

MODULE 1 ASSESSMENT

This topic has been developed with Ben Kingston-Hughes. Ben is an international keynote speaker, author and multi award-winning trainer. He is also the Managing Director of Inspired Children and has worked with vulnerable children across the UK for over 34 years. This course will support your understanding of Play in the Early Years.

QUESTION 1

In this podcast episode Alistair and Ben explore imaginative play. How do they describe imaginative play?

QUESTION 2

One of the key themes of this podcast episode is about how the adult and children interact when engaged in free play in setting. What is the role of the adult during imaginative play?

MODULE 1 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

QUESTION 3

Loose parts play is becoming increasingly popular in Early Years settings with both Ben and Alistair being advocates of this type of play. Why do studies say this is important?

QUESTION 4

What does Ben believe is the foundation of all Maths and Literacy?

QUESTION 5

Ben and Alistair discuss 'prescriptive' activities. These are defined for the purpose of this discussion as activities with a limited end goal. Such as 'today we are going to paint a rainbow' or make a frog out of malleable materials. What do they suggest doing instead?

MODULE 2 ASSESSMENT

QUESTION 1

During this podcast episode Ben and Alistair consider some of the differences between expectations that are placed on the children and whether these are developmentally appropriate. What were their thoughts?

QUESTION 2

One aspect of physical play discussed in the podcast is that of risk and challenge. What impact do they say providing children with the safe space to take risk has on them in later life?

QUESTION 3

How would you describe physical play and why is it important?



MODULE 2 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

QUESTION 4

What impact does being uncomfortable have on children's learning according to the information shared in the podcast?

QUESTION 5

Ben and Alistair discuss how children play differently depending whether they are indoors or outdoors – how do they say children play outside?



MODULE 3 ASSESSMENT

QUESTION 1

What barriers to using humour in early years do Alistair and Ben identify?

QUESTION 2

How do Ben and Alistair describe humour the early years?

MODULE 3 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

QUESTION 3

What role does humour play in the early years?

QUESTION 4

Alistair and Ben discuss the wide ranging impact of humour on children in the early years. What are some of the positives they discuss?

QUESTION 5

How do Alistair and Ben believe humour can impact the learning environment?

MODULE 4 ASSESSMENT

QUESTION 1

Ben uses three words to describe what underpins everything he does. What are these?

QUESTION 2

Ben gives an example of one particular session with vulnerable children which was different to the rest and broke the mould. Why was this?

QUESTION 3

Ben talks about some of the work he does with vulnerable children. What is 'adoption activity day'?

MODULE 4 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

QUESTION 4

Why is play therapy especially important for vulnerable children?

QUESTION 5

Ben and Alistair discuss the impact of attachment on vulnerable children. What do they say?



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

QUESTION 1

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

In this podcast episode Alistair and Ben explore imaginative play. How do they describe imaginative play?

- Imaginative play is pretending one thing is something else. For example if a child pretends that a pencil is a car.
- Symbolic play.
- Imagining something in the world around you in a way in which you cannot see it directly.
- Imaginative play does not just happen in role play or small world. Any kind of free play can be imaginative.
- The freedom to explore encourages this type of play.

QUESTION 2

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

One of the key themes of this podcast episode is about how the adult and children interact when engaged in free play in setting. What is the role of the adult during imaginative play?

- It is believed babies are not born with an imagination and therefore adults who are around children help to grow and support the process of building their imagination by becoming involved in the imaginative world themselves, alongside the children. This should be the case even if it is uncomfortable or the adults do not believe they are creative themselves.
- It is key that children see all adults becoming lost in this world even if you have to 'fake it until you make it' because you are uncomfortable.

MODULE 1 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

QUESTION 3

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

Loose parts play is becoming increasingly popular in Early Years settings with both Ben and Alistair being advocates of this type of play. Why do studies say this is important?

- Loose parts play is a branch of imagination that allows children to look at random objects and see the possibilities as to what they could do with them.
- The concept of physical spontaneity in a child's world is linked to them being capable of becoming creative adults.
- Without the ability to look at something and use it for another purpose than it was intended - humans wouldn't have created fire, the wheel or Marmite.
- It encourages exploration and free play and innovation.
- Unrestricted creativity and endless possibilities.

QUESTION 4

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

What does Ben believe is the foundation of all Maths and Literacy?

- Symbolic representation.
- When you are reading then you are using symbolic representation because you are giving each letter a meaning.
- The ability to look at the letter A – (which is sticks and lines) and understand it is the letter A. Humans are believed to be unique in the world in our ability to interpret that the A shaped symbol is the letter A.
- To be able to look an object or symbol and give it meaning.

