



## **The Importance of Early Experiences! Playing is school readiness!**

Shared with you by Lisa Murphy, *the ooey gooley lady*®

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Environments that encourage **play** are environments that are **preparing children** for kindergarten, future elementary school **academics** and a love of life long learning. This foundation then supports the house of higher learning. What happens when you build with no foundation? What happens if an area or two (or all) is weak or missing? What happens when there is no room for PLAY in our programs?

### **SEVEN THINGS WE MUST DO WITH CHILDREN EACH DAY:**



**CREATE**



**MOVE**



**SING**



**DISCUSS**



**OBSERVE**

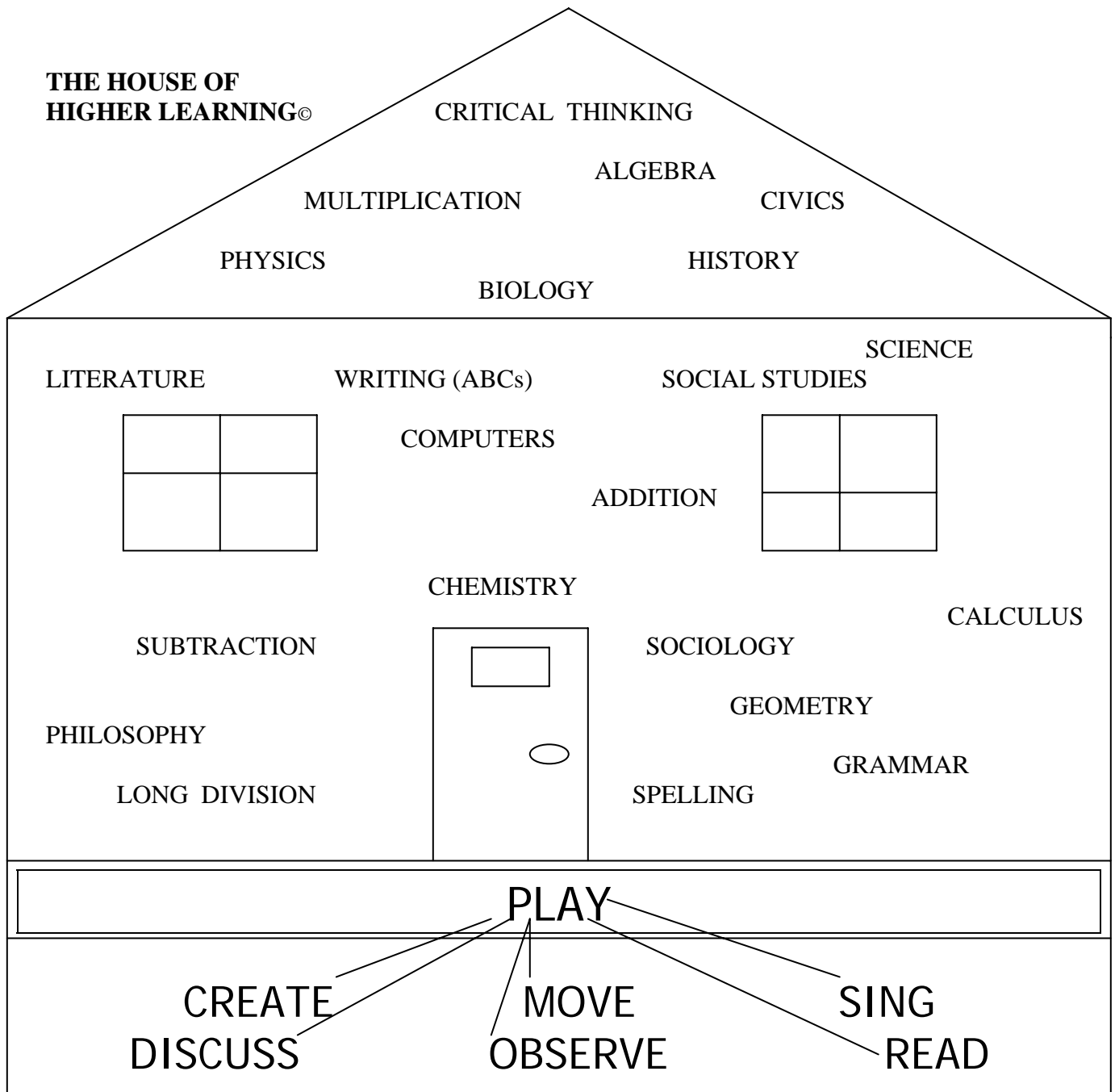


**READ**



**PLAY**

**THE HOUSE OF  
HIGHER LEARNING®**

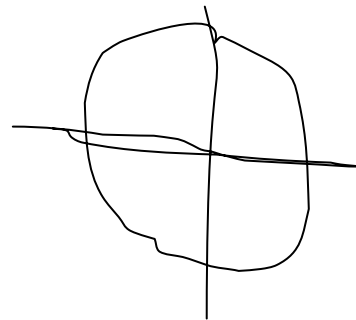
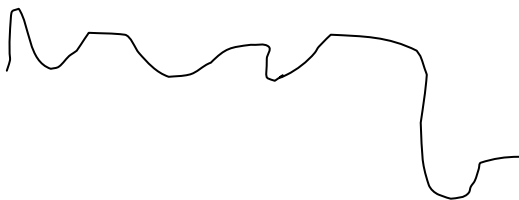
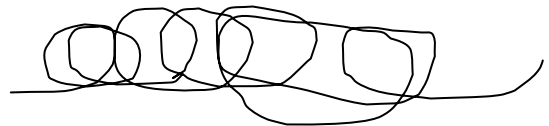
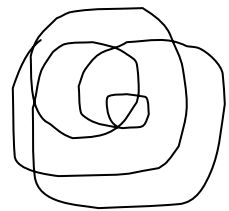


*The house of higher learning is supported by a foundation of PLAY!*

## CREATE

*Creating does NOT always = ART! Some children do not like to “do” art – their creativity comes out in many different ways... the dress up area, blocks, woodworking... are you making time for all these things?*

*Did you know there are 80 Stages of Scribbling before they can WRITE!??*



### **Resources**

You can “google” Rhoda Kellog to get more information about her.

*The Colors of Learning* by Rosemary Althouse, Margaret Johnson & Sharon Mitchell

Also, any art activity/idea book by MaryAnn Kohl is a good resource:

*Scribble Cookies, Mudworks, Big Messy Art*, etc. She has lots and many places sell them!



## How to get free paper!

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Call a local architect and ask for a donation of recycled **blueprints**.

Call your local newspaper, community paper, penny saver publication, ect, and ask, "When is **end-roll** pick up day?" The end roll of newspaper paper is too small for the large machines but is still a lot of paper for your class!

Call the local print shop and ask about **poster board or/and cardstock end-rolls**, again, like the newspaper rolls, it's too small for the machines but lots of paper for you!

