



MAKE-BELIEVE PLAY

EARLY CHILDHOOD

- THE BRAIN “BLOSSOMS” INTO MAKE BELIEVE PLAY during the preschool years
- IT IS THE “HIGH SEASON FOR IMAGINATIVE PLAY

EARLY THEORISTS

- FREUD said....
 - Children act out things they are not sure of
 - They master frightening and frustrating events
 - Through make-believe play

EARLY THEORISTS

- ERICKSON said.....
 - They use pretend play to find out about themselves and the social world
 - In all cultures, they act out occupations and roles
 - Gain a sense of their future
 - How can they fit into society

EARLY THEORISTS

- **PIAGET said...**
 - **Through pretending, children become aware of social role possibilities**
 - **They can look into the past and the future**

VYGOTSKY

- It's essential for children's development
- It is a ***"ZPD"** where children can try on many challenging skills
- It helps them behave beyond the age of their daily behavior
 - *(zone of proxymal development)

VYGOTSKY

- It contains ALL DEVELOPMENTAL TENDENCIES
 - Cooperation
 - Rule-Based
 - Appears to be free play but is bound by social rules
 - Helps them acquire the rules of social life
 - Greatest will-power seen during pretend play

VYGOTSKY

- It contains ALL DEVELOPMENTAL TENDENCIES
 - They can learn to think and act without objects
 - 21 months need a toy phone
 - 2 years can use a block
 - 3 and 4 yrs need no object at all
 - Bridges from concrete thought of early childhood to more mature thought – leads to abstract thinking

VYGOTSKY

- It contains ALL DEVELOPMENTAL TENDENCIES
 - Overcoming impulses
 - They can't always get what they want
 - Strengthens the sense that ideas can guide behavior
 - They can act in ways independent of what they see

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT

- **ATTENTION**

- More complex play goals =
- More focused, effortful and attentive
- Construction and imaginative play = powerful predictors of sustained attention 2 to 5 year olds
- Attention is more advanced in make-believe play than in many real-life situations
- Children choose it - overwhelmingly

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT

- MEMORY
 - Remember better during play than when doing direct memory work
 - Acting out stories helps them learn basic story organization
 - Increases their memory of large chunks of information

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT

- LANGUAGE AND LITERACY
 - They hear speech that comments on things that are going on right then
 - It directs language that is understandable
 - Meaning of new words can be figured out through current cues
 - They learn to use language to work out disagreements
 - They can learn from the language of others

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT

- LANGUAGE AND LITERACY
 - Literacy can be practiced as they practice shopping lists, advertisements, name tags, etc.
 - THE AMOUNT OF TIME CHILDREN DEVOTE TO PRETENDING AT AGE 4 IS POSITIVELY RELATED TO READING AND WRITING SKILLS AFTER ENTERING KINDERGARTEN AND 1ST GRADE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT

- **ABSTRACT REASONING**

- Preschoolers are “concrete” thinkers
- Make-believe play can help them pass concrete limitations
- It helps children separate the real objects and actions from mental symbols – leads to abstract thinking

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT

- TELLING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN APPEARANCE AND REALITY
 - Preschoolers are easily tricked by the outward appearance of things
 - The more they practice pretending in preschool, the better they can separate real identities from disguised

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT

- SELF-REGULATION
 - Private speech
 - Helps bring behavior under the control of thought

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT

- SELF REGULATION
- Study with Montessori and YWCA preschool children
 - Montessori pretend play was limited
 - Private speech was less
- More make-believe play = more they used private speech to guide thought and behavior during real tasks

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT

- IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY
 - Related to outstanding accomplishments in adulthood

ADULT INVOLVEMENT

- **SCAFFOLDING – social functions can be learned**
 - Enlivening daily routines
 - Helps dissolve conflicts
 - Allows easy expression and regulation of emotions
 - Allows influencing of social behavior
 - **FUN**

ADULT INVOLVEMENT

- Children who are just beginning to use language to tell about their
 - Everyday lives
 - Inner thoughts
 - Feelings
- Can do it more easily during symbolic play

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- Excerpted from Awakening Children's Minds by Laura Berk, Oxford University Press, 2001.