



## MODULE 1 ASSESSMENT

This topic has been developed with Mariana Carazo, Educator and Play-based Learning Advocate. The course covers the importance of play-based learning and the impact this has on children's development of key skills in the Early Years. This content assessment aims to enhance your understanding of the strategies, resources, and practices that support language development in early childhood settings.

The following assessment will support you in reflecting on your environment and practice. You will be able to demonstrate that the information you have listened to has embedded and your answers will create new opportunities to create language-rich learning opportunities for the children in your setting.

### QUESTION 1

What is your understanding of what 'play-based learning' is?

### QUESTION 2

How does play influence the way children develop?





MODULE 1 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

**QUESTION 3**

What are some of the different types of play and what are the benefits?

**QUESTION 4**

What are some of the ways you and your colleagues might reflect on the play-based learning opportunities in your setting?





## MODULE 2 ASSESSMENT

### QUESTION 1

How important is play at the heart of any learning opportunity we offer?

### QUESTION 2

In what ways can you observe the learning that comes out of the play?





## MODULE 2 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

### QUESTION 3

How does play-based learning develop key foundation skills?

### QUESTION 4

What is the role of educators in designing play-based learning environments that support key foundation skills?





## MODULE 3 ASSESSMENT

### QUESTION 1

What are some of the ways you can make your environment exciting and inviting for young children?

### QUESTION 2

How do you plan to create 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environments that encourage play-based learning?





MODULE 3 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

**QUESTION 3**

What resources will you use to enhance play-based learning experiences in your setting?

**QUESTION 4**

What is the importance of an educator's role in a play space?

**QUESTION 5**

How might you enhance your construction/block play area?





## MODULE 4 ASSESSMENT

### QUESTION 1

What are executive functions?

### QUESTION 2

How does constructive play help executive functioning?



MODULE 4 ASSESSMENT

**QUESTION 3**

What is the role of executive functioning in the Early Years?

**QUESTION 4**

What strategies can be used to support executive functioning in the Early Years?

**QUESTION 5**

Why should educators inform parents/carers about the importance of play, executive functioning and 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills?





## REFLECTION SECTION

*From listening to all 4 episodes and completing all assessments as part of this module, it is now time to highlight the key takeaways and knowledge you have gained from this Continuous Professional Development module.*

**Key areas to reflect on:**

- *What have you learnt and how this will impact your practice?*
- *What changes you intend to make in your setting from the knowledge you have gained from this module?*
- *What is the desired impact of the changes you intend to make for the children?*

*Please also ensure to give a copy of this assessment including your reflection section to your senior leader, this is a key part of Ofsted 3 I's when reviewing, reflecting and making changes and will support you in your next inspection.*





REFLECTION SECTION CONTINUED

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# ANSWER SHEETS



## MODULE 1 ASSESSMENT

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The following assessment will support you in reflecting on your environment and practice. You will be able to demonstrate that the information you have listened to has embedded and your answers will create new opportunities to create language-rich learning opportunities for the children in your setting.

### QUESTION 1

What is your understanding of what 'play-based learning' is?

Answer 1 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Play is the work of the child. Children like to work best through play, and there's research that supports how movement is crucial for the brain and how mental health needs play. A child needs to engage in play every single day in order to have a strong brain.

### QUESTION 2

How does play influence the way children develop?

Answer 2 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Play is a universal language and evolves over time. We need to inform children that play never ends and it evolves every time.
- When we are born, we begin to play with our body and learn about our body, then, we move into different stages of play, which look different over 6-years.
- Play can influence our lives because when you engage in a meaningful experience, it shapes your life forever. If you think about your childhood, the first thing that pops up will be a play experience.



## MODULE 1 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

**QUESTION 3**

What are some of the different types of play and what are the benefits?

