are able to create recognisable drawings</li> <li>➤ Show creativity through art, dramatic or imaginative play and problem-solving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provide a range of creative options, both experiences and materials.</li> <li>➤ Extend children based on their level of interest and experience; start to add new materials and concepts.</li> <li>➤ Assist preschoolers to achieve their ideas.</li> <li>➤ Show techniques that help children to be successful.</li> <li>➤ Talk about the process and what they are doing.</li> <li>➤ Provide new materials and methods, and develop these as children learn and experience more.</li> </ul>

## School-age development

School-age children can use their imaginations competently. They have their own ideas on what they think is creative and visually stimulating. School-age children also develop their own interests and can independently make their own decisions about their art expressions.

Art materials and resources are used in a more constructive manner, and older children are able to use their imaginations to visualise a product. They have longer concentration spans which allows them to complete an activity of interest over a longer period. They also have good muscle control, allowing them to experiment with a range of materials, resources and techniques that may be dangerous for younger children.



School-age children use processes that are more complex.

When seeking materials for creative play and learning for this age group, consider their safety and level of learning by :

- incorporating suggestions from children
- developing and extending on hobbies
- allowing for self-select peer groups
- providing for individual, small and large group experiences
- providing choices, including respecting a children's wish not to participate
- negotiating alternatives.



## Practice Task 2

Which of the following statements are correct about the role of the arts in children's creative development? Select yes or no for each one.

- |  |       |      |
|--|-------|------|
| a. To successfully provide experiences that enhance and encourage imagination, creativity and self-expression, you need to identify children's interests and developmental levels. | * Yes | * No |
| b. Stimulating play for infants encourages learning; they enjoy brightly coloured objects, mobiles and musical tunes.  | * Yes | * No |
| c. Toddlers enjoy sensory and messy play experiences, such as play dough, clay, slime and finger painting.   | * Yes | * No |
| d. Preschoolers are able to use complex materials and tools. They can plan, design and implement ideas using a range of creative materials.  | * Yes | * No |
| e. Toddlers understand and enjoy being imaginative more than they enjoy exploring emotional expression in dramatic ways.   | * Yes | * No |
| f. School-age children are interested in drama, art, music, movement and exhibitions. Preschoolers do not show interest or excitement in these things until they are older.        | * Yes | * No |

## Summary

- Science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM or STEM) focusses on how children creatively learn and develop using creative skills.
- Children develop dispositions for learning, such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.
- Art allows children to express their ideas. Creativity is the skill used to create the work of art.
- When creative freedom is provided, children's learning and development are enhanced as they develop confidence in using skills and extend their knowledge.
- Creative freedom supports the development of positive self-esteem due to its open nature, allowing the child's ideas and interpretations to be accepted and encouraged.
- When children view the art of others, they are given inspiration and are introduced to the different ways that people view the world.
- While children may enjoy and become enthusiastic about a product, it is the process, including how they develop their own art, where the most valuable learning takes place.
- Active involvement in learning builds children's understandings of concepts, and the creative thinking and inquiry processes that are necessary for lifelong learning.
- The more a child explores and is involved in the arts, the more they are able to express themselves and develop ideas for expression.

# Learning Checkpoint 1

## Understanding art and creativity



1. Which of the following are likely to be achieved through the experience shown in the image above? Select all that apply.

- Element 1.2.3 of the NQS
- Cooperation as a learning disposition
- Element 3.2.2 of the NQS
- Exposure to an artist
- Involvement in a creative process
- Curiosity as a learning disposition
- Imagination as a learning disposition



2. Which of the following are likely to be achieved through the experience shown in the image above? Select all that apply.

- Creative freedom
- Element 1.1.1 of the NQS
- Cooperation as a learning disposition
- Element 5.1.1 of the NQS
- Exposure to an artist
- Creativity as a learning disposition



3. Which of the following are likely to be achieved through the experience shown in the image above? Select all that apply.

- Exposure to an artist
- Participation in a creative process
- Element 2.2.1 of the NQS
- Element 1.1.2 of the NQS
- Persistence as they work with others who might interrupt them

4. Draw a line to match each of the following images to either art process or art product.



\* Process



\* Process



\* Product



\* Product

5. Draw a line to match each learning disposition to the comment an educator might make in regard to it.

\* Confidence

\* 'What do you think you could do with these materials?'

\* Reflexivity

\* 'You look pleased with how that is coming together.'

\* Enthusiasm

\* 'How do you think you could get that to work?'

\* Curiosity

\* 'That seems like a really great idea!'

\* Commitment

\* 'How do you feel about your work so far?'

## 6. Select true or false for the following statement.

It is inappropriate to introduce children to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander art forms and artists. It is essential to show respect by inviting an Elder from the local community to begin the process

\* True    \* False

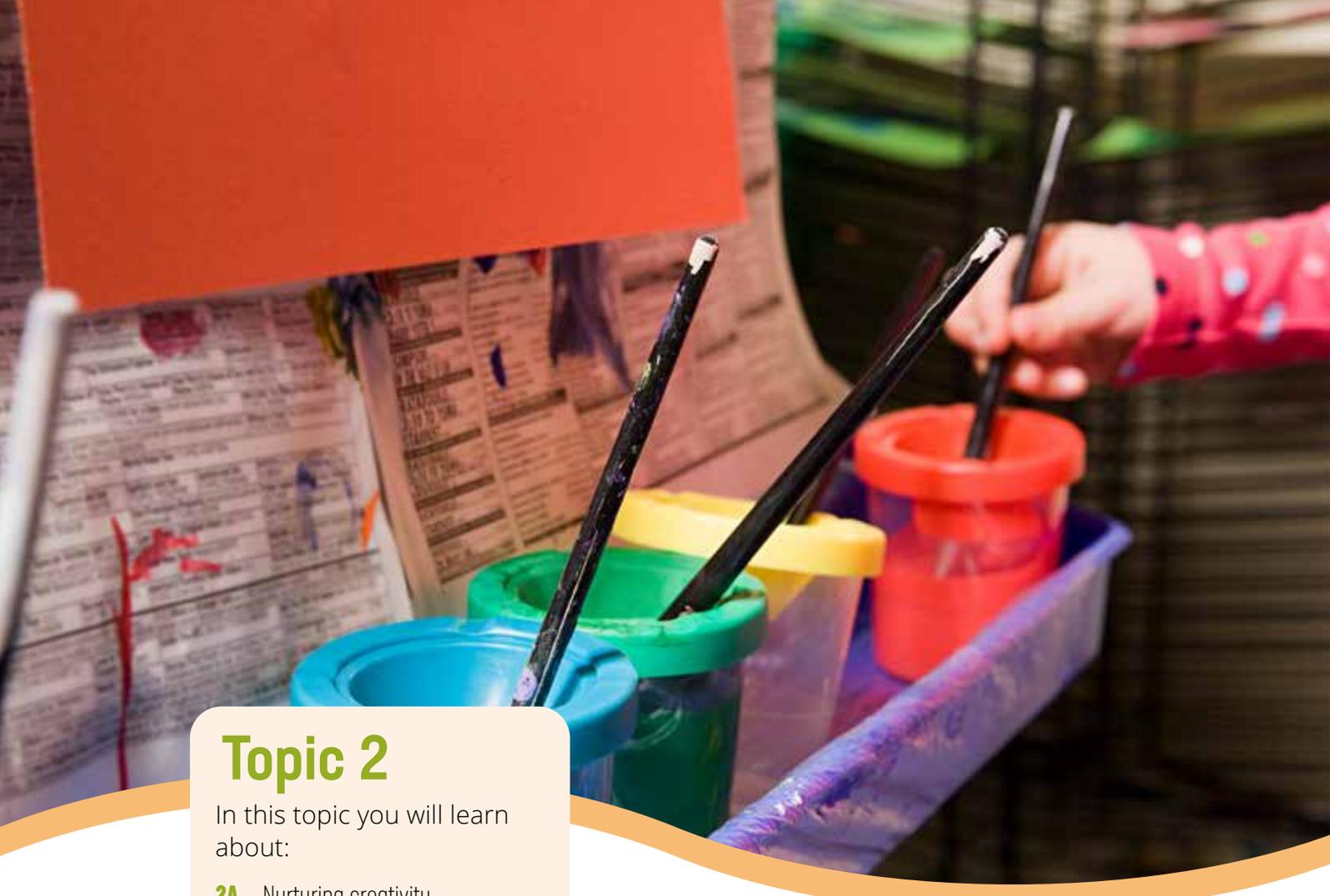
## 7. Draw a line to match each STEAM component to an example of practice.

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| * Science     | * Designing a garden                                       |
| * Technology  | * Working out how much string will be needed for a weaving |
| * Engineering | * Inventing a spaceship                                    |
| * Art         | * Experimenting with elastic bands                         |
| * Maths       | * Telling a story  |

## 8. Which of the following are correct about arts forms and artists? Select all that apply.

- Art can be part of celebrations, message sending or storytelling. Each culture will use these opportunities to communicate different messages.
- Cultural groups use music and dance to demonstrate their interests. To most cultures music and dance are their many form of communication.
- Educators can support children to celebrating diversity and promote pride in culture by using materials, resources and methods that are common to a culture or are recognised as important to a culture.
- Protocols connected to the use of an art form can be ignored when involving children. Sharing this information will not benefit the children's understanding.
- When educators discuss art forms and artists, this takes away creative freedom. Children will be thinking about how they can remember this information instead of how they might create their own art.



A close-up photograph of a child's hands, wearing a pink long-sleeved shirt with colorful polka dots, using three black sticks to stir paint in a purple tray. The tray contains several colorful plastic containers: a blue one in the foreground, a green one behind it, a yellow one behind that, and a red one to the right. The background is slightly blurred, showing a newspaper or magazine pinned to a wall.

## Topic 2

In this topic you will learn about:

- 2A** Nurturing creativity
- 2B** Developing creative skills
- 2C** Providing creative experiences

# Creative expression

*Cater for each child's creative ideas, interests and abilities.*

By providing a range of creative and expressive options, you can capture the individual child's imagination and allow them to use and develop their skills through enjoyable experiences.

Art is influenced by the materials and resources you provide and the way you provide them. It is an appropriate and valuable medium for nurturing creativity and original ideas, as well as developing children's confidence and self-esteem.

In Topic 1 you read about STEAM. Most of the concepts in this section relate to the STEAM concept.

## 2A Nurturing creativity

*Encourage children to express themselves freely and creatively.*

As well as encouraging children's creativity at a level they understand, you can be a powerful role-model in promoting and supporting their creative efforts.

The approved learning framework EYLF guides you to view, plan for and react to children's creativity in the following ways.

Principle/ practice/ outcome	Overview	Guideline
<b>Principle</b>	Equity, inclusion and high expectations	Children are capable and can be successful if given the opportunity, appropriate support and guidance that meets their individual needs and interest levels.
<b>Practice</b>	Responsiveness to children Play-based learning and intentionality	Learning environments should support children's actions in spontaneous and planned ways to enable children's creative expression to be nurtured, grown and developed.  Intentional teaching can support children to learn more about their creative experiences through educators modelling, demonstrating, questioning, explaining, speculating and engaging in shared thinking and problem solving.  Intentional teaching may involve the exploration of art and interaction with artists.
<b>Learning Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners</b>	Sub-outcome: Children develop a growth mindset and learning dispositions, such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.	This relates directly to the child's development and how it links with creative expression.
	Sub-outcome: Children develop a range of learning and thinking skills and processes, such as problem-solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating.	Children's interests lead their learning and determine whether they are engaged in activities.
	Sub-outcome: Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, places, technologies, and natural and processed materials.	Children are able to explore ideas and use their imagination and creativity in play and have many ideas for how they might do this.

Principle/ practice/ outcome	Overview	Guideline
Learning Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators	Sub-outcome: Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media.	Children need to collaborate to develop roles and scripts as well as participate in creative arts.

## Individual interests

*Each child has their own set of interests that can be used to extend their skills and knowledge, encourage creativity and enhance their enjoyment.*

These interests may be identified:

- through discussions with the child and their family
- by observing the child during activities and experiences
- by listening to their ideas
- through information that emerges spontaneously.

For example, a child might:

- discuss the gallery they visited and talk about the paintings they enjoyed
- be observed showing an ongoing interest in construction and buildings
- tell an educator what they enjoy about dancing
- describe an idea they have for creating a sculpture.

To respond appropriately to interests, you need to observe, listen and ask questions. Think creatively yourself and be open to new ideas and different ways to use materials and equipment. Be flexible enough to adapt planned activities and experiences to address spontaneous ideas.

Responding to new and unforeseen interests means more than just a quick acknowledgment. It means reacting positively to the child by taking the interest further and exploring it through discussion then putting plans and the ideas from discussions into practice. This creates a responsive program because it links community, home and care through things children know or find out. It shows that you value their ideas and gives you the opportunity to extend their skills.

### **Always aim to do the following to promote creativity:**

- Allow children time to explore their ideas by being flexible in your schedule.
- Provide appropriate materials and resources.
- Enable children to continue playing or investigating if it is practical and reasonable to do so.
- Encourage children when they combine activities or materials; for example, moving the home area tools into the play dough space.

## Example

### Responding to children's interests

Osias and Kinsley are playing together in the home area. Kinsley talks to Osias about the gymnastic event she and her sister competed in on the weekend. Osias asks Kinsley what gymnastics is. Kinsley replies that it is rolling and tumbling, and dancing with a ribbon.

Zack, the educator, overhears the conversation and moves close to the children. He tells Kinsley that he thinks gymnastics is interesting. He asks if Kinsley would like to show the other children. Kinsley agrees and they talk about what she needs. Together, Zack, Kinsley and Osias organise the space, some music and equipment, and invite other children to watch. Kinsley dances, rolls and jumps to the music, using her ribbon to twirl and spin in the air.

After the demonstration, Zack asks if other children would like to try gymnastics. A number of children agree, so they each take hold of a ribbon and Zack plays more music while the children move around the space.

According to the timetable, Zack should have held an organised group time at this point in the day. However, he decides this spontaneous gymnastic group is more valuable.



## Original ideas

*Encourage children to work through their ideas while providing support, encouragement and the required resources.*

Children are usually more committed to applying interpretation and expression when they come up with their own ideas. At other times it may be appropriate to help spark their ideas. You may need to assist children to work out what they need and how they will use materials. However, you should stand back to allow them to develop their own play and think carefully about what they are doing.

When children play out their original ideas, they develop a range of skills, including:

- problem solving
- persistence
- peer scaffolding
- sharing thoughts, knowledge and information with others
- positive emotional and social responsiveness
- confidence.

Being creative is not just about letting children run with an idea; they still need supervision and direction to ensure they are safe. Children may need your support or require you to complete tasks for them to successfully fulfil their ideas.

**Actions that encourage children to pursue their ideas:**

- Allow children to use materials in their own ways.
- Give children sufficient time to work out their ideas. Never hurry them; let them know they can leave their work and come back to it later.
- Don't judge children's efforts. This is likely to stifle their creativity.
- Support children to think of new ideas by prompting them or asking questions.
- Ensure safety is always a consideration.

The way an experience is set up provides a message to children about the types of skills they should use. Provide opportunities that have the potential to be creative and that allow children to have original ideas. Here are some examples of how to support creativity.

<b>Structured activity</b>	<b>value of structured activity</b>	<b>Alternative creative ideas</b>
<p>Colouring in within prescribed lines</p> 	<p>Colouring in focuses on developing fine motor skills and colour identification. Creativity is not valued in this activity.</p>	<p>Blank paper and drawing materials.</p> 
<p>Models of work to copy, such as a rabbit mask from a paper bag</p> 	<p>Develops cognitive and fine motor skills. Creativity is not valued in this activity.</p>	<p>Provide a range of materials without a model.</p> 
<p>Play dough, rolling pins and cutters</p> 	<p>Develops fine motor skills and social skills when discussing actions and pretend play. Creativity is not valued in this activity.</p>	<p>Provide dough:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ without colour</li> <li>➤ without props</li> <li>➤ with natural materials (leaves, bark, pebbles, sticks or gumnuts)</li> <li>➤ with items children choose.</li> </ul> 

## Example

### Encouraging original ideas

Zeek tells the educator, Tara, he would like to build a car. Tara asks what materials he will need and encourages him to look around the room to see if anything seems useful. Zeek picks a small box, some round milk bottle tops, soft piping and coloured matchsticks.

