CHAPTER 3
Fostering Creativity in Play

COMPREHENSIVE
A parent mentions one day, “I’m glad my son likes to come to school so much, but don’t the children do anything but play around here?” How would you respond to this question?

MULTIPLE CHOICE
In the blank beside each item write the letter that indicates the one best answer.

___ 1. According to both Piaget and Vygotsky, play is important because:
   a. vigorous play helps fight obesity and overweight.
   b. play makes children happy.
   c. free play allows the teachers to set up learning activities for cognitive development.

___ 2. In sociodramatic play, children:
   a. play physically with other children.
   b. act out roles and create stories.
   c. coordinate senses and emotions.
   d. cooperate with other children to help build something.

___ 3. To foster creativity in play, the most valuable thing the teacher can do is:
   a. never intervene in the play.
   b. cast themselves in the role of assistant to the child.
   c. ask the children questions about what they’re doing.
   d. provide many creative, self-expressive materials for the children to use.

___ 4. The aspect of play that has been best accepted and understood in the past 25 years has been the:
   a. physical aspect.
   b. social aspect.
   c. intellectual aspect.
   d. psychological aspect.

___ 5. Games with rules are a form of play that:
   a. is rarely witnessed at the preschool level.
   b. should be a part of the preschool curriculum in order to prepare the children for the elementary school experience.
   c. is the sixth stage of play described by Smilansky.
   d. is the most common form of play among children about to enter kindergarten.

___ 6. Through manipulating blocks, children learn the Piagetian principle of:
   a. convergent thinking.
   b. zone of proximal development.
   c. language and literacy.
7. Piaget maintains that play:
   a. develops the child’s ability to abstract qualities of a social role.
   b. is a form of symbolic thought used by the young child.
   c. allows children the opportunity to acquire information.
   d. is an invaluable adjunct of physical development.

8. When attempting to facilitate creative play, the teacher:
   a. should participate on a peer level with the children.
   b. should teach the children how to follow directions and take turns.
   c. should let the children generate their own ideas.
   d. should stimulate play by reminding the children of their latest field trip and assign each child a role to play.

9. In creative dramatic play, it is important to encourage:
   a. the use of imaginative language.
   b. the use of realistic costumes and equipment.
   c. the chance for each child to participate in various roles to enrich and deepen his experience.
   d. parallel play because it is the forerunner of more sophisticated play when the child matures.

10. Water play is important because:
    a. it teaches children how to share.
    b. it is one of the freest, finest play opportunities we can offer children.
    c. it requires convergent thinking.
    d. it teaches children cognition.

11. It is particularly important to offer sand and mud play at school because:
    a. it is often restricted at home.
    b. it is relatively easy to clean up at school.
    c. the sandbox can be far enough away from the door so the sand will shake off.
    d. it mimics real life experience.

12. Which of the following is not a way to promote positive computer experiences for young children:
    a. locate the computer center in its own separate location away from the distractions of the classroom.
    b. make sure there are several chairs for more than one participant.
    c. ask questions and interact with the children.
    d. ensure that the programs are bias-free, nonviolent, and prosocial.
13. Sociodramatic play:
   a. is not developmentally appropriate beyond age 3.
   b. is not vital to offer as long as water play is available.
   c. has been largely abandoned in contemporary early childhood programs.
   d. can foster the development of empathy.

14. According to Kritchevsky and Prescott a complex play unit:
   a. is likely to give children complexes if over used.
   b. involves combining at least three different kinds of play equipment.
   c. might consist of using digging materials in the sandbox.
   d. might consist of using digging materials, sand, and water at the same time.

15. When a child spanks and punishes a doll he or she is:
   a. using play to express and relieve her feelings.
   b. seeking attention and help from the teacher.
   c. showing the type of situation experienced at home.
   d. using play in an inappropriate way.

16. Vygotsky maintained that fantasy play is valuable because:
   a. it permits the child to assimilate reality in terms of his own interests.
   b. it allows the child to reach a little above or beyond their usual level of abilities, referred to as the zone of proximal development.
   c. the zone of proximal development is closely associated with the developmental levels identified by Parten.
   d. it fosters the development of the symbolic use of language.

17. Strenuous physical play is especially important today because:
   a. we must prepare children for the No Child Left Behind tests.
   b. our country compares unfavorably with other nations in physical fitness.
   c. obesity among children and adults is at an all-time high.
   d. it fosters mutuality and cooperation.

18. Many teachers are offering computer games and programs to the children as:
   a. there are absolutely no harmful effects from using the computer.
   b. they want to prepare them for elementary school.
   c. it can enhance development (collaborative play, learning, and creativity).
   d. there are no gender biases in computer programs.

19. When children come up with different solutions and scenarios during their pretend play, they are:
   a. imitating adults.
   b. handing down games played by previous generations.
   c. confused about the meaning of play.
   d. developing divergent thinking.

TRUE/FALSE
Indicate the correct answer by writing T (true) or F (false) at the left of the statement.

___ 1. Research indicates that little boys should not be allowed to dress up in girls costumes because this leads to confusion in sex role identity.

___ 2. The value of play has often been underestimated or misunderstood by those interested in fostering intellectual gains in early childhood.

___ 3. Doctor play should not be permitted because it is just a cover-up for thinly veiled concerns about sexual differences.

___ 4. Play differs from other activities because it does not progress through a series of developmental stages.

___ 5. Play is inherently a self-expressive activity.

___ 6. Although very worthwhile, it is also true that water play encourages children to become wild and over stimulated when it is offered.

___ 7. Water play contributes substantially to emotional relief, but offers little to intellectual development.

___ 8. Blocks have been recognized as being valuable play materials since Froebel’s time.

___ 9. The purpose of intervening in children’s play should be to stimulate, not dominate what the children are doing.

___ 10. When planning activities in the block corner, teachers should invariably make it a point to include some special accessories along with the basic blocks.

___ 11. One tip for promoting positive computer experiences for young children is to leave the children on their own so as not to interrupt their thinking.

___ 12. Children should not be allowed to use the computer for more than an hour at a time, or consistently at the expense of other activities, such as physical fitness.

___ 13. The NAEYC Position Statement on Technology and Young Children-ages 3 through 8 should always be consulted before using computers in the classroom.

___ 14. Eye-hand coordination is an example of sensorimotor skills that are promoted through play.

ESSAY

A reminder. The Integrative Questions for Review that are included at the end of every chapter offer additional possibilities for essay questions.
1. You are now a master teacher, and your inexperienced student teacher confides one day that she really hates working with blocks because the children hardly ever come to the block corner and play there. What suggestions would you give her that would help increase the attractiveness of the block corner?

2. One of the families in your cooperative nursery school is somewhat concerned because their 2 ½-year-old spends most of his time in the sandbox playing by himself or happily digging beside the other children, although he doesn’t really play with them. Would you also be concerned about this behavior? Explain why or why not.

3. Briefly describe an imaginative play activity, and then describe how a teacher would behave who is over manipulating the play and controlling it. Provide examples of what the teacher might both say and do.

4. Explain the contributions playing with blocks can make to the development of perceptual-motor skills, emotional satisfaction, intellectual learning, and creative self-expression for the young child.

5. Pick one of the following three statements to explain and defend. Be careful to supply examples that support the points you are making.
   a. Play fosters intellectual development.
   b. Play enhances social development.
   c. Play contains rich emotional values.