Answer 3 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Open-ended play: This is where the child leads the way and are the leaders of their own play experiences. Play in an open-ended spectrum will be 100% child-led and we can develop those key 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.
- Playful learning – This is where educators observe play schemas and child development. Educators can develop their own experiences to meet specific goals and use them as a vehicle for learning. Educators can invite children to playful learning experiences to help them with numbers, traces, and writing.

**QUESTION 4**

What are some of the ways you and your colleagues might reflect on the play-based learning opportunities in your setting?

Answer 4 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Reflect by note taking when observing the environment, opportunities and engagement to then reflect on as a team and compare notes by all colleagues to identify similarities and areas of provision or practice that need change,
- Gather responses and feedback from the children, colleagues and leaders to review and reflect collectively.
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the opportunities and discuss areas for improvement
- Observation, team collaboration and communication is key to gather information to then reflect upon and encourage a reflective team ethos.
- Review gaps in children's summative assessments to identify any trends in engagement and developmental outcomes.





## MODULE 2 ASSESSMENT

**QUESTION 1**

How important is play at the heart of any learning opportunity we offer?

Answer 1 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Play is a fundamental and essential component at the heart of any learning opportunity we offer to young children. Through play, children naturally engage, explore, and make sense of the world around them. Play is not merely an enjoyable pastime; it is a powerful vehicle for learning that encompasses cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.
- The motivation for play comes from the educator when we facilitate activities in all the learning areas, such as maths, science, literacy, etc. We open the door to that learning and are an advocate for hands-on learning.

**QUESTION 2**

In what ways can you observe the learning that comes out of the play?

Answer 2 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Work around your team and plan ahead. Planning is a great way to see the progression of learning. If you emphasise on a skill-by-skill basis, it's hard to see what you will achieve. As a team, you need to identify how to recognize progression and more children into the learning outcomes
- Collaborate with one another. The more brains that are put together, the better ideas.





## MODULE 2 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

### QUESTION 3

How does play-based learning develop key foundation skills?

Answer 3 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Extending play-based learning experiences by incorporating literacy, numeracy, and other curriculum areas enriches children's learning opportunities and promotes holistic development. By intentionally integrating literacy elements, numeracy concepts, and other subject areas into play scenarios, educators create a more comprehensive and meaningful learning environment.
- Through this approach, children can engage in authentic, hands-on experiences that support their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. Continuous professional development and a commitment to innovative curriculum integration are essential for educators to effectively extend play-based learning

### QUESTION 4

What is the role of educators in designing play-based learning environments that support key foundation skills?

Answer 4 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Educators have a vital role in designing play-based learning environments that support key foundation skills.
- By creating stimulating environments, planning with intentionality, observing and assessing, facilitating and extending learning, promoting collaboration, and reflecting on their practices, educators can create optimal play-based learning experiences that foster holistic development in young children.
- Continuous professional development and a commitment to best practices in early childhood education are crucial for educators to effectively fulfil their role in supporting children's learning through play.





## MODULE 3 ASSESSMENT

### QUESTION 1

What are some of the ways you can make your environment exciting and inviting for young children?

Answer 1 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Creating an exciting and inviting environment for young children is essential to promote engagement, curiosity, and active participation in their learning experiences.
- Children don't want to be overwhelmed, so practitioners must evaluate their space and what works best for them. Your group of children will tell you what to add because you will see the play schemas which happen within your setting.
- By incorporating colour, providing a variety of materials, creating themed areas, and continuously refreshing the environment, educators can create an exciting and inviting space that sparks children's curiosity, engagement, and love for learning.

### QUESTION 2

How do you plan to create 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environments that encourage play-based learning?

Answer 2 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Creating 21<sup>st</sup>-century learning environments that encourage play-based learning requires thoughtful design, flexibility, integration of technology, inquiry-based approaches, collaboration spaces, reflection, and supportive learning culture.
- By embracing these strategies, educators can foster the development of essential skills while providing engaging and meaningful learning experiences for their students. Continuous professional development and collaboration among educators are essential for implementing and refining these approaches to meet the evolving needs of learners in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Building and construction play is a fantastic starting point for educators because it builds 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills.







