



Resourcing for schematic Play

TAMSIN GRIMMER

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The following schemas are explored in this handout:

Connection

Containing

Enclosing

Enveloping

Orientation

Positioning

Rotation

Trajectory

Transforming

Transporting

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Connection

Connection – children like to join or connect materials or objects together, e.g. connecting the train track, trucks or using any type of tape, string or bands to connect materials. Outdoors they may spend time transporting guttering or planks and use string to connect these together.

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- Make chains with the children out of daisies, paper, pipe-cleaners or paperclips
- Build spiders webs with thread and sticks and encourage children to weave or thread leaves onto a stick and offer materials for threading e.g. pasta, beads, cotton reels, ribbon or shoe laces
- Provide string and rope and toys and objects that can tie together e.g. skipping ropes (ensure that this activity is supervised)
- Offer opportunities to build a train track, road or fences and provide a range of construction materials that join and connect in different ways
- Provide tubes, pipes and guttering outside for large scale connection projects including pipes and funnels in sand water play to make connections
- Offer access to magnetic toys and construction materials or jigsaws that connect in different ways
- Ensure that our dressing-up clothes have a range of different fastenings
- Offer junk modelling with sticky tape, masking tape, gloopy glue, glue sticks, paperclips, treasury tags, rubber bands etc. and access to hole punches so that children can thread paper together to make mobiles
- Play games that involve children holding hands and connecting e.g. circle games
- Provide chunky chalks so that children can draw lines outside from one area to another
- Use words to support this schema such as connect, join, fasten, together, apart, separate, construct, build, disconnect, knot, through, thread, in, on top.

Connection

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Containing

Containing –children display behaviours such as filling and emptying lots of containers and/or bags repeatedly, e.g. placing items in the bin, filling handbags or boxes, can also include children containing themselves as they play inside boxes.

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- Provide a variety of different objects and containers for children to fill and a variety of different objects that can be used to fill containers, e.g. pebbles
- Ensure that we have an 'ethos of permission' allowing children to fill and empty different containers and encourage younger children to take control and do things for themselves e.g. carrying objects or filling containers
- Provide boxes and containers large enough for children to climb into to contain themselves
- Ensure that the containers provided are of different shapes and sizes and offer activities that encourage children to classify and sort objects into groups
- Provide opportunities for burying objects and finding them again in the sand or earth and offer opportunities to investigate capacity and volume using various containers in sand and water play
- Invest in some shape sorting toys and provide baskets and natural materials to be sorted into groups e.g. feathers, pebbles, sticks, leaves, conkers, shells
- Include containers in different contexts e.g. with playdough, in the role-play area or outside
- Encourage children to make dens and hideaways to hide objects and themselves
- Provide clothes with lots of pockets to fill for children to wear or dress a teddy in clothes with several pockets
- Offer a selection of handbags, baskets and rucksacks for children to play with
- Provide trucks and lorries, prams and trolleys that children can use as containers
- Encourage children to join in with tidying up and putting toys away
- Use language associated with container play; in, out, into, empty, full, space, room, fit, inside, outside.

Containing

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Enclosing

Enclosing – children display behaviours such as climbing into boxes, tunnels or pop up houses (anything where they are covered). They may also draw borders around their mark making or construct enclosures around themselves or small world animals with bricks or other equipment. Links with containing and enveloping - emptying and filling boxes.

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- Offer children access to large pieces of material and clothes horses or use a washing line to hang the material on –secure fabric with pegs or bulldog clips or den/tent building materials
- Provide peg boards and pegs
- Provide resources to make borders on paper, put some paper with borders in the writing/mark-making area and allow children to frame their pictures
- Offer houses, garages and car transporters with small world play
- Provide construction materials that lend themselves to making enclosures, fences, bridges, tunnels, walls and houses including large boxes for children to enclose themselves
- Provide lolly sticks, pipe cleaners, ribbon and other materials that children can make borders out of during craft activities
- Offer children opportunities to collect twigs and sticks to make natural borders
- Provide envelopes for filling and paper for wrapping objects
- Allow children access to play houses or to play under slides or in other enclosed spaces
- Provide saris, cloaks and scarves and collect bandages, bracelets, necklaces, watches and belts which children can use to enclose parts of their bodies
- Provide play that involves animal enclosures or cages e.g. vets, farms and zoos
- Provide stacking toys that fit inside each other e.g. Russian dolls and cups
- Play games that involve using the edges of a space e.g. riding bike around the perimeter of the garden, moving the ball around the edge of the parachute
- Make food that has something inside e.g. pies, sandwiches, pitta bread pockets
- Collect segmented boxes e.g. insert of a chocolate box or biscuit tin
- Use language such as in, inside, out, around, edge, perimeter, border, fence, enclose, wrap, corner, beside, on top, underneath, contain to support this schema.

