**What Influences Learning Through Play?**

Use the reflection and discussion tool on the following page to consider how the community, values, environment, and structures in your school can support learning through play. Please consider this tool a work-in-progress, and send us your feedback as you and your colleagues try it out.

1. **Read** over the questions and items in each category. Do these fit the values and beliefs of your school and classroom community? Discuss with other educators in your context, and adapt by adding other items that may be especially important in your school, or removing items that do not feel relevant.
2. **Write** a response to each of the questions, considering how the community, values, environment, and structures in your school are supporting learning through play. Use the checklist for each category to conduct a self-assessment, considering if this is something your school does a little, a lot, or not at all (you might color in the boxes – green for things your school does well, yellow for something you are working on, and red for something that is lacking).
3. **Discuss** your responses with colleagues and with the school leadership, using this tool as a way to consider possible ways the school could better support learning through play.

There are many ways this tool could be used. Here are some ideas:

* As a **self-reflection** for you and your colleagues to consider your school learning through play climate
* For a **discussion with stakeholders** interested in promoting learning through play at your school
* **With students** (especially older students), as a way to consider their learning through play experiences
* **With colleagues**, as an activity and conversation-starter during a staff meeting or team meeting
* At **Parent Night**, to engage parents in thinking about how the school can better support learning through play

**What Influences Learning Through Play? *A reflection and discussion tool***

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| **Community*****Do interactions among learners and educators in your school encourage and support learning through play?*** ***If so, how?****Do you observe or experience…** responsive, democratic relationships
* playful, creative, caring adults
* similar adult/child learning experiences
* humor/silliness
* learners with a playful mindset
* opportunities for different kinds of interactions
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Notes/ideas:  | **Values*****Do your school’s underlying norms, beliefs, and attitudes support learning through play? If so, how?****Do you observe or experience…** trust, respect, and shared responsibility for learning at all levels (administrator-teacher-child-family)
* common beliefs and values among adults, such as:
	+ children learn through play, constructivism
	+ children are capable, should have agency, can contribute ideas
* respect for and valuing of cultural/linguistic diversity
* support for risk-taking
* multiple opportunities for collaboration
* acceptance of and support for a range of emotions
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Notes/Ideas: |
| **Environment*****Do the architecture, furnishings, materials, and aesthetics of your school support learning through play? If so, how?****Do you observe or experience…** learners and teachers with agency over the environment
* learners freely accessing varied and flexible spaces/furniture/materials to explore their ideas
* a safe and comfortable environment, with elements that are playful
* learners and teachers respecting materials and spaces
* aesthetic elements (e.g. light, transparency, natural materials) that evoke wonder and delight
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Notes/ideas: | **Structures*****Do the structures, rules, policies, and traditions in your school support learning through play? If so, how?****Do you observe or experience…** flexible curriculum
* teacher autonomy (power) to make decisions
* negotiable or co-constructed norms and rules
* clear timetable, with some built-in flexibility
* time for socializing, collaborating, having meaningful discussions built into schedule
* low teacher/child ratios
* traditions that support learning through play (LtP)
* new staff hires who support the LtP approach
* whole school gatherings
* varied assessment strategies
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Notes/ideas: |