### MODULE 3 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

#### QUESTION 3

What resources will you use to enhance play-based learning experiences in your setting?

Answer 3 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Open-ended Materials: Open-ended materials are versatile resources that can be used in multiple ways, allowing children to express their creativity and imagination.
- Pretend Play Props: Pretend play props encourage dramatic play and social interaction, fostering language development, social skills, and emotional expression.
- Art and Craft: Art and craft supplies stimulate creativity, fine motor skills, self-expression, and cognitive development
- Science and Exploration Tools: Science and exploration resources engage children in hands-on investigation, problem-solving, and critical thinking.
- Literacy Resources: Literacy resources support language development, early literacy skills, and storytelling abilities.
- Numeracy Manipulatives: Numeracy manipulatives engage children in hands-on mathematical exploration and problem-solving.

#### QUESTION 4

What is the importance of an educator's role in a play space?

Answer 4 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- As educators, we have the responsibility of providing the right materials for the spaces.
- We also want to make sure that children know how to use these environments and understand the importance of the environment. If an educator sees a child is struggling with play and their imagination, educators need to prompt the child and provide the confidence to continue playing.
- An educator's role in a play space is of paramount importance as they play a critical role in facilitating and maximizing the learning opportunities that arise during play. Educators have a unique position to guide, support, and extend children's play experiences, making their presence and active engagement essential.

#### QUESTION 5

How might you enhance your construction/block play area?

Answer 5 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- By adding loose parts to the overall 'body' of larger pieces of constructive items. Such as earrings, rings, cars, and tiny details which enrich the building process and are based on the child's interests.



## MODULE 4 ASSESSMENT

### QUESTION 1

What are executive functions?

Answer 1 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Executive functions refer to a set of cognitive processes that allow individuals to plan, organise, regulate behaviour, and control their thoughts and actions. While initially thought to develop later in childhood, research has shown that executive functions also play a crucial role in the early years of a child's development.

### QUESTION 2

How does constructive play help executive functioning?

Answer 2 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Executive functioning explodes through open-ended play, specifically in constructive play. Children develop their executive functions in depth when they engage in high-level play experiences in constructive play.
- Open-ended play encourages problem-solving; Where should I put this block? How do I build an arch?
- When you expose children to open-ended play, they come up with something nobody can replicate Children will create things which they are fascinated with.



## MODULE 4 ASSESSMENT

**QUESTION 3**

What is the role of executive functioning in the Early Years?

Answer 3 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Executive functioning plays a vital role in the early years by facilitating self-regulation, cognitive flexibility, attention, planning, working memory, self-reflection, and social and behavioural regulation.
- By promoting the development of these executive functions, educators and practitioners can support children's overall development, academic success, and social-emotional well-being in the early years and beyond.

**QUESTION 4**

What strategies can be used to support executive functioning in the Early Years?

Answer 4 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Supporting executive functioning in the Early Years requires a combination of effective strategies and a play-based learning approach. By creating structured environments, teaching self-regulation strategies, breaking tasks into manageable steps, providing visual supports, encouraging metacognitive skills, offering choices, and scaffolding play experiences, educators can foster the development of executive functions.
- Play-based learning, with its inherent flexibility, creativity, and social interactions, provides a rich context for children to practice and enhance executive functioning skills in an enjoyable.

**QUESTION 5**

Why should educators inform parents/carers about the importance of play, executive functioning and 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills?

Answer 5 (Please note, the below are examples and answers may vary)

- Educators should inform parents/carers to replicate these experiences within the home because play gives children so many benefits and the play doesn't end in the classroom; it happens at home too.
- This shared understanding and partnership between educators and parents contribute to a holistic and enriching educational experience for children, maximizing their potential for success in the 21st century.