Zeek tries to solve the problem of how to keep the wheels on the box. At first, the glue isn't holding, so he decides to use masking tape. He then pokes a hole in the box to place a matchstick. Zeek tells Evan that the matchstick is the car's antenna.

Zeek is proud of himself as he shows Tara where the door is to get inside, how he made the antenna and how he made the steering wheel from the piece of pipe.

Zeek rushes off to ask another child to come and look at what he has made.



## Encouraging creativity

*Children need time to explore and practise; they are also encouraged when their environment nurtures creativity.*

You can encourage creativity by fostering children's sense of agency. Do this by stimulating:

- curiosity and ideas
- experimentation
- active learning
- literacy
- choice.

Each of these aspects is outlined in the following table.

<b>Literacy</b>	<p>Literacy includes speaking, reading and writing. In a creative environment, children use self-expression to communicate as they work through self-reflection, or with educators or peers. Use literacy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ research</li> <li>➤ ask questions</li> <li>➤ answer questions</li> <li>➤ sing</li> <li>➤ imagine</li> <li>➤ role-play</li> <li>➤ label work</li> <li>➤ explain creative pursuits.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Curiosity and ideas</b></p>	<p>Curiosity is a disposition related to natural, inquisitive behaviour, such as exploration, investigation and learning. It is about finding things out and experimenting. This makes the mind active rather than passive, and causes children to seek new possibilities.</p> <p>Curiosity is a valuable tool for initiating a new activity or experience. It encourages participation and assists children to develop to their full potential.</p> <p>You can demonstrate and encourage curiosity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ encouraging active exploration, experimentation and learning; for example, introducing new ideas and experiences through formal, informal, planned and spontaneous experiences</li> <li>➤ showing interest in a variety of topics and ideas</li> <li>➤ keeping an open mind; for example, being ready to see things from other points of view, including from the child's point of view</li> <li>➤ asking open questions about the activity or the learning experience to encourage communication, interest and enthusiasm</li> <li>➤ encouraging problem-solving</li> <li>➤ having a positive attitude so that children see learning as fun.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Experimentation</b></p>	<p>Experiences that make children think also encourage their learning and extend their concentration. Questions and further activities can be developed out of conversations that arise from activities, and these can be used to capture attention and encourage experimentation. The environment can encourage this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ allowing children time to explore</li> <li>➤ including technology; for example, microscopes, telescopes or science kits</li> <li>➤ talking about and visiting museums about art, history and science</li> <li>➤ building on children's interests</li> <li>➤ incorporating unusual materials</li> <li>➤ supporting children to try, make up and create new things.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Active learning</b></p>	<p>Your interaction and placement of materials can capture children's attention and stimulate a response and engagement. When children are involved in activities that are open and stimulate a response, they are led into an experience that may bring out new skills and knowledge, and also create reasons to interact with others as part of learning. To achieve this goal, you need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ use open questions</li> <li>➤ be prepared for children to adapt materials or change a provided experience</li> <li>➤ support experimentation</li> <li>➤ be prepared to add more materials and resources</li> <li>➤ provide for all possible events; for example, cleaning up mess</li> <li>➤ be curious and interested yourself, and reflect this in your comments and actions.</li> </ul>

**Choice**

Children will be prompted to use experiences if you present them in an interesting way. By providing a range of creative options and types of experiences, children can choose the type of self-expression that feels meaningful at the time. Spaces should encourage children to do something that interests them. There must be sufficient play spaces for each child to have a choice of two or three activities that meet their interests. Children who are given choices tend to show more creativity than children who have decisions made for them.

## Allowing time for expression

*Arrange for children to work on their creative experiences over a period of hours, sessions, days or weeks to allow them to expand on, develop and adapt their work.*

Children who are encouraged to work on projects and ideas over a period of time will develop a more active involvement and increase their ability to expand their creative skills. Creative involvement does not always come at appropriate times, so you may need to adjust a timetable and use child-centred practice to demonstrate the importance of children's creativity. This might mean being flexible to the needs of children in different ways; some children following a routine, others working on their project.

When you find that a routine is conflicting with a creative experience, you may simply extend the time allowed so that the activity can be completed. Alternatively, you could:

- take a photo of where the children are up to, if the situation can be created again to match
- put up a 'Work in progress' sign so that others know it must not be packed up
- take notes or record information so that the ideas are remembered
- explain when there will be more time and remember to follow through
- ask the children how they would like to arrange their situation.

You may need to inform cleaners or other educators if you are leaving some creative ideas out to be built upon over days or weeks. This may mean that children take responsibility for some part of the service or curriculum requirements, such as:

- helping to clean around the area using their own brooms and mops, so that the space is still safe and healthy
- moving other equipment so there is space available for beds, mattresses or tables
- packing other activities away so there is space for mealtimes or snacks
- moving the activity to a place out of the way
- creating a sign, note or letter that indicates that the work is still in progress
- taking drawings or photos so that the work can be rebuilt or recreated at a later time.

**Example****Providing sufficient time for creativity**

Esha is working in the home area using the colourful lengths of material for the first time. She looks at and feels each different piece. She talks to others and watches how they dress. Over the session she drapes, wraps and models different materials and outfits.

At home, Esha thinks about the dress-ups. She realises that if she wraps the large pieces of material around her body, she can make a skirt and scarf. She knows that the same experience will be available tomorrow, so she can try this then.

The next morning, Esha is excited to return to the materials to try out her ideas.



## Showing enthusiasm

*Act as a role-model to promote and support children's creative efforts.*

The following are ideas for doing this.

### Be enthusiastic about creative expression

Introduce children to a range of examples of creative expression, such as art, music, dance and architecture. This shows children how others use their creative energy and imagination. It may provide a stimulus and some ideas they can refer to in their own play. It shows children that you are interested in and appreciate creativity, and enjoy looking at how others see their environment.

### Be open to new ideas

Be enthusiastic and open to new ideas and initiatives the children suggest. Remember that there are always different ways of doing things and different interpretations of subjects. One way to show this is to provide interpretations of the same scene or object, and talk about how the artists have interpreted them differently. This lets children know there are no right or wrong ways to express ideas.

### Show enthusiasm for creative activities

Show enthusiasm for activities such as art, dramatic play, dance and music. Join in these activities, as children love it when an educator becomes a character or dances to the music. Read stories with energy and enjoyment, and involve children by asking, 'What might happen next?' and other questions to sustain their interest. Being an active participant offers valuable role-modelling and can encourage shyer children to participate.

### Provide a comfortable environment

Foster an environment that is non-threatening and in which children feel safe, relaxed and comfortable to express themselves without fear of failure, being laughed at or feeling silly. Let them know that all their efforts are valuable, but provide guidance and support when appropriate without dampening their enthusiasm or self-esteem.

## Show interest in other cultures

Be familiar with how other cultures celebrate creativity and introduce some examples to your group, such as cooking, music and art. Invite skilled practitioners from your community to demonstrate various cultural activities; for example, Indonesian shadow puppets, Japanese cooking, Aboriginal music or Maori art.

## Using open-ended resources

*The most creative outcomes occur when materials are open-ended.*

Open-ended materials allow children to use them in many ways and in various artforms. During play, children will come up with their own ideas and turn resources chosen by you into creative experiences.

The following table outlines a variety of natural or found items. Most of these materials are sustainable resources.

<p><b>Natural and found materials</b></p> 	<p>Natural materials include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ sand, mud and water</li> <li>➤ shells, pebbles, stones and rocks</li> <li>➤ twigs, leaves, tree bark, gumnuts, pinecones and flowers</li> <li>➤ feathers</li> <li>➤ herbs</li> <li>➤ hay bales</li> <li>➤ tree stumps</li> <li>➤ seed pods (be sure to check if these are poisonous or too small for young children).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Boxes</b></p> 	<p>Shoe boxes, chocolate boxes and grocery boxes are great for imaginative play. You can also find sturdy wooden boxes from greengrocers, hardware stores or wine cellars.</p>
<p><b>Second-hand or reused items</b></p> 	<p>Second-hand materials can be donated or found in charity stores, and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ hats</li> <li>➤ bags and purses</li> <li>➤ buttons</li> <li>➤ cooking equipment</li> <li>➤ corks</li> <li>➤ cotton spools</li> <li>➤ empty containers</li> <li>➤ tins</li> <li>➤ egg cartons</li> <li>➤ tubing.</li> </ul> <p>Recycled materials may be found in reuse services; not-for-profit stores set up for education and care access. These include reverse garbage centres and reverse garbage trucks.</p>

<p><b>Cloth and fabric</b></p> 	<p>Many fabrics, such as cotton, linen and silk, are made from plant or animal fibres. Find suitable fabrics for use in children's play, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ old scarves</li> <li>➤ doilies</li> <li>➤ curtains</li> <li>➤ leftover scraps from sewing projects</li> <li>➤ fabric seconds or offcuts from stores.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dolls</b></p> 	<p>There are many different types of dolls that can be used in addition to commercially produced dolls. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ knitted dolls</li> <li>➤ wooden dolls</li> <li>➤ peg dolls</li> <li>➤ cloth dolls</li> <li>➤ corn husk dolls</li> <li>➤ rope dolls.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Blocks</b></p> 	<p>Wooden offcuts can be found at carpentry and joinery businesses. Provide a range of different sized and shaped blocks.</p>
<p><b>Cane baskets</b></p> 	<p>These come in a variety of shapes and sizes and may be collected from gift packaging or purchased cheaply from second-hand shops.</p>

Children are likely to explore more freely as their curiosity takes over and they take the opportunity to choose how to play. You can encourage this by:

- providing an environment that is visually stimulating and attractive
- setting up creative experiences and displays, including selecting and presenting a range of props and accessories
- displaying children's creative work along with adult displays
- modelling your own appreciation of beauty and creativity
- using creativity and representation to record aspects of the program
- using the appealing nature of indoor and outdoor spaces.

## Answering questions

*Children want to find out information, and there are times when they will continually ask 'why'.*

They use this strategy to try to understand the world, people and to work out how they may find out things for themselves.

To help children to find out, answer 'why' questions by reflecting them back. For example, if you say that you need to fill up the glue pot because it is empty and the child asks 'why', you can reflect it back to the child, saying, 'Why do you think it might be empty?'

You can help children research an answer if the question is complex. In this way, they will learn different strategies for solving problems and finding out answers.

The more you extend and expand children's questions, the more they will ask. This helps you to create responsive and interesting ideas.

### Children can learn the answers to their questions by:

- asking people with specific knowledge or specialist skills
- reading books, encyclopaedias or magazines
- looking at maps
- going on excursions
- experimenting
- watching videos
- going to the library
- carrying out a demonstration
- searching on the internet (where appropriate).

The EYLF Practice: Responsiveness to children encourages you to motivate children and engage them in learning by using open-ended questions and feedback that challenges their thinking and guides their learning.

Open-ended questions and feedback make use of your everyday interactions with children by encouraging them to talk about a topic and share their ideas. Consider how you phrase questions to children so they are given an opportunity to explain and extend beyond a yes or no response.

Some examples of open-ended questions are:

- Tell me about your work?
- What happened?
- What do you like to mould with?
- How do you get the sand to stick to the egg carton?

Questions that involve a yes, no or one-word answer are called closed questions and allow limited responses. Some examples of closed questions are:

- Did you enjoy that?
- Was that hard to do?
- Do you like play dough?
- Did the glue work properly?

The discussions you have with children about their creative activities show your interest and help the child feel valued. Discussion, questioning and feedback provide children with the opportunity to look at their work in a variety of ways, and help them to think more about the process and the skills they have used and may use again.

## Discussing creations

*Use the right type of encouragement when discussing children's creative activities.*

Experiences and other influences in the environment need to make a child feel safe and relaxed so they can explore and develop.

The EYLF Practice: Play-based learning and intentionality, reminds us that play is a time for children to ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking. It is the educator's role to provide a supportive environment where these thinking processes can occur safely. This discussion might occur as part of an intentional teaching process.

### When communicating about art:

- ask children about the process
- encourage effort, persistence, use of materials and uniqueness
- focus on the process and avoid rewards; when children are not motivated by a reward, they are more creative and enjoy the process
- ask children to tell you about their work rather than making assumptions about what they are creating or expressing; for example, it would be disappointing to mistake their cow for a puppy
- display art at children's level so it can be viewed by children.

## Critical reflection

*Critical reflection is a skill used to examine an issue from different perspectives.*

When children are reflecting critically on their creative work, they are thinking about:

- how the process felt
- skills they used
- skills they learnt
- how to describe their work and the process
- how it feels to have accomplished their ideas
- how it feels to be finished or whether they feel the work is not finished yet
- what they could do next.

Critical reflection helps children focus on the process rather than the product. The questions you ask to enable critical reflection should lead them to the process. For example, compare the following questions:

- 'Do you like what you made?' This is a reflection on the end product. It is about being critical and not so much about reflection.
- 'How did you get those thin lines so straight?' This is a question that helps critical reflection and productive thought.

You can engage children in critical reflection either while they are working on a creative project or afterwards. Critical reflection questions help you demonstrate your interest. You may say things like, 'I enjoy watching you work,' 'Your concentration is amazing,' or 'You seem to enjoy doing this.'

Your thoughtful comments can add to the depth of the children's activity, regardless of their age. Try to avoid interrupting a child's work if they appear to be concentrating deeply. Instead, allow children to learn that when you watch them working, you are showing interest in what they are doing.

### Example

#### Encouraging children to discuss their creations

Yanick, an educator, offers the opportunity to create cards for Mother's Day. He says that the cards do not need to be only for mothers, but can be for any people the children feel are special to them.

Yanick provides ideas through his setup. He places some different coloured cards and a range of materials, such as glue, wool, needles, die cuts and paper shape cutters, onto the table. He puts a range of other materials on a nearby trolley for selection. He believes this setup will encourage the children to use their own ideas. They may choose to do collage, sewing or stamping.



As children come to work at the area, Yanick finds that some are making cards and others are exploring the materials for their own enjoyment. He makes positive statements, such as, 'Great idea, Dalip,' and 'What will you do next, Khadija?' He talks to the children about how they are using the materials and encourages them when they try new ideas. 'Dale, I had never thought to decorate the paper that way! Tell me how you do it.'

## Creative collaboration

*The EYLF uses the word 'collaborate' to discuss how children can work together to achieve their goals.*

When children collaborate creatively, they are working together in a process that involves using individual ideas, sharing these ideas and coming up with solutions that everyone is happy with. Children begin to contribute through collaboration from late toddler age (around three years).

Not only are children gaining skills through collaboration, such as problem-solving, communication and negotiation, children's creativity also often benefits from collaboration because it allows them to gain different viewpoints, understand alternative techniques and models of work, and share their expression with others. Self-esteem can be built and improved through success.



Collaborating means working together.

Seek out opportunities to plan or create collaborative projects. There may be a project that you feel all children should have a chance to participate in, or there may be two or more children with similar ideas working individually on projects that would develop more depth if collaboration occurred. It can be a challenge working in groups at times, and children may need direction.

### Common and useful strategies you can use to support collaboration include:

- encouraging small group experiences; collaboration will often occur naturally
- asking for children's help; for example, 'Can anyone help Jaxon balance these blocks?'
- offering open-ended resources and asking how they could be used; children will come up with and share ideas for how to use the materials
- having children work in pairs during group activities; for example, dancing together or acting out a role-play
- presenting ongoing community activities; for example, painting on a large roll or sheet of paper that covers the whole table area, or completing colour squares or pompoms that will be put together to create a larger project
- developing project groups; for example, designing a display or a new part of the yard.

#### Example

##### Encouraging children to collaborate

Carlene, an educator, watches Des building a traffic sign out of boxes. He is trying to tape three boxes together to make a large rectangle shape. Lindee is building a house out of a large box. She is having trouble cutting a door.

Carlene suggests that Des and Lindee collaborate. Lindee can help Des by holding the boxes while he uses the tape, and Des can help Lindee by holding the box in position. Later, they can use both their creations to become involved in dramatic play.



After lunch, Carlene notices that Hayden is showing some children how he can somersault and do handstands. Rea and Gale are watching. Carlene asks if Rea and Gale can do gymnastics or if they know any dance moves. Gale says he goes to tap classes, and Rea says she likes ballet even though she doesn't go to classes. Carlene suggests the children demonstrate what they can do and work together to make a show for the other children.