Enclosing

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Enveloping

Enveloping - children who like to hide or be covered up: they may dress up in layers of clothing including hats. They might enjoy wrapping up dolls and teddy bears in blankets and/or play peek-a-boo or 'hide and seek'.



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- Provide access to tents and den building materials
- Offer children large pieces of material or old pillow cases and cushion covers and provide large boxes to climb into
- Give children access to wrapping paper and wrapping activities and play pass the parcel
- Offer mark-making materials, envelopes of different shapes and sizes and opportunities to fold paper
- Provide different types of material for wrapping toys and objects, e.g. fur, satin, fleece, netting
- Provide posting toys, shape sorters and stacking cups and offer boxes with lids or material to cover baskets and pots
- Encourage children to paint toys or stones, create wax pictures with a wash of paint covering them or scratch art pictures where the design is created by scratching away a layer
- Ensure that dressing up and role play areas include hats, scarves and cloaks or bandages and cloths for wrapping up parts of the body
- Provide small clothes or blankets for swaddling the dolls
- Allow children to bury themselves or objects in a sand pit or at the beach
- Offer children access to hand puppets or make sock puppets for children to put their hands in
- Play hide and seek or guessing games like 'hedgehogs down' where we hide children and the children have to guess who is hidden or 'Kim's game' where we hide objects from a tray
- Play parachute games that involve going under the parachute or making it like a tent
- Offer cooking activities that include wrapping food or spreading, e.g. wraps, tacos, sausage rolls, pasties, pasta parcels, spreading butter on toast or passata on pizza
- Use language such as full, empty, in, out, underneath, under, over, hide, hidden, disappear, transparent, camouflage, visible, invisible, unwrap, wrap, cover up, envelop.

Enveloping

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Orientation

Orientation – children who are interested in seeing things from different angles – children looking through their legs, lying on their backs with legs up or upside down on a sofa etc.

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- Play games that involve children moving their bodies into different positions: rolling, rocking, twisting
- Offer opportunities to climb or hang from climbing frames or trees, bearing in mind safety issues
- Allow children to explore things such as tables and slides by getting underneath them
- Provide objects to climb on so children can view things from different heights
- Provide resources for children to look through; telescopes, magnifying glasses, binoculars, kaleidoscopes, coloured lenses and make binoculars, telescopes and kaleidoscopes out of rolled up tubes of paper
- Provide mirrors for children, hand-held and fixed to walls or floor so they can see themselves from different angles
- Make holes in material or wood for children to look through and provide holes to peep through e.g. a keyhole or letterbox in the playhouse, windows in the dolls house etc. or go on a holes walk and search for holes in our local environment
- Make pin-hole cameras out of cardboard tubes or peep holes in boxes
- Engage in soft play as it can allow children opportunities to roll, twist, climb and view the world from different angles
- Provide 3-D glasses or make our own with red and blue clear cellophane sweet wrappers and provide 3-D pictures for children to explore
- Cover some windows or create stained-glass windows to look through with tissue paper/coloured film
- Offer mats and soft surfaces on which children can do headstands or lie down
- Offer access to rope and tyre swings as well as traditional swings as they allow children to explore viewing the world while swinging
- Teach the children some yoga moves
- Provide opportunities to play with pendulums or to observe a Newton's cradle
- Use language to support this schema, such as look through, twist, forwards, backwards, spinning, under, over, upside down.