While on the phone with the print shop, ask if they generate large amount of **scrap cardstock or poster board** from custom projects. If so, ask if you can haul that away too for them.

Every December we haunt the local office supply stores, stationery stores, Staples, Office Max and Office Depots for **desk calendars** that are about to expire.

**Recycled newspaper** is an excellent form of art paper! As grown ups we might want new clean crisp white paper but the children will paint and create on any surface... offer newspaper at the easels to vary the kind of paper used for art projects.

Know a photographer? They often use long sheets of bulletin board style **colored butcher paper** on photo shoots. The paper gets wrinkled and then they can't use it again. But you can!

Brown **paper bags** from the grocery store.

## **MOVE**

*Children need to move in order to take in new information & the outside environment is more conducive to this active learning style. Many schools in the USA have eliminated recess – take steps to make sure your school does not become one of them.*

*Remember the Learning Styles...*



*and how these preferences impact your classroom!*

### **A small list of resources:**

*Brain Gym* by Paul and Gail Dennison

*Smart Moves: Why learning is not all in your head* by Carla Hannaford

*The Last Child in the Woods* by Richard Louv

S'Cool Moves [www.schoolmoves.com](http://www.schoolmoves.com) Debra Em Wilson

*The Myth of the ADD Child* by Thomas Armstrong

*The Hand: How its use shapes the brain, language and human culture* by Frank Wilson

## **SING**

*Sing to the air! As you grow older, the only thing you will remember with word for word accuracy are the songs you learned when you were little... what songs are you teaching your children? Remember that putting tapes and CDs on are fine! Be sure the children are hearing YOUR voice too though! When was the last time you played JUKEBOX with your family in the car?*

### **A short list of musical resources:**

Vincent [www.lighthouserecords.com](http://www.lighthouserecords.com)

Bev Bos & Michael Leeman [www.turnthepage.com](http://www.turnthepage.com)

Peter and Ellen Allard [www.peterandellen.com](http://www.peterandellen.com)

Hugh Hanley [www.hughhanley.com](http://www.hughhanley.com)

Jim Gill [www.jimgill.com](http://www.jimgill.com)