Later that day, Carlene speaks to the whole group and asks if anyone is interested in collaborating to paint a mural on the brick wall. She shows the children some photos of murals in the community and explains how they were made. Four children indicate their interest, so Carlene starts to work with these children to develop a suitable design.

## Displaying work

*When children's work is displayed respectfully, and with their permission, it presents a message that they are valued and that their work is worthwhile.*

This helps them to feel a sense of belonging and that they are supported.

Thoughtful and meaningful displays of creative work result in:

- exciting and stimulating environments
- promoting value for each child and their skills
- conveying ideas and concepts
- learning tools for future discussion.

Appropriate displays should present work that is individual and shows evidence of how the child thought about or valued the creative process.

Remember, displays that show repetition – where all children have completed work the same way – are not creative or meaningful. Such displays demonstrate the child’s ability to copy models and cognitively or physically complete tasks.

Displays should be set up thoughtfully and at child level so the work can be shared and so that everyone is given the chance to discuss the pieces. When developing a display:

- identify what the purpose is; for example, to showcase work, to support learning or to reinforce a skill
- collect all the items, allowing children to help
- plan the space out; ensure it is safe, uncluttered and clear
- mount the display in creative ways.

Refer to your service’s policies and procedures for displaying work and decorating the environment. Children can help to develop, plan, prepare for and create displays, which will allow them further feelings of ownership, respect for others’ work and a greater opportunity for creative expression.



Display children's artwork respectfully to encourage their creativity.

You can find lots of creative ideas for displays online, particularly at Pinterest ([aspirelr.link/pinterest](https://www.pinterest.com/aspirelr/)).

To ensure children’s work is respected, refer to your service’s policies and procedures. You can involve older children in discussions and decisions relating to their works of art. You can also ask colleagues for their points of view.

### Consider the following questions when displaying children’s work:

- Does naming the work change it in some way?
- Should you ask the child for permission before you name their work?
- Should names be placed on the back or underside of the work?
- If you name the work, does this turn the focus to the product rather than the process?
- Do displays of children’s work focus on the end product or do they value the process?
- Would it be more valuable to display a process of work through photographs or video, rather than an end product?
- If a child’s work is not displayed, does this discourage their creative involvement?
- Is an educator’s decision to display an artwork more important than a child’s request to have their work displayed?
- Should educators ask a child before displaying their work?

Children should never be pressured to produce work for display. Rather, their different areas of creative work should each be respected. For example, while one child provides a painting, another may have built an amazing block piece and another presented a choreographed dance piece. Each creative work is valuable.

## Peer appreciation

*When children receive positive responses from their peers, they feel a sense of belonging, acceptance and increased self-esteem.*

This will further encourage them to share information and gain a sense of accomplishment.

Everyone has different ideas about what is pleasing and enjoyable. You cannot force children to tell others that their ideas or creative work is wonderful, but you can demonstrate, through modelling, that all children's efforts are to be encouraged.

Sometimes, children will automatically be drawn to another child's work. This attraction is something you can build on by asking open questions – not about whether the child likes the work, but about what they find interesting. This develops deeper thought. Some example questions you could use include:

- 'Rosa, what interests you about the painting?'
- 'Lesley, you seem interested. What questions could you ask to find out more?'
- 'Kim, how do you think Justine created that decoration?'
- 'Raelene, you don't seem to like this drawing. Is there something you do like about it?'
- 'Jude, can you explain to Waylon why you have used the colours in that way? He wants to know more.'

When children come up with interesting ideas and experiment with ways of doing things, they have the ability to share these either immediately or at a later time. You can support later involvement by creating opportunities for discussion and display.

### Tips to encourage children to share their ideas

- Allow children to 'show and tell' or demonstrate their work to children who are interested and choose to participate.
- Use group times (such as structured mat times, snack or mealtimes) to encourage children to share their thoughts on the things they found interesting in the work of others.
- Provide safe storage for work in progress or work that has already been completed.
- Encourage other children to check on the work that others are doing.
- Display finished work.

If the attention towards a child's work or ideas is negative, you may need to use simple language and encourage the child to explain why they feel this way. You might also give the artist the opportunity to explain their work. This might be an opportunity to describe:

- why it is presented in the way it is
- how the work makes them feel
- the feelings they wanted others to gain
- what their work means to them.

**Example****Encouraging children to respect others**

Emilie tells Shanna, the educator, that she would like to make a fairy tree. She wants to make fairy figurines and houses, and put them under the tree outside. She thinks that cardboard would be good for this.

Marcello, another child, says, 'Emilie, your idea is stupid! Cardboard can't stay outside in the rain!' Shanna steps in and says, 'Marcello, telling Emilie the idea is stupid is not helping her. Maybe you should ask Emilie some questions and help her work out the best idea.'



## Modelling creativity

*Throughout the day you may be able to role-model creativity and the creative use of materials.*

Children may need help to think about materials and how to adapt them to work the way they imagine. To assist in these situations, you might be able to make a number of suggestions or give some options for the child to decide on.

You can role-model creativity by showing children how you improvise and manipulate materials yourself, as in the following examples.

Improvisation	Examples
Encourage children to think of different ways to use materials	'We have feathers, paper plates and glitter. How can you use these?'
Demonstrate options	'We have matchsticks and pipe cleaners that may suit that task. Can you think of anything else you might use?'
Help to solve problems	'Let's go to the storeroom and see what you can use to make a cubby.'
Provide materials and challenge the children's thinking	'How many ways can you create a bird and what materials do you need?'
Repurpose materials	Use old jars for paint pots, grow seeds in tins punched with drainage holes and store pencils in ice-cream containers.
Provide options	'We have collected so many egg cartons. Do you have ideas for using them? I thought we could make a cityscape for the block area or a truck for under the pergola. What do you think?'

Creativity can sometimes be difficult to model. If you model creativity by developing your own ideas, you may unintentionally stunt the child's ability to be creative by providing guidelines they feel they need to follow.

When situations like this occur, children are measuring their own success against your creation. Even if you verbally state that they should come up with their own ideas, most children will attempt to match you and measure their efforts against your finished product.

When children ask you to provide a product for them to work to, try encouraging them to develop their own ideas. Model creativity by showing them how you improvise with materials and equipment without actually developing a specific product. For example, you may show them a number of ways to use a pipe cleaner or suggest some materials that may solve a problem for them when they are trying to create.

### Example

#### Encouraging a child's creativity

Crystal, an educator, moulds a horse from play dough. Immediately, Stanton starts trying to copy the moulded horse. Crystal tells Stanton to try to make his own animal, but Stanton wants to make a horse and he is determined to make it just like Crystal's. When the body and head will not stay put, Stanton asks Crystal if she will finish the horse for him so that his is the same as hers. She shows him her technique and encourages Stanton to do the same.



Later, Crystal and Stanton are at the play dough table again. Stanton says he wants to make a car. Crystal encourages Stanton and listens to his ideas. When he has trouble moulding a part, Crystal shows him a strategy. Stanton uses his own creative ideas to complete the car in a way he envisions it.



## Practice Task 3

1. Draw a line to match the children's interests on the left with the opportunity provided to foster their creativity and agency on the right.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| * Child who enjoyed visiting a sculpture exhibition                | * Bubble-blowing to encourage curiosity and active learning.   |
| * Child who is learning about their emotions                       | * Cardboard box with different textured materials pasted on each inside panel.                             |
| * Child who has returned from an overseas trip                     | * Drawing app on digital technology accompanied by intentional teaching about how to use the app.          |
| * Infant who points at objects                                     | * Music from different genres and intentional teaching about how music can make us feel.                   |
| * Toddler who enjoys crawling into small spaces                    | * Pilot hat, small trolley with home area food items, chairs, recycled paper cards and pencils.            |
| * Child who is interested in the shapes of windows in the building | * Intentional teaching about how to use wire and papier-mâché to create forms and provide these materials. |

2. Which of the following actions show respect and appreciation for children's creative efforts? Select all that apply.

- Giving children the choice to continue their work at a later time and keeping their work safe until then.
- Writing the child's name at the top of their work so you know who completed it
- Displaying art in individual ways that demonstrates the child has expressed an idea that is imaginative and unique.
- Asking children what interests them about their own and others' work, and using these comments to model and share enthusiasm.
- Showing children how to form their drawings through examples of your own work.

## 2B Developing creative skills

*There are a range of skills that children will draw on when planning and implementing creative ideas.*

The use of these skills allows children to come up with ideas and then to see them happen. When educators encourage these skills, children become more engaged.

### Sensory exploration

*Sensory exploration allows children to use their sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste to find out about the world.*

Sensory-rich materials provide children with the opportunity for hands-on, self-directed and self-centred activity, as well as opportunities to learn. When children understand the properties of materials, realising they are able to use them in creative ways.

Sensory experiences influence the following areas of development:

- fine motor skills, including hand-eye coordination
- creativity
- imagination in play
- social skills of sharing, cooperating and learning to play alongside others
- emotional areas, including releasing tension, building confidence and being able to work in a fail-proof way; that is, there are no right or wrong ways to do something.

Sensory experiences can improve children's knowledge of science through experimentation, including concepts of evaporation, gravity, physics, construction and engineering, and knowledge of maths, including one-to-one correspondence, counting and concepts like weight, volume and measurement.

By using their senses, children learn about materials and how they can be used. They experiment to find methods and actions that can be part of a creative experience, or become part of creative expression at a later date.

Some common sensory experiences and materials are identified below.

<p><b>Water play</b></p> 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Hot and cold water</li> <li>➤ Different colours (e.g. using food dye)</li> <li>➤ Bubbles</li> </ul> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pouring</li> <li>➤ Swirling</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sand play</b></p> 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Different coloured sand</li> </ul> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Smoothing</li> <li>➤ Pouring</li> <li>➤ Moulding</li> <li>➤ Patting</li> <li>➤ Shaking</li> </ul>
<p><b>Simple games</b></p> 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Memory games</li> <li>➤ Feely bags</li> <li>➤ Different foods for taste tests</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cooking</b></p> 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ingredients</li> <li>➤ Cooking utensils</li> <li>➤ Recipes</li> </ul> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Mixing with hands</li> <li>➤ Smelling</li> <li>➤ Tasting</li> <li>➤ Seeing reactions of ingredients (such as cakes rising, biscuits going brown and changes in consistency)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Play dough, clay, mud and slime</b></p> 	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Manipulating</li> <li>➤ Squeezing</li> <li>➤ Rolling</li> <li>➤ Shaping</li> <li>➤ Colouring</li> </ul>

## Teaching skills and knowledge

*Many skills you take for granted may need to be taught to children, even if they have observed adults doing them.*

An example of this is how a child will learn to wipe a glue or paint brush on the side of the pot prior to pasting or painting to remove the excess.

### Some ways of teaching children skills include:

- Demonstrating: Showing them what to do
- Problem-solving: Asking how to resolve an issue or identify a better way to do something
- Providing options and ideas: Showing options, explaining the outcome each would provide, then supporting achievement
- Exploring: Offering different options and working together to find out how each works and which one suits best
- Exchanging equipment: Explaining the risks and providing them with safer options, particularly when safety is a concern
- Trial and error: Allowing exploration, finding out what happens and how things work, while ensuring safety and that materials and equipment are cared for

Intentional teaching may be included in a creative experience so that you can support a child to understand a concept, assist them or provide more information. Intentional teaching can support the child to develop the skills, knowledge or techniques required to use materials, resources and tools successfully. Keep in mind that in some cases your intentional teaching may be useful, and in other cases the child may wish to experiment, explore or use items in their own way.

However, for safety or when correct use is important, you may need to show children how to use items correctly. Once a child is familiar with a material or piece of equipment and can confidently use it, their ability to be creative will increase as they concentrate on the activity.

Some skills for using materials and equipment that children will benefit from are shown in the following table.

Equipment/ material	Useful skills and knowledge
Brushes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Wiping off excess liquid before using</li> <li>➤ Using the brush section to gain greatest control and coverage</li> </ul>
Scissors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Holding techniques; for example, how to hold the paper in one hand while cutting with the other</li> </ul>
Home area equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How all the different equipment is used; for example, chopsticks and coffee maker</li> <li>➤ Different ways to wear and fasten dress-ups or doll's clothing</li> </ul>
Computer/tablet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How to access programs, go back, play, etc.</li> </ul>
Fasteners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How to do up and undo zips, buttons, velcro, laces, cords, etc.</li> </ul>

Equipment/material	Useful skills and knowledge
<b>Musical instruments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children can use these creatively, but they may need to be shown how to use them effectively; for example, a triangle can be struck to make a noise, but it only works properly if you hold the string</li> </ul>
<b>Material</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flinging light materials into the air to make them float</li> <li>Spinning ribbons in the air by flicking wrists</li> </ul>
<b>Puppets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening and shutting the mouth with a hand (hand puppet)</li> <li>Moving strings can make the puppet dance or walk (string puppet)</li> <li>Moving fingers (finger puppet)</li> </ul>
<b>Construction sets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the pieces attach to each other</li> <li>How balance works</li> </ul>
<b>Train sets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to put the track sections together</li> </ul>
<b>Nuts and bolts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How different sizes and threads fit together</li> </ul>
<b>Hammer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to hold a nail so you hit its head, not your fingers</li> </ul>
<b>Pegs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to use fingers to squeeze them open</li> </ul>
<b>Thread</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to tie off so the beads don't fall off the end</li> <li>How to hold the string or cord so there is enough to thread the bead onto, but not so much that it flops over and is not rigid</li> </ul>
<b>Glue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Different glues for different strength requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Hole punches, staplers, tape, stamps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pushing, pressing, loading or cutting</li> <li>Placing material so it is in the correct position</li> </ul>
<b>Compass, ruler or stencils</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to make circles or lines</li> <li>Holding steady and in place</li> <li>Where to place hands or fingers</li> </ul>
<b>Paint</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mixing colours</li> </ul>

## Teaching techniques

*In addition to knowing how to operate equipment and materials, children may need to learn creative techniques.*

This often involves showing older children how effects can be created; for example:

- painting with water paint over crayon, particularly white crayon on white paper with coloured paint
- watering down paint so that it gives a watercolour feel
- mulching paper to make papier-mâché, then creating objects with this material
- using a marble or some wool to create paint tracks



Teach children creative techniques.

- using sticks and paint made from soil to develop dot paintings, or using recognised Aboriginal symbols to paint a story
- making pompoms with wool
- doing pressings and rubbings.

Options are endless and can link with known artforms; for example, you can show Indigenous artforms and then teach techniques, or hang a watercolour painting and encourage children to use watercolours to create their own ideas. Remember that children must have time to practise and experiment, and they may come up with their own techniques to create their ideas. They may use the materials in different ways than you suggest, which should be encouraged unless it is dangerous or damages equipment or materials.

## Overcoming challenges

*The EYLF suggests that learning environments should encourage children to explore, solve problems, create and construct.*

The challenges children face during creative work usually relate to new directions or how materials might be used. For example, if a child is having trouble attaching two materials together, the work will be altered if they decide to use different materials or to leave out the attachment.

To encourage children to think critically and develop strong problem-solving skills, it is useful to encourage creative thinking when faced with a challenge and to have children identify as many resolutions as they can. Doing so helps them to develop stronger:

- self-esteem and confidence
- thinking and reasoning skills
- communication skills
- knowledge about issues and consequences
- understanding of emotions.

In many situations, your role is to help children find out what the real challenge is. They may demonstrate frustration and express this in a variety of ways. Be aware of verbal cues and what they may mean. Some examples are shown in the following table.

verbal comments	Cues displayed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 'I can't do this.'</li> <li>➤ 'This is too hard.'</li> <li>➤ 'I don't want to do this.'</li> <li>➤ 'This is stupid.'</li> <li>➤ 'I am stupid.'</li> <li>➤ 'You need to do it for me.'</li> <li>➤ 'I am no good.'</li> <li>➤ 'Why can't I do it?'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Frowning</li> <li>➤ Growling or making aggressive sounds</li> <li>➤ Stopping work</li> <li>➤ Working on the task, but not progressing</li> <li>➤ Asking you to do the task</li> <li>➤ Telling you they can't do it</li> <li>➤ Being aggressive; for example, throwing materials, sweeping the activity off the table or interrupting others</li> </ul>

To help the child move past these feelings and for them to succeed, you should:

- acknowledge feelings
- identify the issue
- brainstorm to find solutions
- select the most suitable idea
- check back later to ensure all went well.