QUESTION 5

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

Ben and Alistair discuss 'prescriptive' activities. These are defined for the purpose of this discussion as activities with a limited end goal. Such as 'today we are going to paint a rainbow' or make a frog out of malleable materials. What do they suggest doing instead?

- Coaching children through the skills of painting and being creative.
- Scaling back from goal focused approach to a process focused approach.
- Failure is a good thing – it is open-ended and exploratory play.
- Allowing children the freedom to explore materials and express themselves however they choose to.

MODULE 2 ASSESSMENT

QUESTION 1

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

During this podcast episode Ben and Alistair consider some of the differences between expectations that are placed on the children and whether these are developmentally appropriate. What were their thoughts?

- Big focus on the education culture which views compliance as a skill both for children and educators. Practitioners are viewed as 'really skilled' if they are able to get children to sit quietly.
- Sitting quietly refers to sat still, legs crossed and arms folded and maybe even fingers on the lips. Research suggests this is not developmentally appropriate but this is often still considered best practice.
- These skills are an area of focus despite having no purpose in the adult world. They argue adults are never told to sit up straight.

QUESTION 2

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

One aspect of physical play discussed in the podcast is that of risk and challenge. What impact do they say providing children with the safe space to take risk has on them in later life?

- Engaging in outdoor risky play produces cortisol and whilst it is bad for you – outdoor risky play is the only safe opportunity where this can be created and your body can build up a certain level of tolerance. This tolerance is created by allowing the other chemicals in the brain to balance that out. The more risky the play, the more cortisol is produced.
- This balancing act happening in children helps in later life.
- Research suggests that teenagers were given more opportunities to engage in risky play and thus their brains were exposed to more cortisol to make better risk assessment judgements.

QUESTION 3

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

How would you describe physical play and why is it important?

- The joy of movement.
- Physical acts such as running and jumping
- It can be indoor or outdoor play but often outdoor play is more physical due to less restrictions on space.
- Research shows that increased physical activity results in endorphin's being released and oxygenated blood levels improving.
- Some children don't thrive indoors because play is on a smaller scale but do outdoors on a larger scale – an example of this would be construction - construction on a large scale like cardboard boxes, pipes and crates etc. Benefits include – physical act of moving, spatial awareness, interaction you have to with other people – so much more you can gain from this larger scale physical movement.

MODULE 2 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

QUESTION 4

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

What impact does being uncomfortable have on children's learning according to the information shared in the podcast?

- It is argued that often children are unable to sit up straight. Particularly neurodivergent children.
- The same can be said for children sitting with their legs crossed.
- Making children wait until breaktime to go to the toilet for example can also make them feel uncomfortable.
- Research suggests your brain will automatically filter information away if you're not comfortable. You will therefore learn less.
- Being comfortable maximises learning that can take place.

QUESTION 5

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

Ben and Alistair discuss how children play differently depending whether they are indoors or outdoors – how do they say children play outside?

- When children are playing outside, they often play louder and further away from the adult and their play is much more physical.
- Research shows boys prefer outdoor play for a number of reasons. One being that it allows them to be a safe distance from an adult and therefore feel more independent.
- Children are more likely to take risk in outdoor play, safe risks too, because the outdoor space allows that to happen.
- Children are encouraged to be more physical in their play because of the release of adrenaline and endorphins they get when engaging in this type of play. This is all signs of good body chemistry which happens when playing outside.
- There can be less incidences of anti-social/non-compliant behaviour outdoors because of the less structured play which is able to take place. Additionally, there is less focus on rules which may not be developmentally appropriate outside.
- Children's brains are much more comfortable when they are outdoors – behaviour is viewed differently outdoors. Shouting and loud outside is acceptable – inside it is not. Behaviour is perceived as being 'better' outside because it is often a much more comfortable environment for children.

MODULE 3 ASSESSMENT

QUESTION 1

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

What barriers to using humour in early years do Alistair and Ben identify?

- There could be safeguarding risks that occur when discussing toilet habits but these are not insurmountable – they may just need some prior discussion.
- Adults often crush toilet humour etc because it is seen as cheeky or inappropriate. So that team culture can lead to it being discouraged.
- An environment where children move from one planned activity to the next can limit the freedom afforded for children to laugh and make jokes and create their own humour.

QUESTION 2

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

How do Ben and Alistair describe humour the early years?

- Early years humour is basic. It is often about toilet humour.
- Polite society don't want us to talk about it but it is how a child's mind is functioning.
- Stories such as 'the dinosaur who pooped' – all have a role to play in a humorous environment.
- The culture of your space is important. Discuss the use of humour as a team.

QUESTION 3

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

What role does humour play in the early years?