## **DISCUSS**

*Communication skills are the KEY to school readiness! Do the children know how to get their shovels back? Social and emotional competence is more important than ABCs and 123s! Remember my little Miss Heather! Many children can “do” lots of things – but if they are lacking social skills it doesn’t matter a hill of beans if they can read, write, use a computer, know their shapes and colors or whatever – they need to be able to BE with others!*

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM:

*A Good Beginning: Sending America's Children to School With the Social and Emotional Competence They Need to Succeed*

Chicago Tribune  
September 6, 2000

By Ronald Kotulak, Staff Writer

## ***People Skills, not ABCs, Aid Kindergartners, experts say***

For years, educators have been encouraging parents and child-care workers to teach children letters, numbers, and colors before sending them off to school.

**But new research to be released this week suggests that being ready for school really means being friendly, attentive, and curious, and failing to instill these qualities sets up children for failure.**

It sets out to establish new priorities for parents and to call for an overhaul of the federal programs designed to prepare children for school. Evidence continues to mount that despite these programs, children are increasingly showing up for the first day of kindergarten unprepared to learn.

**The report finds that parents can improve a child's chances of success in kindergarten by fostering a strong relationship that enhances confidence, independence, curiosity, motivation, persistence, self-control, cooperation, empathy, and the ability to communicate.**

The report recommends that child-care centers and government policies on early childhood development refocus to promote emotional and social development.

New brain research shows that how children learn to get along with others and control their feelings is greatly influenced by their earliest experiences, and that **social and emotional competence are more important for school success than learning the ABCs and 1-2-3s.**

**“What the basic science is telling us is that simple counting, colors, and the alphabet are really not how kids get ready for school,”** said Dr. Peter Jensen, and expert consultant for the report and director of Columbia University's Center for the Advancement of Children's Mental Health.

The report points out that children who do not begin kindergarten socially and emotionally competent are often not successful in the early years of school and **can be plagued by behavioral, emotional, academic, and social development problem that follow them into adulthood.**

## **OBSERVE**

*Incorporate all of the senses into your explorations! When was the last time you really SMELLED the air after a rain shower? Really FELT the texture of the pillows in the book center? Make more time each day to use the five senses, smell, touch, taste, see and hear!*

### **Resource:**

*A Natural History of the Senses* by Diane Ackerman

## **READ**

*Read read read until you think your lips are going to fall off, and then, read one more. Make sure the “good books” aren’t being saved for special occasions! Remove torn and ripped books immediately for repair or replacement. Learn how to identify a good book and make sure they are provided daily. Remember that the real GOAL is NOT to get to the end of the book – but to instill a love of literature and story!*

### **A small list of resources:**

*Children’s Play – the roots of reading* Eds: Edward Zigler, Dorothy Singer & Sandra Bishop-Josef

*Heavy Words Lightly Thrown – the reason behind the rhyme* by Chris Roberts

*Reading Magic* by Mem Fox

*A is for Ox* by Barry Sanders

*Misreading Masculinity – boys, literacy and popular culture* by Thomas Newkirk

*Chants, Fingerplays and Stories* by Bev Bos

*Eentsy Weentsy Spider – Fingerplays and action rhymes* by Joanna Cole and Stephanie Calmenson

## **PLAY**

*Playing is not a separate seventh thing – but rather, playing is the cement that is holding our foundation together. When was the last time you played? It's been said that we do not stop playing when we get old, but we get old because we stop playing.*

*Go Play!*

### **A small list of resources:**

*Hothouse Kids* by Alissa Quart

*The Genius of Play* by Sally Jenkinson

*Play = Learning* Eds: Dorothy Singer, Roberta Golinkoff, Kathy Hirsh-Pasek

*Einstein Never Used Flashcards* by Roberta Golinkoff, Kathy Hirsh-Pasek

*The Power of Play* by David Elkind

*Perfect Madness* by Judith Warner

*All work and no play.... How educational reforms are harming our preschoolers* Edited by Sharna Olfman

*Children at Play: An American History* by Howard Chudacoff

*Childhood Lost* Edited by Sharna Olfman

*To Play or Not to Play, is it really a question?* Eds: Christine Ferguson & Ernest Dettore

*Playing to Get Smart* by Elizabeth Jones and Renatta Cooper



## Lisa Murphy Contact Information and Helpful Web Links

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**A silly name....**  
**A serious message!**

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I saw a man pursuing the horizon;  
Round and round they sped.  
I was disturbed at this;  
I accosted the man.  
"It is futile," I said,  
"You can never - -"  
  
"You lie," he cried,  
And ran on.