### Example

#### Encouraging children to solve problems

Jiao, an educator, is working with a group of children who are building a sandcastle with a moat. Each time the sand is turned out of the bucket, the castle collapses. Jiao notices the children are getting frustrated and they are starting to blame each other: 'Ann, you keep doing it!'; 'Karla, why did you pull the bucket so fast?'; 'I told you it wasn't full enough.'



Jiao acknowledges the problem and helps the children work out what they need to focus on. She asks, 'What seems to be the problem here?' Each child tells her that another child is doing the wrong thing. Jiao helps them to see the problem differently. 'You all seem to be getting frustrated. Do you think you are doing something wrong or is the sand the problem?' The children agree that it is probably the sand. They brainstorm and come up with a few ideas about what they could do:

- Don't worry about it.
- Add water.
- Get a different bucket.
- Build the castle with their hands instead.
- Pat the sand down hard.

After talking about the issue, they decide to try getting some water, as they want this for the moat anyway. They try this and it works so well that they make a plan to extend the size of the castle.

Jiao stays nearby to support the children to be successful and to supervise their use of water.

## Thinking, reasoning and hypothesising

*Thinking, reasoning and hypothesising are ways to explore and find out about things.*

They can be explained as the following:

- Thinking – The process of using your mind to come up with ideas, remember, develop an opinion or make a decision.
- Reasoning – The ability to think logically.
- Hypothesising – The process of guessing how or why something will occur.

Instead of telling children the answers to questions, encourage them to use thinking, reasoning and hypothesising, and then experiment to reach a solution. You can start the discussion or follow on from a child's lead.

Following on from this, when it comes to creative development, risk-taking relates to the chances children take in their thinking, reasoning, hypothesising and experimenting. Children need to be encouraged to try new ideas and practices; these involve taking a risk, as the idea or practice may not be successful.

Children will not be able to work out their ideas if they are not confident enough to take a risk to:

- try something new
- ask a question
- explore an answer
- attempt to create something they imagine.

### **To facilitate learning environments where children feel comfortable taking risks, you can:**

- encourage children to ask questions and try new ideas and ways of doing things
- model acceptance and value unusual ideas
- plan for open-ended experiences and activities
- provide for inquiry learning; that is, exploring, experimenting, testing and investigating
- encourage spontaneity and advise children that mistakes are opportunities to learn
- provide appropriate levels of challenge
- encourage guesswork and hypothesising (speculating on what they think might happen)
- avoid labelling ideas as 'right' or 'wrong' when children are involved in discussions.

## Inventing

*Children are keen inventors; they use their creativity to solve problems, develop their ideas and express various developmental skills.*

When inventing, children draw on existing skills as well as learning new skills as they experiment, demonstrate and search for solutions. Invention allows children to question why, what, where, when and how.

Inventions usually occur as a spontaneous thought or from wanting to solve a problem. Inventions may also arise from questions you ask children, such as 'How could we ...?'

Some inventions go on to be famous, while others form a useful and sometimes amusing outcome. The more children's ideas are encouraged, the more inventive they will become.

Some examples of patented or published inventions developed by children include:

- crayon holders (Cassidy Goldstein, 11 years)
- underwater walkie-talkie (Richie Stachowski, 10 years)
- fat-free bacon cooker (Abbey Fleck, eight years)
- trampoline (George Nissen, 16 years).



Some children have come up with successful inventions.

The Little Big Ideas competition – an Australian event – announced the following children as winners and finalists, each earning a trip to NASA in the USA:

- colour blind watch (Hamish Lane, aged 10 years)
- no pain band-aid (Chloe H, aged eight years)
- snap and save toothbrush (Alastair V, aged 12 years)

To find out more about these inventions, go to the Origin website at: [aspirelr.link/australias-best-young-inventors](http://aspirelr.link/australias-best-young-inventors)

Other inventions originating from children’s creativity include:

- braille
- braille printer
- Christmas lights
- popsicle
- toy trucks
- snow mobile
- walkie talkie
- swim flippers
- earmuffs.

In an art project, Dominic Wilcox decided to take the inventions of children, usually drawings or learning stories, and develop these into actual objects. You can see how the children’s inventions were developed and created at this website: [aspirelr.link/kids-inventions-real-products](http://aspirelr.link/kids-inventions-real-products).

## Encouraging inquiry

*Inquiry is about new ideas and challenges.*

It involves exploring, examining something in detail, experimenting and performing some procedure or action to find something out. It can also involve risk because the child is unsure of what the result will be and needs to be prepared for unexpected outcomes.

Some outcomes will challenge and intrigue the child. Intrigue may occur if the child is unable to complete the inquiry for some reason, such as if they make mistakes or cannot find an answer. They may investigate to understand how something works. also be surprised and may need further help due to their experiment not turning out how they expected. A child may be surprised when they work something out and feel excited that they have learnt something new.

When planning to provide inquiry experiences, match the type of challenge and investigation with the stage of the child. If they are in the sensorimotor stage, they will be involved in inquiry that involves safe sensory exploration, such as:

- tasting different foods and drinks
- feeling the difference between two things
- touching something they haven’t felt before.

The preoperational child – aged two to seven – will have more questions and many ways of looking at things, not all of them logical.

Inquiry processes can be implemented as group or individual experiences. Any time you are investigating a ‘why’ or ‘how’ question with the children, you are involved in inquiry. There should be regular opportunities for you to ask these questions of the children too, facilitating intrigue with something they have not thought of earlier.

With adult support, children can see how cars, motorcycles, lawn mowers and other machinery work. They might use tools to explore the workings of interesting items and find out what is inside.

To challenge children's thinking, you could:

- ask them to draw what they might find inside an item prior to taking it apart
- take the item apart and see if the children can guess what it is (take a photograph first so that you can show the children what it originally looked like)
- take an item apart and use the pieces to create something new.

You may need parental permission before you begin projects such as deconstruction. The children need to be aware that they need your permission before taking things apart; the items must be old or discarded and the child must have an adult with them at all times.

## Practice Task 4

1. Which of the following are examples of intentional teaching that support creative skills? Select all that apply.

- Demonstrating how the children should construct a model.
- Sharing photographs of different sculptures and talking about the types of materials used.
- Assisting a child to understand how to use a hole punch for their collage work.
- Explaining to a child why it is important to paint using the whole paper area so the paper isn't wasted.
- Explaining the properties of the three types of glue provided.

2. Which of the following statements about creative skills are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

- |   |       |      |
|---|-------|------|
| a. To encourage children to develop strong problem-solving skills, encourage creative thinking so that when faced with a challenge, the child will attempt to identify as many resolutions as they can.   | * Yes | * No |
| b. Rather than telling children the answers to questions, encourage them to think, reason, hypothesise and experiment to reach a solution. You can start the discussion or follow on from a child's lead. | * Yes | * No |
| c. When it comes to creative development, children will only take risks in construction as they balance blocks and build towers.  | * Yes | * No |
| d. When inventing, children draw on existing skills and add new skills as they experiment, demonstrate and search for solutions.  | * Yes | * No |
| e. Demonstrating a creative process is the best way for inquiry to take place. This way children learn new creative techniques.   | * Yes | * No |

## 2C Providing creative experiences

*The more children experiment and explore, the more they develop their skills.*

Through encouragement and the provision of appropriate activities, children will include creativity and imagination in most aspects of their play.

### Cultural experiences

*When providing creative experiences, show that you are culturally aware and sensitive. Include aspects of a variety of cultures, however, express these in a positive and understanding manner.*

Some ways you might do this are by:

- Construction – introducing a variety of construction materials and images that represent culturally diverse buildings, materials and styles
- Digital technology – understanding the cultural choices of families in relation to screen time
- Dramatic and imaginary play - respecting that the day to day life of many ethnic and racial groups are similar to western cultures, for example, traditional dress is worn only at celebrations, foods may only be eaten by isolated or self-sufficient communities, males and females should be represented equally
- Music and creative movement – sectors of the community will have their own dance rituals or interests; they will use music and dance in different ways and for different purposes
- Visual arts – cultures may combine traditional and modern techniques
- Story telling – using culturally diverse stories and language, adding props that represent various cultures.

When using traditional ethnic or racial objects or ideas, check with a community or do some online research to make sure this is acceptable. You may find that your ideas:

- require a permission
- are only able to be used on a specific day
- are restricted to male or female use
- should be represented in a colour, shape or size
- must avoid specific words or gestures
- are used only to demonstrate times of sadness or tragedy.

### Construction skills

*Children construct objects based on items they notice around them and items they imagine, including ones they invent as they play.*

The art of designing and constructing buildings is called architecture. Children demonstrate their interest in architecture as they design and build. They use blocks, discarded boxes and purchased kits and pieces to build things they know and see, as well as developing their own ideas. As their skills develop, children use materials in more advanced ways.

Construction combines creative self-expression with the skills of problem-solving and investigating as children explore their creations. They discover how things work and how to use tools. They also discover aspects of science and maths as they work out:

- size and shape
- numbers and measurements, such as length, area, mass, density and weight
- balance
- spatial awareness
- position
- direction
- patterns
- sorting
- fractions.

The child's experience influences their development of construction skills. For example, a child who has never worked with construction materials may have less knowledge of balance, size and structure, and how these all work together.

Children's developmental stages in relation to construction are outlined in the following table.

<p><b>Sensory</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Developing gross and fine motor skills, and exploring the properties of materials</li> <li>➤ Enjoying seeing whether things fit together or fit into other objects</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tote and carry</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Carrying items around, feeling them and experimenting</li> <li>➤ Enjoying knocking over towers and bashing blocks together to find out what they can do</li> </ul>
<p><b>Building</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Building rows horizontally and vertically</li> <li>➤ Enjoying building roads and towers, and later building fences.</li> <li>➤ Starting to include imaginative play in their construction; for example, using trains and trucks</li> <li>➤ Using repetition in building</li> </ul>

<p><b>Bridging</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Starting to add bridges to building</li> <li>➤ Using trial and error</li> </ul>
<p><b>Enclosures</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Making fences so blocks are enclosing spaces</li> <li>➤ Using their constructions as part of dramatic play; for example, farm animals, dolls and trucks</li> </ul>
<p><b>Representational</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Using symmetry, patterns, balance and design</li> <li>➤ Often deciding what they are building before they start</li> <li>➤ Reproducing ideas and repeating their construction</li> <li>➤ Extending on their ideas and developing them indefinitely</li> <li>➤ Enjoying working on projects and using them dramatically</li> <li>➤ Enjoying developing progressive works and creating elaborate stories that involve their constructions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Complex building</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Creating elaborate buildings</li> <li>➤ Adding curves, levels, balanced parts, shapes and patterns</li> <li>➤ Including cooperative play</li> <li>➤ Discussing plans for building</li> <li>➤ Seeking building challenges</li> </ul>

Blocks of all sizes can be used to enhance creativity by:

- presenting them in the block area, on shelves and set up on the floor
- placing small blocks on tables
- using them to make props for other activities
- adding props such as cars and traffic lights, dolls and animals, pieces of cloth and other material
- providing them indoors and outdoors.

## Planning for construction activities

*You can contribute to children's creative construction by providing materials and space (both indoors and outdoors).*

Support the ideas that children are implementing or help them to gain new ideas. You might do this by extending their understanding about science and mathematical concepts.

You can also support children's exploration of materials for construction by providing opportunities for them to practise using the resources. In addition, you can challenge their skills by providing new resources, listening to their needs, and supplying additional or mixed materials when appropriate.

Construction materials include:

- cardboard boxes, milk containers, egg cartons, yoghurt tubs, paper rolls, tape, glue and string
- wood offcuts
- natural materials, such as branches, shells and sand
- small wooden blocks
- large hollow wooden blocks
- commercial materials, such as Mega Bloks, LEGO, DUPLO, Meccano and Mobilo
- magnets
- connector straws
- plastic cogs or gears.



Provide materials and space for construction activities.

When choosing resources for construction, check that the children have access to appropriate materials; it is frustrating if glue does not stick properly, surfaces are uneven or space is limited. Be aware of safety issues and ensure that materials are safe to use; for example, there are no small parts that could be swallowed or sharp pieces that could harm a child.

Woodwork requires close supervision as children learn to respect and use tools in a safe manner. Young children may begin by using 'tap tap' sets or foam instead of wood. All children require support to develop skills to use tools and hold materials safely. Consider the following:

- Types: Pine is a soft wood; other woods may be difficult to saw or hammer into.
- Shapes: Different shapes and sizes allow for a variety of ideas.
- Tools: Do the tools suit the age group? Nails, hammers, files, saws, sandpaper and non-toxic glue all require consideration as to whether they are appropriate for the children to use and which sizes or types will suit best.
- Materials: Wood, cloth, icy-pole sticks and plastic lids are all options.

Also consider whether the equipment is at the correct level for the children and whether the workbench is steady. Remember, safety is crucial.

You can encourage construction by:

- visiting or viewing buildings and discussing what they are made of and how they are built
- displaying posters of various types of buildings and constructions in the block area
- taking photos of constructions the children build
- looking at photos of constructions at each stage
- viewing constructions from different eras
- looking at architectural drawings
- discussing shapes, colours, textures and patterns.

## Example

### Planning a construction experience

Billy (aged four) has shown interest in construction. The educator comes up with the following plan for a construction activity.

#### Construction activity: Collage pasting with cardboard boxes

**Child:** Billy

**Age:** Four years and three months

**Outcome 4:** Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another.

#### Development:

- Creative – having an idea and creating it
- Physical – manipulating the materials
- Emotional – experiencing success in creating an idea of his own
- Cognitive – solving problems and working out how to create his ideas



#### Materials required:

- Small table with one chair
- One paste pot, brush and smock
- Scissors
- Boxes of various sizes in a basket
- Baskets holding tissue paper and crayons

#### Strategies used to foster creativity during the experience:

- Ensure props are easily accessible.
- Provide plenty of different box sizes and shapes.
- Present materials in an attractive manner.
- Ensure Billy has the opportunity to work uninterrupted and knows that he can stop his work and return to it at a later time – a shelf is available for work to be stored.
- Discuss techniques Billy uses, but don't interrupt concentration.
- Replenish used materials and reset for the next child to participate.

## Digital technology

*Information Communications Technology (ICT) is anything using electronic or digital equipment that allows us to get information or communicate with each other.*

Digital technology is not just about having screen time; it extends into many other areas. Computer programs or apps can provide children with stories, music, pictures and other language experiences. Children can learn words, hear other languages, create their own stories, make posters and design a range of ideas.

Older children may use the internet to look up pictures and information. By observing how children use the internet to access different sites, you can gain an idea of what they are interested in and like to do.

You can take pictures or information that children find and build them into other experiences in your curriculum; for example, printing items for group discussions, reading stories from a screen or using the computer for children to find objects – a trivia hunt.

Skype may be used to communicate in real time with other services or any other person from around the globe.

So that children are safe online, install software that blocks inappropriate content and any contact from others online. You may need to refer to your service's policies and procedures regarding accessing and downloading online content.



Digital technology is advancing rapidly.

## Dramatic and imaginary play

*Children have individual ways of expressing their feelings, and drama is an excellent method for doing this.*

By respecting this and encouraging them to be open in communication and play, children will express themselves in various ways. Their expression depends on factors such as:

- the environment in which they are raised
- the opportunities available
- emotional support and development
- their age
- limits and boundaries set by families and educators
- the materials and resources provided.

Dramatic play involves imaginary situations and organised roles and rules. During dramatic play, children role-play stories and act out situations, such as being shopkeepers, hairdressers and parents. They use dramatic play to understand the world they live in, make sense of things that have happened and act out



Encourage children to engage in imaginary play.

feelings, such as fear, shyness, frustration and anger. Dramatic play allows the child to become another person, to see what it is like to act like them, think like them and express themselves in a different way.

Dramatic play is initiated in the associative social play stage, where children take on roles alongside others, but comes to a peak when they reach the cooperative play stage, in which children are able to share ideas and solve problems together. At this point they become leaders or followers, and give roles to each other in their play. Plots will be discussed and played out, and children work together, meaning the play lasts longer.

