Creating Effective Learning Spaces for Cognitive Development

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Question 1

- How many children did you see?
Question 2

• What type of activities were the children engaged in?
How individuals process information and learn

Response – verbal, physical, symbolic

Sensory Memory

Working Memory

Long Term Memory

S T I M U L U S

sight
sound
taste
touch
smell

Forgetting
What must happen to *REMEMBER*?

- Attention to stimuli
- Action on stimuli
- Practice
- Application of information
- Retrieval
Understanding of Cognitive Activity

- Divergent thinking
- Creative thinking
- Recognizing parts and wholes
- Solving problems such as creating balance or stability
- Application of learning from one setting to another
- Making choices
- Process oriented activities
- Activities encouraging emergent skills
Understanding of Cognitive Activity
Cycle of Change (Adapted from Senge et al 1999, page 46)

- Enthusiasm
- Willingness
- Commitment
- Personal Result
- Personal Investment
- Motivation
Enthusiasm, Willingness, Commitment – Identify something already done well!
Build on what has been done well

• If we wanted to integrate greater cognitive activity into this activity, what changes might we make?
Personal Investment

Common questions asked by staff include:

• What’s in it for me?
• Why change, it’s already working.
• How much extra time will it take?
• How will this improve my teaching?
• What materials do we need and can we get them?
• What is the benefit to children?
Motivation to Change

- Start with what is done well
- Observe effects
- Success builds success
Personal Result – measure change

- Photographs
- Documentations of children’s activities
- Documentation of children’s learning
- Emergent activities
- Before and after
- Personal portfolios
- Personal evaluations
- Reflective discussions
- Personal choices
Area set up by Adults – After 10 minutes of play
Children set up, maintained over a week
**Acknowledge and Share Success**

- **Staff share success**
  - Bulletin board
  - Success book
  - Meetings
  - Documentation panels
  - Sharing sessions

- **Can you think of any other strategies to use?**
Thinking and Learning and the Environment

Response – verbal, physical, symbolic

Environ

Find Learning Activity Areas or Material

How Well Area is Organized

Processing

Forgetting

senses
attend
speed
find
recall
Core Cognitive Activities as set by Organization of Environment

Labelling
Core Cognitive Activities as set by Organization of Environment

Logical
Providing Choices
Problem Solving
Familiar Settings and Realistic Materials
Familiar Settings and Realistic Materials
Process Oriented
Problem-Solving Skills
Evoke
Curiosity
Evoke
Curiosity
Transfer Skills
Mobility of Materials
Proximity of Learning Areas
Open-Ended
Parts and Wholes
Match, Sort, Label
Teachable Moments
References


• [http://lifelonglearn.com](http://lifelonglearn.com)

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