Orientation

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Positioning – includes interests in where things are, positioning items in lines, rows or by size, different types of lines (vertical or horizontal), walking around sand tray edges or on walls, preferring food to be beside each other and/or laying on floors or under tables.



Positioning

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- Encourage the children to lay the table and create place settings with spaces drawn for knife, fork, spoon, plate and cup
- Provide tyres, crates and boxes in different places and at different heights for children to climb on and move
- Allow children to create their own scene in a shoe box for small world play
- Ensure that we provide enough materials so that children can group things in different ways
- Encourage children to sequence familiar stories or cycles, e.g. The Gingerbread Man or The Lifecycle of a Butterfly
- Make patterns with mosaics, collages, peg boards and bead necklaces
- Offer access to groups of objects e.g. Daddy bear, Mummy bear and Baby bear, or lots of different small world people
- Offer toys and resources that lend themselves to sorting activities
- Encourage children to make caterpillars and trains
- Provide name tags for pegs, trays and desks so that children can sit in the same place
- Offer children opportunities to create constructions where everything can have a specific place, using materials that join or stick together
- Provide a selection of toys and resources that children can place in different positions
- Use language associated with size and positioning: next to, behind, on top, under, in front, edge, beside, first, second, third, big, bigger, biggest, small, smaller, smallest.

Positioning

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Rotation – anything that involves spins or rolls, children may enjoy watching the washing machine or rolling down the hill, some may spin around, ride on roundabouts or prefer round objects, others may have repeated behaviour over wheeled toys including bicycle wheels.



Rotation

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- Allow children to roll their bodies and practice different ways of moving their bodies in a circular motion
- Offer opportunities for children to engage in heuristic play with things that could roll, e.g. round coasters, pencils, tubes, balls, cylindrical bottles, rolling pins
- Provide resources that are circular, round or spherical, including different sorts of wheels, balls and offer access to a variety of balls of different sizes and types, soft, squishy, hard, small, big, balls that jingle or light up
- Offer opportunities to play with wheeled toys and vehicles, wind-up toys, spinning tops and toys that spin or rotate
- Take children to a playground with equipment that spins or can rotate, swings, roundabouts, spinning seats
- Engage in write-dance activities when children make anticlockwise pre-writing movements along with music
- Play circle games with the children and games that involve moving in circles and parachute games
- Paint using balls or marbles in a tray and move the tray to make the balls rotate or use paint rollers or textured rolling pins in paint and long strips of paper to roll onto
- Make a vortex out of an old bottle
- Offer children the opportunity to play with gears and cogs
- Sing songs such as the wheels on the bus, wind the bobbin up, round and round the garden or roly-poly, roly-poly
- Offer children opportunities to investigate salad spinners, rolling pins and whisks with playdough or during cooking activities
- Provide bottles and jars with lids that screw and unscrew
- Demonstrate a spirograph or spinning pictures
- Provide hoops and tyres to roll and ribbons on sticks in the outside area
- Provide opportunities to play with water wheels in sand and water tray
- Create pin-wheels or use windmills with the children
- Use language associated with rotation: round, spin, roll, circle, sphere, dizzy, turn, twist, un-screw, screw, rotate, wind-up, unwind, twirl etc.

Rotation

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Trajectory

Trajectory – repeated behaviours include dropping items or food from cots, high-chairs etc. Playing with running water from the tap, building and knocking down towers, climbing and jumping off furniture, throwing, bouncing or kicking balls.