As children's dramatic play evolves, they may begin to explore drama, theatrical performance and presentations.

## Planning for dramatic play

Dramatic play can be introduced and encouraged through the use of props.

Props could be a doll's house, puppets and home areas, while dramatic play areas could be shops, building sites, hairdressers or hospitals.

Older children may enjoy writing, rehearsing and playing out dramatic scripts. Younger children can become involved in imaginary or dramatic play naturally.

You can extend children's understanding of drama by:

- taking them to plays
- inviting actors to the service
- using puppets and props in story times
- providing a range of new and/or culturally rich materials and resources.

Dramatic experiences may be planned or may develop spontaneously and will often develop depending on the props and dress-ups that are accessible, safe and easy to use.

Experiences include:

- acting out stories
- presenting day-to-day situations
- acting out jobs
- inventing situations to demonstrate emotions
- dramatising current events
- puppetry.

As you watch children play and listen to their ideas, you may find opportunities where you can provide support and extension to their play. When you provide extensions to play, children remain engaged for longer periods and can find a broader range of options for their play. Extension may be as simple as adding props to a play space, suggesting a larger or smaller place for their play, or adding a new idea about their topic of play.

## Example

### Planned dramatic play experience

Isolde is 18 months old. She has been observed a number of times watching a group of three-year-olds in imaginary play: playing with dolls, feeding, bathing, changing them and putting them to bed. Isolde is holding a doll and looking at it. She has not shown any imitative play so far. The educator, Katrina, comes up with the following planned activity.

### Dramatic play activity: Feeding dolls

**Child:** Isolde

**Age:** 18 months

**Outcome 4:** Children develop a growth mindset and learning dispositions, such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.

#### Development:

- Creative – imitating real life with an imaginative situation
- Physical – using a spoon correctly
- Emotional – expressing feelings through a make-believe story
- Cognitive – working out how to feed the doll by following actions

#### Materials:

- Doll
- Doll's clothes
- Two spoons
- Bowl
- Chair and table

#### Activity:

- Dressing a doll and sitting it on a chair in the playroom.
- I will ask Isolde to come and help me feed the doll.
- I will have two spoons, so that we can both imitate feeding the doll.
- I will ensure considerations are made to reflect diversity and/or the child's family culture:
  - Isolde eats with a spoon.
  - Isolde has a younger sister at home who is fed with a spoon.



## Creative movement

*Through movement and dance, children learn about their bodies.*

When movement is coupled with music, children are able to channel their energy and feelings through body actions.

Movement can be used to:

- communicate an image (for example, the wind in a tree)
- communicate an idea (for example, a journey)
- communicate a feeling (for example, strength)
- demonstrate a culture (for example, Indonesian dance).

Creative movement is a way for children to get to know themselves and to see connections with the rest of the world. It provides children with opportunities for non-competitive, success-oriented and creative experiences that everyone can participate in.

Many developmental benefits can arise from creative movement, as outlined in the following table.

<b>Physical activity</b>	Fine and gross motor skill development, stability and manipulative skills
<b>Locomotion</b>	Walking, running, jumping, hopping, skipping, sliding and climbing
<b>Stability</b>	Bending, stretching, twisting, turning, swinging, body rolling, landing, stopping, dodging and balancing
<b>Manipulative skills</b>	Throwing, catching, kicking, tapping, bouncing and rolling balls
<b>Spatial or body awareness</b>	Learning about the boundaries of the body, controlling the body, and perceptions of space, shape and distance
<b>Sensory awareness</b>	Visual, auditory, body kinaesthetic (for example, how to move and shape their body) and tactile experiences (for example, running with bare feet or swirling a scarf)
<b>Exploration</b>	Testing physical abilities, choosing movements they are capable of achieving and choosing movements that are new and challenging
<b>Problem-solving</b>	Solving problems such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Can I fit through this hoop?</li> <li>➤ How can I balance this ball?</li> <li>➤ How can I reach that?</li> <li>➤ How can I use this scarf in dance?</li> <li>➤ How can I move fast and slow?</li> <li>➤ How do I use this equipment?</li> </ul>
<b>Imagination and creativity</b>	Freedom to explore their body movements and abilities, expressing thoughts and feelings, and interpreting actions in their own way
<b>Social skills</b>	Working in groups, communication, self-direction, self-awareness, and recognising and appreciating their own and others' uniqueness

Be aware of children’s developmental stages so you can plan movement activities that not only match their level, but also extend their skills.

Developmental stage	Movement skills
<p><b>Infant</b></p>	<p>Infants are developing their gross motor skills. They can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ crawl</li> <li>➤ follow a moving object</li> <li>➤ reach out for objects using their hands, mouth and eyes in coordination</li> <li>➤ imitate hand gestures such as waving goodbye</li> <li>➤ explore their own bodies and surroundings.</li> </ul> <p>They enjoy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ shaking, pounding and banging objects</li> <li>➤ walking or dancing while holding an adult’s hands or being held</li> <li>➤ imitating actions such as peek-a-boo.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Toddler</b></p>	<p>Toddlers are full of energy, enthusiasm and curiosity. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ improving their motor skills, which allows them to freely explore their environment</li> <li>➤ showing some spatial awareness and able to identify body parts</li> <li>➤ walking around obstacles</li> <li>➤ running, squatting and climbing</li> <li>➤ throwing a large ball underarm while maintaining balance.</li> </ul> <p>They enjoy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ pushing and pulling toys</li> <li>➤ participating in simple action songs</li> <li>➤ moving to music.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Preschooler</b></p>	<p>Preschoolers are full of energy, curiosity and creativity. Their motor skills are being perfected. They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ interact in group situations and play cooperatively</li> <li>➤ are able to use a wide range of gross motor skills</li> <li>➤ run, start and stop with ease</li> <li>➤ use imaginative and elaborate play ideas.</li> </ul> <p>They enjoy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ interactive games</li> <li>➤ making up their own songs and dances</li> <li>➤ role-play and imitation</li> <li>➤ creating and sharing their ideas with others.</li> </ul>

Developmental stage	Movement skills
School-age child	<p>School-age children are more in control physically and are becoming more self-confident. They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ are able to control fine and gross motor movements</li> <li>➤ coordinate themselves physically (for example, kicking a ball and riding a bike)</li> <li>➤ understand the concept of space and time.</li> </ul> <p>They enjoy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ vigorous physical activity</li> <li>➤ challenging activities</li> <li>➤ team games and sports</li> <li>➤ dramatic play</li> <li>➤ making up their own games, activities and rules</li> <li>➤ sharing their ideas with others.</li> </ul>

## Planning for movement

***Creative movement provides children with opportunities for non-competitive, success-oriented and creative experiences.***

Activities should be adapted so all children can participate. They should include children with additional needs, such as language, sensory, developmental or physical needs.

There are many ways to include movement in activities. The following table suggests activities to develop skills in movement and nurture creativity.

Physical activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Explore fast and slow, high and low body movements</li> <li>➤ Balance and jump</li> <li>➤ Follow particular movement directions</li> <li>➤ Move freely</li> <li>➤ Act out and shape their bodies like objects</li> <li>➤ Complete obstacle courses</li> <li>➤ Dance</li> <li>➤ Make up new games</li> </ul>
Sensory exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Develop visual and body perception, and spatial awareness</li> <li>➤ Incorporate props such as scarves, bells, streamers and coloured objects</li> <li>➤ Respond with movement to the aspects of music; for example, tempo and rhythm</li> <li>➤ Concentrate on the shapes their bodies make and how this feels</li> <li>➤ Link music to movements of the body</li> <li>➤ Identify the different movements inspired by the music of various cultures</li> </ul>

<p><b>Problem-solving</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Participate fully in an open-ended movement experience</li> <li>➤ Attempt challenging movements</li> <li>➤ Identify ways to complete a task or action, particularly if the action requires a new skill</li> <li>➤ Use props, space, sounds or music in a variety of ways</li> <li>➤ Demonstrate body and spatial awareness</li> <li>➤ Work together to complete movement tasks</li> </ul>
<p><b>Imagination and creativity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Choose a range of props and songs</li> <li>➤ Participate in open-ended movement experiences</li> <li>➤ Express ideas, feelings, culture and body image</li> <li>➤ Dance to a range of music genres</li> <li>➤ Role-play using movement</li> <li>➤ Move like animals or objects</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social and emotional skills</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reflect cultural heritage</li> <li>➤ Participate in group games</li> <li>➤ Participate in dancing experiences where there is turn-taking and cooperation</li> <li>➤ Express ideas and feelings</li> <li>➤ Teach others movements or actions</li> <li>➤ Watch or discuss the movements of others</li> <li>➤ Develop skills that improve body awareness and positive body image</li> <li>➤ Keep fit, healthy and flexible</li> </ul>

**Example**

**Planned movement activity**

Bronwyn wants to help the group understand that each child has their own ideas of how to express themselves within the group. She plans the following experience.

**Movement activity**

**Child or group:** Red Group

**Age:** Five years

**Outcome 3:** Children become strong in their social, emotional and mental wellbeing.

**Development:**

- Creative – expressing the movements that each music genre encourages
- Social and emotional – interacting with and including all children and encouraging new relationships
- Language and cognitive – discussing feelings, ideas and movements
- Physical – using bodies to move to music



**Materials required:**

- open space outdoors
- CDs
- CD player
- Collection of music from different genres

**Activity:**

Settling: I will use my usual call to group time by playing the tambourine until everyone is seated. Once the children are on the mat, we will sign the words 'hello' and 'welcome' to each other in Auslan.

I will play each selection of music for one minute or so and ask children to move to the music using their ideas of how the music makes them feel. When I stop the music, I will ask children how they felt and how they moved to the music.

If children have difficulty choosing movements to the music being played, I will encourage them to follow another child or give some suggestions. If children have difficulty describing their movements or feelings, we will try to explore this together if the child is comfortable.

**Strategies used to foster creativity during the experience:**

- Provide lots of space and time for children to participate fully.
- Choose music that has strong themes (happy, sad, slow, fast).
- Play music for periods long enough for children to settle into a dance.
- Thank children for contributing.
- Provide word suggestions if children struggle to express themselves verbally.
- Encourage sharing, cooperation and self-expression.
- Accept that some children may not want to participate in all aspects of the experience.

## Music

*Music is used all over the world to expressing emotions that words alone cannot express.*

It is a way of expressing emotions that words alone cannot express. Music can be used for rituals and ceremonies or for pure enjoyment. Children might develop their linguistic ability, mathematical thinking, logical thinking, spatial awareness, motor skills, interpersonal skills and cultural identity through music.

Music and sound experiences include listening to music, singing, participating in music-making and listening to the sounds of nature. By providing children with a diverse range of music, you can encourage them to develop an appreciation for various styles, understand the part music plays in different cultures, and develop their own musical preferences and interests. It can also be used as a spontaneous experience during daily routines to calm feelings, or as an outlet to express feelings, thoughts and emotions.



Introduce children to different styles of music from around the world.

Children will be interested to discover the various aspects of music, some of which are outlined in the following table.

<b>Beat</b>	The pulse of sound that marks the rhythm of a piece of music
<b>Rhythm</b>	The variation of a series of sounds; it sets the pattern of the music and can include long and short sounds, regular and irregular sounds
<b>Pitch</b>	Whether sounds are high or low
<b>Tempo</b>	The speed of the music
<b>Harmony</b>	A simultaneous sound of notes of different pitches; this adds interest to a simple melody
<b>Dynamics</b>	Soft and loud sounds; the graduation of sounds from soft to low and vice versa
<b>Timbre</b>	The tone of sound produced from different types of instruments
<b>Form</b>	The overall shape of a song: what sounds similar and what sounds different
<b>Song</b>	A composition of words and melody
<b>Chant</b>	A rhythmic speech of words or sounds
<b>Rhyme</b>	The repetition of words that end with the same sound

## Planning for music development

When planning a music activity, identify the desired outcome or objective.

By having a clear understanding and expectation of children’s development, you will be able to achieve many learning objectives from each music experience you provide.

<b>Developmental stage</b>	<b>Music skills and appreciation</b>
<b>Infant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Show an interest in music and song</li> <li>➤ Have a short attention span</li> <li>➤ Turn their heads towards music and sound</li> <li>➤ Enjoy chants and rhythms</li> <li>➤ Experiment with their voice and banging objects</li> <li>➤ Connect sound and rhythm by jiggling to music or singing and clapping their hands</li> </ul>
<b>Toddler</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reproduce sounds</li> <li>➤ Sing parts of songs</li> <li>➤ Understand what sounds animals make</li> <li>➤ Enjoy being sung to</li> <li>➤ Connect sound and rhythm by jiggling to music or singing and clapping their hands</li> <li>➤ Experiment with keeping the beat and rhythm of the music</li> </ul>

Developmental stage	Music skills and appreciation
Preschooler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Able to clap their hands in time to music</li> <li>➤ Join in singing</li> <li>➤ Follow directions in songs</li> <li>➤ Enjoy group singing</li> <li>➤ Can dramatise songs, stories and poems</li> <li>➤ Make sounds to accompany play and singing games</li> <li>➤ Listen to various styles of music</li> <li>➤ Experiment with instruments</li> </ul>
School-age child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Able to follow rhythm and beat</li> <li>➤ Learn to play instruments</li> <li>➤ Combine skills such as singing and dancing at the same time</li> <li>➤ Make their own songs and poems</li> <li>➤ Explore sounds with different materials and instruments</li> </ul>

When children are provided with regular opportunities to listen to and explore a diverse range of different types of music and songs, as well as learn about different musical instruments, they can express themselves, be creative and further develop language and an appreciation of music.

The desired outcome or objective of a music activity might be to encourage children to:

- use songs, chants and rhymes to express feelings, thoughts and moods
- develop attentive listening skills
- understand and use tone and pitch, fast and slow, high and low sounds
- memorise the words and rhythm of a tune
- develop respect for others, their cultures, their music style choices, and their likes and dislikes
- use their imagination and ideas to make up their own music, songs, rhymes and chants
- practise and enjoy making music or singing and gaining confidence in their skills.

## Activities to develop music skills

There is a wide range of activities you can use to develop music skills and nurture creativity in children.

- Listen to each child's musical preferences and discuss these in a group.
- Include music and songs during daily routines, such as washing and drying hands, packing up, brushing hair and teeth, and dressing.
- Introduce children to a range of instruments; for example:
  - percussion: drums, blocks (rhythm/tone blocks), rattles, cymbals
  - string: violin, guitar, cello
  - brass: trumpet, horn, trombone

- woodwind: clarinet, flute, recorder, whistle, didgeridoo
- electronic instruments: electric guitars, synthesisers, electric keyboards.
- Incorporate instruments into daily activities, such as:
  - a sound to signal a change of activity
  - in imaginary or dramatic play
  - when reading a story.
- Make musical instruments; for example:
  - drums: use formula tins with lids or secure material across the opening of the tin
  - shakers: place uncooked rice or hard objects inside plastic bottles
  - tambourines: string two bottle tops with holes together back to back and attach around a paper plate; older children can help put these together and decorate them
  - rhythm sticks: use bamboo rods or chopsticks
  - cymbals and bells: attach elastic or string to jar lids
  - kazoos and horns: use cardboard/plastic cylinders with paper or material covering the end only stuck partly to the cylinder (so when blown in through one end the paper or material vibrates).
  - using lids, spoons and boxes for banging
  - using cardboard cylinders to blow into
  - using glass jars containing various amounts of water to tap and hear the different pitches
  - using foil cups, plastic containers and metal rods (educator supervision required) for musical mobiles.
- Ask families to represent their cultures by coming to talk to children, sing songs, dance and wear their traditional dress.

You can also provide cultural, commercial and homemade instruments for children to practise new skills, learn the sounds of the different instruments and make their own sounds. When first introducing instruments, demonstrate any special techniques in caring for and playing the instrument.

To do this, you might start by modelling respect and care with one or more children. Children need to be aware that some musical instruments can easily be broken and sometimes cannot be replaced. When you are aware that children are able to show care for the instruments, you may place a basket of instruments on the floor or spread them out on an accessible shelf. Allow time for children to explore and get to know the different instruments.

Use different types of music with other activities to prompt ideas and create a mood; for example, Indigenous Australian music, classical, rock and roll, country, folk, pop, hip hop and music from other cultures.

