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## **LET'S PRETEND**

### **Dramatic Play in the Classroom**

**Vicki Reynolds**



***“Building for the future”***

## The Values of Dramatic Play:

*“The whole child benefits from the ability to pretend!”*

### Social:

Role taking

Perspective taking

Cooperation and sharing

Multicultural awareness

### Emotional:

Express emotions in safe ways

Feel a sense of power

Feel security

Develop autonomy

Distinguish fantasy from reality

### Cognitive:

Increase language skills

Increase creativity

Increase problem-solving skills

Increase understanding of symbols

## Physical:

Fine motor skills

Gross motor skills

## How To Encourage Dramatic Play:

### Setting the Stage:

1. Consider the location & space
2. Furnish your “home”-Child sized basics

Stove

Sink

Refrigerator

Table & Chairs

Doll Bed

Mirror

Shelves

3. Choose appropriate props and accessories

Empty food containers

Pots, pans, & dishes

Dolls

Telephone

Dress-up clothes

Job specific items

4. Let children take the lead
5. Provide enough time
6. Guide their play scenarios

***“Your challenge is to offer a variety of props and the basic framework for a setting.”***

### The Teacher Role:

1. Observe, Observe, Observe
2. Suggest a prop
3. Suggest a theme
4. Become a play partner (model)

### Power Play:

1. Disarm Weapon Play
  - Encourage a child to verbalize his feelings
  - Be direct about why a child cannot hurt others
  - Offer alternatives for working through anger
2. Help Super-heroes exist peacefully

### Dramatic Play Is Everywhere:

The Block Corner

The Puppet Center

The Sand and Water Table

On the Playground

\*Outline taken from Learning Through Play: Dramatic Play, A Practical Guide for Teaching Young Children. Edited by Nancy Jo Hereford and Jane Schall, 1991 Scholastic Inc.

## Setting the Stage

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Spring cleaning                            | Play newspaper  |
| Washing the dishes                         | Election Center |
| Bathing the baby                           | Beauty shop     |
| Cooking lunch                              | Bicycle Repair  |
| Make a “real” snack                        | Play Train      |
| Cooking at a restaurant                    | Play airplane   |
| Pizza parlor                               | Bakery          |
| Setting the table                          | Wedding         |
| Getting ready for school                   | Gift Wrap       |
| Getting ready for work                     | Flower Shop     |
| Going for a drive                          | Space Shuttle   |
| Going shopping                             | Icy Continent   |
| Play store (clothing, shoe, grocery, etc.) |                 |
| Birthday party                             |                 |
| Indoor picnic                              |                 |
| Play hospital                              |                 |
| Play doctor’s office                       |                 |
| Play dentist                               |                 |
| Play nursery                               |                 |
| Play fire station                          |                 |
| Play veterinarian                          |                 |
| Go camping                                 |                 |
| Build a tent                               |                 |
| Talk on the telephone                      |                 |
| Getting ready for bed                      |                 |
| Play post office                           |                 |
| Play library                               |                 |
| Play t.v. news                             |                 |