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- Provide opportunities for children to play with water in a variety of contexts: different containers and bottles, water wheels, spray bottles, water balloons, playing with running water from pumps, funnels, taps or hosepipes
- Provide a selection of water pistols and super-soaker guns for them to squirt towards targets on the wall
- Offer opportunities for children to move in different ways: run, jump, climb, swing, slide
- Investigate pulling and pushing, using yo-yos and pulleys
- Pretend to move like different animals, e.g. jump like a frog, crawl like a caterpillar, waddle like a duck, swing through the trees like a monkey...
- Provide woodwork tools which use trajectory movements and real opportunities to use them
- Experiment with dropping objects of different sizes, weights or shapes from different heights
- Play parachute games with a large parachute or play with toy parachutes
- Offer the children opportunities to kick balls into goals and around cones or throw, roll or kick balls to knock down skittles
- Splatter or flick paint at a large piece of paper or blow paint through straws
- Investigate pendulum movements, or play swing ball
- Play a variety of throwing games such as catch, throwing into hoops or buckets or throwing at targets, with a selection of different things e.g. balls, bean bags, chiffon scarves
- Make paper planes with children and then throw them to make them fly and investigate catapults and slingshots (if you're brave!)
- Offer access to guttering, tubes and pieces of drainpipe for children to roll balls down or for water to flow along and provide a variety of materials for children to play with ramps and cars
- Engage in bubble play, blowing bubbles, chasing bubbles and trying to catch them
- Include language such as; over, under, on, up, down, fast slow, throw, kick, move, fly, spin, twirl, glide, drop, bounce.

Trajectory

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Transforming

Transforming – children like to explore and see changes, e.g. adding colour to cornflour, mixing paints together, making or manipulating play dough, adding juice to food to see what happens, adding water to sand and/or making sand moulds.



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- Provide a variety of malleable materials
- Allow children to investigate ice and how water melts and freezes
- Freeze some small toy dinosaurs or superhero toys in an ice block and allow children to chip the ice away or investigate how to melt the ice
- Freeze water-based paints in ice-lolly containers and create your own ice paints
- Offer plenty of opportunities for cooking
- Provide a variety of different messy play activities: Jelly, gloop, soap flakes, moon dust, shaving foam, bubble mix
- Make your own playdough and add sensory ingredients i.e. rosemary, peppermint flavour, vanilla essence, coffee or chocolate powder, glitter. Supervise this activity to ensure that children are not tempted to eat it!
- Experiment with marbling inks
- Grow things with your children to see how living things change over time
- Explore decay through collecting leaves and composting vegetable and plants
- Make rain makers with oil and water
- Offer children opportunities to colour mix with paint, chalk, playdough or place a small amount of 2 food colouring liquids in small pots and connect them with kitchen towel, the colours will seep up the paper and mix when they meet
- Create a mud kitchen or sensory kitchen in your outdoor area
- Allow children to mix sand and water – if not everyone wants to do this, children can be provided with individual trays
- Investigate adding water to clay
- Use language associated with transformation: change, decay, different, same, time, cook, bake, runny, hard, soft, alter, turn.

Transforming

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Transporting

Transporting – children move objects from one area to another, sometimes with their hands, in bags or via dolls prams or trolleys. They may like to push their friends around in pushchairs or transport sand/water from one area to another.

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- Provide buckets, pulley and thin rope for children to explore (ensure activity is supervised)
- Put dumper trucks in your digging area or in a tray with soil, sand or gravel
- Allow children to transport things using pushchairs, prams, carry-cots, wagons and trolleys
- Provide trolleys or wheeled toys that are large enough for children to ride on
- Offer children bikes that have space for a friend or a basket for toys
- Provide a variety of wheelie bags or suitcases with wheels, baskets, bags, purses and rucksacks for children to fill and carry around and allow children to move things from one place to another
- Provide wheelbarrows in your outdoor area and buckets with handles in your sand area
- Provide a selection of toys that pull on a string
- Play with suitcases, packing, unpacking and carrying or wheeling them around
- Build a small world construction site for moving materials
- Play 'Pooh-sticks' and make 'boats' out of large leaves to float down a river or stream, ensuring that you fully supervise this activity
- Role-play moving house with packing boxes and a toy truck or wagon to fill
- Go on a scavenger hunt around the garden and collect things in paper bags with handles
- Encourage play where water can travel along guttering or pipes
- Plan using stories and rhymes involving transport or moving things e.g. *Whatever Next* or sing 'the wheels on the bus'
- Create a bus with a large box or a train with chairs in a row and imagine going on a journey together
- Use language to support this schema such as: in, on, full, empty, carry, push, pull, under, on top, right, left, far, near.

Transporting

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