Mama Lisa's World ([aspirelr.link/mamalisa-music](http://aspirelr.link/mamalisa-music)) is a website that includes children's songs and nursery rhymes. This site provides music and songs from a variety of countries, with words in English and the originating country, and recordings to allow you to learn the tune.

Putumayo World Music ([aspirelr.link/putumayo-music](http://aspirelr.link/putumayo-music)) has various CDs available reflecting diverse genres and cultures.

## Example

### Planned music experience

Elaine is an educator who observes Hector and Autumn sitting in the sandpit playing with two fish toys. The children are pushing the fish through the sand. Elaine sings a rhyme about fish, and both Hector and Autumn look up at her. The two toddlers swish their fish to the rhyme. Later, Elaine sees Hector and Autumn watching the fish in the fish tank.

These observations prompt Elaine to plan the following experience for the children.

### Music activity

**Child or group:** Hector and Autumn

**Age:** Two years

**Outcomes 5:** Children become strong in their physical learning and wellbeing.

#### Development:

- Language – explore descriptions about fish and the movements they make
- Physical – promote movements that relate to music played
- Social – provide social interaction and participation in a small group
- Emotional – think about how music and movements make the children feel



#### Materials required:

- Large wall mirror
- CD player and music that includes different water movement sound (fish tank bubbles, ocean, creek)

#### Activities:

- Talk to the children briefly about the fish they were playing with in the sandpit.
- Play music while moving around the space like fish with the children.
- Encourage children to use the mirror to watch how their bodies move.
- Talk about how they are moving and how the music makes them feel or move.

#### Strategies to enrich music potential during the experience:

- Short session to match concentration level
- Small group to ensure adequate space
- Educators to participate
- Encourage children to:
  - look at movements others make
  - demonstrate their own movements
  - discuss how each movement makes their body feel.

## Visual arts

*Visual arts are artistic activities that can be appreciated by sight, such as paintings and sculptures.*

To enable learning and enjoyment, visual art opportunities should match children's ages, interests, abilities and needs.

For most art activities, you will need to supply art smocks to protect children's clothing, and warm soapy water and wash cloths so they can clean up when they finish. You may incorporate appreciation for visual art at particular stages of development by providing:

- books displaying photos of artworks, sculptures and monuments
- excursions to museums
- discussion of murals and visual art that appears in your community
- paintings
- calendars with interesting artworks
- designs for gardens.

## Planning for visual art

*There are many activities involving visual arts that children can become engaged with.*

Here are several suggestions.

### Brush painting



- Children enjoy painting with brushes on paper at a table, on the floor, at an easel, indoors and outdoors.
- Easels and tables should be set so children can reach the entire painting surface.
- Each colour of paint should be provided with its own paintbrush. Depending on the age of the children, you can use different-sized brushes for each pot.
- Encourage colour mixing in pots or using mixing trays.
- Provide clean pots, brushes, mixing trays and paint for each child.
- If setting up outdoors, choose a shady area out of the wind to prevent the paint surfaces from blowing and sticking to themselves, or sun drying out the work before it is complete.

### Finger painting



- Finger painting is a calming activity where children can explore colour, texture, shapes and lines with their bodies.
- The paint might be water-based, sand and water, or a cornflour mix.
- For younger children and infants, single-coloured finger paint allows them to focus on manipulation and discovery. Older children enjoy adding a variety of textures, such as wood shavings, glitter or sand to the paint, to further their experimentation.
- Finger painting can be provided on large paper, tables or trays. If paper is used, it should be large enough so that children are not restricted in their movement.
- The final work can be used to make cards or wrapping paper, although the creative process of finger painting should be the focus.

### Printing and stencilling



- Objects or cut-out shapes can be used to print on paper or other materials. Suitable items could be:
  - natural objects such as leaves, rocks and pebbles
  - sponges
  - clay or dough
  - hands and feet
  - various recycled and found objects, such as lids, corks and cotton spools.

### Collage



- Collage refers to pasting and gluing. Various-sized materials allow children to explore a range of ideas and encourages their manipulative skills by assisting them to grasp thin, thick, small and large pieces of material, such as paper, cloth and corks, and to use a variety of joining materials.
- Collages can be set up at the table, on the floor, indoors or outdoors. To avoid the area looking messy and disorganised, set it up in an inviting manner. Provide materials in bowls, containers or trays that keep each material separate. This helps children to think about what they want to use or make without sorting through a mess of pieces. Try not to provide an overwhelming number of collage materials, but select enough for the child's stage of development and previous experience. Ensure there are sufficient paste pots, sticking implements or staplers to allow each child to work at their own pace without waiting for others. Waiting dulls the creative ideas of children and makes the experience less valuable.
- There are numerous types of materials that can be used in collage, all with a variety of colours, textures, shapes, purposes and sizes. These include:
 

– corks	– old birthday cards
– bottle tops	– egg cartons
– straws	– ribbons
– cloth	– stickers
– confetti	– magazine cuttings
– wool	– sequins
– icy-pole sticks	– buttons
– yoghurt containers	– pipe cleaners
– cotton reels	– wood shavings
– netting	– plastic tubing.

### Weaving, sewing and threading



- Weaving and sewing are usually introduced to children who have developed some fine motor skill control as they are able to hold and control needles. They also need to be able to understand the concept of under and over.
- Weaving involves threading materials together to make patterns; materials include wool, paper, cotton, fabric, ribbon, cardboard, pipe cleaners, straws and hessian.
- Sewing involves joining materials together.
- Threading is a related activity where a cord, string or thread is manipulated through an item with a hole.
- Resources include material pieces, wool, cotton, yarn, plastic string, beads and hessian bags. Tools used to guide the thread through the items include blunt, ballpoint or thick plastic needles.

## Moulding and modelling



- Moulding and modelling allows children to experiment with shape, explore textures and create objects using their imagination and manipulation.
- Choose moulding materials that are appropriate for the children's ages and the desired outcome.
- Materials include dough, clay, plasticine, wet sand, paper, papier-mâché and modelling wire. To enhance the experience at specific age levels, you could add icy-pole sticks, glass beads, pebbles, water, dried lentils or beans, straw or leaves.
- Tools to assist children include rolling pins, clay modelling tools, mini garden tools, blunt knives, scissors and potters wheels.
- The most popular forms of moulding and modelling are dough or clay, as these are versatile, easy to obtain and able to provide an aesthetic experience for children. Together with sand and water, these materials allow children to manipulate, poke, prod and pound, as they create whatever they like, and simply squash it and start again or dry it for a permanent finish.
- Moulding and modelling can be used to create objects and shapes for a calming and soothing sensation, or can be used for pounding and stretching as a way of releasing feelings of stress and frustration.
- Set up moulding and modelling materials on clean tables or placemats directly in front of each chair or space. So that children get the most out of the experience, provide each child with at least two handfuls of materials. Give children the opportunity to sit or stand at the activity so they can use different techniques; for example, if they are pounding, children may need to stand in order to use the appropriate level of force.

## Drawing

*Drawing encourages children's fine motor skill development and allows them to express their feelings, ideas and understanding of the world.*

Drawing is suitable for all ages, but consider the child's developmental stage when planning and selecting the forms of drawing tools to use. Offer blank sheets of paper to allow them to draw freely. Stencils and outlined pictures take away the freedom of drawing and encourage fine motor skill control, cognitive copying and decision-making rather than creativity. These types of drawing experiences should be limited and offered as a choice.

By introducing one type of tool or equipment at a time, children will thoroughly explore it. You may want to start with black crayons and pencils, then introduce coloured pencils, textas and chalk. Once children have mastered the use of each drawing tool, you can then offer a variety together. Other tools include charcoal, oil pastels, whiteboard markers, pens and ink.

The size of pencils and crayons depends on the age of the child. Consider the fine motor skills of the child and the grasp that they use. For example, a child with a palmar grasp needs a thick drawing implement to hold well in their palm, whereas a child with a pencil grip is able to manipulate finer tools.



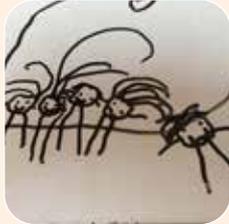
Encourage children to draw using a variety of tools and materials.

Large sheets of paper suit younger children as they use large arm movements. Smaller sized paper can be used for older children as they have more control of their gross and fine motor skills. You may extend the experience by drawing on other surfaces, such as cardboard, coloured paper or wallpaper. Ask the children what they would like to draw on or with.

## Drawing development

Drawing generally develops in four major stages. Each child progresses through these stages at their own pace, depending on their individual abilities, experiences and the opportunities offered. Giving guidance and understanding encourages children to feel more relaxed and motivated to experiment with the materials offered. This, in turn, encourages them to progress smoothly through each of the stages.

A description of each stage is outlined in the following table.

Drawing stage	Developmental stage	Description
<b>Stage 1</b> 	The scribble stage (infant, toddler)	The child is learning to manipulate tools and makes marks, dots and lines. The child will begin with random scribbling, then move to controlled scribbling, followed by naming what the scribbling represents.
<b>Stage 2</b> 	The pre-schematic stage (toddler, preschooler)	The child begins to produce symbols and uses these to represent objects.
<b>Stage 3</b> 	The schematic stage (early-to-mid-primary school age)	The child repeats symbols and links them with an object. They may use x-ray or transparent views, top views and side views.  There is often a baseline, or multiple baselines, where objects are grounded.
<b>Stage 4</b> 	The realism stage (mid-to-late-primary school age)	The child attempts the concept of spatial distance. Objects start to overlap and the sky meets the horizon. They are sensitive about their work and pay attention to details.

## Example

### Preparing a visual arts experience

Yan is an educator who is preparing a collage experience for a group of preschoolers. He chooses a table with room for four children. Yan places a glue tub and a brush at each of the four places. In the middle of the table, he places a tub of sand. He wants the children to think about how to use this creatively.

Yan wants to encourage the children to explore a range of other natural materials, so he has set out a collage trolley next to the table. It has different materials from the yard in each of its compartments.

He plans his activity as follows:

### Activity: collage

**Number and age of children:** Four preschoolers

**Desired outcome:** Creative use of natural materials

#### Materials:

- Glue
- Brushes
- Paper
- Sand
- Leaves
- Twigs
- Small pebbles
- Shells
- Grass

#### Arrangement of environment:

- Low tables and chairs arranged near wet area.
- A tub of sand in a large bowl in the middle of the table and easily accessible.
- Behind the table is a trolley with natural objects in bowls that allow children to select freely.

**Direction:** Children are encouraged to experiment with the materials and be as creative as they want to be.

**Time:** 20 minutes

In his review, Yan will identify the creative processes the children used and the various ways they adapted the materials. He will also consider the following questions:

- Which children needed more encouragement?
- What skills were used?
- Could I have been more enthusiastic?

## Storytelling

*Storytelling is the art of sharing ideas, imagination, as well as old and often valued traditions through the spoken word.*

Storytelling allows the storyteller to share precious memories and traditions, encourages children's imaginations and helps create bonds between people of all ages.

When stories are well told, they encourage children to listen with such concentration that individual mental images will be formed, rather than the prescribed image a picture book presents. Storytelling can occur at any time during the day and with children of any age.

Consider the following points when deciding what stories to tell children or direction for encouraging children to tell their own stories.

Ways to involve children	What children like to hear
<b>Stories about the child</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Children from the youngest age love to hear and tell stories about themselves, so they can recall events and be part of the story.</li> </ul>
<b>Stories about the immediate environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Infants and toddlers relate to stories about their immediate environment and things that they know such as their toys or friends.</li> </ul>
<b>Stories about imaginary adventures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Preschoolers enjoy stories that include them going on imaginary adventures and enjoy an element of suspense.</li> </ul>
<b>Stories that extend on familiar and new songs, rhymes, poems or books</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Familiar and new songs take on meaning when they are expanded by storytelling; for example, children love to hear what the little ducks were doing when they refused to come back in 'Five little ducks'.</li> </ul>
<b>Stories led by children</b>	<p>Encouraging children to decide what direction a story will take. Ask questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What might happen next?</li> <li>➤ Where could they go?</li> <li>➤ What else could happen?</li> </ul> <p>Support children to take on the storytelling role. You might start the story if needed, then slowly let the children take over.</p> <p>You may also ask if a child or children would like to tell a story. This can work well at times when children are waiting, winding down, during a routine or when sharing information they are interested in.</p>

## Language and storytelling

A storyteller should be enthusiastic about the story and want to tell it. An effective storyteller may memorise and practise the story before telling it or might make up a story spontaneously as events or ideas occur. One way to encourage children to story tell is to start a story line, then get them involved. The more you practise, the better you will be at engaging the audience and supporting children to engage their audience.

When you model enthusiastic storytelling, children will gain these skills also. Following are some hints for telling stories and involving children in storytelling.

Helpful hint	How to do it
<b>Make eye contact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ensure you maintain eye contact with the children. Use emphasised expressions.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitor the interest level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ensure you monitor the interest level of the children as you are speaking. If they are losing interest raise the level of your expression, involve the children or end the story.</li> </ul>
<b>Use vocalisations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Use tone, pitch, volume and speed to dramatise the text.</li> </ul>
<b>Use props</b>	<p>Use props to maintain children's interest and involve the audience. Props might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Puppets</li> <li>➤ Felt boards</li> <li>➤ Open ended materials</li> </ul>
<b>Include chants</b>	<p>Have children repeat chants with you; for example, 'Who is there? Who is there?' or 'stomp, stomp, stomp'. Participation encourages children to make up their own stories to tell.</p>
<b>Make up words</b>	<p>Make up words or ask children to create their own words to describe activities, animals or other aspects of a story. Word play is used by children who have a good grasp of language.</p>

Outside of storytelling, language can be used creatively while children are involved in everyday activities and experiences.

Children may:

- make up names for characters
- create chants, songs, poems or rhymes
- describe art or other experiences using words they develop such as names for sounds, feelings or textures

## Practice Task 5

1. Which of the following are learning activities that nurture creativity? Select all that apply.

- Providing large wooden blocks and small wooden blocks together.
- Assisting children to use digital technology to record their involvement in a cultural experience.
- Supporting children to play out a script you have developed for a puppet show.
- Asking children to show you how they climb the play equipment.
- Offering to put music on when you notice some children dancing.
- Setting up a stage and allowing children to develop their own show.
- Adding opened up cereal boxes and shredded paper to a collage area.

2. Which three of the following are learning activities that nurture creativity?  
Select all that apply.

- Offering to put music on when you notice some children dancing.
- Showing children an image of Indigenous art and asking them to use dot painting to copy the symbols.
- Setting up a stage and allowing children to develop their own show.
- Adding opened up cereal boxes and shredded paper to a collage area.

## Summary

- The more children experiment and explore, the more developed their creative skills will become.
- Sensory-rich materials provide children with the opportunity for hands-on, self-directed and self-centred activity, as well as opportunities to learn.
- When children understand the properties of materials, they are able to use them in creative ways.
- Intentional teaching may be included in a creative experience as a means to support a child to understand a concept, to assist them in their direction or to provide more information so they are fully resourced.
- To encourage children to think critically and develop strong problem-solving skills, it is useful to encourage creative thinking when faced with a challenge and to have children identify as many resolutions as they can.
- Each child has their own set of interests that can be used to extend their skills and knowledge, encourage creativity and enhance their enjoyment.
- The approved learning frameworks provide outcomes that support you to develop opportunities that nurture creativity.
- Use your child-centred practice to demonstrate the importance of children's creativity. This might mean being flexible to the needs of children in different ways; some following a routine, others working on their project.
- To help children to find out, answer 'why' questions by reflecting them back.
- Experiences and other influences in the environment need to make a child feel safe and relaxed so they can explore and develop.
- Encourage peer appreciation by asking open questions – not about whether the child likes the work, but about what they find interesting.

# Learning Checkpoint 2

## Creative expression

### Part A

1. Which of the following children's interests link to the opportunity for nurturing creative expression shown in the image below? Select all that apply.



- The children noticed a rainbow
- A new baby in the family
- A family is building a new house and the child has been talking about the plans
- The children wanted to build an obstacle course

2. For each of the following children’s interests, identify how they may use blocks as an opportunity for expressing themselves creatively through active learning.

a. A family is building a new house and the child has been talking about the plans

.....

b. Travelling on a train as part of a holiday

.....

c. City buildings and architecture

.....

d. Visit to a dinosaur exhibition

.....