- As adults we often use humour more than some academic subjects that are part of the EYFS Framework.
- Making children laugh is incredibly powerful – particularly with vulnerable children.
- All developmental processes have stages and toilet humour is one of those stages.
- However, it is rare settings plan for humour. We should ask ourselves 'what can we do to make the children laugh?'
- Being able to laugh together makes you feel more comfortable in someone's company. This helps to build those positive relationships amongst children, educators and families.

MODULE 3 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

QUESTION 4

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

Alistair and Ben discuss the wide ranging impact of humour on children in the early years. What are some of the positives they discuss?

- Making children laugh is hugely beneficial for the body's bio-chemistry. In terms of well-being, creative thinking, imagination and problem solving.
- When children can acknowledge and identify with the fact that something is funny – it shows a real change and shift in their knowledge and understanding of language which will make them a better reader, writer and talker.
- Humour plays a massive role in the way children understand the construct of language and they enjoy playing around with language when it is funny.
- Cornerstone of joyful approaches to education is that if you are enjoying something you want to do it more and even then the processes to then learning become linked to the fun.
- Your brain becomes hard wired to associate positive feelings with a particular learning subject.
- When we get older we use humour as a way to cope with the world, to cope with grief and bereavement etc.

QUESTION 5

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

How do Alistair and Ben believe humour can impact the learning environment?

- One worry is that a playful approach to learning encourages 'poor or silly behaviour' – but that isn't their experience.
- They argue children respond so much better to adults if the focus isn't always on compliance and being told they have to do something a certain way rather than being developmentally appropriate.
- Loud behaviour can often be viewed as a lack of control but that is not the case as it actually can lead to better behaviour and allow the fun to continue and not make the children feel like they are in an adult space.
- If you can get children laughing, then their behaviour will improve automatically because they will feel better about themselves.
- On the surface it might look chaotic but beneath that you have children behaving pro-socially in the way that humans do behave - laughing and making jokes today and making positive links to you, the environment, each other, nursery/pre-school/school and being a learner.
- Happier children – happier adult. Happier adult – happier children.

MODULE 4 ASSESSMENT

QUESTION 1

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

Ben uses three words to describe what underpins everything he does. What are these?

- Play.
- Nurturing.
- Curiosity.
- This helps a child to bring their own brain under control and that is when you see the wonderful stuff happening.

QUESTION 2

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

Ben gives an example of one particular session with vulnerable children which was different to the rest and broke the mould. Why was this?

- During sessions with vulnerable children there is often an initial period of 20-30 minutes where they don't play. When they feel unsure of themselves.
- One session however this was not the case. The children arrived into the environment and immediately started to play without the 20-30 minutes needed to settle in.
- When Ben and the team reflected on the session they realised it was because all of the adults were sat on the floor and already engaged in playing with the toys when the children entered the environment.
- Playful adults are extremely powerful.

QUESTION 3

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

Ben talks about some of the work he does with vulnerable children. What is 'adoption activity day'?

- It helps children who have been unable to find adoptive families find their forever homes. An example of this could be a child who has a disability. Statistically they are less likely to be adopted.
- The focus of the day is play.
- Den making or making magic potions etc. Potential adopters join in with the play as well as the other adults in the team and the children.
- Ben says this has created more forever families than any other project than ever has been tried.
- It works because of the simplicity of the concept that if a child and adult are playing together in a tent for example, the adult is not seeing anything beyond that child for who they are.

MODULE 4 ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

QUESTION 4

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

Why is play therapy especially important for vulnerable children?

- Children who are always in fight or flight due to their life experiences or children for whom chaos is the norm may try and recreate that because it is normal and comfortable for them. Play is really good at knocking down some of those barriers and opening up in ways they struggle to do in every day interactions.
- Play therapy has the capacity to bring down the fear centre of the brain when playing it automatically lightens the effect of that fear centre of the brain and if children couple that with playing with adults who they feel safe with – the nurturing experience and shared safety – it is a double benefit. Children who are stimulated with activity curiosity helps bring down that fear too.

QUESTION 5

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

Ben and Alistair discuss the impact of attachment on vulnerable children. What do they say?

- Modern attachment theory says that children who have insecure attachments are less likely to explore their environment because of lack of safety. Adults can make the child feel safe immediately by being on the floor playing.
- Children with trauma need to come to the realisation that these adults in front of them are not like the adults that have previously caused them pain and the best way to do that is through play.
- Our role as educators is to be that different adult.
- You don't have to be whacky, you can be a different adult by just listening to the child or by being the adult who doesn't appear threatening or just by being there for them. Presence means a lot.
- Playful spaces and playful adults. To be a playful adult it can be a glance or a gesture. It doesn't need to be the big stuff.
- Often vulnerable children need coaching through play and breaking those barriers of 'can I trust you?'