3. Which of the following children’s interests link to the opportunity for nurturing creative expression shown in the image below? Select all that apply.



Walking in a national park

An excursion to a pond

A visit to the library

A family is building a new house and the child has been talking about the plans

Travelling on a train as part of a holiday

4. Which of the following children’s interests links most closely to the opportunity for nurturing creative expression shown in the image below?



- Visiting an art gallery
- An excursion to a pond
- Landscaping in the yard
- Travelling on a train as part of a holiday
- A poster of city buildings
- A visit to the farm

5. Which of the following children’s interests link to the opportunity for nurturing creative expression shown in the image below? Select all that apply.



- Visiting an art gallery in a bus
- Walking excursion to a pond
- Landscaping in the yard
- Travelling on a train as part of a holiday
- A poster of city buildings

6. Which of the following opportunities for nurturing creative expression link with the image below? Select all that apply.



- Taking digital photos to record the experience for later ideas
- Making drums from open-ended materials
- Drawing a map of Africa
- Threading beads to make necklaces
- Researching using digital technology to find out about other cultural music
- Learning songs in different languages

7. Which of the following materials are sustainable art resources? Select all that apply.

- Shredded newspaper
- Gumnuts
- Pasta
- Wood offcuts
- LEGO

8. Which of the following opportunities in the images below encourage children to collaborate with each other creatively in active learning?



Image 1



Image 2



Image 3



Image 4

9. Draw a line to match each method for encouraging a child to use creative expression and fostering their agency on the left to the example on the right.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Encouraging curiosity and an opportunity to ask questions to find out answers</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* The child asks the educator why they put water in the dry mud today. The educator explains that on hot days the mud becomes dry from the heat and so each day it needs more water to make it squishy.</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Intentional teaching</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* The child says there are lumpy bits in the mud. The educator asks the child what the lumps might be and how they might find out.</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Intentional teaching about sustainable resources</li> </ul>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* The educator asks if the child would like to help add water to the dry mud and see how dry it will be after lunch.</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Using creativity to overcome challenges</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* The child says they want to paint with the mud. The educator asks how they might do this and what they would need.</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Encouraging choice</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* The child notices the water in the mud came from a bucket. The educator shows the child how the water is saved from the drinking taps and used in the mud so water isn't wasted.</li> </ul>                      |

10. What are some ways you might involve children in story telling?

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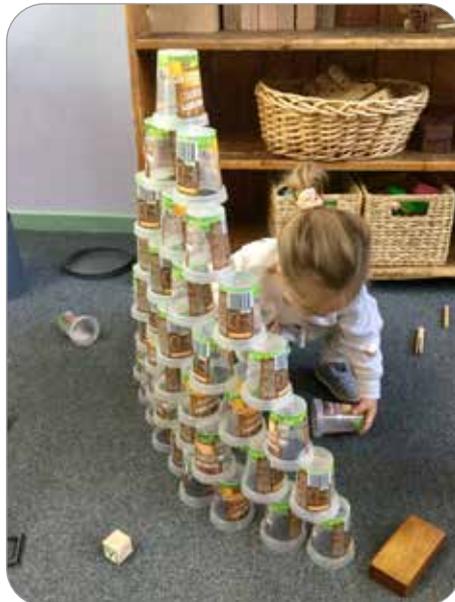
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**Part B**

Use the image below to answer the questions that follow.



1. Which of the following comments could you offer to model and share your enthusiasm with the child?

- 'I think I could help you with that. Just let me see if I can balance another one on top.'
- 'Wow! That's very tall! What are you planning to do with that next tub?'

2. Which of the following open-ended questions could you ask to engage the child in talking about their creation and foster their sense of agency?

- 'Did you realise the tower is rounded at the bottom?'
- 'Did you plan to make this shaped tower when you started?'
- 'It looks like you have a plan for that tub. What do you think you will do with it?'

3. Which of the following comments would show respect for the child's efforts?

- 'Would you mind if I take a photo of your tower? You could help me.'
- 'This is the best tower I have ever seen.'
- 'I think Travis made a tower just like this yesterday.'

4. A child comes into the space to build with blocks. Which of the following comments would encourage the child to show respect for the effort of their peers?

- 'Don't knock the tower down. Be careful where you walk.'
- 'Look at this tower. How many tubs do you think it has?'
- 'What do you think we should do so your work doesn't damage this tower?'



## Topic 3

In this topic you will learn about:

- 3A Evaluating experiences
- 3B Future practice

# Planning for creativity

*Creativity can be enhanced through the planning and presentation of beautiful spaces, open-ended materials, choices, natural resources and attractive displays.*

These spaces can be extended on through involvement in incursions and excursions that expand children's experiences and ideas.

The EYLF identifies that learning occurs over time. A child's creative expression is influenced by:

- the environment and its materials
- your attitude towards creativity
- their current abilities
- the time they have to work through their ideas and reflect on their work.

Children need time to practise their skills, and to develop and reinforce new ones. This is part of an ongoing cycle.

## 3A Evaluating experiences

*The information gained from evaluation forms part of the assessment process.*

Evaluate the experiences you provide as part of your commitment to critical reflection and ongoing professional learning.

You might use evaluation to:

- reflect on the success of the curriculum, an experience or activity
- record information about how each child is progressing towards specific outcomes
- encourage families to communicate how they feel the program is operating and how successful it is for their child
- ensure you are including each child
- lead you towards curriculum decision-making that extends children's learning.

### Meaningful reflection

*The evidence you gather should be relevant and meaningful in relation to a child's creative expression.*

This can include observing:

- the process:
  - the way a child is involved
  - the materials and tools used
  - the skills the child uses
  - emerging skills or knowledge
  - how the child interacts with others
  - the knowledge, ideas, strengths and interests that were observed.
- the product:
  - comments or descriptions the child makes about their creative expression
  - learning and development that are shown.



Reflect on the learning you have observed.

Reflection also involves critical reflection, which involves considering your attitudes and motivations and identifying how you plan to work towards a higher level of understanding or application of skills and knowledge. While reflection is about checking how you are going and asking yourself questions, critical reflection is a more in-depth process where you have improvement and development in mind.

The EYLF Principle 'Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning' supports all educators to plan to regularly think about how they are doing and what skills they could develop. Educators are encouraged to make changes when needed and set goals for themselves to increase their knowledge as well as developing further understanding of each child and their family.

## Reflecting with others

*Other people, including colleagues, families and children, can provide useful reflective feedback about your skills and knowledge, how you influence them and how you can modify your curriculum or experiences.*

By giving others opportunities to express their ideas, opinions, requests or thoughts, you are meeting both their needs and your own.

You might gather reflective feedback through general conversations and discussions, or through surveys, meetings, questionnaires or forms.

### Ways to gain reflections from others include:

- talking to people – during visits, interviews, spontaneous discussion and meetings
- gathering feedback – through suggestion requests, communication books and apps
- meetings – uninterrupted time when information can be exchanged and discussed
- observing and listening
- contacting by phone
- emailing
- using social media such as Facebook or in-house programs or apps
- conducting surveys verbally
- asking people to complete templates or forms.

## Monitoring and evaluating

*Observation and critical reflection support you to monitor children's roles in creativity.*

They also encourage you to look at whether children were involved in creative experiences, how they participated and how you could improve your own knowledge and skills to inform future practice.

Your monitoring might identify information about:

- effectiveness
- children's needs
- sequences of activities
- resources or materials
- amounts of time
- space available.

### Reflect on the following when evaluating the product:

- what development and learning was identified
- whether progress was made
- the child's description or discussion of their work
- the child's feelings about their work.

### Reflect on the following when evaluating the process:

- the materials and tools that were provided and used
- whether the plan was followed or needed to be changed; this might link with age/stage appropriateness, time, space, materials or other factors
- whether spontaneous ideas, risk-taking or learning arose; this might include the child changing the experience
- whether any collaboration took place
- whether the child discussed the process
- how the child described the process and the experience
- whether challenges or frustration were noticed or discussed
- whether communication, discussion or questioning took place
- what participation levels, choices and decisions were made.

## Formative evaluation

*Formative evaluation is the result of information collected while a child is participating in an experience.*

Formative evaluation considers the process of an activity. This information helps you to identify ways you can support the child in future practice.

Each service will have policies and procedures that provide information on recording method expectations. The following table outlines some recording methods that can be used to develop a formative assessment.

<b>Anecdotal records</b>	<p>These are brief narratives describing an experience.</p> <p>The content should be written in a factual, objective manner and can be used to see how well a certain task can be performed, such as painting.</p>
<b>Jottings</b>	<p>These include noting children's questions, brief transcripts of their conversations or comments, quick details of an experience, questions, ideas and knowledge.</p>
<b>Learning stories</b>	<p>These tell a story of what learning you noticed.</p> <p>The child's own words can be used to make the record more meaningful.</p>
<b>Photos</b>	<p>You can capture children's learning effectively with digital photography.</p> <p>Photos may be linked to anecdotal records or learning stories to provide the background and information about the learning, or the child's own words can be used to enhance the record.</p> <p>Sometimes a series of photos showing a process, idea or project is more useful evidence of learning than a single photo.</p>
<b>Samples of work</b>	<p>Collect a sample of the child's work. If children prefer to take their work home, photos can be taken for your collection.</p> <p>Samples of work need evaluation information added, commenting on the process or product.</p> <p>The child's own words can be used to make the record more meaningful.</p>

When you look back at a range of formative evaluations to gain a comprehensive view of the child, you are using summative evaluation. Summative evaluation gathers information from a range of sources and uses this to reflect on the child's strengths, interests, skills, abilities and capacity for self-expression. This information can be shared with others, such as colleagues, families and other people who care for the child.

While formative evaluations provide snippets of information, summative evaluations give you an overall picture of a child's learning and development; in this case their creative activities.

## Linking outcomes

*When evaluating, you will notice information that stands out to you and demonstrates a particular area of interest; in this case creative learning and development.*

This information can be linked to approved learning framework outcomes so that your documentation is meaningful and can be easily shared. Learning outcomes also help to inform future practice.

Steps to linking learning outcomes might be:

1. Observe and listen then collect information through documentation
2. Assess and analyse the information by asking yourself, 'What does this tell me about the child's creative learning and development?'
3. Choose a learning outcome and sub-outcome. Do this by:
  - ▶ looking through the five learning outcomes of the approved learning framework, and choosing the one that most closely connects to what you have observed, recorded and analysed
  - ▶ looking at the sub-outcomes of the learning outcome you have chosen and selecting the one that most closely connects with what you have observed, recorded and analysed.

To gather more information on each learning outcome and sub-outcome, you can read the EYLF. Under each sub-outcome there is a list headed: 'This is evident when children, for example:'

You can research information about the approved learning frameworks at: [aspirelr.link/approved-learning-frameworks](http://aspirelr.link/approved-learning-frameworks).

**Example****Using evaluation to inform future practice**

<b>Documentation method</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>Formative evaluation</b>
<b>Learning story</b>	Bae, you worked at your box construction for more than 15 minutes, using samples of all the materials available. You then came to me and said you wanted to make a train, so we went to the storeroom where you chose bottle tops to use as wheels and some corks for steam engine funnels. You carefully put them together using tape and staples. You created a train that you drove across the windowsill. You made sounds like a train softly, so only I could hear. When it was time to pack up, you put the train into your locker, carefully covering it with your coat so it was safe.	Bae enjoys construction and is able to invent and carry out his own ideas selecting the materials he needs. He is also able to care for his work.
<b>Jotting</b>	At group time, the children are encouraged to move to music. Bae chose to whistle through the group, tooting and circling his arms like a train.	Bae is showing an interest in trains.
<b>Anecdotal record</b>	Bae works at the paint easel. He uses blue and tells me it is Thomas the Tank Engine. He asks if he can have some white as he wants to make smoke coming out of the funnel. Bae creates a recognisable train with smoke. I ask why the train has smoke and Bae says that it just does.	Bae shows interest in trains and knows the Thomas the Tank Engine character. Bae knows the train has smoke, but does not know why.

Documentation method	Record and formative evaluation
<p><b>Summative evaluation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Bae has a high level of self-expression as he is able to create his own ideas using different art media. (Outcome 5: Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media.)</li> <li>➤ Bae participates with others in creative movement. (Outcome 1: Children feel safe, secure, and supported; Outcome 2: Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.)</li> <li>➤ Bae did not know why the train had smoke. (Outcome 4: Children develop a range of skills and processes, such as problem-solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating.)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Future planning</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Set up large wooden blocks, recycled plastic coils, crates, hub caps, dress-up hats and chairs. (Outcome 5: Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media.)</li> <li>➤ Read story about Thomas the Tank Engine. Encourage Bae to work out why Thomas has smoke. Investigate materials we could use to make the effect of smoke using visual art or construction – as designed using Bae’s ideas. (Outcome 4: Children develop a range of skills and processes, such as problem-solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating.)</li> </ul>



## Practice Task 6

1. Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

- |   |       |      |
|---|-------|------|
| a. When you critically reflect on the creative experiences you provide, you evaluate their effectiveness and seek ways to improve them.                       | * Yes | * No |
| b. The best way to monitor creative experiences is to use a sample of work.   | * Yes | * No |
| c. By collaborating with families to find out about children's interests, you can identify how to provide relevant creative opportunities in the curriculum.  | * Yes | * No |
| d. When a range of evaluation methods are used, a broad picture of a child's interests and artistic abilities can be identified.                              | * Yes | * No |
| e. Approved learning framework outcomes assist educators to understand what children have learnt, appreciate this learning and plan for future opportunities. | * Yes | * No |

2. Draw a line to match each of the following examples to either the process or the product.

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| * The material resources used were bottle tops, glue and corks.   | * Process |
| * The bottle tops were glued with tape.   | * Process |
| * The children started to build a cubby but found a steering wheel and decided to make a boat.                    | * Process |
| * One child completed a row of sandcastles, another child offered some pebbles and together they built a pathway. | * Product |
| * The children asked others to come and see what they had made using the large box.                               | * Product |

## 3B Future practice

*Evaluation should be used to gather ideas for future practice.*

This can include:

- expanding on current ideas or interests
- identifying new interests to develop
- providing more challenging experiences
- improving resources
- encouraging creativity
- meeting new learning outcomes
- approaching experiences in different ways.

Once you have evaluated experiences, you can modify the curriculum, program or experience to ensure there are improved opportunities to stimulate children's creativity through their interests and ideas.

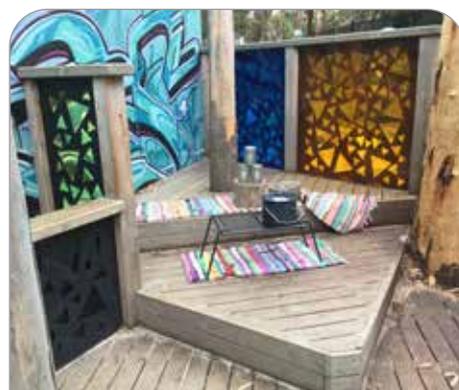
### Consider the following when evaluating experiences:

- What activities can you plan to further the child's interest and development?
- How will the experiences assist children to achieve outcomes?
- What props, materials, tools and equipment will you need?
- How can you set up the experience so it is aesthetically pleasing?
- Is the experience open-ended?
- How many children will be involved in the experience at any one time?
- Will the experience be available at all times?
- What is your role and the role of others in the experience?
- How much time will you provide for the experience?

## Apply aesthetic values

*Aesthetics relates to the appearance of the environment.*

Some people like an environment with minimal clutter, while others prefer one that feels more lived in. Your challenge is to balance these needs to create environments that the majority of children will find stimulating and are attracted to.



Provide interesting materials to make the environment engaging.

Consider the following aspects of your play spaces when thinking about aesthetics.

<b>Lighting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lighting can give spaces warmth and character, and can highlight specific features. Activities should be set up either as close to natural light as possible or under good lighting.</li> </ul>
<b>Colour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Colour creates moods and highlights features.</li> <li>➤ Colours that are bright attract attention and encourage an active and stimulating atmosphere; for example, reds are stimulating and exciting, while blues and greens can exert a calming effect.</li> <li>➤ Natural colours and textures create relaxing, intriguing environments that encourage appreciation for the space and materials.</li> <li>➤ When you balance colour and nature, the space will provide children with inspiration.</li> </ul>
<b>Displays</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Displays that are uncluttered, colourful, interesting and appealing encourage curiosity.</li> <li>➤ When appropriate pictures, posters, props and children's artwork are added, this signals that the space belongs to the children.</li> <li>➤ Children may use what they see in their play or artwork, so effective displays might include interests, an area of learning, and demonstrate multiculturalism and diversity.</li> </ul>
<b>Sound</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sounds can encourage or inhibit creative and expressive development. They may disrupt concentration or provide a soothing atmosphere, depending on the type of sound and where it is coming from. For example, a noisy environment can disrupt children's concentration, play and creativity.</li> </ul>

When setting up an environment, think about how it will encourage creative learning.

### Tips for encouraging creativity

- Separate noisy areas from quiet ones; for example, place block areas away from easels, and use shelves, dividers and furniture to separate areas.
- Display materials and equipment at children's level. Use open shelves where they can see easily and choose what they would like to use.
- Place experiences and activities logically in the room; for example, place water play in the wet areas, climbing or gross motor activities on areas with soft fall or mats.
- Arrange tables, chairs and other areas to cater for the number of children you want at the activity. Seats should be at the correct height so that children are comfortable.
- Set up activities according to the space that is available. Check there are enough activities for all children without overcrowding the space.
- Allow enough space for children to spread out materials, move to create their desired work and use their level of skill.

## Ensuring safety

*When children feel safe, they will more readily explore the environment and make use of experiences.*

Your knowledge of child development and children's individual abilities will allow you to identify how the environment needs to be set up to ensure safety, while still allowing for children's spontaneous behaviour, curiosity, independence and growing understanding of danger and its consequences. For example, infants may use non-toxic paint to finger paint, but an adult still needs to supervise to ensure they do not eat the paint. Older children may experiment with small objects such as corks, scissors, buttons and pipe cleaners, but you should not give them to infants as they would put them in their mouths and may choke.

Finding a balance between safety and healthy risk-taking is a challenge. Consider the following safety recommendations.

Developmental stage	Appropriate materials and activities
Infant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provide a selection of toys valued for their textures, colours and sizes</li> <li>➤ Provide large toys that cannot be swallowed</li> <li>➤ Ensure toys have no sharp edges</li> <li>➤ Ensure toys are easily washed and cleaned</li> <li>➤ Provide different types of experiences; for example, water play, sand play and outdoor play</li> </ul>
Toddler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provide indoor and outdoor activities running together or at different times of the day</li> <li>➤ Provide activities that reflect an interest in the world and a desire to explore it with the different senses</li> <li>➤ Provide experiences that reflect mastery of the child's own body</li> </ul>
Preschooler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Focus on life skills, such as cooking, sewing, carpentry and washing</li> <li>➤ Provide more varied and complicated materials and activities</li> <li>➤ Provide activities that reflect children's increased cognitive and physical capabilities</li> <li>➤ Use strategies for negotiating alternative activities</li> </ul>
School-age child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Incorporate suggestions from children</li> <li>➤ Develop hobbies</li> <li>➤ Allow children to select their own peer groups</li> <li>➤ Provide for individual and small and large group experiences</li> <li>➤ Provide choices, including respecting a child's wish not to participate</li> <li>➤ Provide strategies for negotiating alternative activities</li> </ul>

## Creating limits and guidelines

*Support children to be responsible for their equipment and space by developing limits and guidelines with them, then role-modelling how these are applied.*

These should include how they handle equipment and resources, and what they do with them when they are finished. If children are not clear about their role, then the equipment and materials may become damaged and lost. Some limits and guidelines might include:

- packing up when they are finished
- keeping equipment safe
- using equipment in ways that show respect
- waiting for equipment if others are using it
- cleaning up if there is a mess.

These limits and guidelines should be seen as positive ways to communicate respect, and should be incorporated into the normal actions of the group.

Clear limits and guidelines allow children to take responsibility and experience the consequences of their behaviour. Responsibility comes with ownership.

### Example

#### Encouraging a child to take responsibility

Mariah, an educator, is supervising Koby (four years) at the paint easel. She is waiting with Leon, who also wants a turn. When Koby finishes at the easel, Mariah makes a comment about the number of colours Koby used to paint. She helps Koby take his painting to the drying shelf, but notices that paint has spread onto the easel. Mariah alerts Koby to the paint and suggests they get some water and a sponge to clean the easel. She explains to Koby that if they leave the paint, it may stick to someone else's work.



Mariah and Koby work together to clean the easel. Mariah role-models how to wring out the sponge. At the same time, they talk about an idea Koby has for a construction.

## Giving responsibility

*Children can be involved in being responsible for equipment and resources.*

They can also take responsibility for their own actions, such as cleaning up after themselves. As they grow and develop, this responsibility can be extended to caring for the environment and the entire play space.

Responsibility for equipment and resources is about keeping the environment clean, safe, enjoyable, attractive and engaging. The right level of responsibility is one that is age-appropriate and where the child feels they are contributing, yet is not overwhelmed.

Children make mistakes, but these should be seen as times to learn rather than a failure to meet their responsibilities.

When children are given responsibility, they have the opportunity to gain trust, use decision-making skills and take ownership of their actions. Understanding the consequences of their actions helps children to experience how the world works.

Children develop ownership of their environment when they feel they belong. Ownership is about knowing that something is your own, and that you have control over it and can adapt it to meet your needs.

When children are given the opportunity to take responsibility for the space and equipment, this helps them feel that they belong and that the environment is theirs. The EYLF encourages this in their goals, principles, practices and outcomes.

Service policies and procedures that link with ownership of the environment and materials include those related to:

- sustainability; for example, recycling, caring for plants and animals, cleaning in safe ways and dealing with waste materials safely
- cleaning schedule; for example, strategies for cleaning, what to clean and when
- health and safety; for example, safe placement and storage of equipment.

### Example

#### Children taking responsibility

The following outlines examples of children taking responsibility.

#### Example 1

Rogue is 18 months old. He loves helping to sweep the floor and putting the toys on the shelves.

#### Example 2

Kelly is three years old. If she sees a child finish with equipment, not put it away, or leave it half complete, she approaches them and tells them, 'You need to pack away.'

#### Example 3

Piper is four years old. She refuses to put toys away unless she was the one to play with them. However, she will wipe tables at any time if asked.

#### Example 4

Stefanie is five years old. Whenever she finishes working with equipment, she leaves puzzles with pieces strewn across the area, paint brushes on the stand (rather than in the pots) and home area equipment in various places across the room. She needs to be reminded to pack up or reset it for others.

#### Example 5

Stuart is nine years old. He packs up the activity he is using, but does this very slowly.

## Age-appropriate expectations

*The age, developmental stage and experience of a child has an enormous impact on the materials and equipment you choose.*

Some materials can be used across all age groups, which makes them more valuable. At each age/stage of development, children will use the materials differently.

The following outlines some guidelines and strategies to assist you in planning materials and equipment for children of different ages and stages of development.

Age/developmental stage	Open-ended materials: Boxes	Natural materials: Sand	Found materials: Egg cartons
Infant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Seeing what will fit in the box</li> <li>➤ Stacking and knocking down</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Feeling, tasting, throwing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Stacking</li> <li>➤ Tapping</li> <li>➤ Finding things inside</li> <li>➤ Feeling</li> <li>➤ Opening and shutting</li> </ul>
Toddler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Stacking to make a building</li> <li>➤ Lining up to make roads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Digging</li> <li>➤ Making castles and roads</li> <li>➤ Hiding items in the sand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Stacking</li> <li>➤ Crushing</li> <li>➤ Pasting items onto or in</li> <li>➤ Threading</li> </ul>
Preschooler/school-age child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Creating cities, cars or phones</li> <li>➤ Using in dramatic play for shops, homes, hairdresser, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Making castles and roads</li> <li>➤ Sand drawing</li> <li>➤ Sand sculpture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Creating their own craft ideas that are not modelled by adults</li> <li>➤ Building walls and fences</li> <li>➤ Making papier-mâché</li> <li>➤ Creating items</li> </ul>

## Caring for materials

*Regardless of where you source an item from, and whether it is natural, found or recycled, you must still demonstrate care and respect for it.*

Children love to find items and then think of ways they might use them. Resources and equipment can be obtained from a range of sources, including:

- inside and outside the home or service
- in the natural environment when visiting the park, walking down the street or at the beach
- at variety or discount shops
- at second-hand shops or garage sales
- when recycling
- as part of donations and gifts.

You can show care and respect by storing the items carefully and considerately. You may need to access storage spaces or boxes and/or containers.

To display the items for children to use, you need to:

- have the materials at the child's height
- label containers (using photographs helps children who can't read yet) or use clear containers
- ensure lids can be easily removed
- use shelves or trolleys to display items
- separate child-safe materials from adult equipment.

## Using food in play

*In general, real food should be avoided in play or creative activities.*

This decision will most likely be a service-wide agreement. It will take into consideration the moral and ethical values of your colleagues and families. Some reasons food might be avoided for play include the following:

- Food is for eating; children should explore it during mealtimes or cooking.
- Millions of children around the world live in poverty and are hungry each day, including some children that may be involved in the play.
- Families may feel disrespected if they are food-poor and yet food is used for creativity.
- Food for play may be culturally disrespectful; for example, Māori people (indigenous New Zealanders) feel this is inappropriate, and refugees may have come from extreme situations where food was lacking.
- As part of your sustainability curriculum, you should show children that food is not to be wasted.
- There are many other options that children can explore, particularly natural and recycled materials, and these should also come from the ground and be returned later, if possible.
- Food is costly. It is purchased but also needs to be grown, manufactured, packaged, etc.
- Food waste is a worldwide issue.
- Young children may be confused about when to eat, when to explore and when to be creative.
- Some food products can be dangerous when used in play; for example, powdery or dusty foods might cause asthma or respiratory issues and be flammable. Unseen mould or microscopic spores may be present and cause illness.
- Children may react to foods during play due to allergies or anaphylaxis that is either known or not yet identified. This may occur if the child eats the foods, but may also cause skin rashes or infections.
- Obesity is an issue for many children. Playing with food gives the message that food is vital in all areas of life.



Fake food or food that is out of date may be suitable to use in play.

If you decide food play is an option, use the foods in sustainable ways, such as:

- only using out-of-date products that will be discarded anyway
- using kitchen scraps or offcuts for activities such as printing
- reusing the foods; when one activity has finished, use the leftovers for another (for example, compost it, grow it, make bean bags, add them to maracas, paste them in visual art, use them to sculpt)
- using food you have grown in reusable ways; for example, the children might harvest vegetables or fruit, then sort them from smallest to biggest, lightest to heaviest, etc.; they can then be prepared and eaten
- using only the amount you need
- using food that can be recycled rather than expensive materials that are toxic or produced using dangerous or unsustainable methods.

Whichever philosophy you decide on, be clear on how you have come to this decision. Consider the families and your community when deciding, and rethink your values regularly as changes may occur that alter your view.

## Practice Task 7

Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

- |  |       |      |
|--|-------|------|
| a. Educators have full responsibility for safety. This means they must take care of all the resources and equipment. Children may hurt themselves if they care for the resources they use. | * Yes | * No |
| b. When children use food in play, this gives a message that some families may find disrespectful. Food in play can be seen as food waste.   | * Yes | * No |
| c. When children are supported to care for the resources and equipment they use, they are encouraged to feel a sense of ownership and responsibility.                                      | * Yes | * No |
| d. Information from evaluations helps you to expand on current ideas and identify new interests.   | * Yes | * No |
| e. Evaluations should be about the learning children have demonstrated. They allow you to approach an experience in a different way so an alternative creative result might occur.         | * Yes | * No |

## Summary

- When children are given responsibilities, they have the opportunity to gain trust, use decision-making skills and take ownership of their actions.
- Select experiences suitable for the age and developmental stage of the children.
- Environments suited to self-expression are those that are adaptable and responsive to the actions and ideas that are occurring at the time. The NQS and EYLF demonstrate this flexibility by guiding you to develop your curriculum based on the direction the children take.
- Environments that are aesthetically pleasing, safe, interesting and challenging encourage curiosity, experimentation, active learning, literacy and choice.
- Critical reflection allows you to examine something from different perspectives.
- Your role is to nurture creativity at every opportunity to allow children to develop their skills and self-expression. This includes observing, encouraging, providing opportunities and extending the interests and abilities of all children.
- Evaluating the experiences you provide is part of your commitment to ongoing learning and reflective practice, as well as an important aspect of gathering information to assess learning, as outlined in the NQF.
- A formative evaluation is an appraisal of information collected while a child is participating in an experience. This information helps you to identify ways you can support the child in follow-up activities.
- Summative evaluations occur when you look back at a range of formative evaluations to gain a comprehensive view of the child.
- Modify the curriculum or program to ensure there are improved opportunities to stimulate children's interests and develop their creativity.
- To successfully plan an experience that enhances and encourages imagination, creativity and self-expression in children, observe children's interests and developmental levels.

# Learning Checkpoint 3

## Planning for creativity

### Part A

Which of the following creative activities are made with consideration for sustainability? Select all that apply.

- Dough made using out-of-date flour
- Printing using carrot ends from kitchen scraps
- Decorating a cake before eating it
- Pasting using popcorn
- Creating biscuit art in gingerbread for afternoon tea

### Part B

In the image below, the children are working together outdoors to construct. Use this image to answer the questions that follow.



1. Draw a line to match each sub-outcome to the most likely future practice based on the experience in the image.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Sub-outcome: Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Add fabric sheets, balls and angled blocks to the area.</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Sub-outcome: Children develop a growth mindset and learning dispositions, such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Ask the children to tell you about what they are working on. Extend their vocabulary by asking them about the vertical and horizontal parts of the building work.</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Sub-outcome: Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Add a wheelbarrow so the children are able to move extra materials from the storage area to their play.</li> </ul>   |

2. Which of the following are correct about the experience in the image? Select yes or no for each one.

- |  |              |             |
|--|--------------|-------------|
| <p>a. A meaningful observation record might include the materials used, how the children interacted and any specific knowledge or skill each child demonstrated.</p>   | <p>* Yes</p> | <p>* No</p> |
| <p>b. To critically reflect on the experience, you could speak with their family members and discuss construction experiences the children participate in at home. These might be linked to future planning.</p>   | <p>* Yes</p> | <p>* No</p> |
| <p>c. If the children were interested in videoing themselves describing how they built the construction, this would be useful for sharing with the children, but would not provide ideas for critical reflection or future planning.</p>                             | <p>* Yes</p> | <p>* No</p> |
| <p>d. A learning story would best capture this experience. The process and the product can be included.</p>  | <p>* Yes</p> | <p>* No</p> |
| <p>e. The children seem to have nearly finished their construction. It would be a good time for educators to clear up the unused blocks with the children so they learn to care for resources and equipment and develop a sense of responsibility and ownership.</p> | <p>* Yes</p> | <p>* No</p> |

## Part C

1. When educators link sub-outcomes of the approved learning framework to what they observe, they inform future planning based on this information. Draw a line to match each sub-outcome to the example of a future creative practice.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Sub-outcome: Children become strong in their physical learning and wellbeing.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Provide non-toxic finger paint mixed with short lengths of wool.</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Sub-outcome: Children develop a growth mindset and learning dispositions, such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Introduce finger play, such as 'Open, shut them'.</li> </ul>                |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Sub-outcome: Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Make uncooked play dough, allowing the child to mix and roll.</li> </ul>    |

2. Which of the following are correct about the experience in the image below? Select yes or no for each one.



- |  |              |             |
|--|--------------|-------------|
| <p>a. If the child was encouraged to use a spoon to serve her own food, she should be allowed to do this independently. Supervision will mean her sensory exploration will be compromised.</p> | <p>* Yes</p> | <p>* No</p> |
| <p>b. To critically reflect on the experience, you may choose to speak with the child's family members and let them know about the sensory exploration the child is having.</p>                | <p>* Yes</p> | <p>* No</p> |
| <p>c. The child may wish to be recorded in a photograph. The photograph would be meaningful as it would show her creative exploration.</p>   | <p>* Yes</p> | <p>* No</p> |

- d. A sample of work might best capture this observation. \* Yes \* No
- e. This sort of play is to be discouraged. Children have many opportunities to learn; they do not need to explore their meals. The child and area should be cleared to maintain aesthetic values. \* Yes \* No

